An Ordinary Meeting of Lismore City Council will be held at the Council Chambers on April 14, 2026, 10:00 AM

Attachments Excluded From Agenda

Eber Butron
General Manager

8 April 2026

Attachments

Reports

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Planning Proposal

Amendment to Lismore LEP 2012 to rezone land at Lot 22 DP 835735, 803 Ballina Road, Goonellabah, to E1 Local Centre

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Proponent-led planning proposal applies to land known as Lot 22 DP835735, located at 803 Ballina Road, Goonellabah, as shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure1 – Land Subject to this Planning Proposal



The site is zoned R1 General Residential under *Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP 2012). As shown in **Figure 1**, it is directly adjacent to the East Point Shopping Village, which is on land zoned E1 Local Centre under the LEP.

The aim of the planning proposal is to rezone the site from R1 General Residential to E1 Local Centre, to facilitate its future development for an expansion of the adjacent Shopping Village.

The planning proposal also seeks to remove the current minimum lots size standard, to provide for a consistent planning framework with the adjoining shopping village.

The site has an area of 2,080m^2 and is rectangular in shape, with a frontage of 34.78m to Ballina Road on its northern boundary. It has a depth of 59.765m and is generally flat.

It contains a single storey dwelling with access via an existing driveway off Ballina Road, with a metal shed toward the rear of the site. Mature landscape trees are located along the site's boundaries.

East Point Shopping Village is located directly to the west, sharing the whole length of the adjoining boundary. Residential development borders the southern boundary of the site, accessed via Ida

Place. Land to the east, known locally as Platypus Park, is currently vacant and was recently rezoned to R1 General Residential to facilitate an urban subdivision.

The planning proposal is consistent with the *North Coast Regional Plan 2041* and the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies. The proposal is also consistent or justifiably inconsistent with the relevant Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.

The merits of the Planning Proposal have been assessed in accordance with the Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure's *Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline* (August 2023). A Gateway Determination is sought under *Section 3.34* of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*

Figure 2 – Current Zoning



PART 1 – OBJECTIVES OR INTENDED OUTCOMES

Objective

The objective of the planning proposal is to amend Lismore LEP 2012 to:

- apply a zoning of E1 Local Centre to Lot 22 DP835735, 803 Ballina Road, Goonellabah; and
- remove the 400m^2 minimum lot size development standard as it currently applies to that property.

Intended Outcomes

The planning proposal will facilitate the development of the site for commercial purposes, as an expansion of the adjoining East Point Shopping Village.

PART 2 – EXPLANATION OF PROVISIONS

The proposed outcome of the planning proposal will be achieved by:

- amending LEP 2012 Land Zoning Map – Sheet LZN_005AB to alter the zoning of the site from R1 General Residential to E1 Local Centre; and
- amending LEP 2012 Lot Size Map – Sheet LSZ_005AB to remove the 400m^2 minimum lot size (Notation F), such that no minimum lot size is applicable to the site.

PART 3 – JUSTIFICATION

Section A – Need for the Planning Proposal

1. Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed LSPS, strategic study or report?

Yes. The Lismore Growth & Realignment Strategy 2022, endorsed in September 2023, identifies the subject land on Map 17 as having the potential to be rezoned to provide for an expansion of the East Point Shopping Village.

2. Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?

The planning proposal is the best and only way to achieve the intended outcome, as commercial premises are prohibited under the site's current residential zoning.

Section B – Relationship to Strategic Planning Framework

3. Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional or district plan or strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?

The subject site is located within the Urban Growth Area as mapped within the *North Coast Regional Plan 2041*.

Rezoning of the site supports the following regional priority identified in the Plan:

> *Support the development of employment lands, including commercial and industrial employment opportunities such as retail sharing outside the Lismore CBD.*

The proposed rezoning also gives effect to Objective 11 of the Plan, which aims to *support cities and centres and coordinate the supply of well-located employment land*.

4. Is the planning proposal consistent with a council LSPS that has been endorsed by the Planning Secretary or GCC, or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?

The planning proposal is consistent with Council's LSPS – *Inspire Lismore 2040* and supports planning priorities for economic resilience and employment land diversification. The relevant planning priorities are addressed in **Table 1**.

Table 1 LSPS Planning Priorities

#	Planning Priority	Consistency
1	Growth is consolidated around Lismore city, CBD and villages	While the subject land is not located adjacent to the Lismore City CBD, it is directly adjacent to an existing local centre, which services an expanding residential area.
2	Create a city and villages that support active & healthy living.	Expansion of the East Point Shopping Village will provide a for a greater range of commercial services within walking distance of existing and future residents.
3	Rural and natural landscapes will be identified & protected.	No significant impacts to the rural landscape are anticipated given the location and relatively small size of the site.
4	Recognise, embrace and protect our cultural heritage.	No Aboriginal Sites are recorded in or near the subject land. The site does not contain any items of Heritage significance and is not located within a Heritage Conservation Area.
5	Identify & support the expansion of emerging industries	Not directly relevant to this proposal.
6	Expand agriculture & agribusiness while protecting productive agricultural land.	The site is located within the existing Urban Growth Area boundary of the North Coast Regional Plan. It is not mapped as having significant agricultural potential.
7	Revitalise the City Heart and create linkages to a reactivated River Precinct.	Not directly relevant to the Planning Proposal.
8	Consolidate existing industries & support their continued growth.	The planning proposal supports consolidation and expansion of commercial uses on higher ground.
9	Transport & communications keep our communities connected and facilitate the expansion of industries	Not directly relevant to the subject proposal.
10	Areas of high biodiversity value and connectivity are protected and enhanced.	The site is not mapped on the Biodiversity Values Map and does not contain any high environmental value vegetation.
11	Waterways, riparian areas and water catchments are protected and enhanced.	Not directly relevant to the Planning Proposal.

#	Planning Priority	Consistency
12	Protect and improve productive agricultural land and other natural resources.	See comments provided for point 6.
13	Identify, manage and adapt to risks from natural hazards.	The site is located above the Probable Maximum Flood event. It is not mapped as Bushfire Prone Land.
14	Build community resilience and adapt to climate changes.	Not directly relevant to the Planning Proposal.

5. Is the planning proposal consistent with any other applicable State and regional studies or strategies?

The planning proposal is not inconsistent with any State or regional study or strategy.

6. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?

The planning proposal is consistent with the applicable State Environmental Planning Policies, as described below in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Consistency with SEPPs

SEPP	Comments	Consistency
SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Chapter 4 Koala habitat protection 2021 This Chapter aims to encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas. The site is located within the area covered by Council's adopted *Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for South-East Lismore (2013),* but is not mapped as containing, or in close proximity to, areas of koala habitat.	The proposal is consistent as the PP does not impact Koala habitat.
SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	The proposal does not rely on any of the codes within this SEPP.
SEPP (Housing) 2021	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	Not applicable.
SEPP (Industry & Employment) 2021	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning	Not applicable.
SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	Not applicable.

SEPP	Comments	Consistency
SEPP (Primary Production) 2021	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	Not applicable.
SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	Chapter 4 Remediation of land This Chapter aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment. The site is currently used for residential purposes and is proposed to be rezoned to facilitate commercial use, which is a less sensitive use in relation to potential soil contamination. A review of aerial photography indicates that the dwelling on the site has been in place for at least 50 years, with no apparent agricultural use of the land over that time. As such, the risk of soil contamination is very low.	The history of site use indicates that there is little likelihood of soil contamination.
SEPP (Resources and Energy) 2021	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	Not applicable.
SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022	No specific requirements relevant to the proposed rezoning.	Not applicable.
SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021	Chapter 2 Infrastructure The objective of this policy is to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across NSW. The policy includes specific planning provisions and development controls for 25 types of infrastructure works. The SEPP primarily applies to the detailed development assessment phase of projects (either the Development Application (DA) or Review of Environmental Factors (REF) phase. In this instance, given that the site directly fronts a classified road and is proposing changes to the traffic arrangements on this road, the Planning Proposal was forwarded to TfNSW for review as part of the Planning Proposal phase.	TfNSW advise that a State Voluntary Planning Agreement (SVPA) will be required to facilitate the updates to the Ballina Road / Holland Street roundabout that are needed to service the future redevelopment of the existing shopping village. TfNSW request the SVPA to be in place prior to the finalisation of the proposed rezoning. The applicant has objected to this requirement and considers the upgrades works if required should not form part of

SEPP	Comments	Consistency
		the planning proposal process. Their formal letter objecting to this aspect of TfNSW request is provided at **Attachment 2.** Council agrees with the contents of the objection and is of the opinion the SVPA should not be required by the Gateway Conditions or prior to the finalization of the planning proposal.

7. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (s117 directions)?

The planning proposal is consistent, or justifiably inconsistent with the applicable section 9.1 Ministerial Directions. Refer to ***Appendix 1*** for s9.1 compliance table.

Section C – Environmental, Social and Economic Impact

8. Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?

There is no registered critical habitat within the Lismore Local Government Area.

The vegetation on the site consists of landscape plantings along site boundaries, and none is mapped as High Environmental Value Vegetation.

Removal of this vegetation will not result in any significant ecological impacts.

9. Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

The site is generally clear of major planning constraints. Part of the site is mapped within a drinking water catchment. This is typically managed by suitable consent conditions at Development Application stage requiring appropriate management of sediment and erosion during construction.

10. Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

Aboriginal and European cultural heritage

There are no recorded Aboriginal sites or objects in or near the allotment. Given the site location and context, the rezoning is unlikely to have any impacts on local Aboriginal Cultural values.

The site does not contain any items of European Heritage and is not located close to any listed items. The rezoning will not result in any European heritage impacts.

Social Impact

A formal social impact assessment is required where a rezoning results in a significant change in land use (Section 5.3 LCC Social Impact Assessment Guidelines). The planning proposal will facilitate an expansion of the existing adjacent local shopping centre. In the context of this locality,

particularly being adjacent to a recently zoned residential expansion area, the additional retail / commercial floor space will provide a positive benefit and is unlikely to result in any detrimental social impact.

Economic Impact

An expansion of the existing shopping village, located close to existing and planned future residential areas, will result in economic benefits through the provision of an increased range of local service offerings. The expansion will also provide for additional local employment.

Section D – Infrastructure (Local, State and Commonwealth)

11. Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?

The subject property is well serviced in terms of local infrastructure (water, sewerage, electricity).

The property has a frontage to, and is accessed from, a State-controlled road – Ballina Road. In a preliminary assessment of the proposed expansion of the existing shopping village, which would be facilitated by the proposed rezoning, Transport for NSW, as Roads Authority for Ballina Road, advise that a State Voluntary Planning Agreement (SVPA) will be required to facilitate the required augmentation to the existing Ballina Road / Holland Street roundabout.

TfNSW advise that, while the SVPA will need to be in place prior to the finalisation of the rezoning, it is not required prior to a Gateway determination.

The applicant has objected to this requirement and considers the upgrades works if required should not form part of the planning proposal process. Their formal letter objecting to this aspect of TfNSW requests is provided at **Attachment 2.**

Council agrees with the contents of the objection and is of the opinion the SVPA should not be required by the Gateway Conditions or prior to the finalization of the planning proposal.

There is no commonwealth infrastructure of relevance to this proposal.

Section E – State and Commonwealth Interests

12. What are the views of state and federal public authorities and government agencies consulted in order to inform the Gateway determination?

Given the nature of the proposed rezoning, the site and the locality, TfNSW were the only State agency consulted to inform the Gateway determination.

See comments above regarding the requirement for a State VPA and the applicant's objection **(Appendix 2)** to this requirement. Council considers the matters raised in objection by the applicant as valid.

Additional agency consultation would be undertake following a Gateway determination.

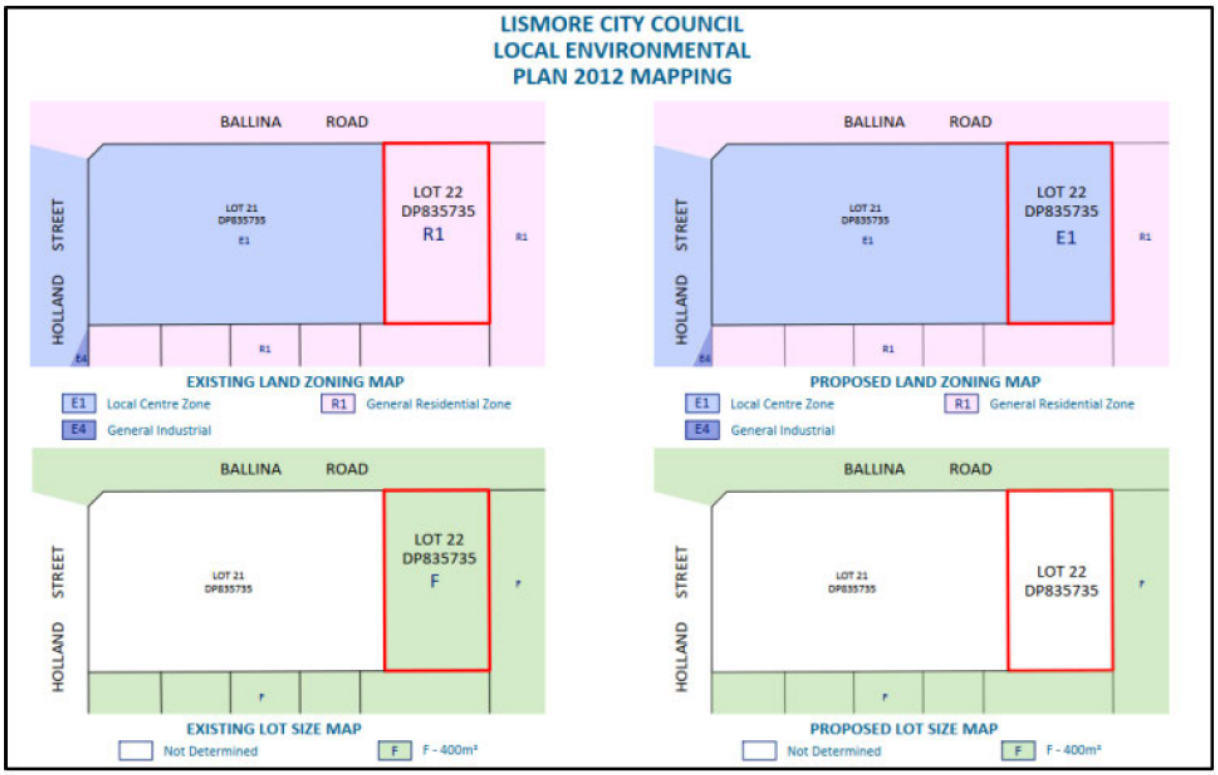
PART 4 – MAPPING

The following changes will be required to the mapping associated with the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012:

- Land Zoning Map – Change the zoning applicable to Lot 22 DP 835735 from R1 General Residential to E1 Local Centre (consistent with the adjoining shopping centre); and
- Lot Size Map – Change the Lot Size Map for Lot 22 DP 835735 to remove the current 400m^2 minimum lot size (consistent with the adjoining shopping centre).

No changes are required to other mapping layers within the LEP. **Figure 3** illustrates the proposed changes to the LEP mapping.

Figure 3 Proposed Mapping Amendments



PART 5 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council will commence community consultation post Gateway determination. For the purposes of public notification, Council considers the planning proposal as "low impact" and recommends a 20 day public exhibition period.

PART 6 – PROJECT TIMELINE

Plan Making Steps	Estimated Completion date
Report planning proposal to Council	April 2006
Gateway determination issued by DP&E	(30 days) May 2026
Amend planning proposal report in accordance with Gateway	(30 days) June 2026
Government agency consultation	(20 days) July 2026
Public exhibition	(20 days) July 2026
Consideration of submissions	(30 days) August 2026

Plan Making Steps	Estimated Completion date
Report to Council	September 2026
Opinion sought from Parliamentary Counsel's Office (if delegated) Plan making by RPA (if delegated)	October 2026
Notification of the draft Local Environmental Plan	November 2026

PART 7 – LEP DELEGATIONS

Council resolved at its Ordinary meeting of 11 December 2012 to accept the delegations which will enable Council to process the final stages of a planning proposal as outlined in Planning Circular PS12-006.

Council seeks to exercise delegations for plan making in this instance.

APPENDIX 1 - SECTION 9.1 MINISTERIAL DIRECTIONS COMPLIANCE TABLE

Direction	Compliance
Focus Area 1: Planning Systems	
1.1 Implementation of Regional Plans	Consistent The planning proposal is consistent with the North Coast Regional Plan 2041. The site is located within the Urban Growth Area Map for Lismore LGA.
1.2 Development of Aboriginal Land Council Land	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the land is not shown on the Land Application Map of chapter 3 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021*.
1.3 Approval and Referral Requirements	Consistent This planning proposal does not contain provisions requiring concurrence, consultation, or referral of development applications.
1.4 Site Specific Provisions	Consistent The PP will rezone the site to an existing zone in LLEP 2012, which allows the proposed land use without imposing any development standards or requirements in addition to those already contained in that zone.
1.4A Exclusion of Development Standards from Variation	Does not apply to this planning proposal as it does not propose to introduce or alter an existing exclusion to clause 4.6 of the Lismore LEP.
Focus Area 1: Planning Systems – Place Based	
	None apply to this planning proposal.
Focus Area 2: Design and Place	
	There are no Directions.
Focus Area 3: Biodiversity and Conservation	
3.1 Conservation Zones	Consistent. The planning proposal does not include any conservation zones, and the land does not include any environmentally sensitive areas.
3.2 Heritage Conservation	Consistent. The site does not include any heritage items and there are no known areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
3.3 Sydney Drinking Water Catchment	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the land is not within the Sydney drinking water catchment.
3.4 Application of C2 and C3 Zones and Environmental Overlays in Far North Coast LEPs	Not applicable as the proposed rezoning does not include any C zones.

Direction	Compliance
3.5 Recreation Vehicle Areas	Consistent. The proposal does not enable land to be developed for the purposes of a recreational vehicle area.
3.6 Strategic Conservation Zoning	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the land is not identified as avoided land or a strategic conservation area under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*.
3.7 Public Bushland	The Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
3.8 Willandra Lakes Region	The Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
3.9 Sydney Harbour Foreshore and Waterways Area	The Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
3.10 Water Catchment Protection	The Direction does not apply to this planning proposal as the site is not within a regulated catchment, within the meaning of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*.
Focus Area 4: Resilience and Hazards	
4.1 Flooding	Does not apply as the land is not mapped as being flood prone.
4.2 Coastal Management	Does not apply as the land is not within the coastal zone.
4.3 Planning for Bushfire Protection	Does not apply as the land is not mapped as bushfire prone land.
4.4 Remediation of Contaminated Land	Consistent. The information submitted with the rezoning proposal is sufficient for Council to be satisfied that the land is not likely to be contaminated.
4.5 Acid Sulfate Soils	Does not apply as the land is not mapped as containing acid sulfate soils.
4.6 Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the land is not within a declared mine subsidence district in the *Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Regulation 2017*.
Focus Area 5: Transport and Infrastructure	
5.1 Integrating Land Use and Transport	Consistent. The proposal is consistent *with Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines for planning and development* and *Integrating land Use and Transport*, which suggest that retail land uses should be in centres which are serviced by easy and efficient vehicle and pedestrian connections.
5.2 Reserving Land for Public Purposes	Consistent. The planning proposal does not reserve land for a public purpose or affect any such land already reserved.
5.3 Development Near Regulated Airports and Defense Airfields	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the site is not near a regulated airfield.

Direction	Compliance
5.4 Shooting Ranges	Does not apply to this planning proposal as the site is not near a shooting range.
5.5 High Pressure Dangerous Goods Pipelines	Consistent. The site is not close to any high-pressure dangerous goods pipelines.
Focus Area 6: Housing	
6.1 Residential Zones	Justifiably Inconsistent. The planning proposal affects land within an existing residential zone, by removing that zone. In this case, given that the proposal relates to a single lot containing one dwelling, the removal of that zone is considered to be of minor significance to the provision of housing in the locality.
6.2 Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates	Does not apply to this planning proposal as it does not include any provisions relevant to caravan parks.
Focus Area 7: Industry and Employment	
7.1 Employment Zones	Consistent. The planning proposal will implement an employment zone over the land (E1 Local Centre). This will give effect to the objectives of this Direction by facilitating the expansion of an existing retail centre, which will provide for local employment growth.
7.2 Reduction in Non-hosted Short-term Rental Accommodation Period	This Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
7.3 Commercial and retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast	This Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
Focus Area 8: Resources and Energy	
8.1 Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries	Does not apply to this planning proposal as it does not contain provisions that would affect mining or other resource development.
Focus Area 9: Primary Production	
9.1 Rural Zones	This Direction does not apply to Lismore City Council.
9.2 Rural Lands	This Direction does not apply as the land is not within an existing rural zone and the proposal does not propose a rural zoning.
9.3 Oyster Aquaculture	This Direction does not apply as the site is not within a Priority Oyster Aquaculture Area.
9.4 Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast	This Direction does not apply as the site is mapped within the urban growth area boundary within the *North Coast Regional Plan 2041*.

APPENDIX 2 – APPLICANT OBJECTION TO STATE VPA REQUEST BY TfNSW

Newton Denny Chapelle Surveyors Planners Engineers

Date: 6th February 2026

Our Ref: 200580

General Manager
Lismore City Council
Attention: Mr Peter Whittaker

Dear Sir

Re: Planning Proposal Application PP-2025-347
803 Ballina Road Goonellabah

We refer to recent conversations between Council's Mr Peter Whittaker and NDC's Ms Karina Vikstrom concerning the Planning Proposal seeking to rezone the property known as 803 Ballina Road, Goonellabah to permit commercial development as permissible with consent.

We refer also to the Pre-Gateway advice received from Transport for NSW (TNSW) concerning the project. In this regard, we note that TNSW have advised as follows:

> TfNSW has reviewed the 'LEP Amendment Request' prepared by Newton Denny Chapelle dated 24 February 2025, the Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) and supporting modelling prepared by Colliers dated 21 October 2025 and does not object to the Planning Proposal progressing to Gateway, noting the following.
>
> 1. The supporting TIA identifies the need for improvements to the Bruxner Highway and Holland Street intersection to support the future development of land resulting from the rezoning.
>
> 2. An appropriate mechanism, preferably a State Voluntary Planning Agreement (SVPA), should be negotiated to ensure the delivery of the required infrastructure by the proponent, as identified in the strategic design prepared by Colliers international Engineering & Design (Drawing number 23GCT0067-01 Rev B) dated 9 December 2025.

We are writing to request that Council and the Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) have regard to the following matters when considering this matter;

1. The Planning Proposal seeks to simply change the planning controls for 803 Ballina Road from a residential zone to a commercial zone. This, in itself, does not change traffic generation in the surrounding road network.

2. As part of the Planning Proposal, our client elected to illustrate the likely future development outcome should the Planning Proposal be approved. This was provided to illustrate that the rezoning of 803 Ballina Road would theoretically enable the expansion of the existing Eastpoint Shopping Centre (at 799 Ballina Road) and deliver improved services to the Goonellabah community. It was also provided to enable assessments to be completed to demonstrate that this was a suitable outcome for the site and surrounding road network.

   The Planning Proposal does not 'lock in' this development outcome post rezoning, with a range of scenarios permissible on the land.

PO Box 1138, Lismore NSW 2480 • Phone 02 6622 1011 • Email office@ndc.com.au
Lismore Suite 1, 31 Carrington Street, Lismore NSW 2480 • Casuarina Shop 8, 480 Casuarina Way, Casuarina NSW 2487

3. For any development on 803 Ballina Road (being the subject of the rezoning request), a Development Application (DA) will be required to facilitate development for commercial uses - either in isolation or as part of a broader redevelopment of the shopping centre at 799 Ballina Road.

   At that time, a Traffic Impact Assessment will be required which assesses the final development concept. This may (or may not) be the same as that illustrated in the Planning Proposal documentation.

   Given the location of the site fronting the Bruxner Highway, TNSW will have opportunity to comment on the DA and associated traffic assessments and apply suitable conditions at that time.

4. Whilst it is currently our client's intention to lodge a DA for development of the site as soon as possible, circumstances can change and the timing of approvals and construction are currently unknown.

Given the above, it is considered premature to 'lock in' a formal Planning Agreement for road upgrades as part of the current Planning Proposal.

Please be assured that our client is aware that any future DA involving commercial development of both 803 and 799 Ballina Road is likely to trigger upgrades to the Bruxner Highway / Holland Street intersection. They do not object to completing these works in due course. However, it is considered more appropriate that these works (and any associated Planning Agreements and the like) be deferred to Development Application stage.

We trust that the information provided herein is sufficient to enable Council and the Department to not require our client to enter into a formal planning agreement associated with road upgrades as part of the current Planning Proposal.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact NDC's Ms Karina Vikstrom on 02 6622 1011.

Yours sincerely,
NEWTON DENNY CHAPELLE

[redacted]

KARINA VIKSTROM
Town Planner. BTP. REAP.


Lismore 60,000
Local Strategic
Planning Statement
DRAFT


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
Lismore City Council

Snapshot of the Future

The Lismore Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets out a clear and coordinated pathway for the future of Lismore as a principal growth centre for housing and employment in New South Wales. Aspirational yet practical, the LSPS promotes collaboration across all levels of government, industry, and the community to realise Lismore's full potential.

Regional Capital
of Northern NSW

As the Regional Capital of Northern NSW, the city is poised to lead a new generation of regional growth – responding to adversity with innovation and building a bold, climate-ready future.

Lismore serves more than 250,000 people as the civic, cultural and service engine of the region – delivering health, education, justice, creative, and emergency services for communities from the coast to the ranges.

60,000 people
and beyond

With a clear vision to grow beyond 60,000 people, this LSPS sets a confident direction for a connected, creative, and resilient Lismore. It establishes a deliberate framework to manage change, ensuring growth delivers shared benefits and reinforces Lismore's role as a thriving regional centre.

10,000
new homes

Drawing together years of planning, the LSPS synthesises strategic land use studies, growth frameworks, flood recovery initiatives, and comprehensive community engagement.

The LSPS identifies adequate flood-free growth areas to meet long-term housing needs. This approach will enable up to 10,000 new dwellings over time.

6,500+
new jobs

Lismore's economy is evolving.

Around 6,500 new jobs are supported by over 400 hectares of additional employment land and prioritised infill areas. These jobs enabled across a range of core and emerging industries, will underpin population growth and quality of life.

Lismore City Council

ity of esilience

rough innovation d influence

Motivated by a deep sense of responsibility and confidence in what is possible, the community channels its energy into bold ideas and innovative solutions that shape a city of resilience. Through strong regional, national, and global connections, Lismore is positioned to lead the Northern Rivers into the next generation of prosperity, fostering innovation across established and emerging industries.

Innovation underpins a new planning direction – one that looks forward rather than back – enabling transformative progress and ensuring Lismore is prepared for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Creative

people and centre

Creativity is the heartbeat of Lismore – expressed not only through its nationally recognised artists, musicians, and makers, but through its vibrant sports culture, festivals and events, and diverse outdoor recreation experiences – anchored by First Nations culture and storytelling.

The LSPS embraces Lismore's creative edge by supporting cultural and sporting precincts, live-work spaces and investment in outdoor and nature-based experiences, ensuring Lismore remains the creative, cultural, and active heart of the Northern Rivers.

onnected

ysically, digitally socially

Lismore's future is shaped by strong social, physical, and digital connectivity. Connectivity is one of the most significant shaping influences that will continue to shape Lismore. Through comprehensive, forward-focused strategic planning, the LSPS addresses the fundamentals of how people live, work, and play – supporting housing affordability, employment, environmental protection, and integrated transport networks, while investing in recreation spaces, walkways, cycleways, and community infrastructure that strengthen social inclusion and quality of life.

Healthy Waterways

Caring for Country

The Wilson River is the lifeblood of Lismore and our community, offering cultural value, community connection and pride.

The LSPS embeds the appreciation, protection and enhancement of our rich biodiversity, waterways, nature reserves, urban green corridors, and landscape character. Balanced with the need for sustainable and resilient growth, Lismore will safeguard people and place while enhancing the natural systems that sustain the region and enable our excellent quality of life.

oordinated

frastructure

Lismore's growth will be shaped by strategic, coordinated investment in flood-resilient infrastructure, essential services, digital networks and transport networks that support a connected and liveable regional city.

As a strategic employment hub, Lismore's infrastructure investments serve both local and regional needs, strengthening connectivity and opportunity across the Northern Rivers.

Partnerships

Regional Leadership

As the Regional Capital of Northern NSW, Lismore anchors the institutional and economic systems that support the Northern Rivers – home to the region's major hospitals, universities, facilities and courts.

Through partnerships and advocacy Council will ensure coordinated delivery of infrastructure, housing, and employment outcomes across the region.

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Mayor's Foreword

A Message from Steve Krieg

Mayor, Lismore City Council

There is no community in Australia quite like Lismore. Our people are creative, courageous, and deeply connected to place, each other, and our region. Through the toughest of times, we have stood tall. In the face of unprecedented natural disasters, our community did not break – it rose – stronger, louder, and more determined to define our own future.

This LSPS is our blueprint for that future. It marks a generational shift – a pivot from recovery to regeneration, from hardship to hope. It is a statement not just of land use intent, but of civic pride and ambition. Flood lines or headlines will no longer define Lismore. We will be defined by what we do next.

Our vision is bold: to grow to a regional city of 60,000 people, supported by 6,500+ new jobs, up to 10,000 new homes, and the infrastructure to match. We're planning for a diverse, inclusive and connected city that is climate-resilient, economically vibrant, and rich in culture, nature and opportunity.

Lismore is not a place that fits a traditional mould. We are a university city, a regional health hub, a creative powerhouse, a centre of innovation, and a gateway to the World Heritage rainforests. We are also the Regional Capital of Northern NSW - a role we embrace with pride and purpose. Lismore is the economic, cultural and service centre for one of the fastest-growing regions in the state. Our influence stretches from the coast to the ranges, from Tweed to Grafton, and across generations.

We know the challenges ahead are complex – from climate adaptation to housing affordability, economic transition and ecological restoration. But we also know that no other regional city has shown the capacity to lead and to galvanise like Lismore. The community's response to the 2022 floods was not just a show of strength but the beginning of a transformation.

This LSPS tells our story on our terms. It outlines where growth should occur, how infrastructure will be delivered, what land will be protected, and how our unique character will be celebrated. It ensures that every decision we make reflects the values of our community and the lessons of our past, while casting our eyes firmly toward the future.

Let this be the moment that history looks back on as the turning point. A time when Lismore stepped forward - not as a city rebuilding what was lost, but as a city reimagining what's possible.

Let this be our story - written not in response to crisis, but in pursuit of greatness.

Lismore City Council

Lismore's Story

Lismore stands on Widjabul/ Wia-bal Country, held by deep cultural memory and the living presence of the Bundjalung people. For tens of thousands of years, this place has been a meeting ground where waterways, trade routes, ideas, families and cultures converge.

Settling at Lismore because of its prosperous river routes, Europeans began clearing the Big Scrub, Australia's largest area of lowland subtropical rainforest, to start a strong cedar logging industry. By the early 1900s around 99% of the Big Scrub was cleared and The Wilsons River was the foundation of trade, transport, activity and industry. By 1946, with a population of around 15,000 people, Lismore was declared a city.

That same year, Frank Roberts represented Lismore on the world stage in boxing, making history as one of the earliest Indigenous Olympians. His achievement marked the beginning of a proud and growing tradition of Lismore developing elite sporting talent and establishing itselfas a recognised regional centre for sporting excellence.

During the 70's, the Aquarius Festival in Nimbin helped catalyse a wave of environmental awareness, creativity and alternative thinking, putting Lismore on the map by and for it's people. Population grew throughout the decades until it reached 40,000 people in the 1990's. By 2020, with the population still around 44,000, COVID-19 rustled up a movement of tree-changers, as people sought connection, lifestyle and opportunity. This new wave of migration brought fresh ideas and energy, while also intensifying pressure on housing, infrastructure and services.

Then in 2022 Lismore faced a defining and devastating moment with a natural disaster flood event exceeding all previous records. However, recovery became an opportunity for change, to heal, to reduce risk, to rethink the urban landscape, and renew a commitment to living with the river rather than against it.

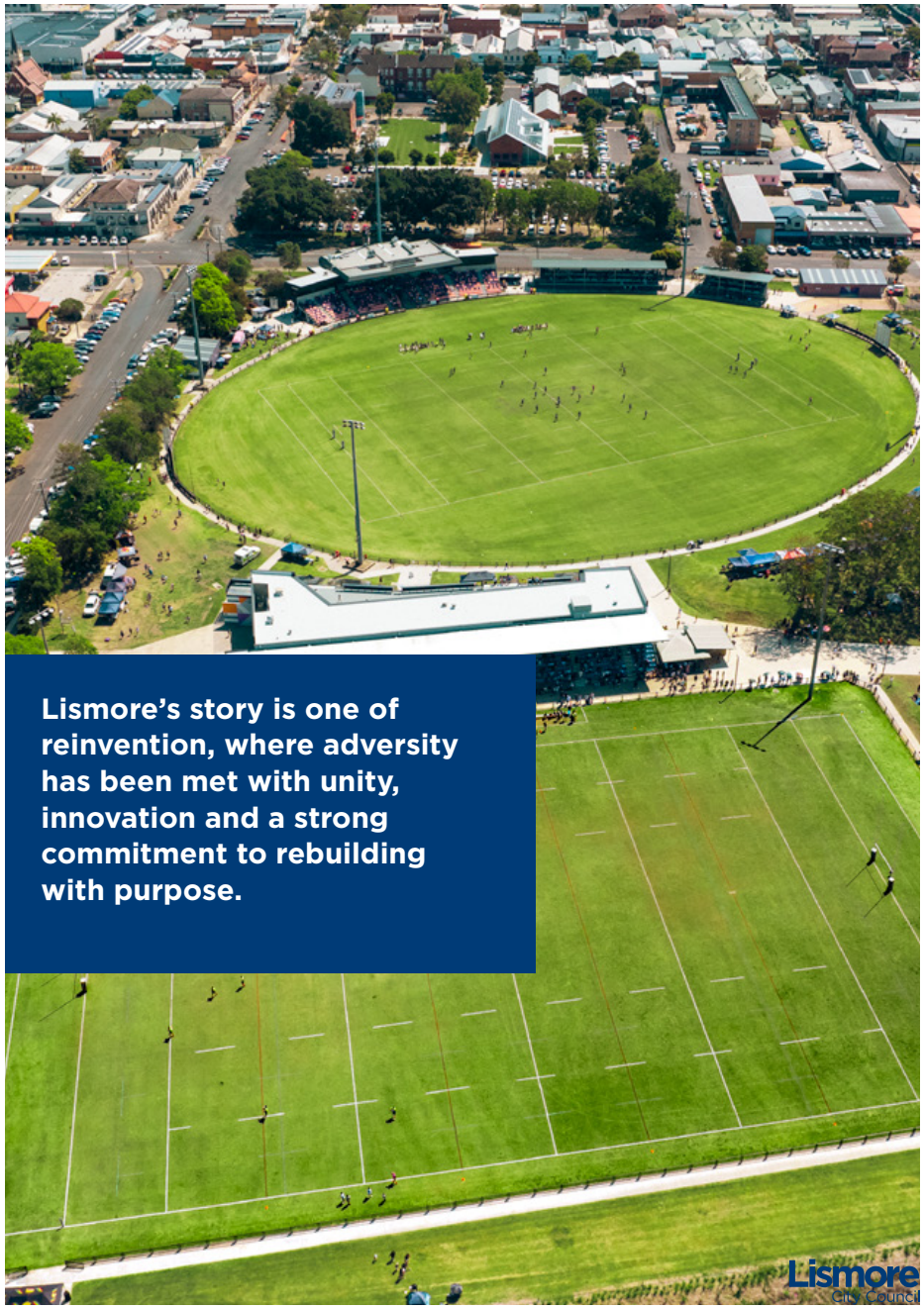
Through recovery, our people also moved towards new opportunities. In 2024 Albert Park hosted two international baseball competitions, attracting junior players from around the world to play at our world-class facilities. In



the same year, Lismore's premier sporting facilities Oakes and Crozier re-opened with national-standard broadcasting facilities and the capacity to host 18,000 spectators across the two stadiums.

Today, in 2026 as we celebrate our 80-year anniversary of being a City, Lismore is in a continued period of intentional transformation. From governments to individuals, everyone is contributing to the future of Lismore. Our households are more prepared and resilient than ever, our businesses, artists and athletes are reinvigorating our activity centres, our entrepreneurs are contributing nationally and internationally to research, innovation and leadership across a range of fields; from First Nations Caring for Country and agricultural crop diversification to health, wellbeing and natural product generation.

The depth of commitment to Lismore, by all those involved, is reshaping the City. Lismore's story is one of reinvention, where adversity has been met with unity, innovation and a strong commitment to rebuilding with purpose. Lismore's story is not about returning to the past, but about becoming something more resilient, more connected and more intentional; grounded in Country, shaped by each other, and looking steadily toward the future. This resilience is not just a trait; it is a strength, one that underpins our capacity for renewal.



Widjabul/Wia-bal Country

The Widjabul/ Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung Nation hold Native Title over public land and water across much of Lismore. Their connection to Country is lived through story, language, ceremony, songlines and totemic relationships, and through the ongoing responsibilities of looking after land, water, plants, animals and the places that hold cultural significance. These knowledge systems have sustained the Widjabul/ Wia-bal people and the landscapes of the Bundjalung Nation for thousands of generations.

For Widjabul/ Wia-bal people, caring for Country is an expression of culture, belonging and identity. Lismore's *Strategic Planning Framework* recognises the crucial role of First Nations knowledge in guiding land management, shaping restoration efforts and strengthening the health of Country. By working alongside First Nations communities, Council seeks to support cultural practices, enable meaningful partnerships, and embed Indigenous knowledge into the planning and management of Lismore's landscapes.

Widjabul/ Wia-bal Native Title Determination

The Native Title determination area is approximately 11,700ha.

The NSW government has entered into an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Widjabul/ Wia-bal as part of the settlement of the native title claim.

The settlement also included an agreement to disregard historical extinguishment of native title in national parks within the native title determination area, paving the way for the future recognition of native title over an additional 2,600ha of national parks.

Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council

NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) play a central role in land management, cultural heritage protection and community wellbeing for Aboriginal people. Ngulingah LALC's operational area covers most of the Lismore LGA, and sits alongside neighbouring LALCs: Tweed Byron, Gugin Gudduba, Casino and Jali.



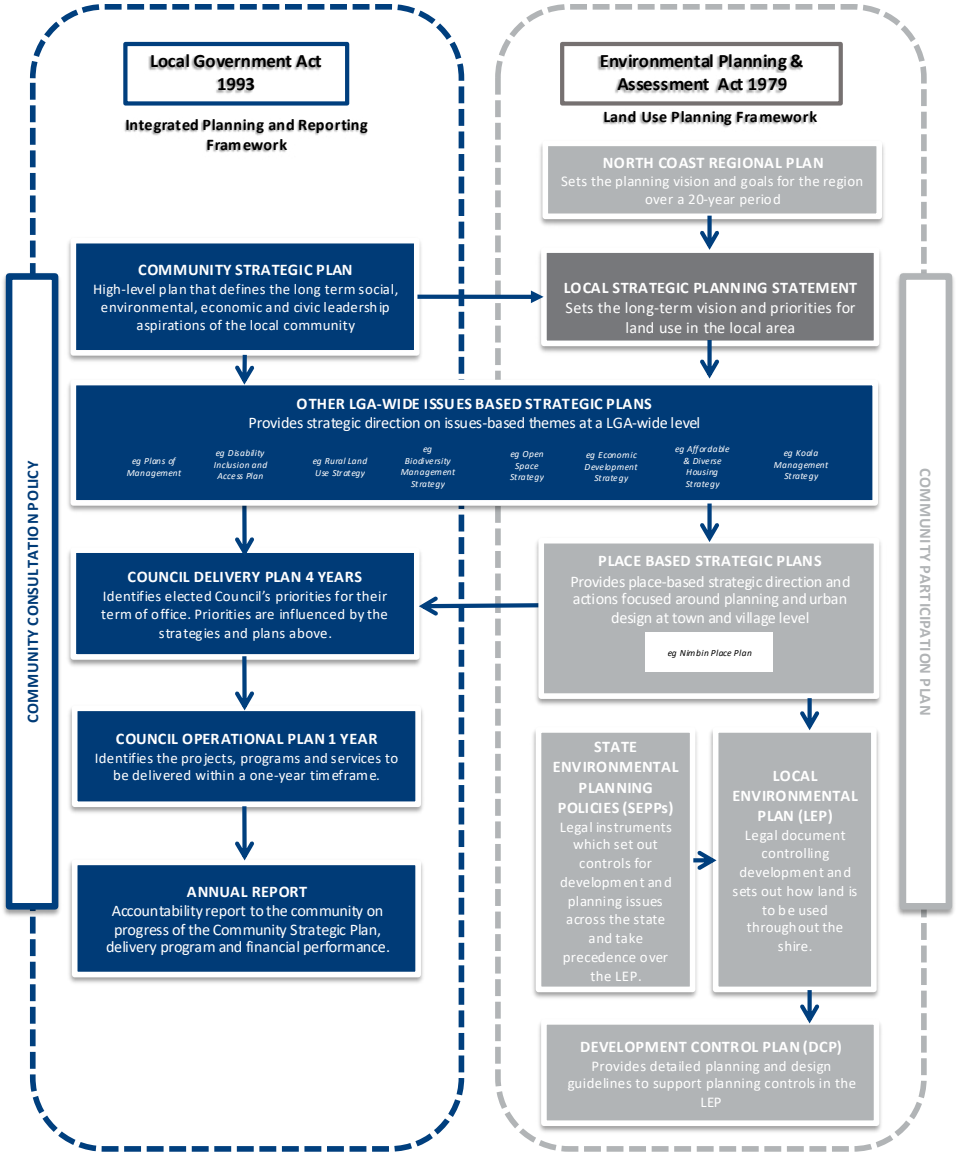
Map 1 – Local Aboriginal Land Council and Native Title Determination Areas

About this Plan

Administrative

This LSPS has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and will guide Lismore City Council in land use planning and decision-making. It has been developed in accordance with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (DPHI) LSPS Guidelines and provides a coordinated strategic foundation for promoting and managing growth, change, and resilience across the Lismore LGA, informing a new and necessary regional planning conversation responsive the regional drivers effecting this part of NSW.

It replaces the previous LSPS adopted in March 2020 and the Growth and Realignment Strategy adopted in 2022.



Purpose and Local Framework

The LSPS defines the long-term land use vision for Lismore and charts a clear framework to guide sustainable growth, manage and orchestrate population growth to help generate the necessary change, which is responsive to the city's economic, social, cultural, and environmental needs.

Unapologetically aspirational, this LSPS seeks not only to manage growth but also to shape a stronger, more inclusive, and climate-ready future, in line with the community's expectation that Lismore lead as the Northern Capital of NSW. A strategic plan that deliberately crafts an outcome reflective of Lismore's needs and community expectations. It provides a response to Lismore's recent flood events whilst setting a pragmatic and legitimate new strategic direction where growth, protection of the environment and social fabric is wrapped in Lismore's future.

This LSPS marks a clear shift from planning that looks backward to one that is firmly focused on renewal and opportunity. It is grounded in a deliberate, forward-looking strategic conversation that uses growth and change as catalysts for recovery, transformation, and long-term wellbeing.

The LSPS sets out Council's long-term vision for the area over the Lismore LGA. It explains where homes, jobs, services and activity should be located and how change will be managed over time. The LSPS is about the big picture and provides the strategic direction for land use planning across the community.

The LSPS is accompanied by a series of theme-based strategies and place-based strategies then transform the vision and directions into reality. These strategies and plans contain the detail and the actions, demonstrating collectively how the LSPS vision will be achieved. While the LSPS narrates 'what and why' Lismore will evolve, the supporting strategies detail the 'how'. Together, these form Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework.



Figure 2 – Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework

Principles and Values Guiding the Strategic Planning Framework

The following principles reflect the shared values of Lismore's communities and provide the foundation for all strategic planning decisions made under this Local Strategic Planning Statement.

These principles ensure land use planning is transparent, place-responsive and aligned with the long-term aspirations of the community, while maintaining a clear line of sight to regional, state and national priorities.



Place-based

Planning decisions are grounded in the distinct identity, geography and character of Lismore.



Aspirational

The LSPS is forward-looking, setting an ambitious trajectory for what Lismore can become.



Community-focused

Our planning priorities are shaped by what the community has told us: that Lismore should be safe, inclusive, vibrant and able to provide opportunities for all.



Long term stewardship

The LSPS plants the seeds for the next generation of Lismore, directing growth to flood resilient land, strengthening environmental systems, and planning infrastructure.



Collaborative

Lismore's future relies on partnerships between Council, First Nations organisations, State and Federal Government agencies, neighbouring LGAs, industry, institutions and the community.



Pride and care for place

Lismore's identity, heritage and culture are central to its future.



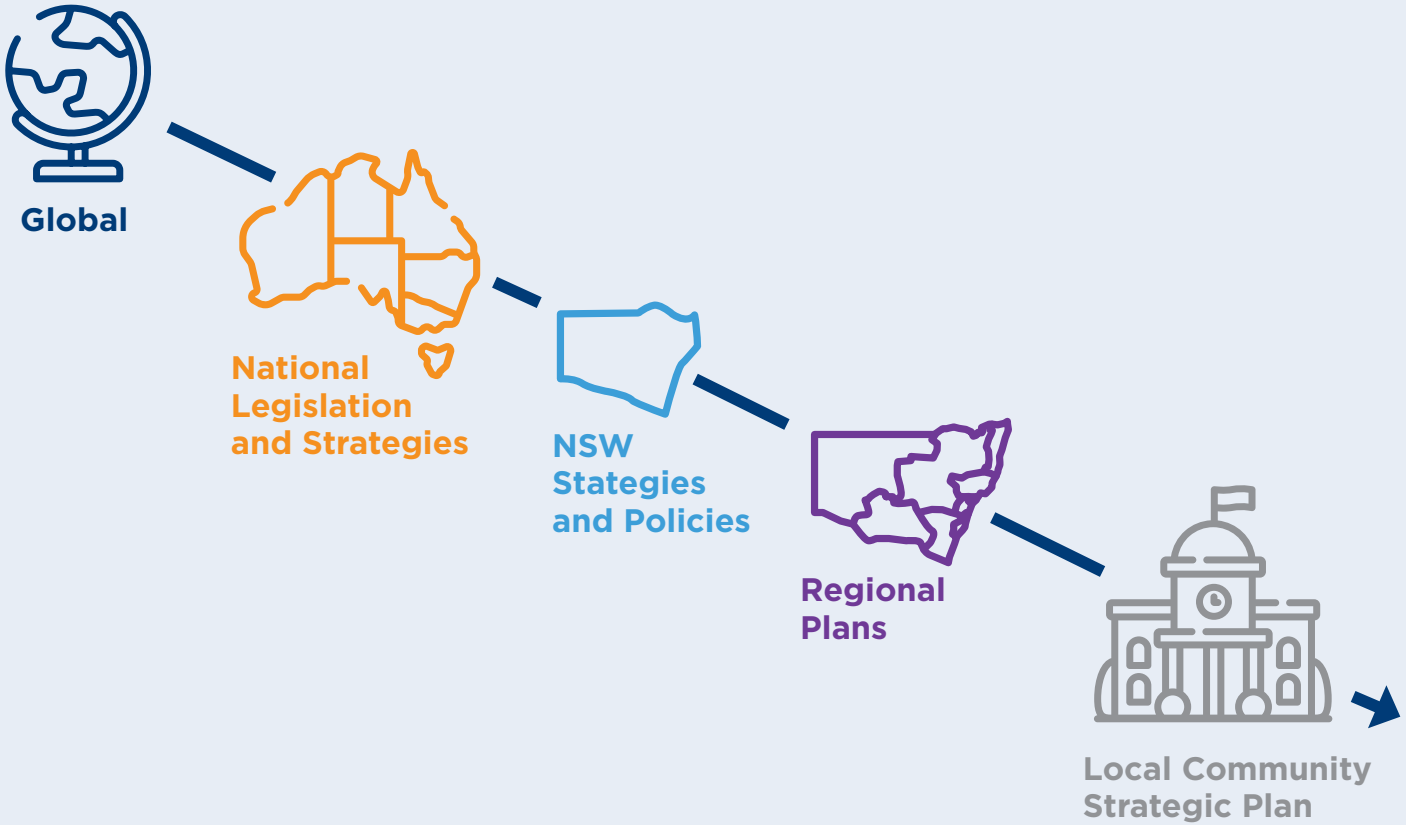
Circular and regenerative

Planning decisions support a circular, low waste, regenerative economy which minimises environmental impact and enhances local resilience.

Context

This LSPS establishes a clear line of sight from global megatrends to local action, providing a strong framework for strategic direction.

In doing so, it ensures that Lismore's future growth is not reactive or unplanned, but purposeful, aligned and grounded in both global understanding and local values – positioning the city to lead the next generation of resilient, inclusive and regionally significant growth. The LSPS is responsive to the unique context and relation that the Northern Rivers shares with the significant metropolitan influences of Southeast QLD and Regional NSW with regard to connectivity, housing, employment and economic drivers.



Plan Methodology

This LSPS has been prepared for our community, reflecting a shared aspiration for the future of Lismore. While aspirational in outlook, the plan is grounded in extensive research, data and evidence, ensuring a credible and achievable response to what the community has told us.

In 2025, during the preparation and adoption of the Community Strategic Plan Reimagine Lismore: A Plan for the Future, Lismore's diverse communities told us what they wanted. This feedback provides a genuine foundation for the drafting of this LSPS.

The LSPS is a living document that will be reviewed and refined as Lismore's needs evolve and as new evidence, partnerships, and opportunities emerge.





How to read this LSPS

This LSPS is structured to answer four key strategic questions about Lismore's future.

Together with its supporting strategies, this LSPS provides the overarching planning and delivery framework to guide Lismore's growth toward a population of 60,000 and beyond – building a stronger, more resilient, and more connected city and region.



Lismore Today

Our City and Regional Role

Lismore has long been, and continues to be, the Heart of the Northern Rivers. It anchors the infrastructure and institutions that support the wellbeing and prosperity of a regional population of more than 250,000 people, including Southern Cross University, the University Centre for Rural Health, Lismore Base Hospital, St Vincents private Hospital, various state agency headquarters, regional courts, and major recreation, arts, education and emergency service facilities.





Our People

Lismore's population



44,300 Residents

63-65% Urban areas

35-37% Villages & rural areas

44 yrs Median age

Lismore is a diverse regional community with a distinctive settlement pattern and well-established rural–urban connections.



Population trends

Stable growth:

0.1 -0.2% p.a (2001-2024)

As planning, infrastructure, housing supply, and flood-resilient growth opportunities are unlocked, Lismore is well-positioned to accommodate **stronger**, more sustained **population growth**.

Who we are

- **71.7%** Adults
- **28.2%** Youth
- **37.5%** Live with a long-term health condition
- **12.4%** Live with a mental health condition
- Daily assistance needed
- **30.4%** Live alone
- **5.9%** First Nations

Community Strengths

- Engaged and resilient community
- Vibrant local events
- Four weekly farmers markets



82% feel connected to Lismore

Top Visitor Descriptions

#1 - Friendly

#2 - Alternative

Our Economy

Lismore's economic profile



$3.05b Gross Regional Product (GDP)

26,000 Local jobs

4,433 Registered businesses

Local Jobs

73% Residents work in the LGA

23% Residents work outside the LGA

26% Health care & Social Assistance

11% Education & Training

11% Retail trade

10% Construction

Industry Contribution to GRP

21% Health care & social assistance

11.8% Education & Training

9.5% Retail

6.4% Professional, Scientific & Technical

5.9% Admin & support services

5.9% Construction

5.6% Manufacturing

4.4% Agriculture, forestry & fishing

3.8% Accommodation & food services

Economic Opportunities

- $181m Visitor Economy ready to grow
- Nature and culture driving tourism demand
- Circular economy know-how sets Lismore aprat
- Innovation rising across key industries
- Eco-events and markets attracting new people

Lismore is entering a new era of growth, strengthening what works and welcoming emerging industries for a prosperous future.



Lismore City Council

Our Housing, Neighbourhoods and Infrastructure

Lismore's Housing Snapshot

18,500 Dwellings in the Lismore LGA

2.4 Average Household size

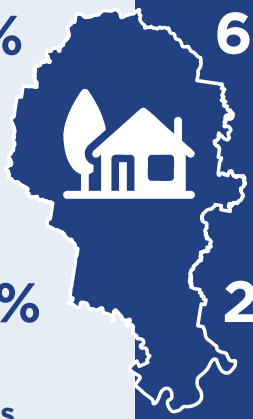
Residents own or have a mortgage **21%**

Detached houses **83-84%**

Dwellings Unoccupied (Census 2021) **7.2%**

Shortage of suitable, resilient and affordable housing to **meet the needs** of the community.

Apartments represent **less than** 5% of Lismore's dwellings.



69% Residents own or have a mortgage

27% Residents rent

26% Lone person households



41.3% Experience rental housing stress

13.9% Experience mortgage housing stress

Up to **6.5%** Households experience energy poverty

60.3% Homes have installed rooftop solar

Housing Stress: When a household pays more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs.

Energy Poverty: When a household pays more than 10% of their income on electricity.



Council collects: 16,098 landfill bins; 16,079 recycling bins; 13,141 recycling bins

Council Infrastructure

804km Sealed roads
411km Unsealed roads

118 Bridges
278 Culverts
354km Water mains
376km Sewer mains

Other Providers

Bulk Water
Rous County Council

Electricity
Essential Energy
NSW Government

Communications
NBN
Fed. Government

Lismore City Council

Our Climate and Environment

Regional Significance

Border Ranges Rainforest Region one of 15 **National Biodiversity Hotspots**

Lismore LGA covers approximately **1,290**km2

Highest Koala population in Northern Rivers



Richmond River is the **largest coastal floodplain in NSW,** covering **1,000**km2 with a waterway area of **19**km2.

Local Significance

1% Big Scrub remains

146 Known threatened plant species

28 Threatened native wildlife species

18 Endangered ecological communities

Threats

11,916 Parcels of land mapped as bush fire prone land

7,079 Parcels of land susceptible to flood

Lismore's warming climate and rising flood risk are stressing local rivers, soils, and ecosystems.



Rural Landholder Initiative

236 Parcels of land

56,500 Trees planted

380ha Weed control

6.5km Riparian restoration



Community Strengths

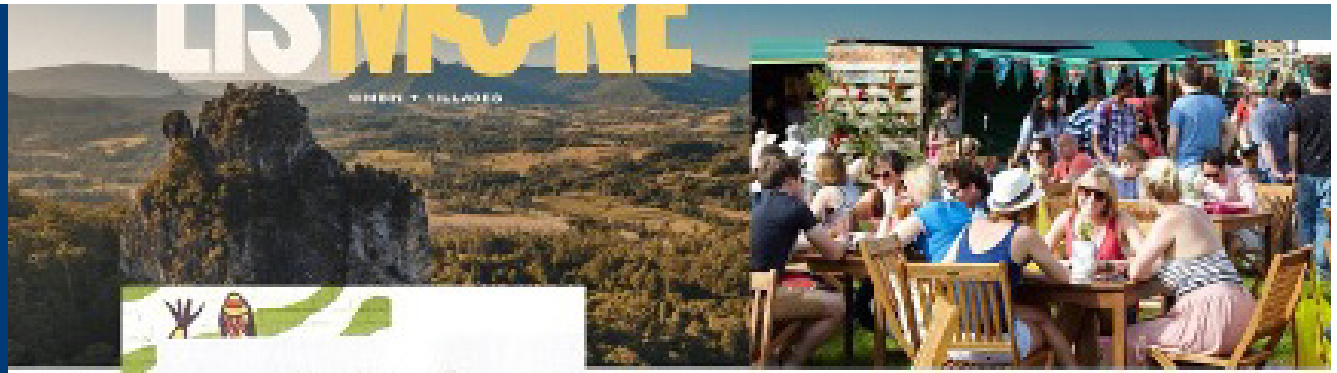
- 10 Active urban Landcare groups
- High levels of knowledge, research and passion
- Our environment is a big part of what makes living here special

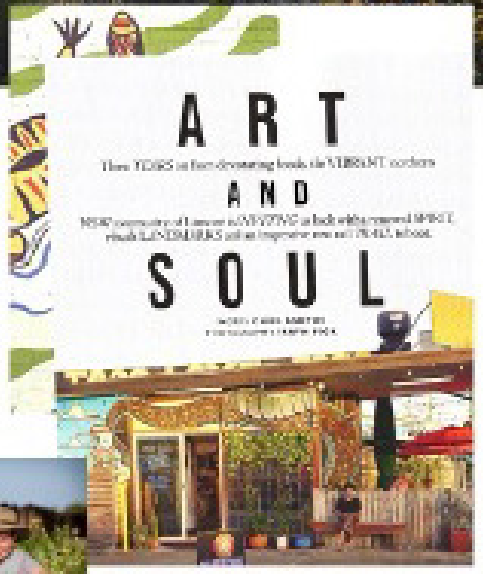
With the right care, our local ecosystems can bounce back and thrive.

Lismore's Vision

Lismore is the vibrant resilient hub of northeast NSW where past meets future, entrepreneurship flourishes, diversity, culture and the environment are celebrated, and innovation and new ideas are embraced.

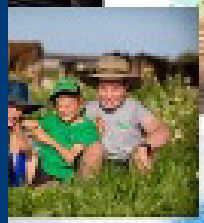
Lismore is the draw card of the North Rivers west of the Pacific Highway, it presents an invitation for visitors, business, and new residents to experience its authenticity, charm, amenities, leading edge services, and special environmental qualities and backdrop. All the while respecting the past and caring for existing community.





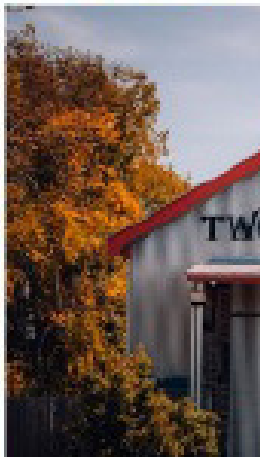


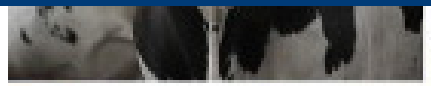
















Strategic Directions

Sustainable Growth

60,000
people and beyond

Lismore will emerge as a confident and thriving regional capital of 60,000 people and beyond, shaped by coordinated land use and infrastructure, strong essential services, seamless transport connections, and well-connected places. Growth and change will be managed sustainably and with purpose, positioning Lismore as the principal growth centre for the Northern Rivers and a catalyst for a new era of shared prosperity across the region.

Economic Prosperity

At least
6,500
new jobs

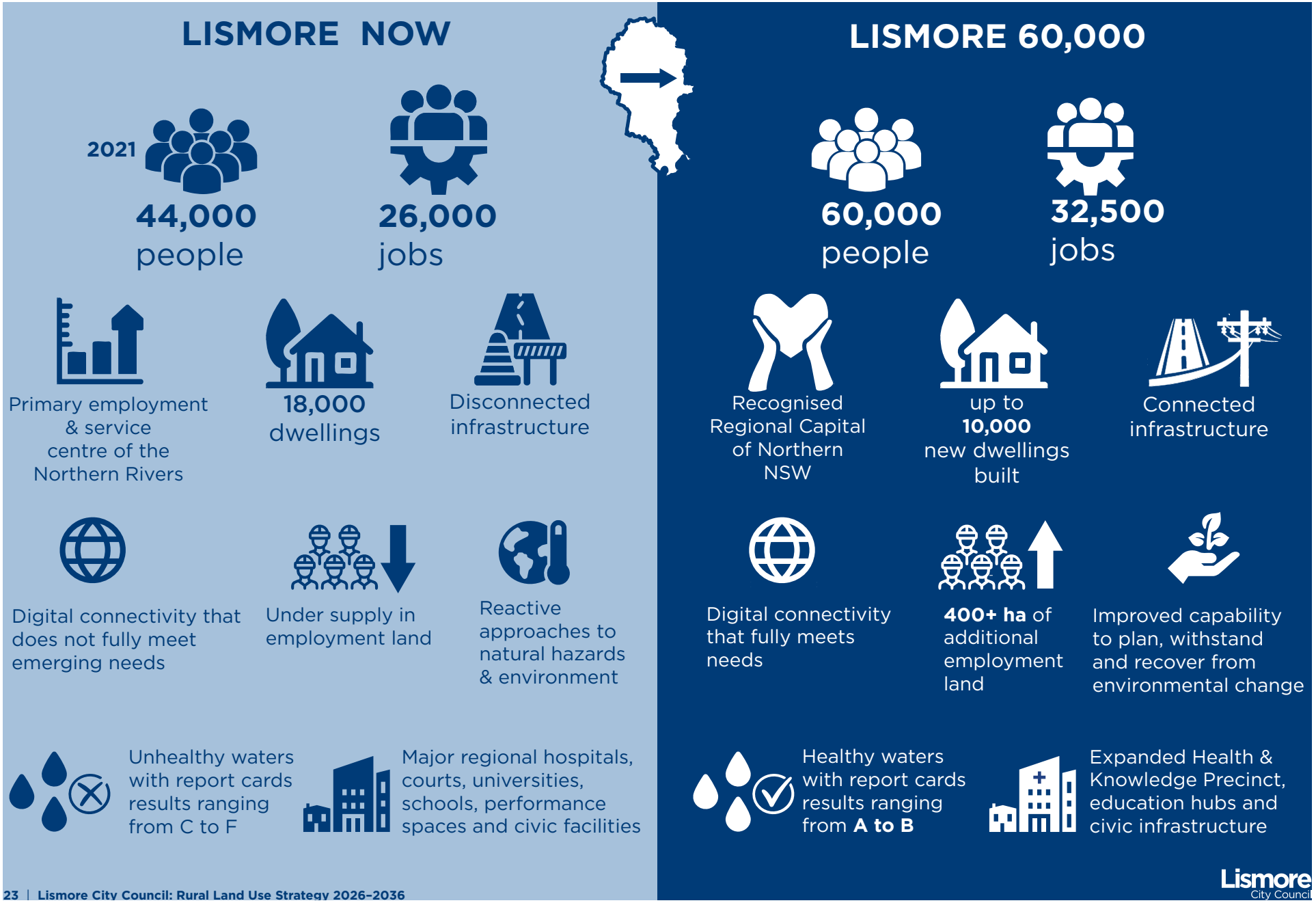
Lismore will be a connected and innovative regional capital with a diverse economy that supports the creation of at least 6,500 new jobs, with capacity for growth beyond, as the city moves toward a population of 60,000 and beyond. Our economy will be anchored in health, education, agribusiness and the creative industries, and strengthened by visitor experiences, manufacturing and the circular economy that links local enterprise to national and global markets.

Thriving Communities

Lismore's centres, villages and neighbourhoods will be inclusive, resilient and well-connected places that support a growing and diverse community. As the city grows, we will deliver flood-resilient housing, strong local centres and vibrant public spaces. The city centre will re-emerge as a thriving civic and cultural heart, while villages and rural communities retain their identity and character.

Resilient Environments

Lismore will protect its rivers, floodplains, farmland and biodiversity while leading climate-ready growth. Through risk-informed land use planning, integration of both nature-based and engineered infrastructure approaches, we will adapt to natural hazards and climate change, care for Country, and strengthen long-term environmental and community resilience.


LISMORE NOW
2021
44,000
people
26,000
jobs
Primary employment & service centre of the Northern Rivers
18,000
dwellings
Disconnected infrastructure
Digital connectivity that does not fully meet emerging needs
Under supply in employment land
Reactive approaches to natural hazards & environment
Unhealthy waters with report cards results ranging from C to F
Major regional hospitals, courts, universities, schools, performance spaces and civic facilities
LISMORE 60,000
60,000
people
32,500
jobs
Recognised Regional Capital of Northern NSW
up to 10,000 new dwellings built
Connected infrastructure
Digital connectivity that fully meets needs
400+ ha of additional employment land
Improved capability to plan, withstand and recover from environmental change
Healthy waters with report cards results ranging from A to B
Expanded Health & Knowledge Precinct, education hubs and civic infrastructure
23 | Lismore City Council: Rural Land Use Strategy 2026–2036
Lismore City Council

Visionary Turbochargers

Lismore's turbochargers are a suite of bold, high-impact, catalytic programs designed to seize opportunity, accelerate economic and environmental renewal, diversify industry and strengthen the region's identity as a centre for resilience, creativity and innovation.

They represent strategic programs of investment, collaboration and innovation, rather than single, fixed projects. Each turbocharger acts as both a project and a platform, driving collaboration across government, education, business and community. Together, they provide the structural backbone for Lismore's transition toward a more sustainable, knowledge-driven, creative and regenerative economy.

The turbochargers have been prioritised for their:

- Ability to solve multiple challenges at once.
- Alignment with State and Commonwealth policy.
- Ability to attract broad partnerships.
- Readiness for activation.
- High economic return.

Council will facilitate each turbocharger through a range of actions, projects and partnerships. Each turbocharger is embedded within the Planning Priorities and actions within the LSPS as well as throughout the supporting strategies that make up Lismore's *Strategic Planning Framework.*



1. Catalyst Infrastructure; prioritising future-ready sequencing of critical infrastructure

Lismore 60,000 and the potential for Lismore to achieve the vision for the future laid out within this LSPS is solely reliant on a series of infrastructure provision. This turbocharger leads to the timely delivery of both foundational infrastructure, such as water and sewer, and catalyst infrastructure, such as flood mitigation.

What it delivers

- Integration of the LSPS across Council's long term asset management and financial planning
- Advocacy, business case and budget bids for state and federally funded infrastructure
- Investment attraction for private infrastructure delivery and/or upgrades
- Sustainable, sequenced and considered infrastructure provision

Why it matters

- Infrastructure upgrade or provision is critical to unlocking both residential and employment developments. Without basic infrastructure such as water, sewer, roads and internet, development cannot occur and Lismore's population will continue to stagnate
- There is a local, regional, state and national shortage of housing
- There is an acute regional need for industrial lands
- Lismore has the potential for economic uplift across a range of sectors, investors and businesses rely on infrastructure security and will require stable internet, water and energy provision
- Whilst some residents in our most flood prone areas have moved to higher ground, we still have many residents and our key activity centres at significant risk to flooding. Investment in flood mitigation infrastructure will reduce risk to life, property, business and economy

Council's role

- Prepare investigative studies that include technical solutions and concept designs for infrastructure solutions
- Advocate for government funding and seek grant funding
- Deliver high-wuality infrastructure and long-term infrastructure management plans
- Use infrastructure as a a key aspect for investment attraction

2. City of Resilience; showcasing our Knowledge and Innovation Excellence

This turbocharger represents and amplifies the network and actions of excellence across institutions, businesses, Council and the community with regards to our ability to live with flood.Lismore will seize the opportunity to become a centre of knowledge leadership in resilience, adaptation and future-focused industries, both in terms of research and real-world action.

What it delivers

- Repositioning Lismore away from being a place that floods towards a city of excellence across all aspects of living and thriving with flood risk
- Advocacy on matters relating to flood mitigation and insurance
- Translation of research and lived experience into real-world solutions for resilience, risk management, adaptation and recovery
- Knowledge-sharing that informs planning, construction business innovation and service delivery
- Opportunities for high-value jobs, industry partnerships, educational tourism and conference hosting arising from research and innovation activity

Why it matters

- Lismore's lived experience with climate impacts creates a competitive advantage in applied resilience knowledge, not just theory
- Lived experience in flood recovery and reconstruction provides credibility and real-world testing conditions
- Climate impacts are reshaping how and where cities build, creating demand for resilient construction solutions
- Knowledge, research and innovation are central to long-term economic diversification and resilience
- Positioning Lismore as a place of knowledge and innovation excellence strengthens its regional, national and international profile

Council's role

- Enable collaboration between research institutions, industry, First Nations organisations and government
- Support pathways for applied research, pilots, demonstration projects and commercialisation
- Embed local knowledge and research insights into planning, policy and investment decisions.
- Advocate for funding, partnerships and recognition that strengthen Lismore's role as a centre of knowledge and innovation excellence

3. Healthy Waterways; Restored vegetation, waterway health and nature-based recreation opportunities

Healthy Waterways focuses on restoring our waterways. It strengthens the health of creeks, rivers and waterways through targeted restoration, erosion control, habitat improvement advocacy and partnerships. At the same time, it creates more opportunities for people to connect with nature – such as kayaking, swimming, shaded walking trails and river-based recreation – integrating environmental restoration with cooling, amenity and community wellbeing led biodiversity action.

What it delivers

- Cleaner, healthier waterways with improved water quality, enhanced habitat and greater resilience to flood events
- Biodiversity recovery informed by real data, enabling targeted planting, weed suppression, habitat mapping and long-term monitoring.
- Nature connected liveability, offering safe, attractive places for residents and visitors to engage with the river and natural landscapes
- Expanded recreation and eco tourism opportunities, supporting river trails, outdoor adventure, environmental education and nature based visitation
- Stronger cultural and community stewardship, supporting partnerships with Traditional Owners and local environmental groups

Why it matters

- Biodiversity understanding informed by real data, enabling targeted planting, weed suppression, habitat mapping and long-term monitoring
- the Richmond River catchment is unhealthy and eroded but its health opens opportunties for everyone
- the wilsons river is the lifeblood of our community and connects us all

Council's Role

- Lead data driven restoration through biodiversity mapping, monitoring partnerships and evidence based revegetation planning
- Strengthen and build on Council's established networks with Traditional Owners, environmental organisations, educational institutions and community groups to deliver coordinated, long term restoration outcomes
- Deliver on ground works such as riparian planting, erosion control, water quality improvements and habitat creation
- Invest in and enable nature based recreation infrastructure – kayak access, riverfront paths, shade, signage and safe public spaces
- Advocate for funding and cross government collaboration to scale up restoration and monitoring programs



4. CBD Renewal; turning to face the river

A flagship commercial precinct transforming Lismore's CBD to celebrate and reconnect with the Wilsons River — the lifeblood of our community. Over time, the CBD will become a future-ready, flood-resilient centre of community life and commercial activity. It is the physical and symbolic heart of Lismore's renewal, anchoring recovery, confidence and long-term economic vitality.

The CBD renewal will strengthen the relationship between the city centre and the river through a connected waterfront park system and high-quality public spaces that support everyday activity, gathering and recreation. Historic buildings will continue to be adaptively reused in response to recent flood events, balancing heritage values with contemporary requirements.

What it delivers

- Activating the waterfront areas through improved public realm that directly engages with the city
- Coordinated Council focus on CBD cleanliness, safety, renewal and vibrancy
- Reopening and re-energising Lismore's City Hall
- Adaptive urban design built for flood resilience, flexibility and long-term reinvestment
- Tourism and event activities that drive visitation, night-time economy and extend dwell time

Why it matters

- The CBD is critical to restoring community confidence following repeated flood events and disruption
- A resilient and active city centre underpins Lismore's role as the civic, cultural and economic heart of the Northern Rivers
- Concentrating investment in the CBD supports job creation, business retention and economic diversification
- A renewed CBD strengthens identity, liveability and the visitor economy while signalling long-term confidence to investors

Council's role

- Lead and coordinate precinct-based planning for a flood-resilient, mixed-use CBD
- Enable planning controls and design frameworks that support adaptive reuse and reinvestment
- Invest in public domain, new infrastructure and catalytic projects
- Facilitate partnerships with business, creatives, institutions and government to drive activation.
- Advocate for State and Commonwealth funding aligned to CBD resilience, renewal and economic growth

5. Lismore Health, Care & Wellbeing Precinct; The Northern Rivers' centre for integrated health, training and care

A defined, place-based health precinct centred on Lismore Base Hospital and surrounding health, education and care facilities, focused on densifying and intensifying the existing health precinct rather than expanding its footprint. The precinct acts as the physical anchor and springboard for a wider health, care and wellbeing ecosystem serving the Northern Rivers, with potential to demonstrate models of regional health delivery, training and innovation of national and global relevance.

What it delivers

- Coordinated growth of acute, community and preventative health services within a walkable precinct
- Expansion and integration of Lismore Base Hospital, the University Centre for Rural Health and Southern Cross University health programs.
- Co-location of allied health, mental health, First Nations health, aged care and community services
- Training, teaching, research and clinical placement pathways linked to real-world service delivery
- Increased development capacity through higher building heights and expanded permissibility for health, care and related uses
- New health-related accommodation and residential uses, including short-stay, key worker and supported housing, within walking distance of the CBD

Why it matters

- Health and care are Lismore's largest and most stable employment sectors and a cornerstone of future job growth
- Densifying the health precinct supports workforce attraction, retention and service integration
- Concentrating health, education and housing reduces pressure on transport, improves accessibility and strengthens the CBD.
- Investment in health and wellbeing diversifies the economy into resilient, future-proof industries aligned with population growth and ageing
- Strong, place-based health precincts increasingly underpin regional centres of excellence in rural and regional health delivery, training and innovation

Council's role

- Define and protect the health precinct as a strategic planning area
- Enable densification through planning controls, increased building heights and expanded land-use permissibility
- Coordinate land use, infrastructure, access and public domain improvements within the precinct
- Facilitate partnerships between health providers, education institutions and government agencies
- Advocate for State and Commonwealth investment in health infrastructure, training and workforce housing



6. Creative Industries and Cultural Hubs; empowering and welcoming regional leaders

An opportunity to grow Lismore's arts, creative and cultural economy through partnerships, creative precinct planning, venues, programs, public art and incentives, building on the city's established creative identity. This turbocharger positions Lismore as the cultural capital of the Northern Rivers, anchored in the CBD and connected to Nimbin, villages and grassroots creative hubs as a linked network rather than a single site.

What it delivers

- Creative enterprise development across music, performance, digital media, screen, design and visual arts
- Expanded festivals, events and cultural programming that attract visitors and activate the city year-round
- Public realm and planning investigations to enable more flexible permission pathways for the night time economy

Why it matters

- The creative and cultural economy is a key economic driver and point of differentiation for Lismore
- Cultural activity generates jobs, visitation and investment, alongside placemaking and liveability improvements
- Strengthening the creative economy supports economic diversification, CBD revitalisation and long-term resilience

Council's role

- Enable creative precinct planning and land-use settings that support cultural enterprise and mixed-use activation
- Facilitate partnerships between creatives, Arts Northern Rivers, education providers, venues and industry
- Advocate for investment, infrastructure and recognition that grows the creative and cultural economy

7. Agri-Food Innovation; centring on food systems

An opportunity to establish Lismore as the hub for Northern Rivers–based, globally connected centre of excellence for agri-food innovation, value-added production and regional logistics. This turbocharger focuses on strengthening sustainable food systems by building a coordinated cluster of enterprises, infrastructure, research capability and supply-chain functions that support regenerative agriculture, food manufacturing and logistics across the Northern Rivers, while positioning Lismore as the central place where producers, processors, logistics, knowledge and markets connect.

What it delivers

- Infrastructure and enterprise support for regenerative agriculture, food processing and manufacturing across the Northern Rivers
- Expanded value-add production capability, including food manufacturing, functional foods and advanced agrifood products
- Shared and distributed storage, processing and distribution functions that improve supply-chain efficiency and resilience
- Stronger logistics capability linking Casino–Lismore–Ballina and connecting inland producers to coastal ports and markets
- Innovation pathways across emerging and high-value sectors, including hemp, alternative materials, nutraceuticals and functional foods

Why it matters

- Agriculture and food production remain foundational to the Northern Rivers economy, but long-term value capture depends on innovation, processing and logistics, not just production
- Strengthening value-add and supply-chain capability increases regional jobs, resilience and economic retention
- A coordinated centre-of-excellence approach supports diversification, climate resilience and productivity across rural and regional industries
- Positioning Lismore as the hub reinforces its role as the inland economic and service centre of the Northern Rivers

Council's role

- Act as an enabler and facilitator of a Northern Rivers agri-food centre of excellence, rather than an owner or operator of facilities
- Support enabling land-use settings, infrastructure planning and precinct-based approaches that allow value-add and logistics activity to grow
- Facilitate partnerships between producers, processors, logistics operators, research institutions and government agencies
- Advocate for investment, funding and policy settings that strengthen regional food systems and supply-chain resilience
- Progress further investigation, staging and delivery through implementation planning, partnerships and future feasibility work



8. Circular Economy Innovation

The Circular Economy Innovation builds on the Lismore's community approach to sustainable living through innovative reuse and recycling of end-of-life products, showcasing circular economy innovation systems turning lived experience, research and innovation into real-world delivery, manufacturing capability and skilled jobs.

This turbocharger focuses on applied outcomes rather than theory, embedding the principles of a circular economy, including sharing, maintain items, reuse, refurbish and recycle, into building, precincts, arts, retail offerings and reconstruction activity, tapping into the opportunities and inspiring other communities across Australia.

What it delivers

- Circular economy ventures, promoting reuse, repair and recycling, testing innovative ideas and demonstrating what is possible across sectors
- Circular economy products and waste-to-materials technologies for the construction sector
- Modular and prefabricated housing and building solutions suited to climate-exposed regions

Why it matters

- Circular economy approaches reduce waste, lower costs and create new regional industries
- Unlocks opportunities for investment, government funding, economic diversification and private enterprise
- Construction and reconstruction represent major economic opportunities when linked to innovation, manufacturing and skills
- Moving from research to delivery supports job creation, industry diversification and long-term economic resilience

Council's role

- Enable planning and procurement settings that support circular economy innovation and embed these principles across Council's operations
- Facilitate partnerships between researchers, industry, manufacturers, makers and training providers
- Support pilots, demonstrations and adoption through real projects and precincts
- Advocate for investment and funding that accelerates delivery, industry development and workforce pathways

Spatial Framework for Growth

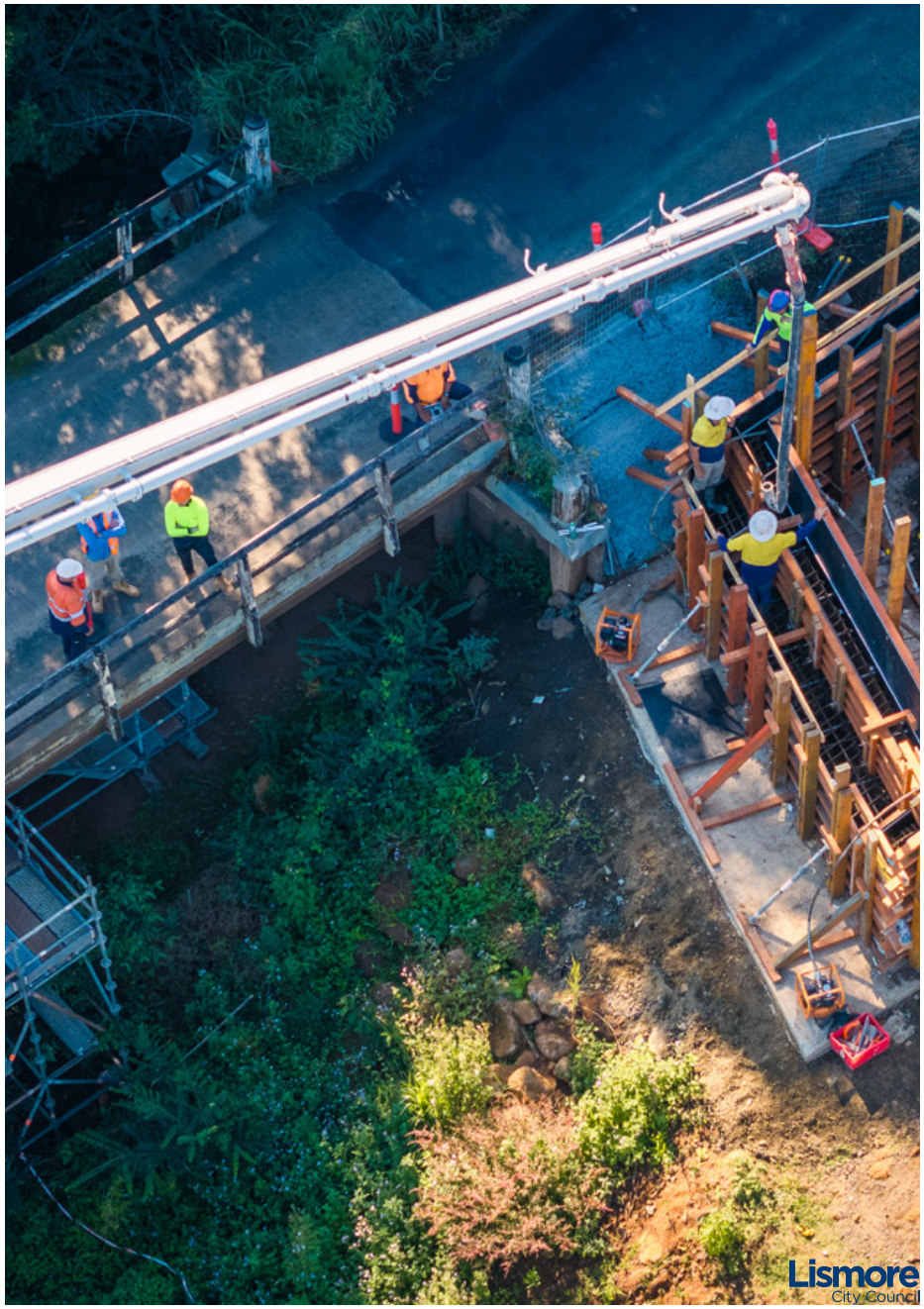
The following section controls the way in which Lismore will grow into the future, covering both residential and employment land growth management.

Lismore's growth led strategic intent to deliver change is structured around strengthening the existing settlement pattern, continuing to support a clear hierarchy of urban areas and centres, villages and rural areas. This hierarchy provides direction for the location and scale of housing, employment, services and infrastructure investment.

The Spatial Framework defines the physical structure of Lismore's future growth. It provides a clear picture of how population, housing, employment and infrastructure will be distributed across the city and its surrounding villages over the next 20 years and beyond.

By linking land use planning with infrastructure sequencing, environmental management and economic development, the Framework ensures that growth occurs in the right places, at the right time and for the right reasons.

The Spatial Framework identifies future growth areas that are flood-free and above the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF), providing ample capacity for the city's growth to 60,000 residents and beyond. The boundaries of these growth areas may be refined through future Planning Proposals or Development Applications supported by detailed structure planning, infrastructure assessment and hazard mapping.



Growth Management Principles

In addition to being guided by the settlement hierarchy, Lismore's future growth will be guided by a clear set of growth management principles that ensure land use planning supports resilience, liveability, economic opportunity and environmental stewardship.

These principles provide a consistent decision-making framework for strategic planning, rezonings, development assessment and infrastructure investment, and underpin the Planning Priorities set out in this LSPS.

Growth in Lismore will be guided by the following principles:



1. Infrastructure-led growth

Urban development will be sequenced to align with the timely provision of transport, water, sewer, energy, digital infrastructure and community facilities.



2. Flood-resilient and risk-based land use planning

Growth will be directed away from areas of unacceptable flood and hazard risk, with risk-based planning applied where development is proposed in constrained environments, particularly for employment and transition areas.



3. Economic diversification and job creation

Change led innovative land use planning will be supported by a resilient and collaborative economy with opportunities for flood-resilience, innovation, clean technology, agribusiness and creative industries. A strong supply of flood-free land for future employment purposes will enable growth and diversification, and experiential employment opportunities.



4. Clear settlement roles and pattern

The city centre, extended urban fabric, villages, hamlets and rural areas will each play a defined role in accommodating housing, employment and services, consistent with their infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints and character.



5. Compact, connected settlement patterns

Urban growth will reinforce Lismore as a compact regional city, supported by connected neighbourhoods, strong centres, and efficient public and active transport connections.



6. Housing choice and affordability

A diverse mix of housing types, tenures and price points will be enabled to meet the needs of a growing and changing population, including key workers, older residents and smaller households.



7. Environmental stewardship and caring for Country

Growth will respect natural systems, protect biodiversity and waterways, and embed Caring for Country principles through partnerships with First Nations people.



8. Place-based and community-led outcomes

Planning will be responsiv to local character, community identity and site-specific opportunities and constraints.
Growth boundaries are indicative until detailed investigations occur

Lismore City Council

Key Assumptions and Dependencies

This LSPS has been prepared based on a series of strategic assumptions and delivery dependencies. These provide important context for how and when the vision and Planning Priorities of this strategy can be realised.

While Council will actively advocate for and coordinate delivery, some outcomes are dependent on external funding, infrastructure provision and market conditions.

Key Assumptions

- Population growth toward 60,000 and beyond is key to creating the recovery and change required for Lismore as a regional centre and will occur progressively
- Adaptive and precautionary planning responses will continue to unfold and drive both innovation and excellence across the community.

Key Dependencies

Delivery of the LSPS is dependent on:

- State and Federal infrastructure funding, particularly for transport, flood mitigation, water and sewer infrastructure.
- NSW Reconstruction Authority programs, including the Resilient Homes Program (home buybacks and retrofits) and the Resilient Lands Program
- Timely delivery of enabling infrastructure by utility providers and transport agencies.
- Market capacity and feasibility, particularly for housing delivery, employment land take-up and private investment.
- Ongoing collaboration with neighbouring councils to deliver regional infrastructure, tourism and economic initiatives.
- Appropriately responsive Regional planning fabric and consideration of the rigorous analysis that informed Lismore's recovery story, LSPS and economic development strategies.

Where assumptions or dependencies change materially, Council will review growth sequencing, planning controls and infrastructure priorities through the LSPS monitoring and review process.



Settlement Pattern

Lismore's settlement pattern is overwhelmingly shaped by the scale of its rural landscapes and environmental lands. Approximately 87% of the LGA (over 112,000 ha) comprises rural land, with a further 7–8% (around 10,000 ha) dedicated to national parks, state conservation areas and environmental lands. Urban development occupies a comparatively modest footprint: residential neighbourhoods total around 2,040 ha, villages and lifestyle areas together comprise around 1,480 ha, and employment lands and infrastructure combined represent less than 1% of total land area.

This spatial structure underpins Lismore's identity as a regional centre embedded within its landscape - a city whose CBD, urban fabric of neighbourhoods, precincts and employment areas, villages and rural places function within a framework dominated by working land, natural systems and dispersed rural communities.

Recognising the diverse influences shaping Lismore's future, the growth vision is refined through a structured framework that articulates clear intentions across four interconnected spatial and functional spheres. This approach adds specificity and purpose, providing a transparent way to understand how local, regional, and broader drivers interact across the city.

By clarifying these relationships, the framework supports informed decision-making and coordinated action, ensuring Lismore's growth remains cohesive, resilient, and aligned with its overarching vision.



Map 3 - Lismore's Key Settlements

Settlement Pattern (continued)

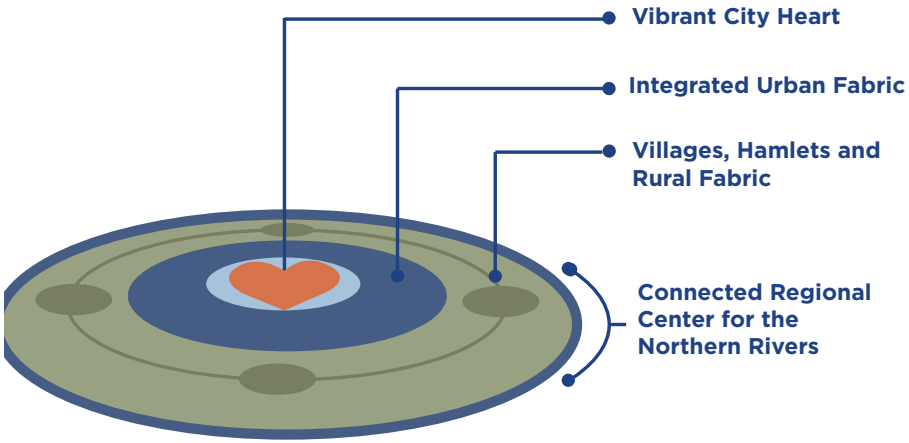


Figure 4 - Lismore's Conceptual Settlement Pattern

A Vibrant City Centre

Lismore's Central Business District (CBD) serves as the dynamic heart of the city, renowned for its strong identity, rich history, and welcoming community atmosphere. It is a place where locals and visitors alike can experience a variety of activities, including browsing local markets, enjoying cafés and galleries, and exploring green spaces which encourage walking and cycling. As the principal location for commercial services and civic employment, the centre is well-integrated with major institutions such as hospitals, universities, and schools, creating a seamless blend of business, culture, and community through inclusive urban design and climate-conscious development. The CBD contains the highest concentration of office-based employment, government services and cultural institutions within the LGA. Recent flood impacts and the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings are visible across the centre.

An Integrated Urban Fabric

Lismore's urban fabric extends from South Lismore to the North Lismore Plateau and east to Goonellabah, and features a diverse array of housing options, essential services, strong neighbourhood identities, and connected green spaces. Within the urban area beyond the CBD, employment activities are distributed across established precincts which sit alongside these residential neighbourhoods and community facilities. These include industry and business areas in South Lismore and Goonellabah, employment associated with the Airport/Bruxner Highway corridor, and health and education related employment within and around the Health Precinct. Together these precincts form part of a compact urban fabric supported by the existing transport network and servicing, while green infrastructure and environmental corridors connect employment areas with surrounding neighbourhoods and open spaces.

Settlement Pattern (continued)

Villages, Hamlets and Rural Fabric: Distinct Identities and Strong Community Networks

Lismore's villages and hamlets are celebrated for their unique identities and enduring rural charm. They are characterised by strong community networks which foster vibrant, supportive environments for both residents and visitors. Playing vital roles in the region's social, cultural, and economic landscape, these centres support a thriving tourism sector, drive local enterprise, and are integral to food production, collectively enriching the fabric of the broader city and region. Within most villages is a neighbourhood centre, offering core village services such as a general store and/or a post office and the like. Village and rural centres support small scale commercial activity and local enterprise which serve resident and visitor needs.

Connected Regional Centre of Northern NSW

Lismore plays a pivotal role as a connector between the Northern Rivers and Southeast Queensland through key transport routes. Its collaborative infrastructure and governance support economic growth, remote work, and innovation, while partnerships with neighbouring local government areas strengthen Lismore's residential, cultural, and business roles. Creative industries and education contribute to a growing innovation ecosystem. The city's employment pattern is regionally oriented, with businesses and institutions serving catchments beyond the LGA and relying on transport, digital and institutional networks for access to workers, suppliers and customers.



Employment Lands Hierarchy

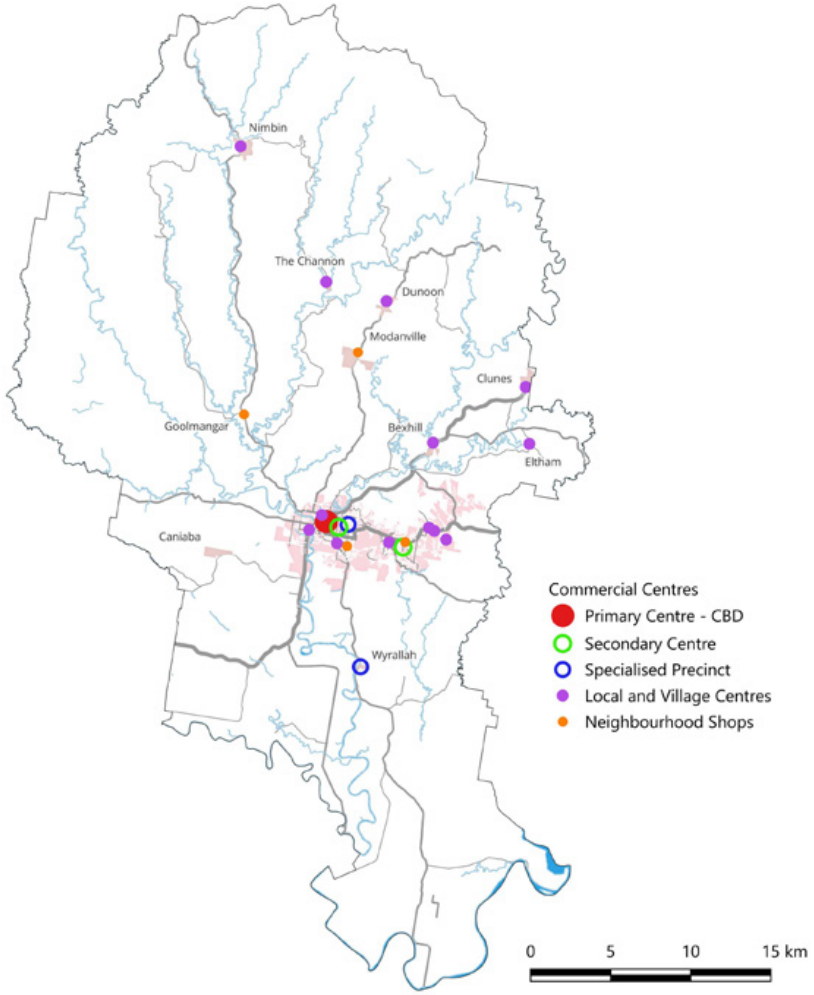
CBD / Primary Centre – The civic, commercial and cultural employment anchors in Lismore and remains the focal point for professional services, government activity, creative industries, experiential activities and events. The CBD is the highest-level commercial centre in Lismore.

Secondary Centres – Provides daily servicing to a local catchment and typically incorporates a full line supermarket or a discount department stores, with a range of specialty stores. Secondary activity centres can become important employment hubs for service industries and anchors for medium to high level residential development in the long term.

Specialised Precincts - Provides specialised services and are supported by a range commercial activities and mixed-use development that offer ancillary uses and/or daily service needs for those in the precinct. Commercial premises within these areas provide retailing opportunities only for the immediate precinct and non-precinct related office space should be limited. Lismore's Health Precinct, just outside the CBD, is the only specialised precinct within the LGA and is critical to those requiring medical services in the North Coast.

Local and Village Centres – Provides local convenience retailing for an immediate catchment and is often anchored by a local food grocer or similar. Commercial floor space needs are determined by the size of catchment, and the location of the centre to larger urban areas. Retail floor space may offer fine grained opportunities for specialised retail in unique locations.

Neighbourhood shops – Provides small-scale daily shopping needs or destination shops, such as corners stores or cafes. Neighbourhood shops are often stand-alone developments but can be clustered to provide complementary offerings. Lismore currently only contains two neighbourhood shop centres in its urban areas.



Map 4 - Lismore's Activity Centres

Residential Growth

Residential Demand and Projections

To align settlement planning with population forecasts, it is necessary to understand the indicative dwelling requirement associated with long-term demographic change.

Moving from a current population of approximately 44,000 to 60,000 represents an uplift of roughly 16,000 residents, which translates into the following indicative dwelling demand based on typical regional household sizes:

Projected Dwelling Requirement - Population Growth to 60,000

Household Occupancy Rate	Baseline New Dwellings Required	Projected New Dwellings Required (including 20-30% buffer)
2.4 persons per dwelling (current)	6,680 dwellings	8,020-8,680
2.1 persons per dwelling (projected)	7,630 dwellings	9,155-9,920

Housing Supply Buffer and Market Responsiveness

In a regional housing market, supply must also remain competitive and responsive to rental demand, short-term accommodation pressures and delivery lag.

Accordingly, the dwelling estimates in this LSPS incorporate a 20–30% supply buffer above the baseline requirement of approximately 6,700–7,600 new homes, ensuring overall capacity exceeds minimum numerical demand and helping to moderate price escalation, discourage land-banking and maintain a balanced vacancy rate across the delivery horizon.

On this basis, the LSPS plans to deliver up to 10,000 new homes over the strategic period. This reflects not only the uplift required to accommodate population growth and maintain a competitive supply buffer, but also a gradual shift toward smaller household sizes over the next 20 years, driven by demographic ageing, lifestyle trends and an increasing share of single and couple-only households.

Providing capacity at this scale ensures that Lismore can meet underlying demand, enable choice across tenure and location, and maintain a housing market that is resilient to delivery risks, rental pressures and structural change in household formation.

Flexibility and Adaptability

These growth proportions are indicative rather than prescriptive, reflecting each settlement type's relative capacity to accommodate development under current and foreseeable conditions.

This balanced and flexible framework ensures that new housing identified in the LSPS is flood-resilient, feasible and supported by essential infrastructure, while enabling Council to adjust delivery rates in response to market demand, policy settings and infrastructure investment. Together, this approach will support sustainable population growth while maintaining a strong focus on affordability, liveability and long-term resilience.

A larger city also requires a larger local economy. Planning for housing growth must therefore be matched by planning for jobs, employment land and productivity.

Lismore's future growth will be distributed across the existing settlement pattern, balancing flood-resilient urban expansion, targeted renewal, flood-free land release, lifestyle living and village growth. Together, these areas are expected to deliver approximately 70% of Lismore's future housing supply, with the remaining 30% accommodated within existing zoned land and approved sites across the city (refer Appendix C for further information).

Residential Growth Distribution

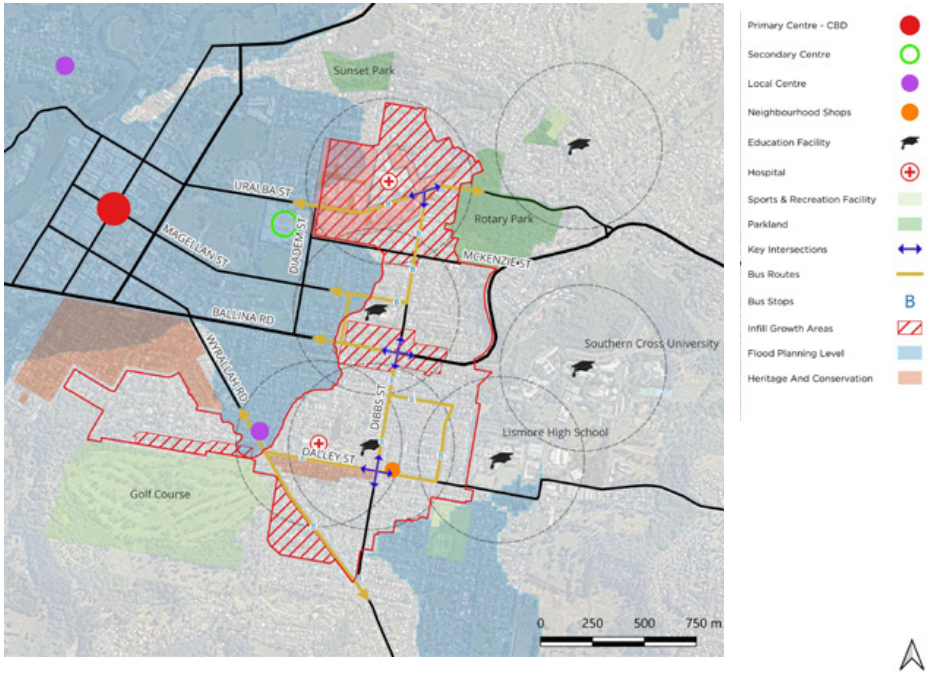
This LSPS is taking a responsible position on future change, with less than 5% of land used for residential, employment, and provision of services, and 95% of land retaining its existing rural, environmental or green characteristics.

Table 1 - Lismore's Future Growth Distribution

Settlement hierarchy	Role in growth	Indicative new dwellings	Proportion of total new supply
Urban Fabric	Health Precinct: Targeted renewal and infill, close to jobs, services and transport	~1,500	~15%
	Suburb Expansion and Infill: Primary urban expansion areas of existing suburbs, such as Goonellabah, delivering flood-free greenfield housing with efficient infrastructure delivery	~3,000	~30%
Thriving Villages	Place-based village growth reinforcing rural community roles	~2,000	~20%
Rural Lands, Hamlets and Alternative Rural Living	Rural-residential and lifestyle housing in suitable, serviced and environmentally appropriate locations	~1,500	~15%
Subtotal – Identified Growth Areas		~8,000	~80%
Existing zoned land & approved sites	Incremental infill and development capacity within established urban areas	~2,000	~20%
Total Planned Housing Capacity		~10,000	100%

Urban Fabric: Health Precinct and CBD Surrounds

The Health Precinct and CBD Surrounds, nestled on edge of the flood area and bordered by the escarpment, represent the mixed-use and residential areas located close to the City Centre. The area contains the 'Health Precinct', which is an area already identified and zoned for medium density growth, low density development including some of Lismore's more unique heritage and character housing, as well as other numerous community uses such as schools and hospitals.



Map 5 - Health Precinct

This area has become strategically important to Lismore, particularly following the 2022 flood events, as it is the closest unconstrained residential land to the City Centre. It also benefits from several favourable traits:

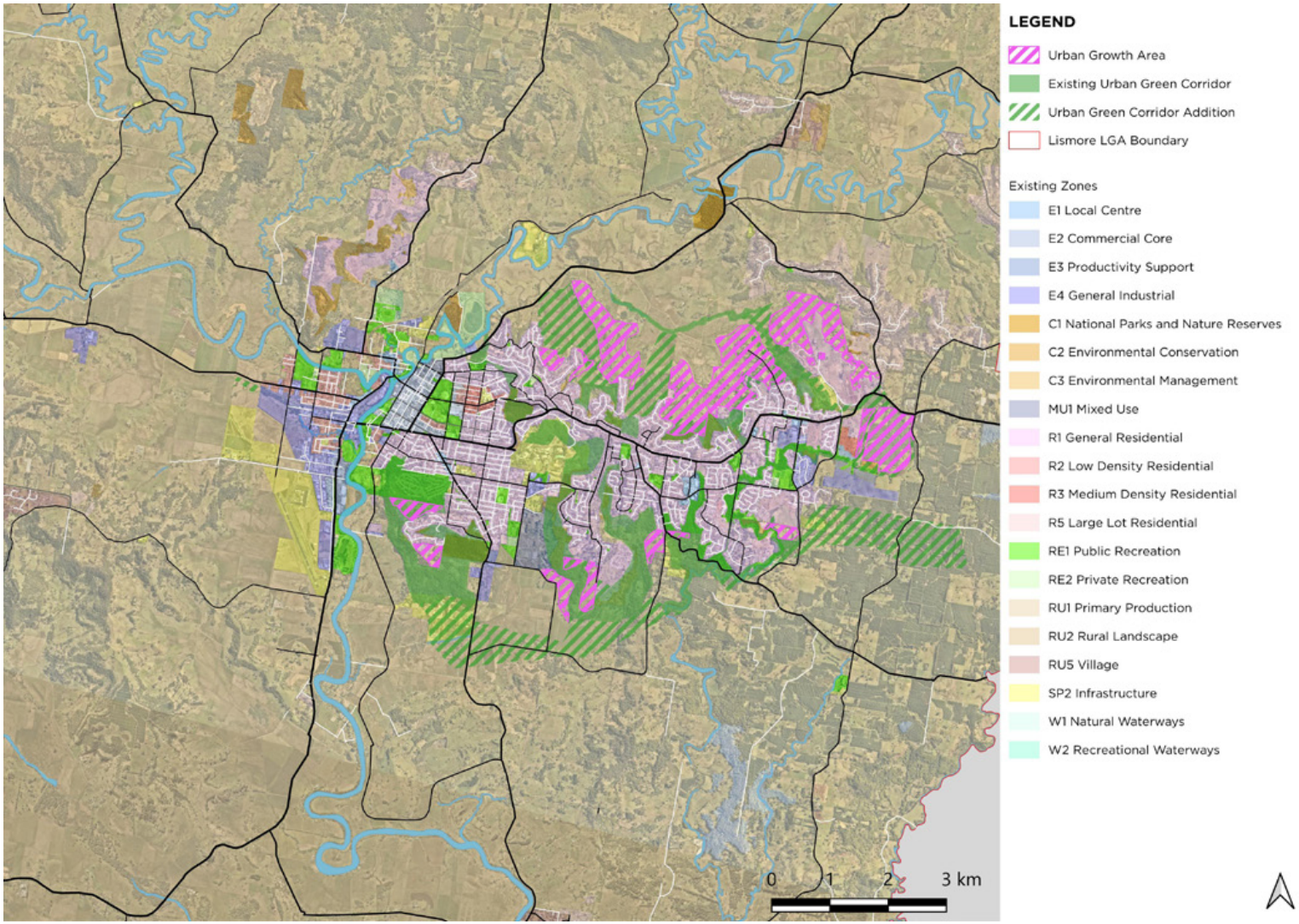
- the land is relatively flat, with most slopes under 10 degrees;
- every household is within a five-minute walk of a bus stop;
- it is serviced by nearby commercial centres, education facilities, and major employment generators such as the university and hospitals;
- and it is generally no more than a half-hour walk to the CBD.

Building on these advantages, the area is positioned to evolve into a vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood that strengthens local housing supply and supports key employment anchors. While it will not envisioned that it will accommodate a large share of Lismore's future growth, there are opportunities to deliver a diverse range of housing close in close proximity to the City Centre.

The Health Precinct, already well established and the closest urban area to the CBD, is central to this outcome. With increased height limits (see Appendix A) and a broad mix of health-related and supporting uses, the precinct is set to provide a concentrated residential population, improved housing diversity, and essential accommodation for workers in nearby hospitals and medical facilities. Further areas for medium density infill housing may also be supported close to activity centres and/or key movement corridors, although master planning will likely be required to unlock some of these opportunities.

See appendix A, site 9 for further detail on expected outcomes and required infrastructure for growth in this area.

Urban Fabric: Suburb Expansion and Infill



Map 6 - Urban Growth Areas

Urban Fabric: Suburb Expansion and Infill (continued)

Lismore's urban fabric extends west of the CBD to North Lismore Plateau and East of the CBD out to Goonellabah.

As North Lismore Plateau's developable area remains already zoned as residential, future urban growth therefore is predominantly centred in and around Goonellabah and it's Northern Ridges. The Northern Ridges Growth Area are priority areas based on their development potential and infrastructure access. The growth boundaries identified within the Northern Ridges are indicative rather than prescriptive and may be refined through future detailed planning, provided development remains consistent with the LSPS's growth management principles.

An additional expansion to the east of Goonellabah will enhance the recently released Ridgeview Heights estate and small yet strategic infills within Goonellabah's southern areas and around East Lismore all contribute to the urban fabric. Making efficient use of existing infrastructure networks, these flood-free areas provides excellent liveability with proximity to education, services, open spaces, nature connection and employment.

While not currently considered part of Lismore's urban fabric, Monaltrie has been identified as having possible for a long-term satellite suburb, with potential to support future residential and employment growth as Lismore moves beyond a population of 60,000.

Monaltrie provides an opportunity with potential access to flood-free and serviceable land but is not committed for development at this time. Some land within Monaltrie has been previously investigated by landowners, Council and the NSW Planning department and it is acknowledged that prior to any rezoning applications significant structure planning and controls will be required. Detailed structure planning based on considered economic assessment, infrastructure requirements, ecology and hazard assessments will be progressed to determine how much, if any, of the identified proposed area is developable. Until such time that Council completes this process, no rezoning applications will be accepted.

Strategic infrastructure investment – including road upgrades, trunk water and sewer capacity, and digital connectivity – will be planned and delivered in alignment with any future land release, ensuring that development proceeds in a coordinated, staged and cost-effective manner.

See appendix A, sites 1, 7, 8, 11and 16 to see land parcels supported for residential and or commercial rezonings in these areas.

Urban Fabric: Suburb Expansion and Infill (continued)

Villages

Lismore's villages form a diverse network of distinctive semi-rural/ semi-urban communities extending from Nimbin in the north to Wyrallah in the south. Villages include Bexhill, Caniaba, Clunes, The Channon and Dunoon and now Modanville and Eltham. Each village is shaped by its landscape setting, cultural history and community values, and performs a different role within the broader settlement pattern of Lismore.

These villages are embedded within productive rural landscapes and areas of high environmental value, with strong connections to agriculture, tourism and local enterprise. Their scale, character and social fabric distinguish them from urban neighbourhoods, and their strength lies in their individuality and diversity rather than uniformity or growth intensity. A key element within our rural lands, further information on the character of Lismore's villages is detailed within the Rural Land Use Strategy.

Maintaining clear distinctions between villages and urban areas is a defining consideration, ensuring that villages retain their unique character and do not evolve into homogenous urban replicas. Together, Lismore's villages contribute to the social, cultural and economic diversity of the City and remain an integral part of its regional identity.

Lismore's villages play a vital role in maintaining the city's identity and lifestyle diversity. Each village contributes uniquely to the regional economy and community fabric. Growth will be distributed across the following villages:

- Bexhill
- Caniaba
- Clunes
- Dunoon
- Eltham
- Modanville
- The Channon
- Wyrallah

Future master planning, in collaboration with the community, will preserve the character and amenity of these settlements while allowing limited, infrastructure-ready growth. Village master plans will commence in 2027.

See appendix A for further detail on the expected development and requirements across the villages.



Map 7 - Village Growth Distribution

Urban Fabric: Suburb Expansion and Infill (continued)

Rural Lands, Hamlets and alternative rural living

Lismore's rural lands form the foundation of the City's landscape character, cultural identity, alternative living and lifestyle options and our economy. Resources harnessed and products made in our rural lands sustains cities around the world. Stretching from the fertile floodplains of the Wilsons River and southern sugarcane lands to the elevated ridges and forested ranges, these lands support a diverse mosaic of productive agriculture, environmental stewardship, rural communities and emerging land-based enterprises. Rural lands are not simply a backdrop to urban growth; they are active, living landscapes requiring targeted investment, responsive planning controls and long-term stewardship as Lismore grows.

Lismore's rural landscape is characterised by a network of smaller hamlets distributed across the LGA, including Goolmangar, North Woodburn, Numulgi, Tregeagle and more. These communities are typically low-intensity, closely connected to surrounding agricultural land and natural landscapes, and defined by strong local identity and social cohesion. While smaller in scale than villages, they play an important role in supporting rural living, farming activity and community life.

Lismore's Rural Land Use Strategy steps out a new framework for rural land use zoning, including the introduction of an RU2 Rural Landscape zone, a pathway and criteria for enabling RU4 Primary Production Small Lots. The new framework enables place-based and capability-led residential growth, protecting high-value agricultural land, recognising environmental constraints and supporting land uses aligned with local character, infrastructure capacity and risk. In addition to an improved zoning rollout, the Rural Land Use Strategy introduces improved pathways for rural dwellings across all zones and modern approaches to rural Landsharing communities or eco-villages.

See the Rural Land Use Strategy for further detail.



Employment Lands Growth

Employment Land Demand and Projection

The Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) commissioned economic consultants Hill PDA to undertake an employment lands study for the Northern Rivers region in 2023. This audit represents the most up to date and comprehensive analysis of employment lands supply, demand and emerging trends across the region and recommends an additional 106 ha of new employment land be rezoned to meet anticipated demand across the region. On top of the regional HillPDA report, Council is aware that many existing businesses within flood prone areas of the LGA are seeking to relocate to higher ground and expand their businesses at the same time, therefore, requiring additional demand outside the scope of HillPDA's research.

Lismore is strategically located to be able to service the wider region with the proposed upgrade of the Bruxner Highway from Goonellabah to Wollongbar improving safety and travel times to the Pacific Highway and coastal areas as well as its significant connections inland to Casino and beyond.

On top of this previously identified regional need, this LSPS has investigated local employment lands demand and supply to ensure both the population and job targets are achievable. Employment land supply was derived from employment forecasts, with projected jobs across key industry sectors translated into indicative land requirements using typical employment density assumptions (jobs per hectare) and standard development yield allowances. To achieve the job target and meet the market demand, approximately 400 ha of gross employment land, 256 ha net, is required. Net developable land assumes that approximately 60% of gross employment land is available for development, allowing for roads, buffers, servicing constraints, flood mitigation works and other infrastructure requirements.

This job, and therefore land target, is essential for the overall achievement of Lismore's increased population target.

Indicative Employment Land Demand – Growth to 60,000

Time period	New Jobs	Gross employment land	Indicative net developable Land (60%)
Immediate	~3,000	~197 ha	~118 ha
Medium to Long term	~3,500	~230 ha	~138 ha
Total (to ~60,000)	~6,500	~427 ha	~256 ha

Employment Growth Distribution

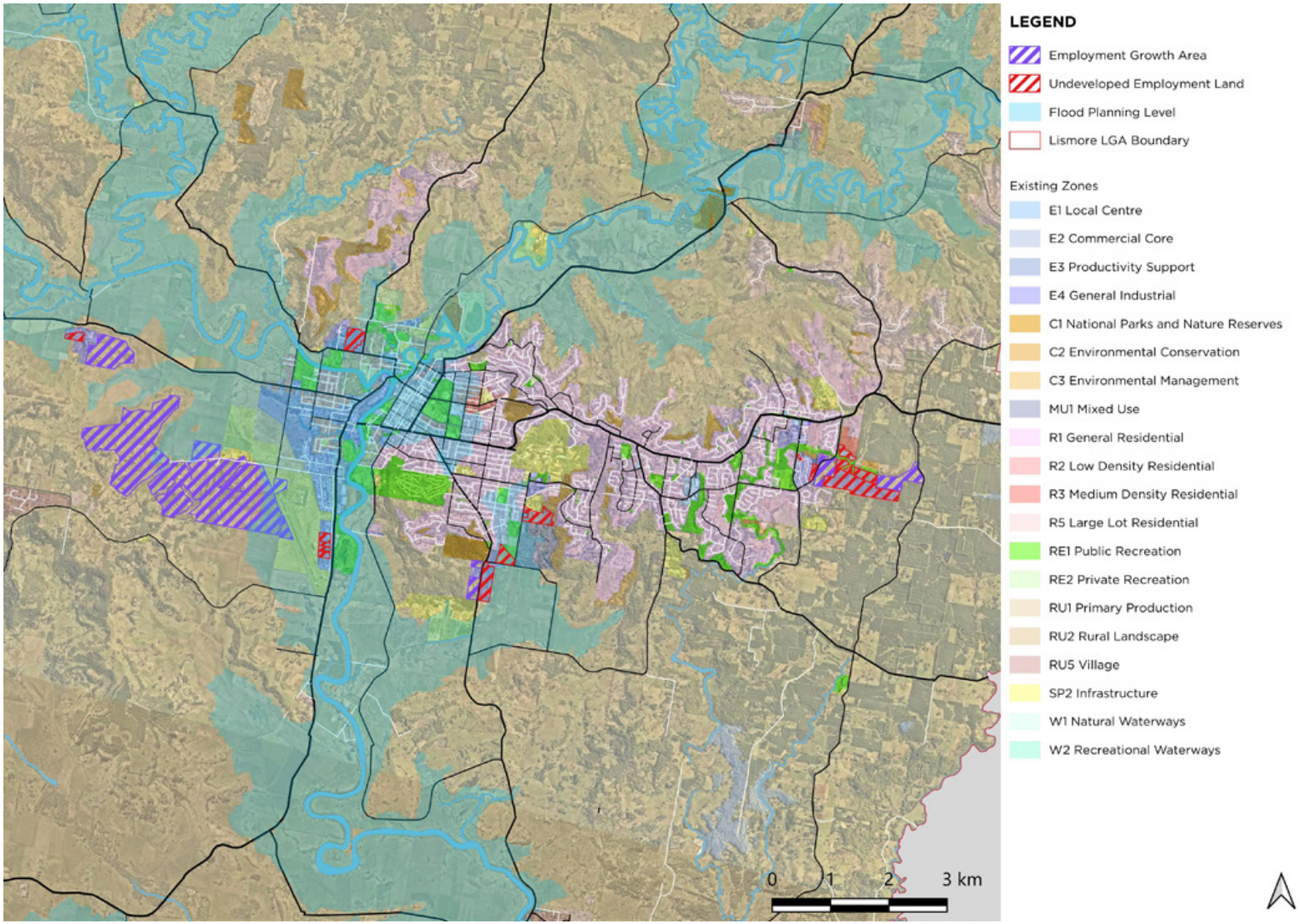
Greenfield employment land has been identified for employment lands within and around the periphery of Lismore's urban fabric and/or adjacent to existing industrial lands. Sites supported for future employment uses are listed within table x, with further detail provided within Appendix A. Collectively, these areas provide 328 gross hectares of employment land, representing ~80% of our identified need.

Table 2 - Land identified for future Employment zoning

Location	Area (ha)
Health Precinct (Site 10) Employment lands within and adjoining the Health Precinct are supported and enabled by mixed use development potential and flexible planning controls. These areas support health related, education, research and service-based employment that aligns with the established precinct pattern around the hospital and university facilities.	~17 ha
Goonellabah Infill (Site 15) Employment land integrated within the broader Goonellabah urban structure, consistent with the area's established light industrial and service-based land uses.	~11 ha
Ridgeview Heights (extension) (Site 12) A mixed-use precinct with potential to incorporate industrial and/or commercial employment land, consistent with the existing settlement pattern and urban expansion of Ridgeview Heights, a recently approved urban release area adjacent to this site.	~18 ha
South Lismore (Site 16) Land contiguous with the existing South Lismore industrial precinct, reflecting the established role of South Lismore as one of the city's longstanding employment locations.	~239 ha
Tuncester (Site 17) Further detailed analysis has identified new greenfield employment land at Tuncester, reflecting its existing industrial character, proximity to the rail corridor, and alignment with the settlement pattern west of Lismore. These sites complement South Lismore by providing additional industrial land within an established employment cluster.	~34 ha
Wyrallah Road (site 18) As included in Council's previous growth management strategies, the site is suitable for industrial zoning being adjacent to a Council depot.	~9 ha
Total	328 ha

The remaining 20%, 89 ha, of required employment land to achieve Lismore's job target is accommodated across lands already zoned. This land is shown at table 3.

Employment Growth Distribution (continued)



Map 8 - Future and current employment land

Employment Growth Distribution (continued)

Table 3 - Land rezoned, awaiting development.

Location	Zoning	Area (ha)	Comments
Goonellabah, Ridgeview Heights,1055 and 1055a Bruxner Highway	MU1 Mixed Use	~10 ha	Expected to deliver 105 commercial lots across the various zones. Zoning complete 2025 with progress underway for development
	E1 Local Centre	~4 ha	
	E4 General Industrial (Employment Growth)	~18 ha	
Goonellabah, 252 and 260 Oliver Avenue and 1 Slade Street	E4 General Industrial	~3 ha	Zoned and in public ownership, ready for development
North Lismore, land between Lake Street and Terania Street	E4 General Industrial	~15 ha	Subject to sufficient flood planning controls
South Lismore, Krauss Avenue	E3 Productivity Support	~5 ha	Raised, filled and subdivided and therefore ready for development with some sites already through the DA process.
Tuncester, Rifle Range Road	E4 General Industrial	~11 ha	Small amount of the existing zoned area is outside of flood risk but is subject to slope
Local Centres within residential development estates (Caniaba, North Lismore Plateau)	E1 Local Centres and RU5 Village	~8 ha	Subject to future DAs
Wyrallah Road corridor (232 and 246 Wyrallah Road)	E4 General Industry	~14 ha	The site at 246 Wyrallah Rd has been affected by landslips and other geotechnical issues. Significant work is required to make the site suitable for future industrial use
Total		**89 ha**	

Employment Growth Distribution (continued)

Two additional areas warranted longer-term consideration are:

- **Lindendale** (Site 19):
  Although included in prior investigations, this area is recognised primarily for its agricultural production function. Its long-term landuse considerations relate to agricultural productivity, rural enterprise, and value add potential rather than general employment land supply.
- **McLeans Ridges** (Site 20):
  Identified as a potential long-term employment investigation area (approx. 210ha) due to its location adjacent to the Bruxner Highway corridor and its flood-free topography. Any future activation of this land remains dependent on the TfNSW program for the Bruxner Highway upgrade, including proposed dual carriageway works and realignment.



Implementation

Planning Priorities and Actions

Lismore's Planning Priorities translate the vision of Lismore 60,000 into a clear, place-based framework for growth, resilience and investment.

They have been developed through evidence-based analysis, local data validation, and collaboration with key stakeholders across government, business and the community.

Strategic Directions	Planning Priorities	Turbocharger Projects
Sustainable Growth	• A.1 Coordinate Land Use to Guide Sustainable Growth to 60,000 and Beyond • A.2 Provide, Maintain and Enhance Essential Water, Sewer, Energy and Communications Services • A.3 Strengthen Regional Transport Links Connecting Lismore to Ballina, Casino and South-East QLD • A.4 Plan and Deliver a Connected Active Transport Network Linking Neighbourhoods, Education, Employment and Open Space Actions • A.5 Work in partnership with Lismore's First Nations Communities • A.6 Maintain Strong Partnerships with Neighbouring Councils, NSW Government Agencies and the Private Sector to Deliver Shared Outcomes	*#1 Catalyst Infrastructure* *#2 City of Resilience*
Economic Prosperity	• B.1 Strengthen Lismore's Role as the Health, Education and Service Hub of the Northern Rivers • B.2 Support Rural Enterprise, Emerging Agricultural Practices and Value-Added Agrifood Production • B.3 Strengthen Lismore's Manufacturing Industries and Support the growth of the Circular Economy • B.4 Foster, expand and enhance Lismore's Creative Industry • B.5 Increase Lismore's Visitor Experiences, Tourism Trail Networks and Large-Scale Recreational Opportunities	*#5 Health, Care & Wellbeing Precinct* *#6 Creative Industries and Cultural Hubs* *#7 Agri-Food Innovation* *#8 Circular Economy Innovation*

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

Strategic Directions	Planning Priorities	Turbocharger Projects
Thriving Communities	• C.1 Provide Safe, Diverse, Housing Options across Lismore to Meet Community Needs • C.2 Provide Public Places for Culture, Play and Connection • C.3 Strengthen the City Centre as the Civic and Cultural Heart through Mixed-Use Redevelopment, Activation and Placemaking • C.4 Protect scenic rural landscapes and maintain the identity and character of villages and rural communities.	*#4 CBD Renewal* *#6 Creative Industries and Cultural Hubs*
Resilient Environments	• D.1 Build a resilient infrastructure and built environment network that supports Lismore's future • D.2 Protect and Restore Rivers, Creeks and Riparian Corridors through Management and Revegetation • D.3 Conserve Biodiversity and Strengthen Green Corridors Linking the City to Regional Landscapes • D.4 Driving Risk Narratives/Improve understanding of climate and hazard risks to support local resilience, informed decision making and stronger advocacy for insurance affordability and reform.	*#2 City of Resilience* *#3 Healthy Waterways*

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

A. Sustainable Growth

Lismore will emerge as a confident and thriving regional capital of 60,000 people, shaped by coordinated land use and infrastructure, strong essential services, seamless transport connections, and well-connected places. Growth and change will be managed sustainably and with purpose, positioning Lismore as the principal growth centre for the Northern Rivers and a catalyst for a new era of shared prosperity across the region.

Planning Priority A.1 Coordinate Land Use to Guide Sustainable Growth to 60,000 and Beyond

Actions:

- **A1.1** Prioritise Goonellabah's Northern Ridges for development by waiving Council's Planning Proposal fee and preparing structure plans for Trinity Drive, Lagoons Grass and the Pineapple Road Extension growth areas.
- **A.1.2** Prepare a structure plan for the Monaltrie growth area to facilitate proponent led detailed site analysis and future master planning.
- **A.1.3** Prepare master plans for villages identified as areas supported for change in Appendix A, in accordance with the priority outlined within the Rural Land Use Strategy.
- **A.1.4** Prepare a master plan for the East Lismore infill area that identifies opportunities for flood free medium density development.
- **A.1.5** Regularly update and publish land supply mapping on the LCC website, detailing serviced land supply, approved subdivisions and areas where structure planning has been completed.
- **A.1.6** Amend the LEP to encourage the development of residential flat buildings and health related mixed-use development by rezoning and increasing building heights within the 'Health Precinct (as detailed in Appendix A). {T5}
- **A.1.7** Amend the DCP to provide a simplified and streamlined development assessment framework that provides certainty for low impact development and flexibility when considering creative design outcomes.
- **A.1.8** Integrate NSW Government's Connecting with Country principles into Council's built environment planning, infrastructure design and project delivery to ensure culturally informed and resilient places.
- **A.1.9** Review, update and publish the growth management component of this LSPS every four years.
- **A.1.10** Collaborate with infrastructure and utility stakeholders identified in the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to assess current and future power, water and transport servicing needs across the LGA, guiding upgrade priorities, critical dependencies and long-term capacity planning. (T1)

Planning Priority A.2 Provide, Maintain and Enhance Essential Water, Sewer, Energy and Communications Services

Actions:

- **A.2.1** Upgrade the East Lismore Sewage Treatment Plant to accommodate all development along the Southern Trunk Main. {T1}
- **A.2.2** Advocate for funding to deliver servicing infrastructure to growth areas identified in appendix A. {T1}
- **A.2.3** Provide updated land supply data to Essential Energy and NBN to ensure that future growth areas are appropriately serviced at the point of subdivision.
- **A.2.4** Update Councils Developer Contributions Plans to:
  - reflect the revised growth targets identified in this LSPS; and
  - waive developer contributions within the 'Health Precinct' (identified in Appendix A) to incentivise development of residential flat buildings over three storeys. {T5}
- **A.2.5** Investigate opportunities to deliver a pressurised water main from the Holland Street reservoir zone to the Hospital Precinct to reduce the need for boosting to higher storey development. {T1}
- **A.2.6** Collaborate with NBN Co for implementing broadband upgrades across the LGA

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

A. Sustainable Growth

Planning Priority A.3 Strengthen Regional Transport Links Connecting Lismore to Ballina, Casino and South-East QLD

Actions:

- **A.3.1** Advocate to TfNSW for realignment and duplication of the Bruxner Highway (Wollongbar to Goonellabah); Hollingworth Creek bridge improvement; intersection upgrades at Ballina Road and Invercauld road; and the removal of critical viaduct railway bridges. {T1}
- **A.3.2** Improve the accessibility of key freight roads such as Union Street. {T1}
- **A.3.3** Prepare and implement an Integrated Transport Plan in collaboration with TfNSW and neighbouring Councils to co-ordinate the delivery of essential road infrastructure and future proof existing connections.
- **A.3.4** Advocate for the finalisation and implementation of TfNSW's *Northern Rivers Integrated Service Plan.* {T1}

Planning Priority A.4 Plan and Deliver a Connected Active Transport Network Linking Neighbourhoods, Education, Employment and Open Space Actions:

Actions:

- **A.4.1** Deliver appropriate active transport infrastructure within future growth areas, provided in accordance with delivery expectations detailed in Appendix A.
- **A.4.2** Deliver missing walking, cycling and shared paths links within the active transport network, as identified within the Walking, Cycling and Micromobility Strategy.
- **A.4.3** Update the Walking, Cycling and Micromobility Strategy to connect key active transport networks identified within forthcoming Precinct Plans with nearby education and employment areas.
- **A.4.4** Deliver appropriate open space infrastructure within all new subdivisions, in accordance with the standards detailed within the Open Space Strategy.

Planning Priority A.5 Work in partnership with Lismore's First Nations Communities

Actions:

- **A.5.1** Collaborate with the Widjabul/ Wia-bal Prescribed Body Corporate to update cultural heritage mapping, appropriate for Council knowledge, to ensure Council planning staff have access to known and predicted cultural sites for use in determining Planning Proposals and Development Applications.
- **A.5.2** Establish a clear and agreed process for integrating First Nations cultural knowledge and perspectives across Council's planning functions to ensure placebased, culturally informed decisionmaking.
- **A.5.3** Formalise structured governance arrangements with First Nations organisations and knowledgeholders for key strategic decisions (including structure plans, major precincts, and corridor programs) to ensure culturally grounded approaches.

Planning Priority A.6 Maintain Strong Partnerships with Neighbouring Councils, NSW Government Agencies and the Private Sector to Deliver Shared Outcomes

Actions:

- **A.6.1** Participate in Northern Rivers Joint Organisation networks and forums
- **A.6.2** Pursue partnership-based delivery models with community housing providers, major employers, educational institutions and the private sector to accelerate housing, employment and infrastructure developments

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

B. Economic Prosperity

Lismore will be a connected and innovative regional capital with a diverse economy that supports the creation of at least 6,500 new jobs, with capacity for growth beyond, as the city moves toward a population of 60,000 and beyond. Our economy will be anchored in health, education, agribusiness and the creative industries, and strengthened by visitor experiences manufacturing and the circular economy that links local enterprise to national and global markets.

Planning Priority B.1 Strengthen Lismore's Role as the Health, Education and Service Hub of the Northern Rivers:

Actions:

- **B.1.1** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that address workforce shortage in key industries.
- **B.1.2** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy to prepare investment prospectus' for key industries and ancillary areas of opportunity.
- **B.1.3** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that position Lismore as a specialist regional service hub.
- **B.1.4** Update the Lismore DCP to ensure development standards for industrial uses are streamlined and deliver built form outcomes appropriate to Lismore's service centre identity.

Planning Priority B.2 Support Rural Enterprise, Emerging Agricultural Practices and Value-Added Agrifood Production

Actions:

- **B.2.1** Implement land use and zoning changes identified within the Rural Land Use Strategy that provide expanded opportunities for rural enterprise and A uses. {T7}
- **B.2.2** Implement land use and zoning changes identified within the Rural Land Use Strategy that support emerging agricultural practices, such as introducing the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone into the LEP and reviewing minimum lot sizes, to provide cost effective opportunities for small lot production and value adding industries. {T7}



Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

B. Economic Prosperity

- **B.2.3** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that support rural industries to position Lismore as a rural industries hub. {T7}

Planning Priority B.3 Strengthen Lismore's Manufacturing Industries and Support the growth of the Circular Economy

Actions:

- **B.3.1** Deliver flood free employment land, in accordance with Appendix A, to avoid future supply constraints of commercial and industrial land supply and ensure long-term economic resilience.
- **B.3.2** Review the Resource Recovery and Residual Waste Strategy to ensure that immediate actions prioritise growth of the circular economy. {T8}
- **B.3.3** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that support new circular economy businesses. {T8}

Planning Priority B.4 Foster, expand and enhance Lismore's Creative Industry

Actions:

- **B.4.1** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that considers planning and public realm options for activating creative and night-time activities. {T5}
- **B.4.2** Implement actions within the Events Strategy that expand Lismore's festivals and cultural programming. {T5}

Planning Priority B.5 Increase Lismore's Visitor Experiences, Tourism Trail Networks and Large-Scale Recreational Opportunities

Actions:

- **B.5.1** Provide for commercial and employment land that be utilised for visitor experiences within village growth areas (as identified in Appendix A) and along existing and planned trail route routes.
- **B.5.2** Identify and rezone land along existing and planned trail routes, in accordance with the framework outlined in the Rural Land Use Strategy, to facilitate the development of strategically important tourist corridors.
- **B.5.3** Implement actions within the Economic Development Strategy that support the local visitor economy.
- **B.5.4** Implement actions within the Destination Management Plan that encourage the activation of tourist related activities.
- **B.5.5** Deliver and activate the remainder of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

C. Thriving Communities

Lismore's centres, villages and neighbourhoods will be inclusive, resilient and well-connected places that support a growing and diverse community. As the city grows, we will deliver flood-free housing, and vibrant public spaces for continued social connection. The city centre will re-emerge as a thriving civic and cultural heart, while villages and rural communities retain their identity and character.

Planning Priority C.1 Provide Safe, Diverse, Housing Options across Lismore to Meet Community Needs

Actions:

- **C.1.1** Implement actions within the Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy that facilitate and deliver affordable and diverse housing for Lismore residents.
- **C.1.2** Investigate fit-for-purpose streamlined LEP pathways to fast-track the development of low impact residential dwellings.
- **C.1.3** Ensure that new growth areas are provided with an appropriate level of commercial floor space, in accordance with the delivery expectations detailed in each new growth area at appendix A, to provide long term viability for commercial businesses.
- **C.1.4** Investigate implementing incentives through Lismore's LEP and DCP, such as providing height limit bonuses, to encourage the uptake of neighbourhood shops in residential zones.

Planning Priority C.2 Provide Public Places for Culture, Play and Connection

Actions:

- **C.2.1** Implement actions within the Open Space Strategy, or any applicable master plan or place plan, prioritising upgrades to accessibility, shade, seating, play diversity and connected path networks across the LGA.
- **C.2.2** Implement actions within the Nimbin Place Plan to improve public realm and continue activating the village in collaboration with the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce
- **C.2.3** Collaborate with stakeholders to activate the CBD levee wall as a key public space with lighting, art, wayfinding and trail connections to the CBD, rail trail and riverfront, consistent with Open Spaces Strategy directions for connectivity, river corridor enhancement and city centre activation. {T4}
- **C.2.4** Review the Bridge to Bridge Master Plan and implement relevant actions, in accordance with the outcomes of the Lismore Central Precinct Plan precinct plan. {T4}
- **C.2.5** Integrate locally relevant urban art and provide platforms for cultural expression within key public spaces.
- **C.2.6** Implement actions with the Open Space Strategy, or any relevant village master plan or place plan to apply placeled approaches to activate parks and public spaces through events, popups, markets, community gardens, performances and temporary interventions.
- **C.2.7** Implement actions within the Biodiversity Management Strategy that enhance public spaces through green infrastructure, including climate-resilient landscaping, increased tree canopies, increased corridor plantings and water-sensitive design.

Planning Priority C.3 Strengthen the City Centre as the Civic and Cultural Heart through Mixed-Use Redevelopment, Activation and Placemaking

Actions:

- **C.3.1** Finalise and implement the Future Use of the Buyback Lands Precinct Plan in collaboration with the NSW Reconstruction Authority. {T4}
- **C.3.2** Upon finalisation of the Lismore Central Future Lands Precinct Plan, amend:
  - relevant council strategies such as the Walking, Cycling and Micromobility Strategy and the Lismore Strategic Road Review; and
  - undertake actions that support the Lismore Central Precinct Plan, such as amending the LEP and DCP or waiving developer contributions, to encourage mixed use redevelopment and placemaking within the city centre. {T4}

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

C. Thriving Communities

- **C.3.3** Amend Lismore's LEP and DCP to allow activation of the footpath by CBD businesses, consistent with the parameters undertaken during the Footpath Trading Trial 2025. {T4}
- **C.3.4** Develop a Street Tree Planting Guideline for the City Centre that prioritises species that provide shade and bright coloured flowering to guide wayfinding, contribute to placemaking and increase the amenity of the public realm. {T4}
- **C.3.5** Deliver the Lismore Business Activation Plan in partnership with Business Lismore to re-invigorate and grow CBD businesses. {T4}

Planning Priority C.4 Protect scenic rural landscapes and maintain the identity and character of villages and rural communities.

Actions:

- **C.4.1** Implement land use zoning changes within the Rural Land Use Strategy that prioritise and protect areas with high scenic amenity.
- **C.4.2** Embed local character considerations within the master planning process for each village, as detailed within the Rural Land Use Strategy, and convert built form character principles into village specific DCP provisions to guide future development.
- **C.4.3** Identify suitable locations for alternative rural living models, in accordance with the framework set out in the Rural Land Use Strategy, and implement LEP and DCP controls that allow new developments to obtain community title.
- **C.4.4** Implement LEP and DCP amendments that facilitate housing options for generational change on rural properties, in accordance with the direction established in the Rural Land Use Strategy.



Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

D. Resilient Environments

Lismore will protect its rivers, floodplains, farmland and biodiversity while leading climate-ready growth. Through risk-informed land use planning, nature-based solutions and resilient infrastructure, we will adapt to natural hazards and climate change, care for Country, and strengthen long-term environmental and community resilience.

Planning Priority D.1 Build a resilient infrastructure and built environment network that supports Lismore's future

Actions:

- **D.1.1** Advocate for the funding to deliver CSIRO's flood mitigation measures, pending their June 2026 modelling report
- **D.1.2** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that guide Council's operational functions and use outcomes to inform capital works projects
- **D1.3** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to obtain data informed spatial mapping and studies on urban heat, rural flood risk, overland flow and landslip and slope stability, to inform climate resilient built environment policy development
- **D1.4** Integrate Build Back Better principles to inform rebuilding decisions and deliver resilient infrastructure {T1}

Planning Priority D.2 Protect and Restore Rivers, Creeks and Riparian Corridors through Management and Revegetation

Actions:

- **D2.1** Support a catchment-scale flood management approach for the Richmond River with regional partners {T1,T2}
- **D.2.2** Codesign riparian restoration and access projects with First Nations organisations, integrating cultural values and Caring for Country practices.
- **D.2.3** Implement actions within the Biodiversity Management Strategy that prioritise and protect riparian corridors along waterways, continue mapping riparian works to identify gaps and priority locations for future works (T3)
- **D.2.4** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that strengthen LEP and DCP provisions for water sensitive urban design, and protection of waterways and their corridors.
- **D.2.5** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that prioritise the development of cofunded systems and partnerships for water quality monitoring programs
- **D.2.6** Partner with research institutions, local innovators and community groups to expand citizen science programs and local monitoring of climate impacts, waterways, vegetation and wildlife

Planning Priority D.3 Conserve Biodiversity and Strengthen Green Corridors Linking the City to Regional Landscapes

Actions:

- **D.3.1** Implement actions within the Biodiversity Management Strategy that will prepare LGA wide vegetation mapping to establish a biodiversity corridor overlay to protect key ecological linkages (including koala movement) (T4)
- **D.3.2** Implement LEP and DCP actions that give effect to revised vegetation mapping (D.3.1), embedding fauna sensitive design, climate resilient native landscaping and controls that avoid and mitigate impacts on high conservation value vegetation (T4)
- **D.3.3** Implement actions within the Biodiversity Management Strategy to develop a local offsets and stewardship framework that directs offsets to mapped priority corridors and Councilidentified lands, maintains a public register and secures longterm management outcomes
- **D.3.4** Implement actions from the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to ensure natural hazard and climate data are consistently reviewed and updated

Planning Priorities and Actions (continued)

D. Resilient Environments

- **D.3.5** Implement the Urban Green Corridors Plan to connect urban areas to regional bushland and riparian systems, using heat and droughtresilient native planting to close gaps in the corridor
- **D.3.6** Investigate opportunities to connect urban and rural green corridor through village master plans and precinct plans
- **D3.7** Deliver the Rural Landholder Initiative actions within the Biodiversity Management Strategy programs, leveraging Landcare networks, extension services, education and grants to strengthen rural land management, regenerative agriculture, biodiversity stewardship and climate-adapted practices.

Planning Priority D.4 Improve understanding of climate and hazard risks to support local resilience, informed decisionmaking and stronger advocacy for insurance affordability and reform.

Actions:

- **D.4.1** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that will create a public, mapbased platform that integrates flood, coastal, bush fire, land slip and urbanheat risk layers; restoration progress; corridor connectivity; and community vulnerability indicators, to support transparent decisions and advocacy.
- **D.4.2** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that deliver annually an allhazards public risk awareness and preparedness program, using clear, accessible information and practical guidance (T2)
- **D.4.3** Advocate to and seek opportunities to engage with insurers, banks and State and Federal governments for recovery & insurance reform that recognises local risk mitigation; pilot datasharing and resilient design pathways that derisk properties and precincts. (T2)
- **D.4.4** Position Lismore as a national and global leader in floodresilient design, community recovery, hazard adaptation and naturebased solutions by partnering with universities, research agencies, community groups and industry to develop demonstration projects, training programs and shared learning initiatives. (T2)
- **D.4.5** Promote Lismore as a KoalaFriendly City by integrating habitat and corridor priorities from the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management into public risk narratives and community education to highlight the role of healthy ecosystems in strengthening climate resilience. (T4)
- **D.4.6** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy that will lead to collaborations with regulators and industry to improve understanding of and access to secure water resources for rural communities
- **D4.7** Implement actions within the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to partner with remote an/or hazard-affected communities to develop resilience plans, hazard education, emergency preparedness resources and communitycentred adaptation strategies that address heat, flood, fire and isolationrelated risks
- **D.4.8** Collaborate with local businesses and industry groups to deliver education, tools and support for adapting operations to heat, flood and fire risks, including supply chain resilience, business continuity planning, circular economy opportunities and uptake of lowrisk development pathways.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The Lismore LSPS is a living strategy that must respond to change in the environment, economy, policy and community expectations. Regular monitoring, reviewing and transparent reporting are critical to ensure the LSPS remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the aspirations of Council and the community.

Progress will be measured against the baseline provided in Appendix B every four years. Reporting against delivery of actions and any associated qualitative data will be provided annually through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R).

Council will formally review the LSPS every 5 years, after a baseline monitoring review, or more frequently if required by legislative or contextual changes, including major natural disasters, regional policy shifts, or infrastructure funding commitments.

Reviews will:

- Engage the community and stakeholders to ensure the LSPS reflects shared priorities
- Evaluate the effectiveness of implemented actions and planning controls
- Respond to updated data, evidence and government policies
- Inform amendments to the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP)

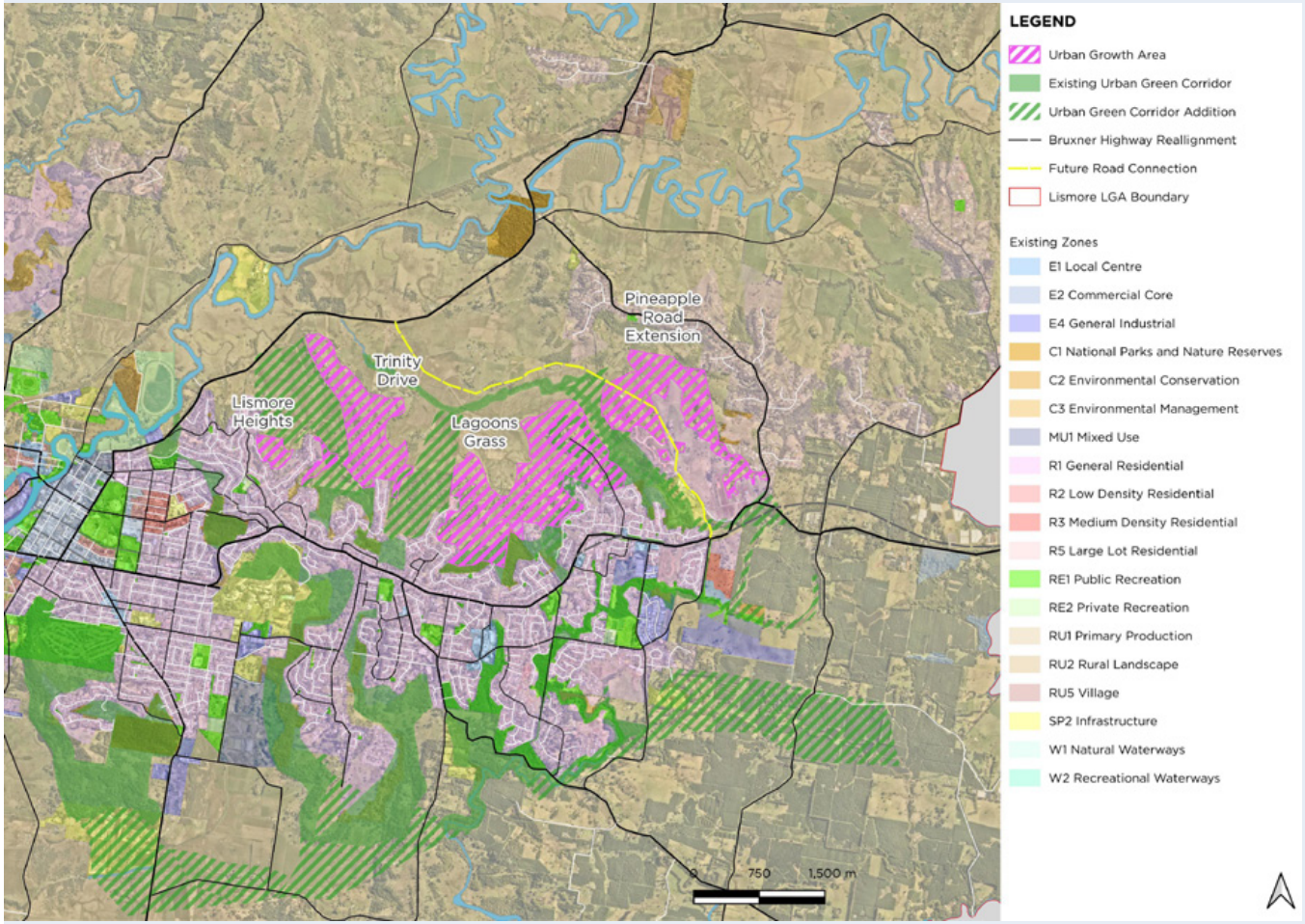
Where necessary, Council will prepare interim LSPS Addenda to respond to urgent issues or opportunities between formal review cycles.

This approach ensures the LSPS remains a forward-looking, enabling document that drives sustainable growth, resilience and innovation for the people of Lismore.

Appendix A – Areas Supported for Change

Residential and Mixed Use

Goonellabah's Northern Ridges



Residential and Mixed Use

1. Priority area: Goonellabah's Northern Ridges

Context: Goonellabah's Northern Ridges is made up of consecutive greenfield sites including; Pineapple Road Extension; Lagoons Grass; Trinity Drive; and Lismore Heights Extension.

The Northern Ridges of Goonellabah offer significant and beautiful vistas
to the north, with rolling hills meaning lot sizes will vary in response. On the fringe of our existing urban areas, these areas offer easy connectivity into existing infrastructure and road layouts.

Most of these sites have been identified in Council's previous growth management strategies. Recognising the significant existing infrastructure and urban footprint in this area additional land has been identified as suitable for short term growth in this area. With this iteration, the scale of lagoons grass has been amended to remove areas subject to the PMF



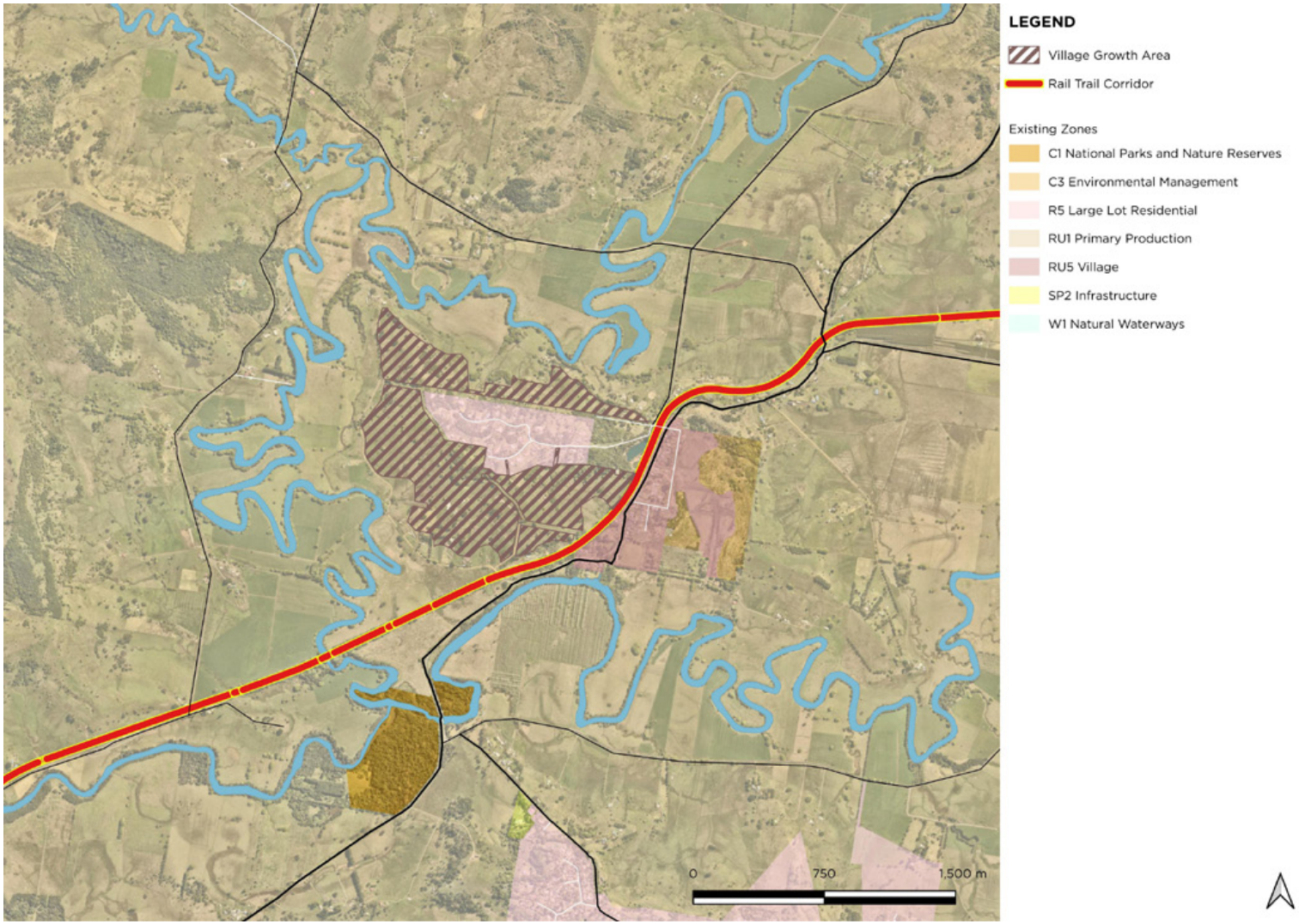
1. Priority area: Goonellabah's Northern Ridges (continued)

Table 4 – Northern Ridges Development Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	370 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	1,665 homes
Suitable housing typology	Compact neighbourhoods, larger lots in areas of significant slope, reflecting existing development and housing patterns in the vicinity. Premium large lot housing expected at the eastern end within the Pineapple Road Extension, complimenting the natural constraints and offering a much-needed housing product within the LGA.
Commercial centre	Not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible. No impediment.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Northern Bypass Link, as conceptually designed and supported by the LCC Strategic Road Review Improving existing intersections onto Ballina Road Internal roads subject to structure planning
Open Space	To be delivered at DA stage in accordance with Council's DCP
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Urban Green Corridor to be avoided by development footprint Additional needs to be determined at Planning Proposal and DA stages
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Some areas of Regionally Significant farmland mapped

Residential and Mixed Use (continued)

2. Bexhill



2. Bexhill

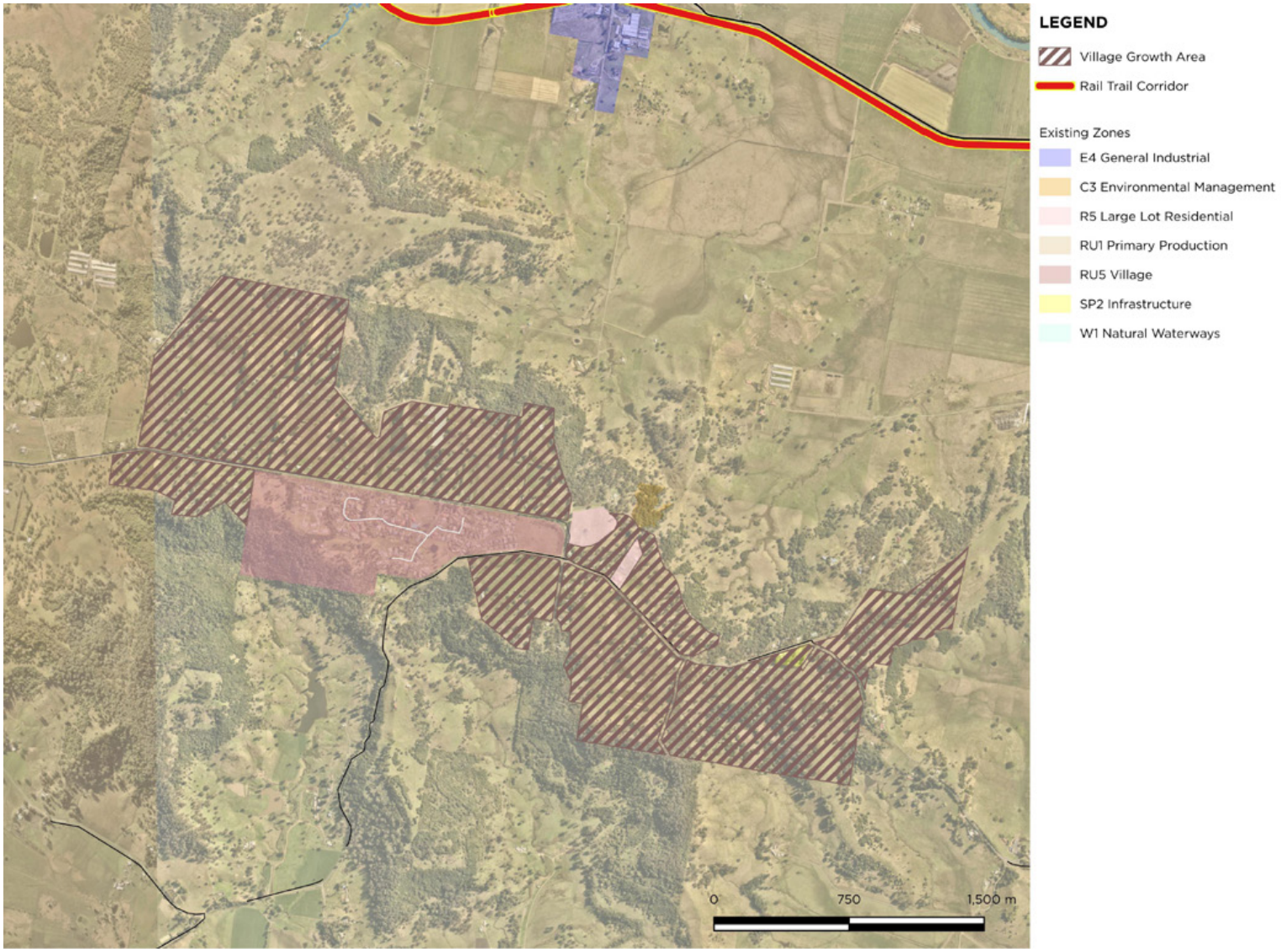
Context: Bexhill's location 8.5km from the Lismore CBD and has a population of 523 people, including the surrounding area. The provision of a school, shops, sporting facilities, community hall together with natural assets and future tourism developments such as the Northern Rivers Rail Trail provide for a high-quality village lifestyle. The village is largely situated uphill along Bangalow Road, providing easy access into Lismore and east towards the coast. Areas being considered for future rezoning are flood-free and outside Lismore's PMF. Without sewer, residents live on large lots.

Land at Bexhill has previously been included in Council's growth management strategies. This LSPS includes more land than previously considered and will be guided by a master planning process.

Table 5 - Bexhill Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	90 ha
Supported for change to	Residential with small components of compatible land-uses such as agri-tourism, community uses and/or accommodation
Expected residential yield	100 homes
Suitable housing typology	Larger lots to accommodate on-site septic systems and reflect existing village character
Commercial centre	Not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection of development to LCC existing water supply not feasible. Water supply currently provided by Rous County Council (RCC).
Wastewater	Development of this scale would necessitate the provision of a new sewage scheme and wastewater treatment plant. In addition to extensive investigation, this would require financial modelling of resulting impacts on user charges and development contributions.
T**elecommunications**	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Road requirements to be determined via Master Planning process, including collaboration with Transport for NSW who are the responsible for authority for Bangalow Road.
Open Space	To be determined via Master Planning process
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Requirements to be determined at rezoning stage. Landowners to submit sufficient studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site.
Important Farmland	Regionally significant, currently used for light grazing only.

3. Caniaba


LEGEND
Village Growth Area
Rail Trail Corridor
Existing Zones
E4 General Industrial
C3 Environmental Management
R5 Large Lot Residential
RU1 Primary Production
RU5 Village
SP2 Infrastructure
W1 Natural Waterways
0
750
1,500 m

3. Caniaba

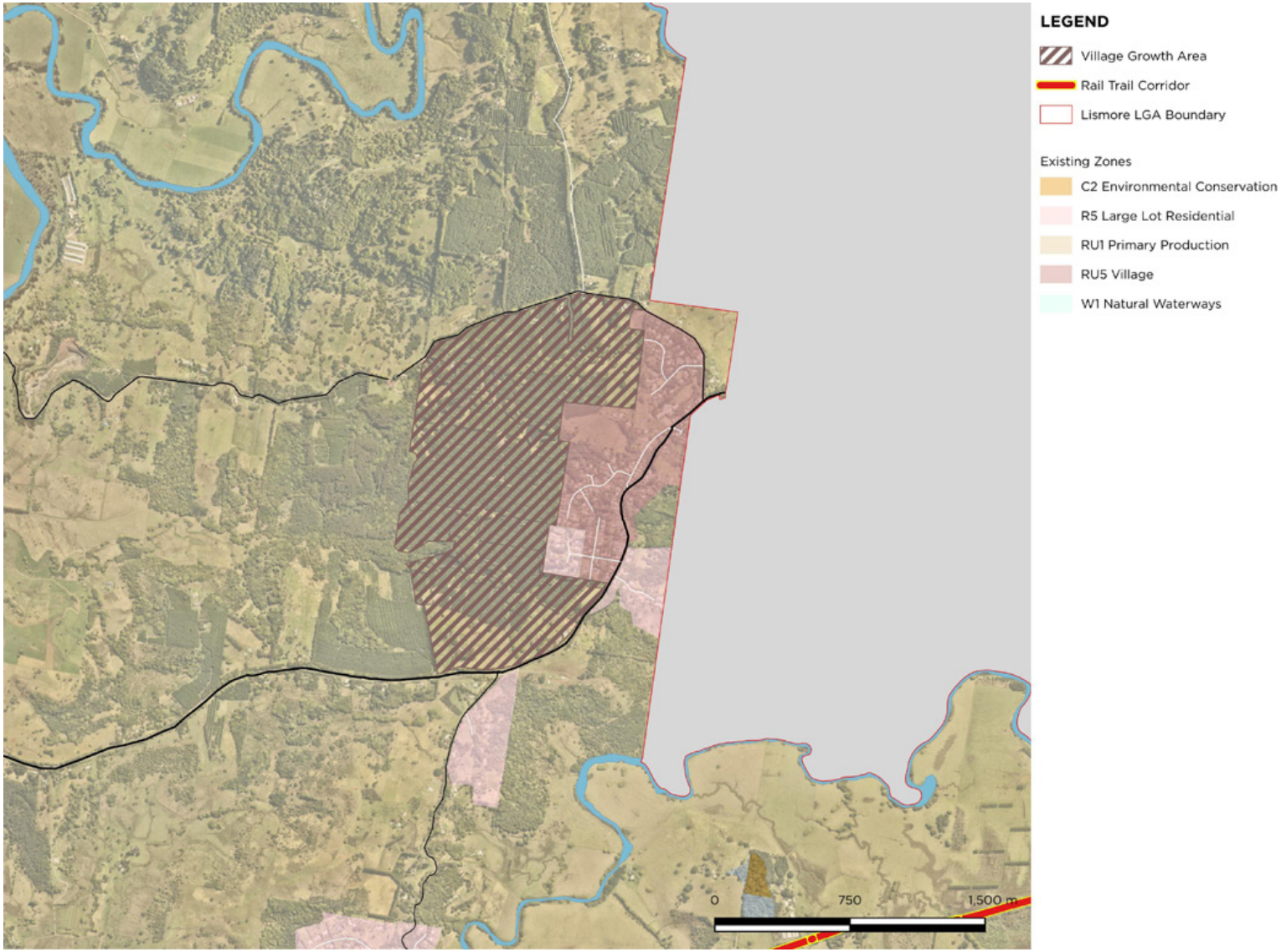
Context: Caniaba is an elevated, flood-free village located south-west of the Lismore CBD, offering great liveability and access to services. The village is home to 430 residents and has connected water, sewage, sport and recreation facilities including a community hall and a school just outside the village centre. Currently, Caniaba is made up of one recently developed estate 'Perradenya' that has been delivered across the last 28 years. Although not finished, recent stages have argued that the proposed commercial and community uses originally promised to be built within the estate are not viable.

Lismore City Council considered including land to the north of Perridenya in the 2022 Growth and Realignment Strategy but ultimately decided against it. Using community feedback from the consultation that took place in 2022, growth here is proposed to mimic the footprint and character of Perridenya, in terms of lot size, housing typologies and road layout. It is expected that the additional growth will make the provision and operation of commercial and community uses viable.

Table 6 - Caniaba Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	350 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	700 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing Perridenya Estate across the road
Commercial centre	Not required, planned for within Perridenya
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure feasible though would be dependent on additional infrastructure to make this connection. Assessment of impact of additional load on existing infrastructure would be required.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Assessment on the capacity of Caniaba Road in its current form would need to be undertaken. The required internal and connecting road requirements will need be master planned as part of any Planning Proposal submitted to Council for review
Open Space	Not required but safe and pedestrian friendly connections into the recreational facilities at Perridenya are required.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Requirements to be determined at rezoning stage. Landowners to submit sufficient studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Regionally significant. Currently used for only minor agricultural uses with no significant crops or production.

4. Clunes


LEGEND
Village Growth Area
Rail Trail Corridor
Lismore LGA Boundary
Existing Zones
C2 Environmental Conservation
R5 Large Lot Residential
RU1 Primary Production
RU5 Village
W1 Natural Waterways
0
750
1,500 m

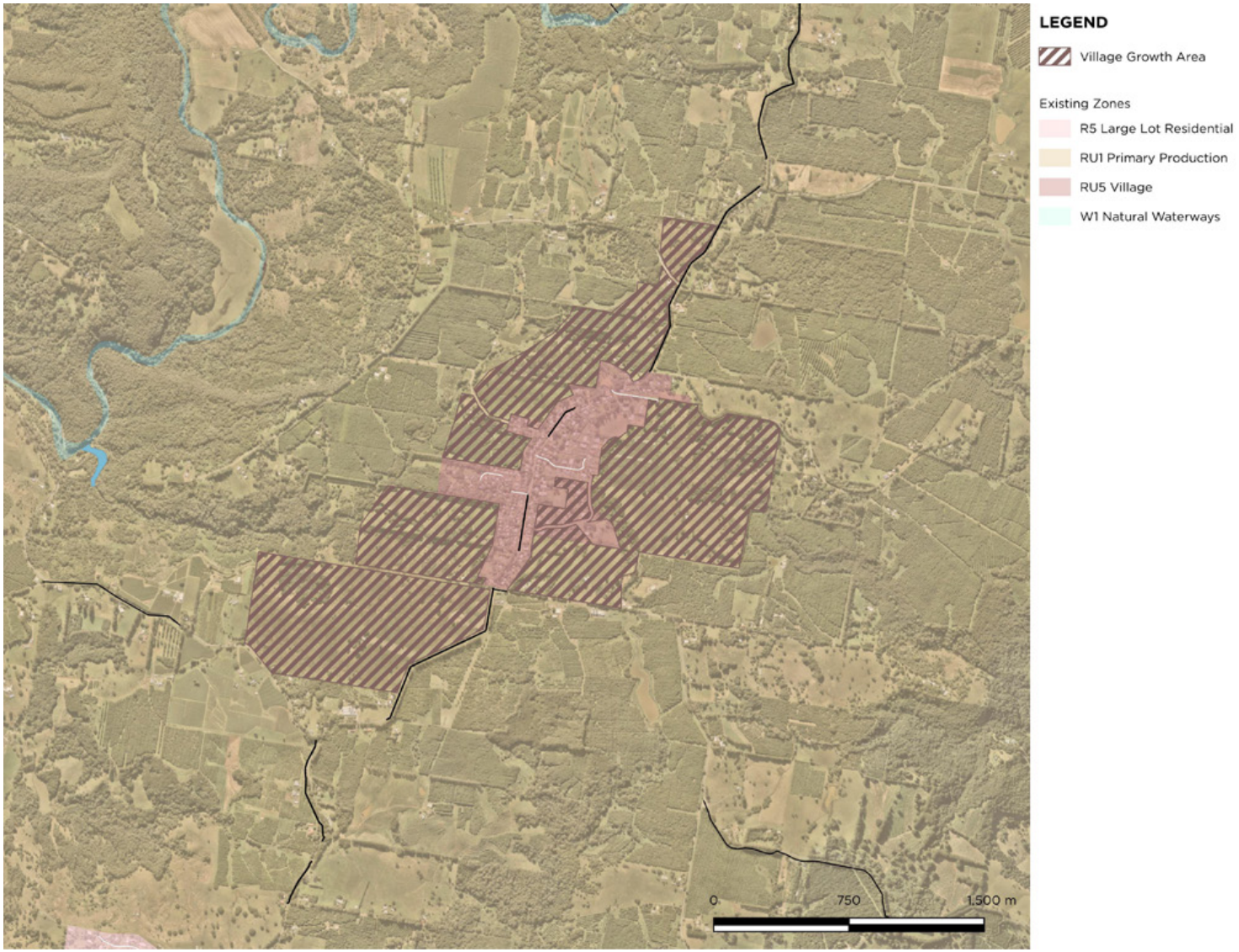
4. Clunes

Context: Clunes has recently undergone a comprehensive masterplanning process with strong community input, resulting in a long-term framework to guide low impact growth while preserving its distinct village character. The adopted Master Plan is anchored by five key moves: supporting diverse housing options through RU5 Village and R5 Large Lot Residential zones supported by a site-specific Development Control; protecting and enhancing natural assets via an Urban Green Corridor and C2 Environmental Zones; improving safety and amenity along the main road through traffic calming and enhanced pedestrian connections; upgrading public facilities and fostering community initiatives that reinforce village character and sustainability; and establishing long-term western connectivity through a mixed modal spine linking existing clusters and future growth areas. Together, these actions ensure Clunes evolves as a connected rural village cluster, balancing growth with environmental stewardship and community values. Council notes that this Master Plan has now been adopted and will guide any development in and around Clunes; accordingly, all future planning proposals and development assessments must consider and align with its strategic directions and built form outcomes.

Table 7 –Clunes Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	180 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	200 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing village. Preferred zoning is R5 and RU5 as per indicated within the Master Plan
Commercial centre	Not required, any further commercial areas must align with the adopted Master Plan
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Landowners will be required to consider upgrades to the existing water reservoir during any rezoning stage. During interruptions to the regional water supply, the existing Clunes reservoir has insufficient elevation to provide adequate service pressure to the higher parts of the village.
Wastewater	Council will not be providing sewer services to Clunes, as per the adopted Clunes Master Plan. Any rezoning application must demonstrate compliance with on-site septic system compliance or provide a site-specific community title sewer treatment facility.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	A local connector road through the identified growth area is required as per the indicated locations in the Master Plan
Open Space	A preferred location has been identified within the Master Plan.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints and Opportunities	
Biodiversity	A green corridor has been identified in the Clunes Master Plan, any rezoning application must demonstrate that this corridor has been avoided.
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the development site
Important Farmland	Regionally Significant

5. Dunoon


LEGEND
Village Growth Area
Existing Zones
R5 Large Lot Residential
RU1 Primary Production
RU5 Village
W1 Natural Waterways
0
750
1,500 m

5. Dunoon

Context: Dunoon is 17 kilometres north of Lismore, just north of Modanville, and has a population of 510 people, and services another 750 people in surrounding areas.

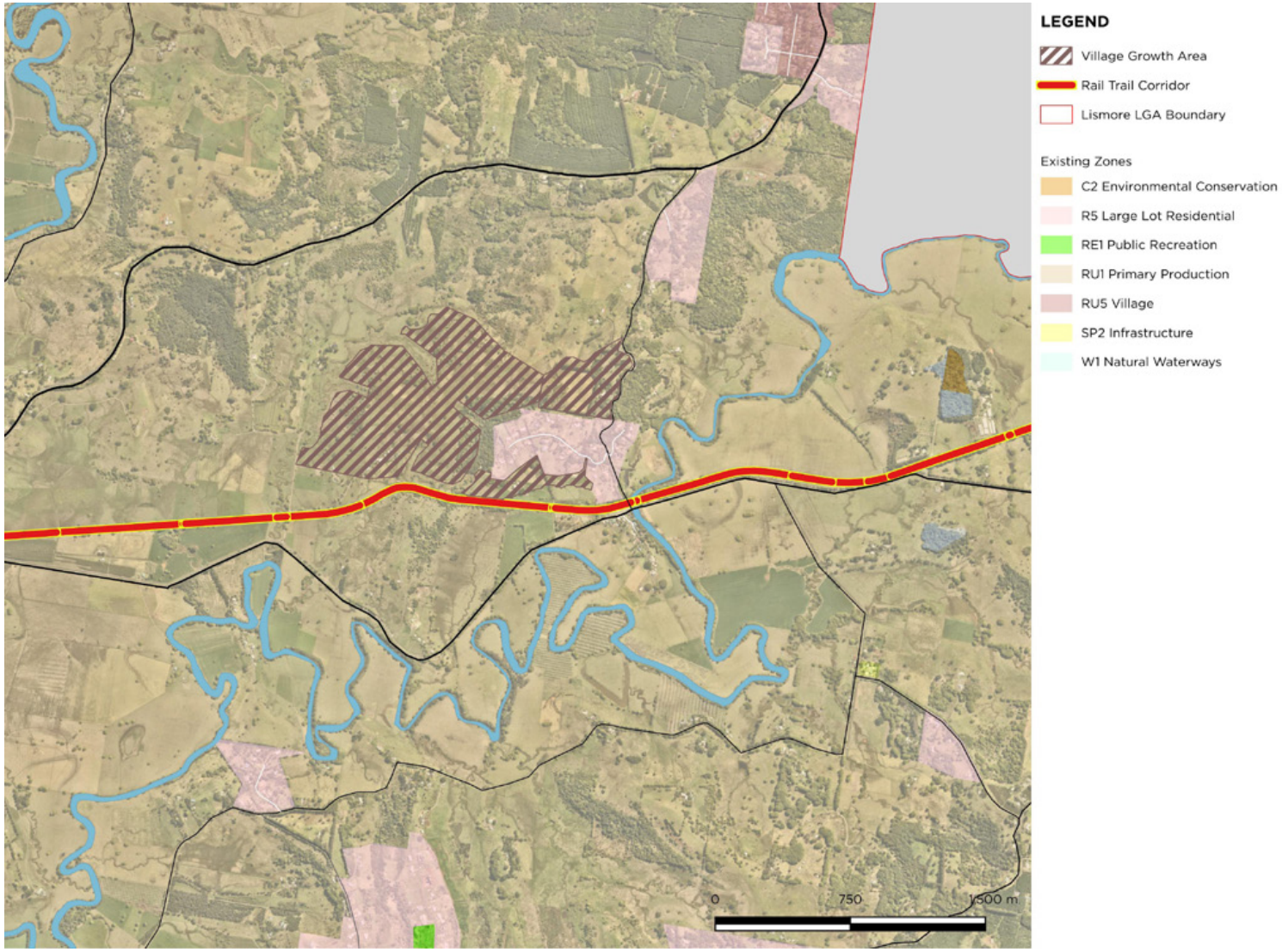
Dunoon and its community have strong village characteristics. The village benefits from a primary school, a community hall, a sports club with a diversity of offerings and events, a general store, a doctor and recreational facilities. These offerings service the village community itself but also the surrounding rural residents. Dunoon and its surrounding areas have a long tradition of macadamia nut production, processing and marketing and with surrounding productive farms producing macadamias, fruit, coffee and cattle grazing.

Future expansion will be guided by a Village Master Plan and will consider the provision adequate buffers for the surrounding agricultural production areas and nut processing facility as well as other impacting factors such as the road network and capacity, village character and more.

Table 8 - Dunoon Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	260 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	300 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing village
Commercial centre	Not required, development must provide safe and suitable access into the existing village services
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	Any rezoning applications must demonstrate compliance with on-site septic system requirements.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	A local road network throughout the identified growth area is required and should be identified in the Master Plan. It would be ideal that any new road connections into Dunoon Road be located North and South of the existing Dunoon Village area.
Open Space	Subject to Master Plan
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Regionally significant with varied levels of agricultural production being undertaken. Majority of the growth area is used for light grazing only.

6. Eltham


LEGEND
Village Growth Area
Rail Trail Corridor
Lismore LGA Boundary
Existing Zones
C2 Environmental Conservation
R5 Large Lot Residential
RE1 Public Recreation
RU1 Primary Production
RU5 Village
SP2 Infrastructure
W1 Natural Waterways
0
750
1,500 m

6. Eltham

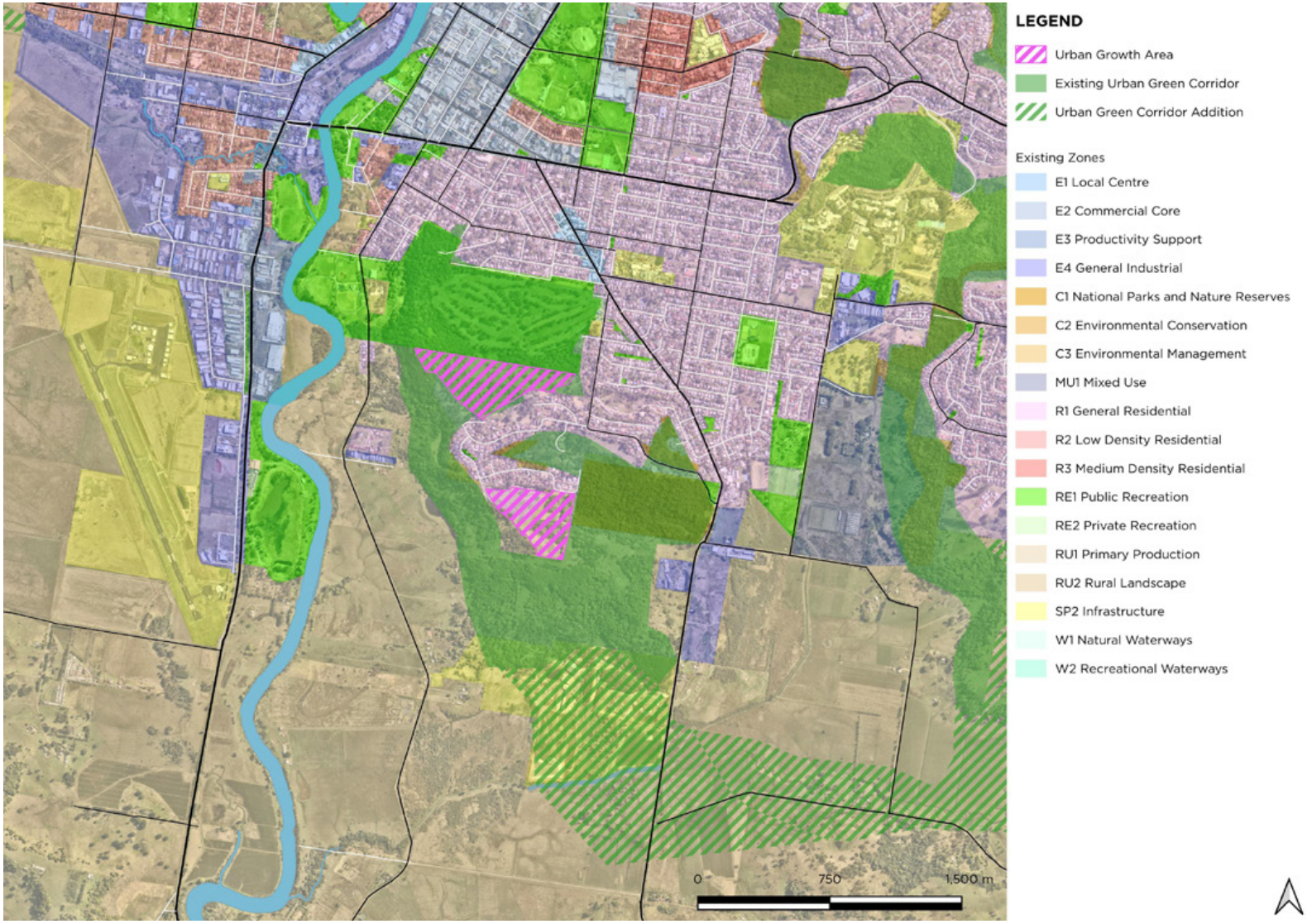
Context Eltham is located in a scenic valley 16km north east of Lismore and has a population of 337 people. This historic village includes a classic and well-known country hotel that hosts live entertainment and provides food and accommodation. Next door is a gallery in a vintage building. Along with recreational facilities, these provide a strong anchor for the village and the opportunities that are soon to come with the development of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail and the expansion of their residential community. The rail-trail extension provides opportunities for future tourism and commercial growth in the village.

Growth will be guided by a Village Master Plan that takes into consideration flood risk, tourism opportunities, agricultural production, the road network and capacity and more.

Table 9 - Eltham Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	98 ha
Supported for change to	Residential with small components of compatible land-uses such as agri-tourism, recreation and/or accommodation
Expected residential yield	118 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern of the existing village
Commercial centre	Can be supported but not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure not readily achievable. Extension of the Clunes water supply could possibly be achieved at significant cost and may also require augmentation of the regional water supply operated by Rous County Council (RCC). Given relatively low yield, related costs may not be warranted.
Wastewater	Any rezoning applications must demonstrate compliance with on-site septic system requirements.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Area should have a new intersection onto Eltham Road with a collector road servicing the growth area, subject to Master Planning. Would be beneficial to limit road connection to the existing Eltham residential area.
Open Space	Subject to Master Plan
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Regionally Significant

7. Golf Club South and Wanda Drive



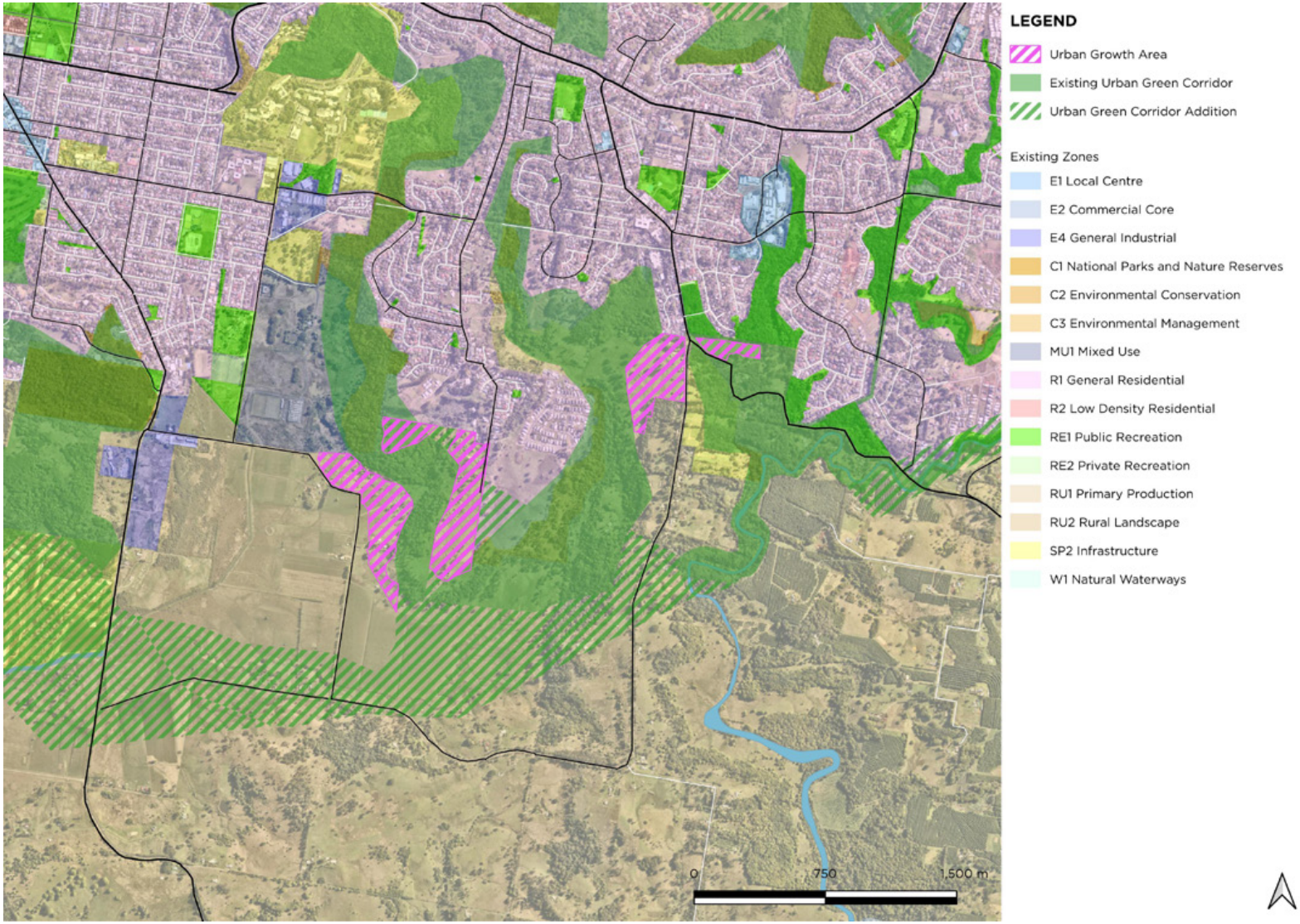
7. Golf Club South and Wanda Drive

Context: These small infill sites offer great opportunity being within Lismore's urban fabric and infrastructure servicing. These sites have been identified previously in Council's growth management strategies.

Table 10 - Golf Club South and Wanda Drive Development Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	28 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	280 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the neighbouring estate
Commercial centre	Not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible. Some sections of Wanda Drive may require pressure sewer.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Golf Club South – Growth area should include a connection road from East Lismore to Keen Street. Wanda Drive – Growth area should include a connection road from Wanda Drive to Wyrallah Road.
Open Space	Not required, connection to existing open space provision is required.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to Councils waste facility and sewage treatment plant to the south
Important Farmland	None

8. Goonellabah Infill



8. Goonellabah Infill

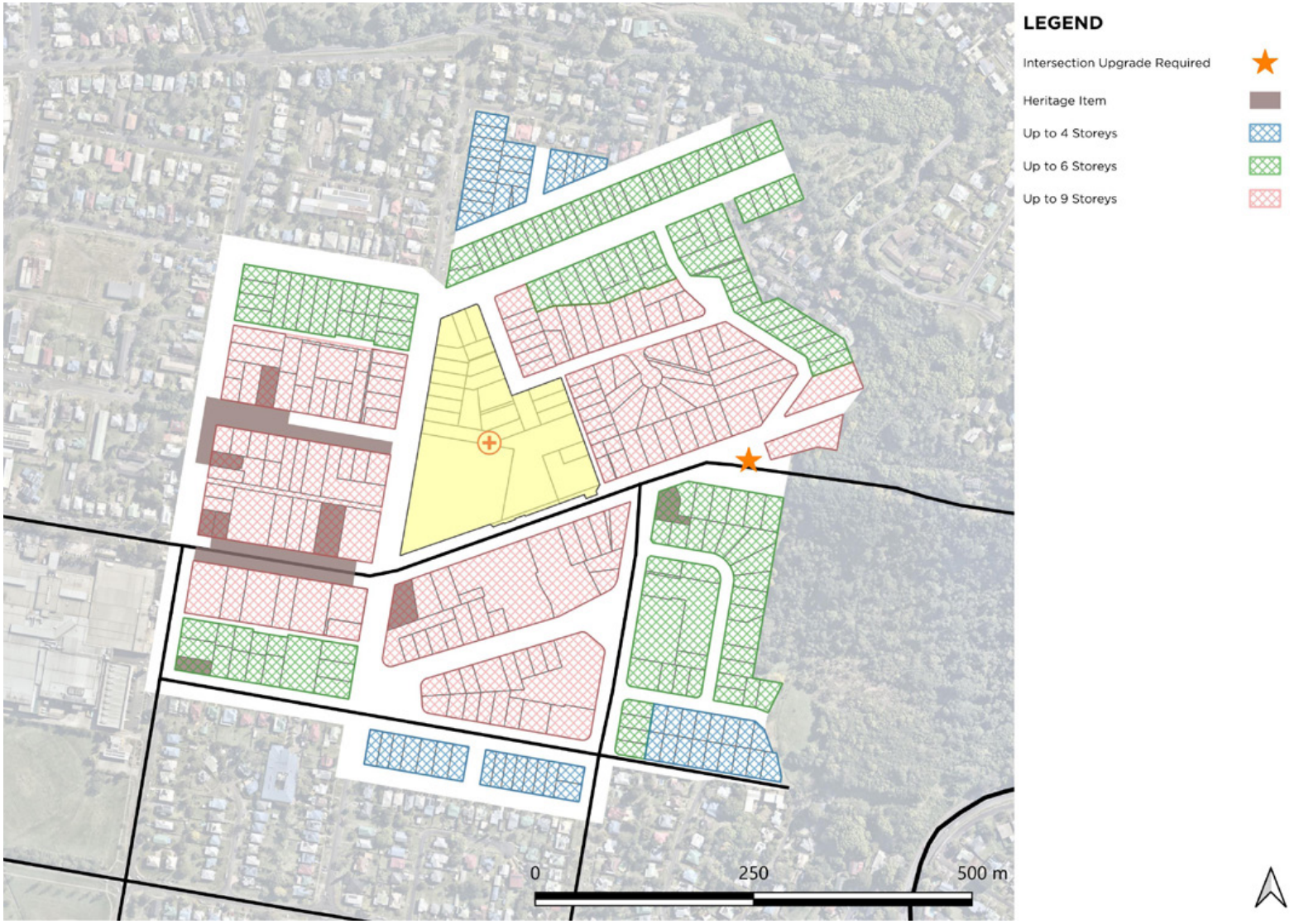
Context: The 'Health Precinct' located around Lismore Base Hospital is an area of approximately 17 ha that provides opportunities for infill housing and additional health related services close to the City. Enjoying elevated views to the City Centre and out to North Lismore Plateau, as well as being a short walk away from Lismore Square, the Health Precinct is the premier urban redevelopment area in Lismore.

The LSPS intends to provide more flexibility in implementation and encourage development in this area by amending the height controls within the Health Precinct (as identified in Figure X). Guided by a precinct specific DCP, there are opportunities for all scales of development, ranging from one off residential buildings to multi lot mixed use development. Some areas within the precinct may require amalgamation of multiple sites either to achieve financial viability, or to allow for the provision of road infrastructure.

Table 11 – Goonellabah Infill Development Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	60ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	600 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the neighbouring vicinities
Commercial centre	Neighbourhood centre supported but not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible. Strategies in place to accommodate additional load. No impediment.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Crawford Road, Evergreen Drive and Eastwood – A connection road from these developments to Skyline Road would need to be investigated. These areas need a secondary access location and traffic modelling suggests that South and West are not desirable. Chilcotts Grass, Rous Road, Skyline Road – Internal road networks to be consistent with surrounding areas.
Open Space	Not required, connections to existing open space provision is required
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must consider and avoid the Urban Green Corridor
Buffers	Required within development sites to provide buffers between residents and any neighbouring rural land.
Important Farmland	None

9. Health Precinct Mixed Use Infill



9. Health Precinct Mixed Use Infill

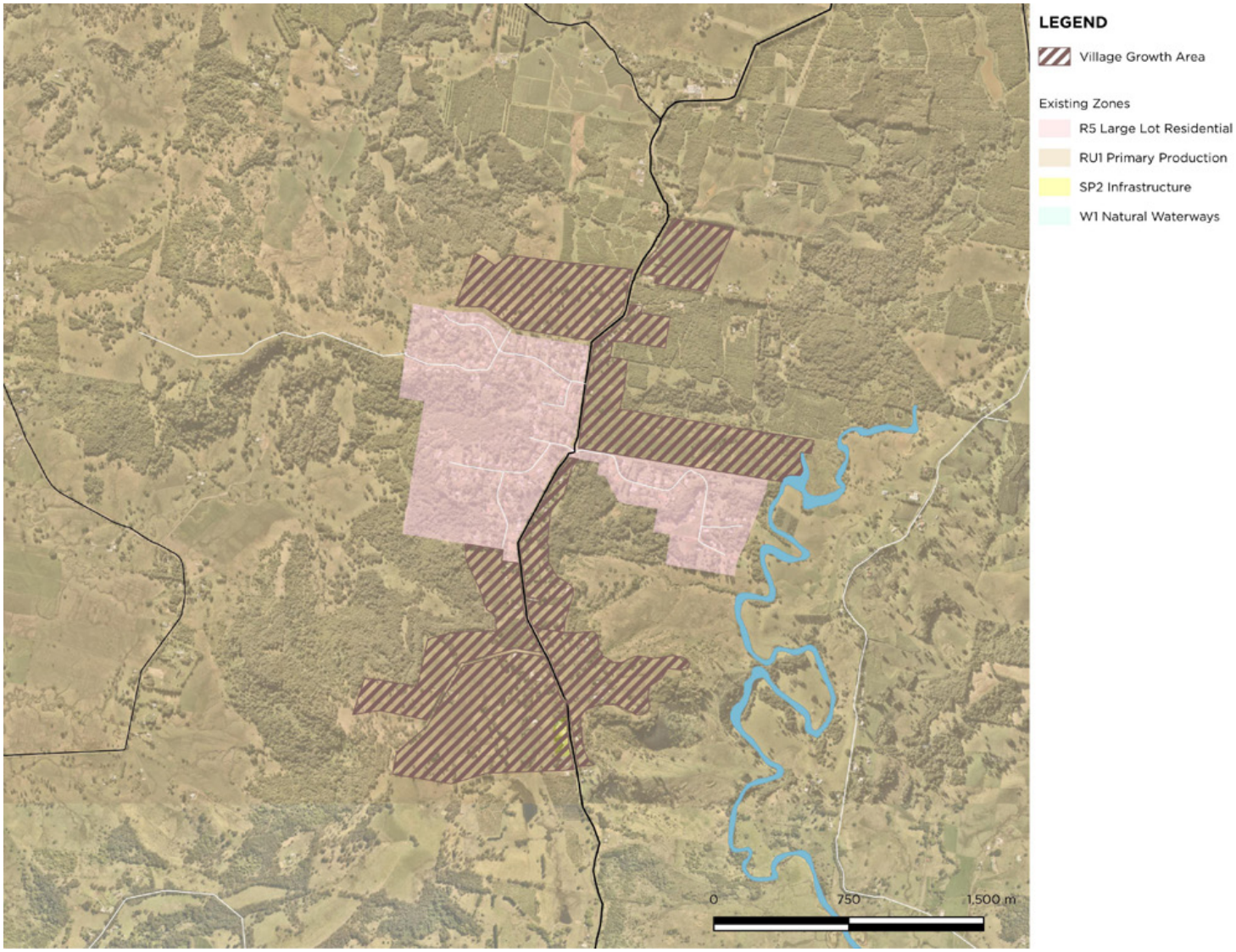
Context: The 'Health Precinct' located around Lismore Base Hospital is an area of approximately 17 ha that provides opportunities for infill housing and additional health related services close to the City. Enjoying elevated views to the City Centre and out to North Lismore Plateau, as well as being a short walk away from Lismore Square, the Health Precinct is the premier urban redevelopment area in Lismore.

The LSPS intends to provide more flexibility in implementation and encourage development in this area by amending the height controls within the Health Precinct (as identified in Figure X). Guided by a precinct specific DCP, there are opportunities for all scales of development, ranging from one off residential buildings to multi-lot mixed use development.

Table 12 - Health Precinct Mixed Use Development Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Supported for change to	Residential, Health related mix use development, Supporting commercial uses
Expected residential yield	1,200 homes
Suitable housing typology	Apartments and multi-dwelling housing in accordance with the height limits identified.
Commercial centre	A limited amount of commercial and health relate uses are permitted as part of the zone. Commercial facilities are to be of a scale that supports the precinct, without substantially detracting from the viability of CBD businesses.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Existing Central Reservoir Zone is unlikely to have sufficient pressure to be able to service higher levels of multistorey development with likelihood that pressure booster pumps will be required within individual developments.
Wastewater	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment of the impacts of placing additional load on existing infrastructure will be required.
Telecommunications	Existing lots are serviced with telecommunication infrastructure.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Capacity of road network and on street parking will need to be undertaken. Multi-lot development may be required to the north-east of the hospital (around Bent Street, Fermoy Aves and Orion Street) to ensure that road network upgrades are sufficient to carry the anticipated level of traffic.
Open Space	Not required, connections to existing open space provision is required.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Heritage	Development will need to respond to listed sites of heritage significance.
Biodiversity	N/A
Buffers	N/A
Important Farmland	None

10. Modanville



10. Modanville

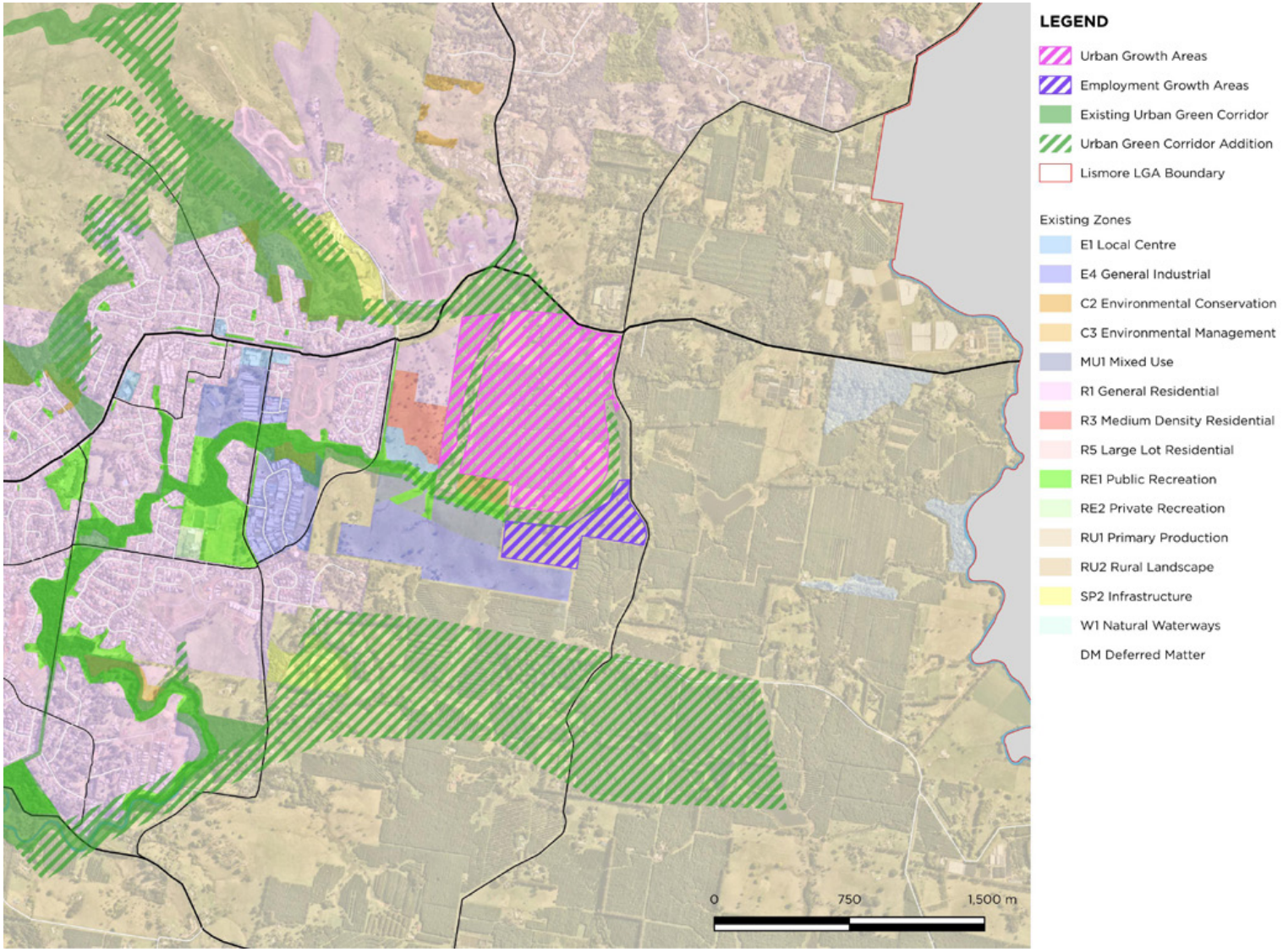
Context: Modanville is 14km north of Lismore and is home to around 527 residents across large lots. It has drinking water supplied but no sewer. Modanville has a primary school, a bakery, general store and recreation facilities.

Some land at Modanville has previously been included in Council's growth management strategies. Recongising the flood-free and village improvement potentials that additional land could provide for Modanville, this strategy includes additional land that will be guided by a Village Master Plan. The Modanville Village Master Plan will be prepared at the same time as the Dunoon Village Master Plan.

Table 13 – Modanville Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	200 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	240 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing village
Commercial centre	Small-scale additional neighbourhood centre uses supported but not required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	Any rezoning applications must demonstrate compliance with on-site septic system requirements.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Road requirements to be determined via Master Planning process
Open Space	To be determined via Master Planning process
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Southern areas mapped as Regionally Significant but not actively used for intensive agriculture.

11. Ridgeview Heights Mixed Use Extension



11. Ridgeview Heights Mixed Use Extension

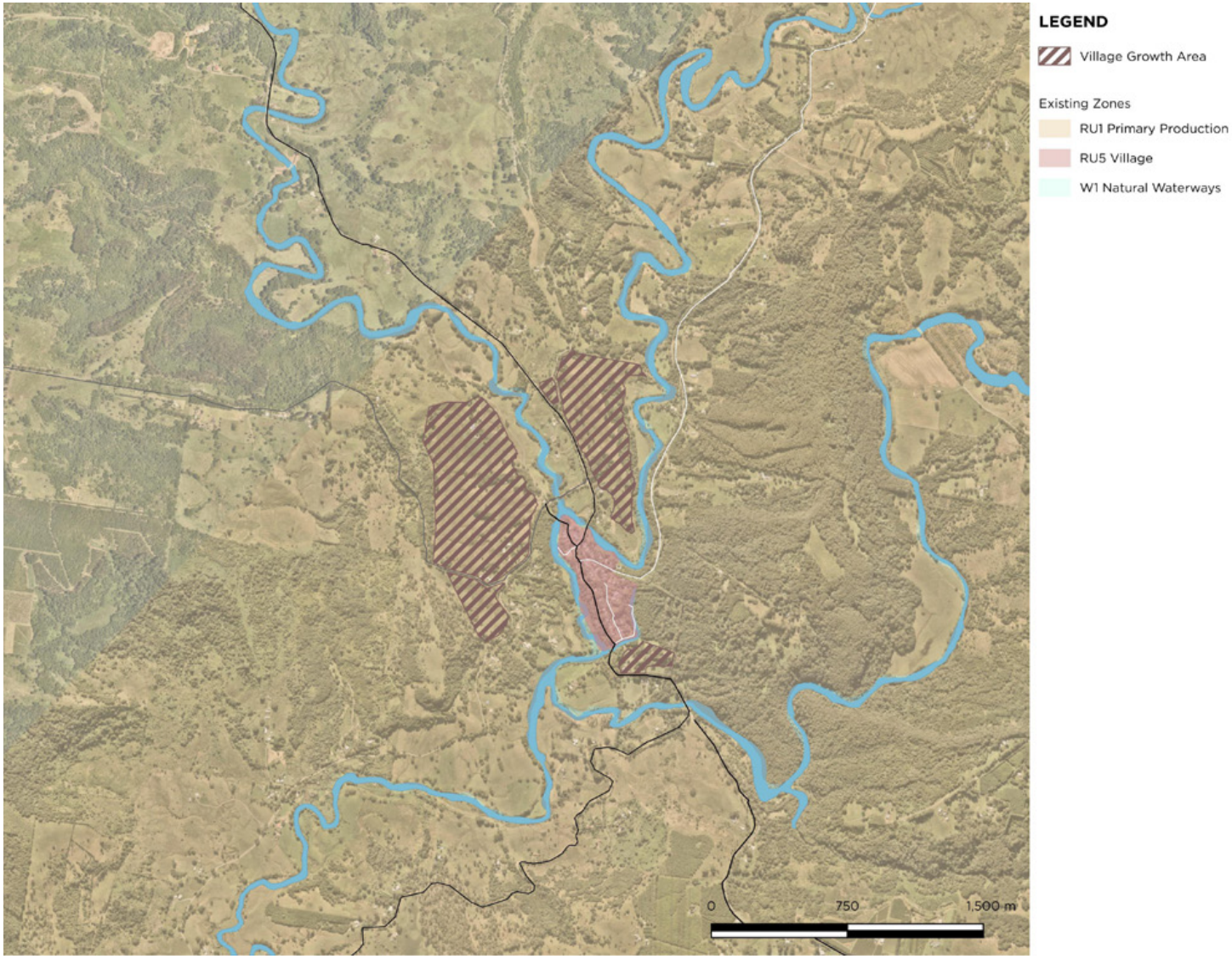
Context: This site acts as an extension to Ridgeview Heights, a recent urban release area that bounds the site to the west and offers a range of employment, commercial, mixed use and industrial. With easy access to both the existing and proposed future Bruxner Highway, the site has easy access to the M1 in the east and inland service centres such as Casino in the west.

The majority of the site is currently used for macadamia farming that has come to the end of its life. It is acknowledged that the site is mapped as State Significant farmland however the topography, connectivity and location of the site at the edge of Lismore's urban fabric offers valuable benefit for much-needed houses and jobs. As Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework seeks to strengthen and protect state significant farmland elsewhere, it is considered that this balanced loss of potential farmland is warranted for the long-term future for the City. Land to the south and east of the site are still actively farmed and recognised for their agriculture and economic value.

Table 14 – Ridgeview Heights Extension Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	80 ha
Supported for change to	Residential and employment (industrial),
Expected residential yield	240 new homes, 30 - 70 employment lots
Suitable housing typology	Medium density housing and a variety of industrial lot sizes to meet local needs
Commercial centre	Commercial zoning not required, connectivity through to existing commercial centre within Ridgeview Heights will be required
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing water and wastewater systems currently not possible. Servicing of development will require major new capital works with related investigation and assessment of impacts on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Road requirements to be determined via Master Planning process Road connection from Oliver Avenue (through existing area of Ridgeview Heights) to growth area
Open Space	To be determined via rezoning process, site structure plan and offerings should match the quality of development at the existing Ridgeview Heights area and provide connection into shared areas
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Potential for expansion of the Urban Green Corridor to be negotiated during rezoning. Riparian corridor along the Tucki Tucki creek expected to be enhanced and zoned appropriately.
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone and macadamia de-husking facilities to be included within the development site
Important Farmland	State Significant

12. The Channon



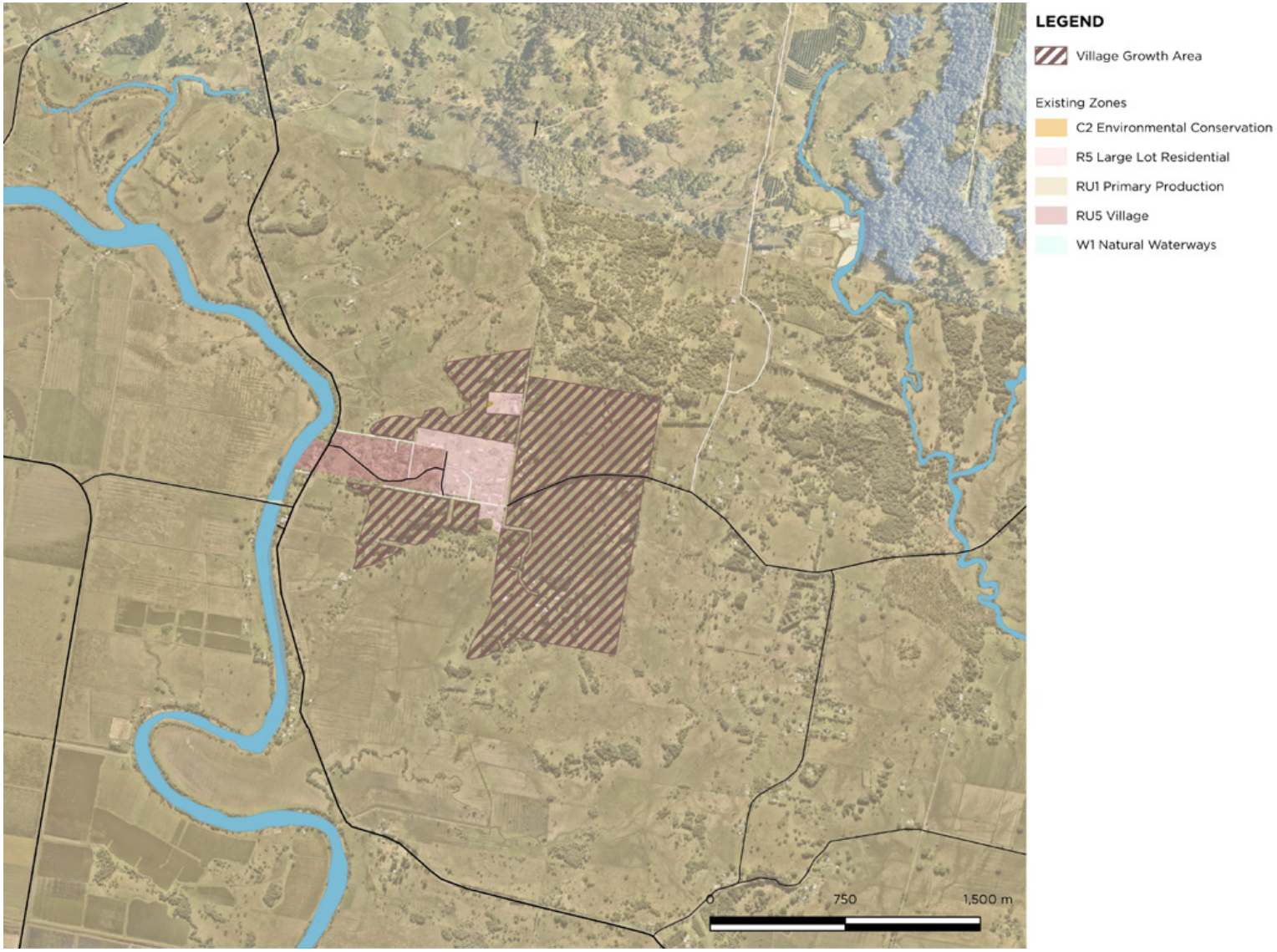
12. The Channon

Context: Growth at these sites within The Channon have been supported and included in Council's growth management strategies for some time. To reflect current known flood risk, the sites have been slightly reduced, ensuring that Lismore's growth can be accommodated entirely on flood-free lands.

Table 15 – The Channon Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	65 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	100 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing village
Commercial centre	Not required, developments must provide suitable connections into the existing village centre
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	Any rezoning applications must demonstrate compliance with on-site septic system requirements.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Road requirements to be determined via Master Planning process
Open Space	To be determined via Master Planning process
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Opportunities and Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Southern areas mapped as Regionally Significant

13. Wyrallah


LEGEND
Village Growth Area
Existing Zones
C2 Environmental Conservation
R5 Large Lot Residential
RU1 Primary Production
RU5 Village
W1 Natural Waterways
0
750
1,500 m

13. Wyrallah

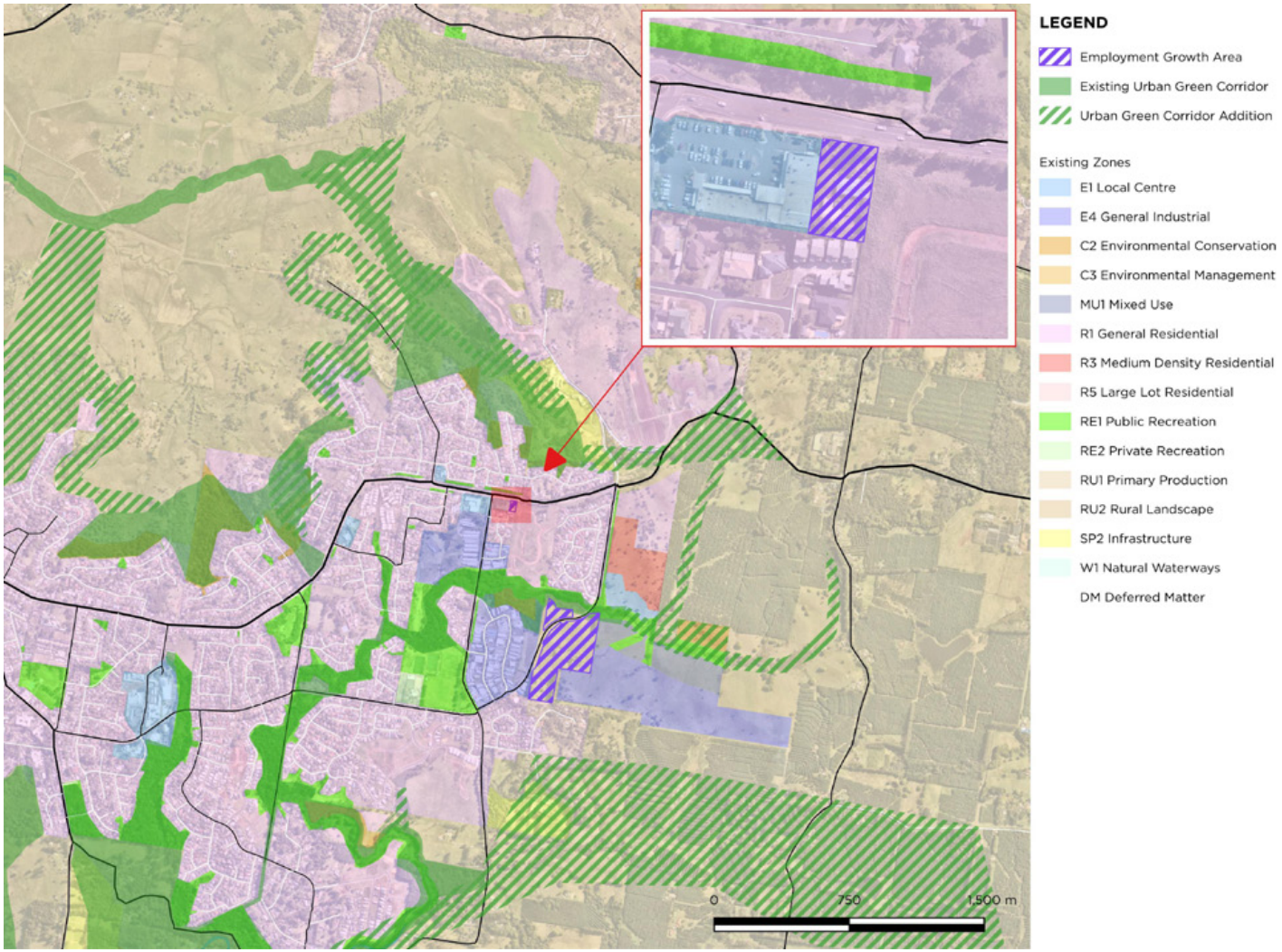
Context: Wyrallah is a historic riverside village about 16km, or 18 mins drive, south of Lismore's CBD. Wyrallah is home to a peaceful rural community of around 489 residents, supporting another 940 people in the surrounding rural areas. The village includes a primary school, community hall and public recreation areas, serving as a small but important hub for local families. Growth at Wyrallah will be guided by a master planning process.

Table 16 – Wyrallah Village Expansion Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	140 ha
Supported for change to	Residential
Expected residential yield	160 homes
Suitable housing typology	Lot sizes and housing typologies to reflect the pattern and quality of homes in the existing village
Commercial centre	Neighbourhood centre is expected, subject to rezoning process and viability.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection of development to LCC water supply not feasible. Connection to regional water supply operated by Rous County Council (RCC) will be required and will be explored during Master Planning process.
Wastewater	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure. Suitability to be determined via Master Planning process.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Road requirements to be determined via Master Planning process
Open Space	To be determined during Master Planning process
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	None

Employment

14. Goonellabah Infill Employment Land



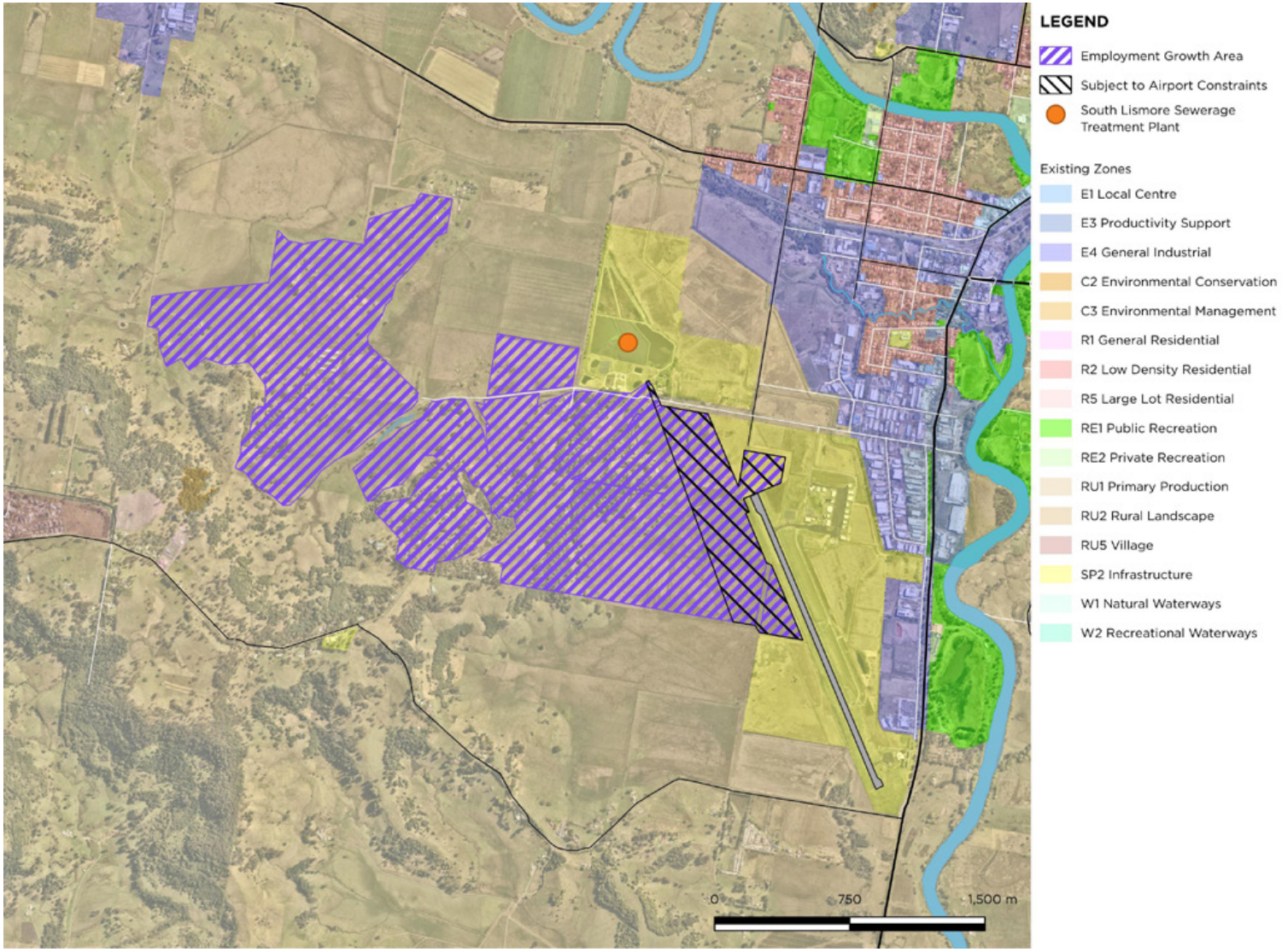
14. Goonellabah Infill Employment Land

Context: These infill sites forms part of the established Goonellabah employment precinct and is surrounded by a mix of light industrial, service enterprises and residential areas. One site occupies an accessible position along Ballina Road with the other along Oliver Avenue. Both sites sit within the broader urban fabric of East Lismore and Goonellabah, where utilities, transport connections and local workforce catchments are already in place. The area exhibits a compact, infill character with smaller industrial holdings, trade supply businesses and workshops that draw on proximity to the surrounding suburbs. This location provides opportunities to strengthen existing patterns of employment in Lismore, supporting local businesses requiring serviceable urban land without significantly expanding the city's industrial footprint. 245 Oliver Avenue has previously been included in Lismore's growth management strategies.

Table 17 – Goonellabah Infill Employment Lands Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	~ 11
Supported for change to	Compatible Ezones for retail, light industrial, warehousing, trade supplies and service enterprise.
Expected yield	Small to midsize lots to address local demand and infill the existing precinct.
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	Varied between 5.0ha, 10.0ha.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	803 Ballina Road: Connection to existing infrastructure possible. No impediment.
Wastewater	245 Oliver Avenue: Servicing of this land is likely to be integrated with servicing of adjacent development site Ridgeview Heights with new infrastructure required.
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Access via Ballina Road/Oliver Avenue; local intersection and frontage upgrades addressed at DA/subdivision stages.
Open Space	Not required
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Manage any mapped biodiversity corridors through setbacks and acoustic/landscape treatments.
Buffers	Buffers to neighbouring RU1 zoned land must be provided for on site.
Important Farmland	803 Ballina Road: none 245 Oliver Avenue: State significant

15. South Lismore Employment Land



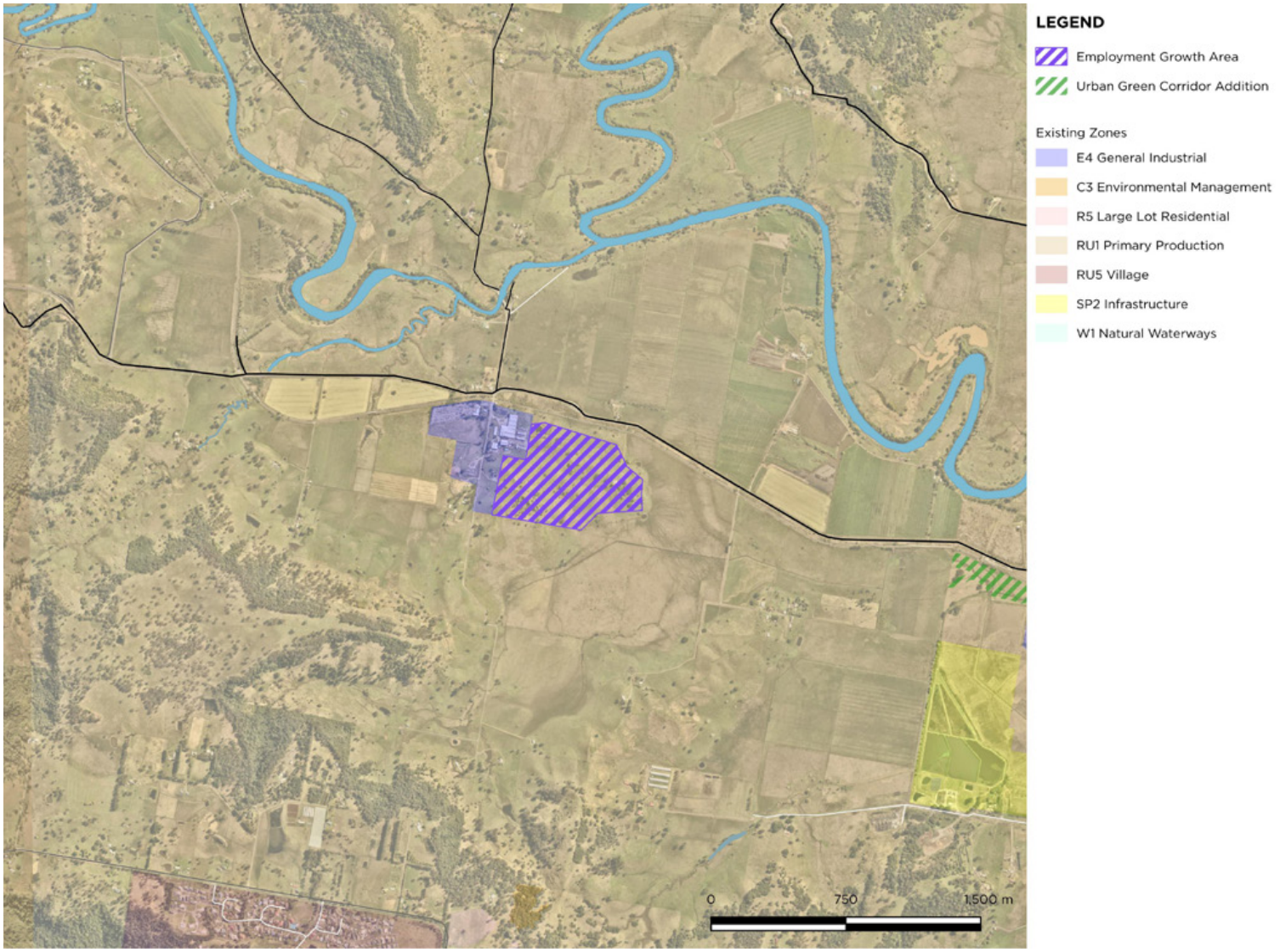
15. South Lismore Employment Land

Context: The South Lismore industrial area is one of Lismore's longest standing employment precincts and contains a diverse mix of industrial, logistics, construction, manufacturing and service-based uses. It sits adjacent to the existing South Lismore industrial estate and contributes significantly to regional economic activity due to its scale and central location. The area reflects the traditional industrial character of Lismore, with larger lots, established road networks and longstanding commercial operations that service both the urban population and nearby rural communities. Its proximity to transport links and to the city centre supports a wide range of businesses that rely on movement of goods, equipment storage and access to the broader Northern Rivers market.

Table 18 – South Lismore Employment Lands Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	239 ha
Supported for change to	Predominantly E4 General Industrial with complementary E3 Productivity Support and utility uses.
Expected lot yield	Mix of large, serviced lots and flexible parcels for logistics, light/general industry, manufacturing and resource recovery.
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	To be determined during the rezoning process
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected. Capacity upgrades may be needed for highdemand users; coordinate with carriers at structure planning.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Areas would require a significant connection road onto the Bruxner Highway along with an appropriately designed intersection for the expected traffic volume and type. Internal road upgrades and intersection treatments to respond to heavyvehicle movements; safeguard key freight connections.
Open Space	Functional open space limited to buffers and drainage; integrate WSUD, detention and waterquality treatment.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	To be addressed at rezoning and DA stages
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Some areas mapped regionally significant

16. Tuncester Employment Lands



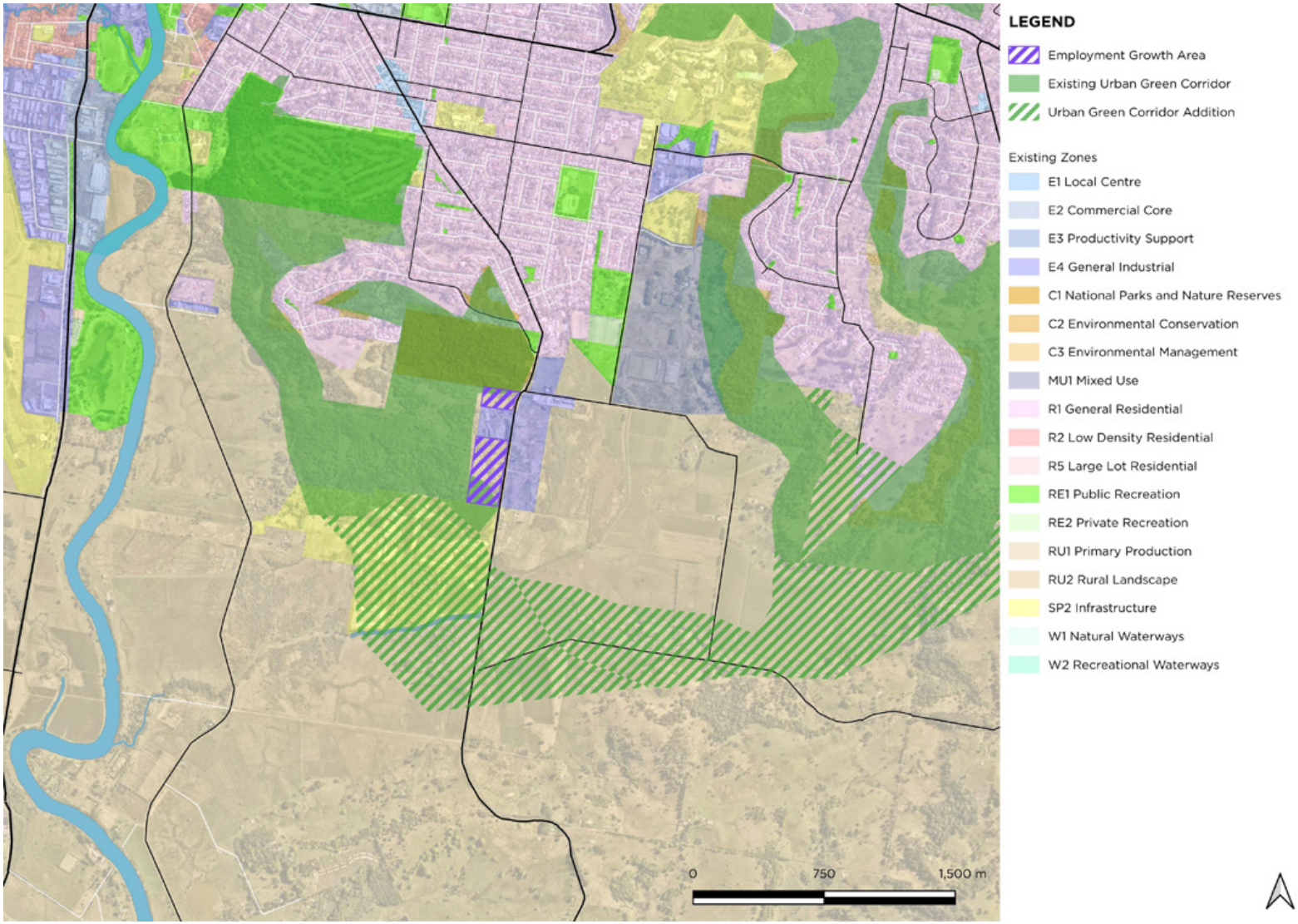
16. Tuncester Employment Lands

Context: Tuncester is an emerging employment location positioned west of Lismore and connected to the broader industrial and logistics network of the South Lismore precinct. It is characterised by a semirural industrial setting with larger parcels, proximity to the rail corridor and adjacency to existing employment land. The area already supports industrial and storage activities and provides opportunities to expand Lismore's supply of serviceable, floodfree industrial land. Its landscape setting offers flat, developable land suited to trade services, small logistics operations and light manufacturing, complementing the heavier industrial functions found elsewhere in Lismore. This location is well placed to serve enterprise activity that does not require immediate urban adjacency but benefits from access to key east–west transport corridors.

Table 19 – Tuncester Employment Lands Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	39 ha
Supported for change to	E4 General Industrial, with scope for E3 Productivity Support on interface lots and/or MU1 Mixed Use for uses ancillary to the Rail Trail
Expected yield	Subdivision to deliver a range of lot sizes, prioritising small to midsize serviced lots.
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	To be determined during the rezoning process.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible. No impediment.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Rifle Range Road to be upgraded to service the area. New intersection at the East of the site that connects Kyogle Road to Rifle Fange should be investigated. Freight access and turning paths addressed through structure planning.
Open Space	Functional open space limited to buffers and drainage; integrate WSUD, detention and waterquality treatment.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	To be addressed at rezoning and DA stages.
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Regionally significant but not currently used for intensive agriculture

17. Wyrallah Road Employment Land



17. Wyrallah Road Employment Land

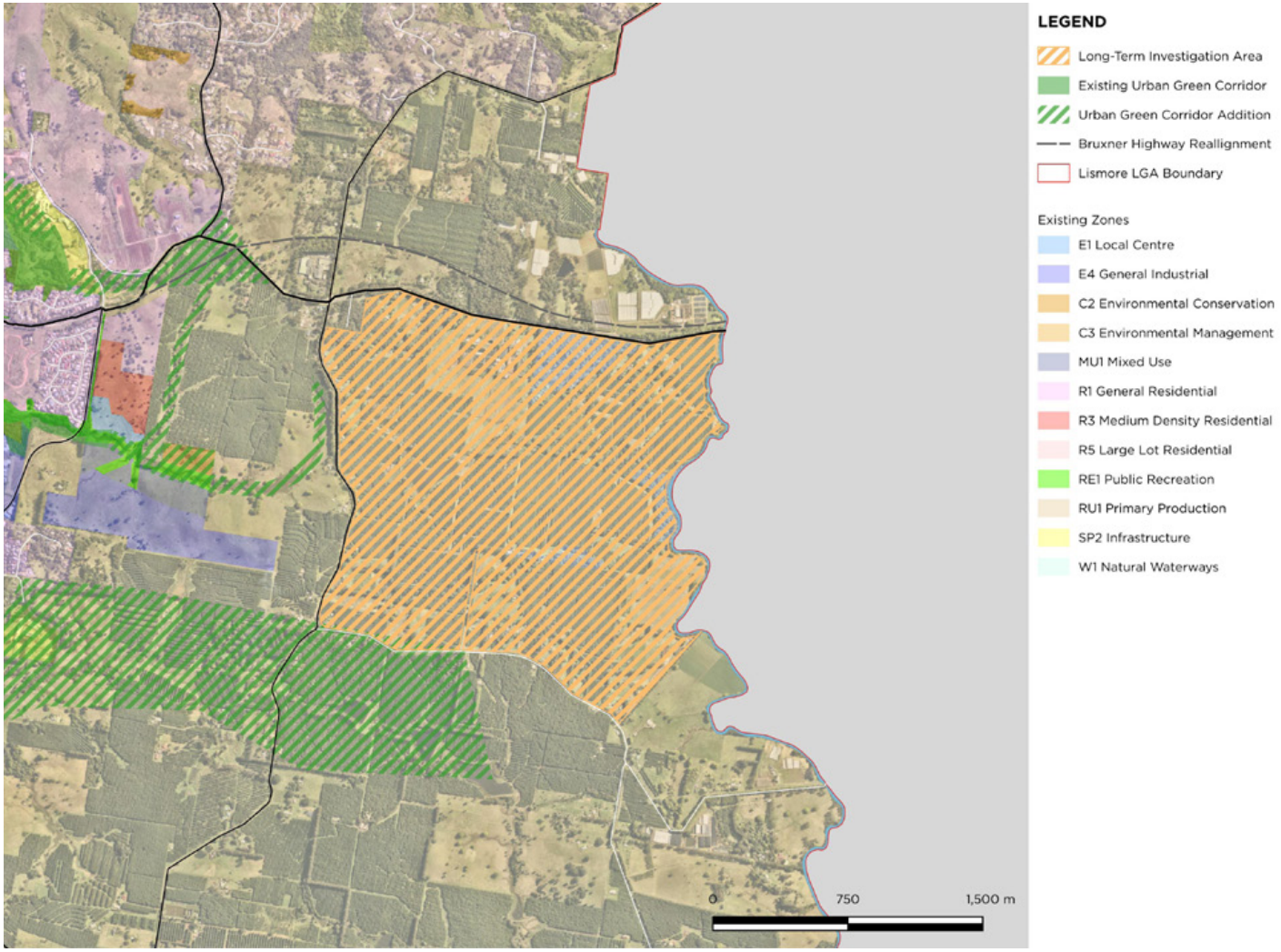
Context The Wyrallah Road employment area is a smaller, strategically placed industrial location situated near Council's existing operations along the southern approach to Lismore. The land sits within a mixed ruralindustrial setting and provides opportunities for service industries, depots and enterprises that benefit from connection to Wyrallah Road and proximity to both urban and rural catchments. Its position near existing operational land uses gives it a practical, utilitarian character suited to lowimpact industrial activity. The site is well located to support businesses that require site functionality, storage or servicing capacity without needing direct frontage to major arterial corridors.

Table 20 – Wyrallah Road Employment Land Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	9 ha.
Supported for change to	E4 General Industrial, with ancillary E3 uses where needed for operational efficiency.
Expected yield	Focussed on a limited number of functional lots for service and operational users.
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	To be determined at rezoning stage.
Commercial centre	Not required.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing infrastructure possible though assessment would be required of the impact of additional load on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Early consultation with Essential Energy shows no concerns or constraints. Consultation will continue.
Roads	Areas would require a significant connection road onto the Bruxner Highway along with an appropriately designed intersection for the expected traffic volume and type.
Open Space	Functional open space limited to buffers and drainage; integrate WSUD, detention and waterquality treatment.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	To be addressed at rezoning and DA stages.
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	None

Long-Term Investigation Areas

18. Lindendale Agricultural Productivity



18. Lindendale Agricultural Productivity

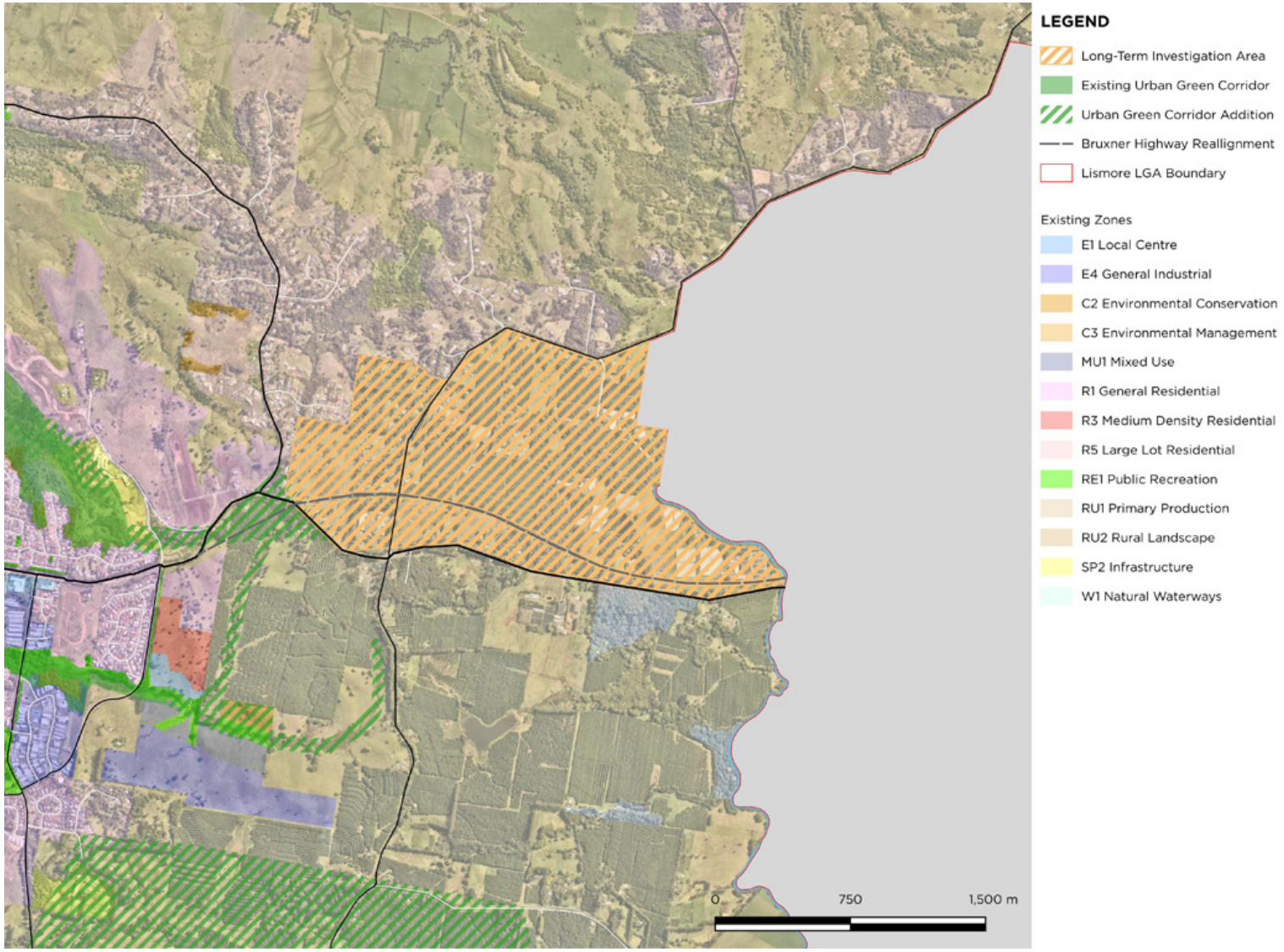
Council will not accept a Planning Proposal unless it aligns with the Agricultural Innovation ambitions set within this LSPS.

Context: Lindendale is characterised by its highvalue agricultural landscape, supported by fertile soils, established horticultural production, and strong connections to regional agrifood industries. As a longterm investigation area, its primary role is to enhance and protect agricultural productivity while enabling potential valueadding uses aligned with the agrifood sector. This area will remain focused on sustaining and strengthening the local agricultural economy, supporting innovation, diversification, and future agriindustry opportunities without compromising the region's most important farmland.

Table 21 – Lindendale Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	640 ha
Supported for change to	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, E3 Productivity Support to enable value-adding agri-food enterprises and distribution aligned to existing and sustained agricultural productivity.
Expected yield	No set yield target: emphasis on maintaining and intensifying agricultural output with potential for agri-industry precincts and value-add uses.
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	Varied between 5.0ha, 10.0ha, 20.0ha, 40.0ha.
Commercial centre	Not required; any supporting services should be ancillary to agricultural function.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing water and wastewater systems currently not possible. Servicing of any development requiring water and wastewater will require major new capital works with related investigation and assessment of impacts on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Assessment on capacity of existing network required.
Roads	Internal roads subject to structure planning. Intersection upgrades subject to structure planning.
Open Space	Not required.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Opportunities Constraints	
Biodiversity	N/A
Buffers	N/A
Important Farmland	State Significant, to be retained for agricultural intensification

19. McLeans Ridges Employment Lands



19. McLeans Ridges Employment Lands

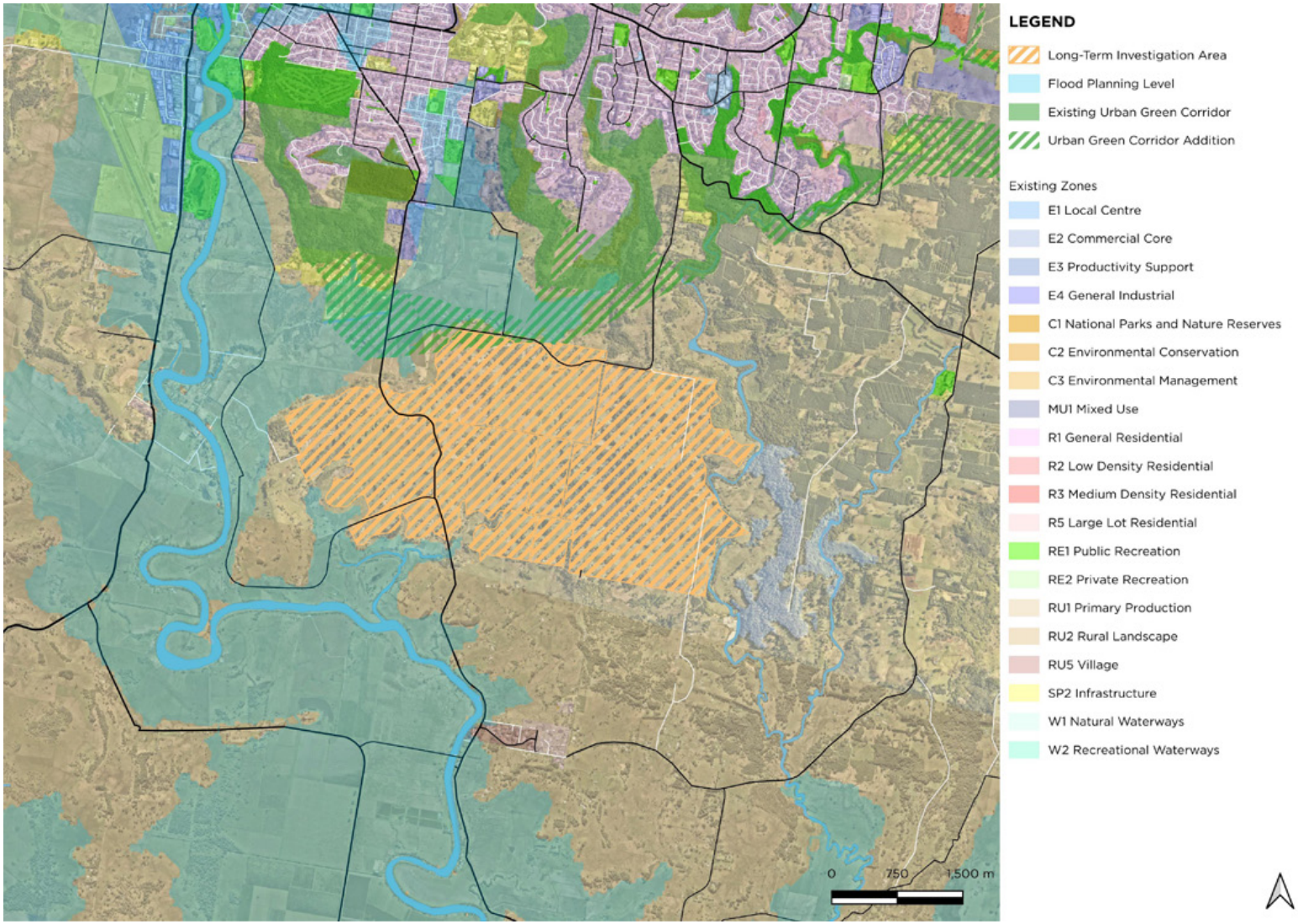
Context: McLeans Ridges is envisioned as a strategically located, flood-free employment precinct. Its elevated land, proximity to the Bruxner Highway and capacity for industrial, logistics, and enterprise uses position it as a future hub for job-generating industries. The area will support the relocation of flood-impacted businesses, enable new industrial growth, and provide space for innovation and circular-economy activities, forming a key component of the region's employment land supply.

Council will not accept a Planning Proposal until other employment land has been exhausted.

Table 22 – McLeans Ridges Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	210 ha
Supported for change to	Commercial and Industrial (E1 Local Centre, E2 Commercial Centre, E3 Productivity Support, E4 General Industrial), MU1 Mixed Use, SP2 Infrastructure, Residential (R1 General Residential + R3 Medium Density Residential + R5 Large Lot Residential).
Expected yield	68ha industrial (or equivalent), 35ha circular economy (or equivalent), 89ha residential (- 178 dwellings) (however precinct emphasis is flood-free employment relocation and growth).
Indicative Minimum Lot Size	Employment Lands = varying. Residential = between 400 m^2 and 5 ha (varied between R1/R3/R5 zoning).
Commercial centre	Not required.
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Connection to existing water and wastewater systems currently not possible. Servicing of development will require major new capital works with related investigation and assessment of impacts on existing infrastructure.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation to take place, no concerns expected.
Energy	Assessment on capacity of existing network required.
Roads	Subject to implementation of the TfNSW proposed Bruxner Highway upgrades (Woo 2 Goo project).Internal roads subject to structure planning. Intersection upgrades subject to structure planning.
Open Space	Limited to functional needs such as landscaping, buffers, and integrated stormwater areas, providing amenity for workers while supporting the precinct's operational and environmental requirements.
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process
Constraints	
Biodiversity	Highest conservation habitat to be avoided and protected. Biodiversity in Place Framework to guide structure planning. Specific development controls to accompany structure plan to embed Koala-friendly development.
Buffers	Provide buffers to surrounding RU1 Primary Production zone. Provide buffers to identified biodiversity and riparian areas. Manage land use conflict with rural activities.
Important Farmland	State significant some parcels currently used for agricultural production

20. Monaltrie Satellite Suburb



20. Monaltrie Satellite Suburb

Context: Monaltrie is located approximately 8–10 kilometres south-east of the Lismore CBD. Its proximity to Lismore's urban area places it in a strategically advantageous position within the broader settlement pattern. The area's large land parcels, flood-free topography and landscape setting provide an opportunity for a future satellite suburb that complements Lismore's urban footprint while maintaining a strong relationship to the surrounding rural character.

Council will not accept a Planning Proposal until site-studies and structure plan is complete

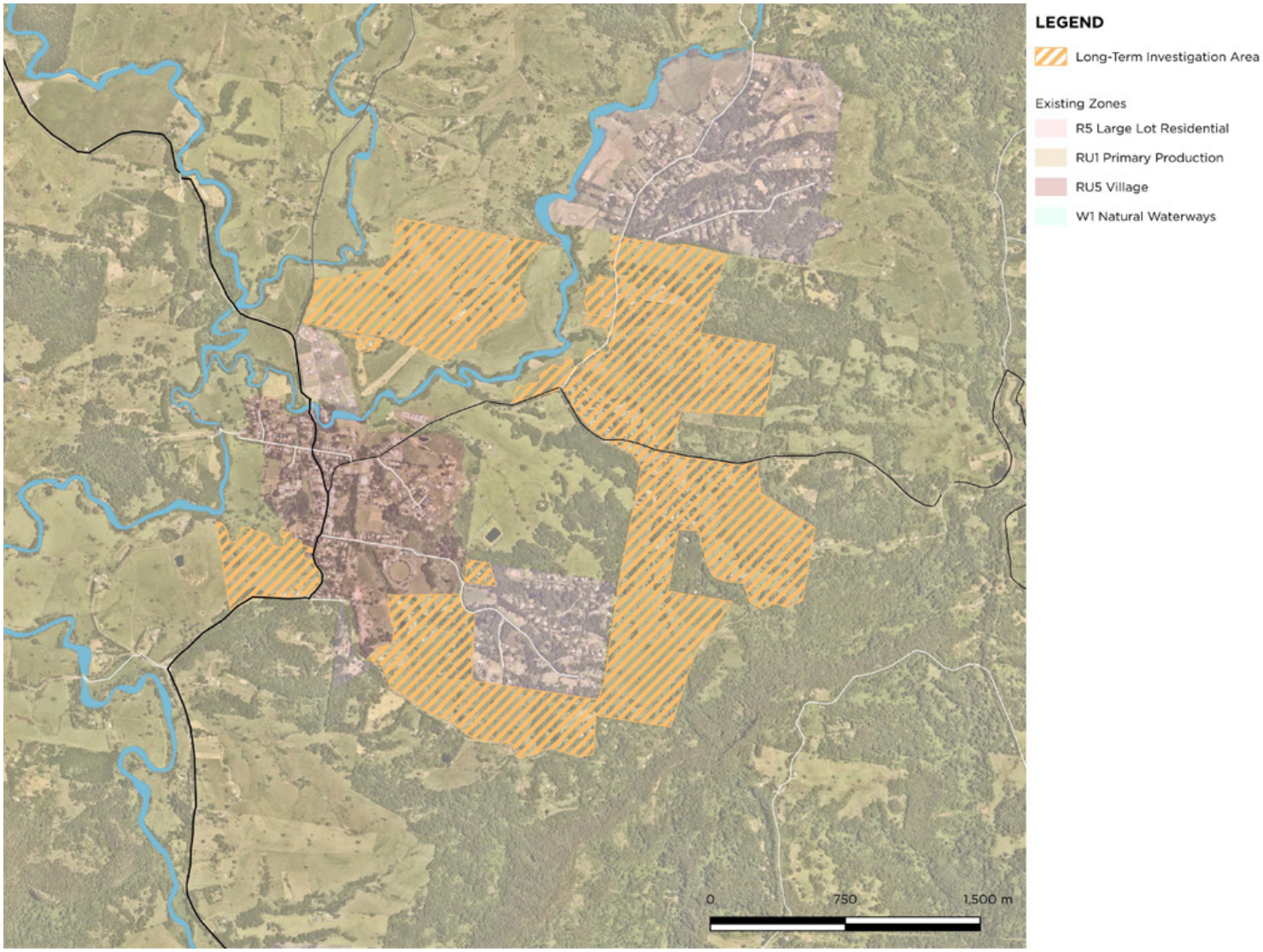
Table 23 – Monaltrie Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	970 ha
Supported for change to	Residential and local scale commercial
Expected yield	1,000 homes, subject to site studies and structure planning
Indicative minimum lot size	To be determined during structure planning, lot sizes expected to vary based on site-specific constraints
Suitable housing typology	To be determined during structure planning
Commercial centre	Required at a scale to support residents only
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	The existing Central Reservoir Zone has insufficient pressure to service the majority of this land and this development would require its own pump station and reservoir. Connection of this new water supply to Council's existing water supply systems would require a significant expansion of the existing water supply with associated new infrastructure. Assessment of the impact of additional load on Council's existing infrastructure would be necessary. The capacity of existing infrastructure to take any additional load would be dependent on anticipated yields for this development.
Wastewater	Connection to existing infrastructure is feasible though would be dependent on additional infrastructure to make this connection. Assessment of the impact of additional load on the Southern Trunk Main and East Lismore Sewage Treatment Work would be necessary. The capacity of existing infrastructure to take any additional load would be dependent on anticipated yields for this development
Telecommunications	Consultation with NBN Co. required
Energy	Consultation with Essential Energy required
Roads	Structure planning will investigate options for how this area will connect to Lismore and Goonellabah.
Open Space	Will be determined via structure planning
Stormwater	Landowners are to provide suggested stormwater solutions that will be considered during the rezoning process

20. Monaltrie Satellite Suburb

Constraints and Opportunities	
Biodiversity	Assessment of the impacts to koalas (and other species) should include assessment of the cumulative impact to future koala populations, both within the proposed footprint and on the landscape scale functional movement of animals – genetic, population resilience, incremental stressors and loss of health. Koala Habitat Assessment Study to be commissioned prior to structure planning Highest conservation habitat to be avoided and protected Biodiversity in Place Framework to guide structure planning Specific development controls to accompany structure plan to embed Koala-friendly development
Buffers	Will be required and built into structure planning
Important Farmland	None.

21. Nimbin Residential



21. Nimbin Residential

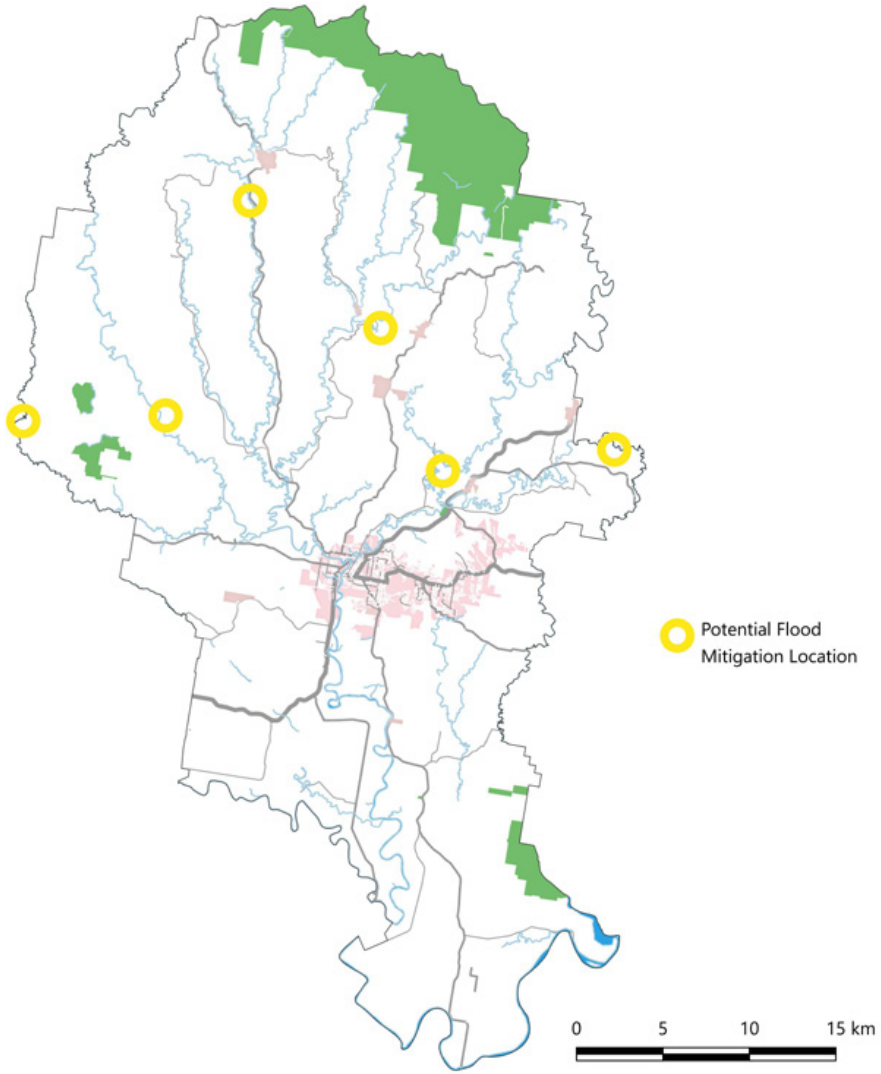
Context: Desktop analysis, and consultation during the preparation of the 2022 Growth and Realignment Strategy, indicates there is capacity for expansion around some villages. Limitations to the secure water supply at Nimbin currently constrain further growth of the village. Investigations into the long-term Nimbin Water supply are underway, until such time that those investigations lead to solution delivery, rezoning applications will not be supported.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with the Nimbin community in late 2020 /early 2021 and it was clear that the community did not want to see new large lot residential subdivisions on the outskirts of Nimbin. In July 2021 Council resolved to remove the potential large lot residential land at Gungas Road and Tuntable Falls Road as part of the growth strategy review. In 2025 Council adopted the Nimbin Place Plan. The Place Plan sets out three priority projects for the village as well as numerous actions for improved amenity, infrastructure and village upgrades. Council is now committed to commencing the implementation of the Place Plan.

Table 24 - Nimbin Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	Suitable expectations will be determined only after Council's investigation into water security is complete, pending feasible solutions being agreed upon.
Supported for change to	
Expected yield	
Indicative minimum lot size	
Commercial centre	
Infrastructure Requirements	
Water	Further development within Nimbin is subject to identifying a means by which the secure yield of the water supply can be increased and would also require an upgrade of the Nimbin Sewage Treatment Plant. If a means of increasing the secure yield of the water supply is identified, major capital works and planning would be required.
Wastewater	
Telecommunications	Consultation with NBN. Co required
Energy	Consultation with Essential Energy required
Roads	Internal roads subject to structure planning. Road network review to determine traffic volume, load and safety
Open Space	Upgrades as set out in the Nimbin Place Plan
Stormwater	To bd determined during the rezoning process
Constraints and Opportunities	
Biodiversity	Any rezoning application must be supported by ecological studies
Buffers	Buffer to the RU1 surrounding zone to be included within the site
Important Farmland	Riparian areas in Nimbin are mapped as regionally significant.

22. Special Infrastructure Zoning



22. Special Infrastructure Zoning

Context: CSIRO are currently modelling a number of potential flood mitigation solutions within the Richmond River Catchment. A number of the solutions being modelled are detention basins within Lismore's rural lands. Following the outcome of the model, further work will need to be done

Council will not accept Planning Proposals here until CSIRO's work has been completed.

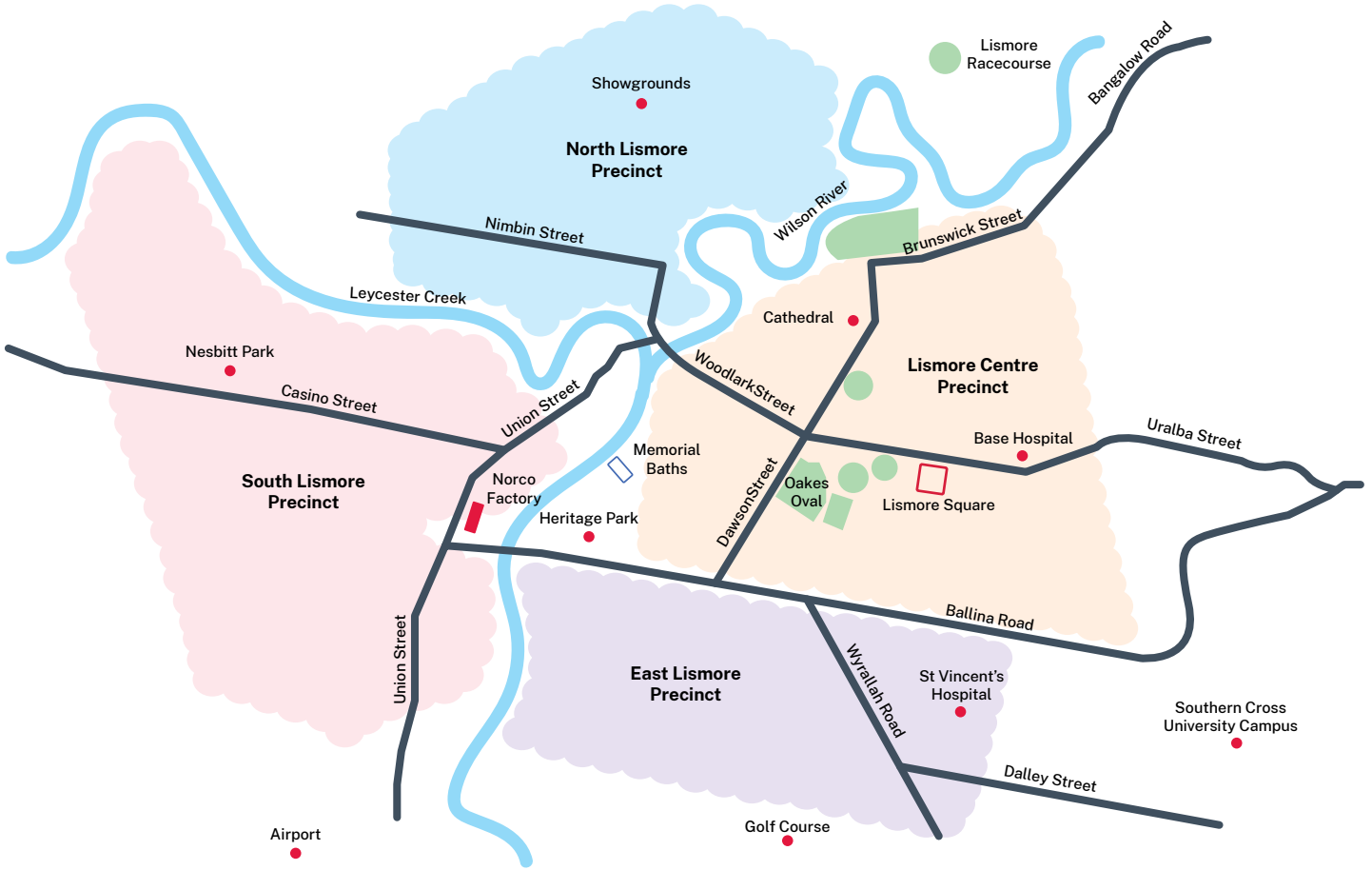
Table 25 - Flood Mitigation Expectations

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	To be determined subject to need
Supported for change to	SP1 or SP2 Infrastructure zones
Opportunities and Constraints	
Biodiversity	Impact and solutions to be determined closer to the time
Buffers	
Important Farmland	

23. Special Consideration Zoning

NSW Reconstruction Authority

Precinct planning for buyback land in Lismore



23. Special Consideration Zoning

Context: The NSW RA have bought back many homes under a voluntary buyback program in North, South, East and central Lismore. These land parcels, once vacant, need to be suitably rezoned to prevent future residential uses. Together, Lismore City Council and NSW RA will deliver Precinct Plans to determine the best future use of the vacant buyback land.

Council will collaborate with the NSW Reconstruction Authority on rezoning the land they have acquired as part of the Resilient Homes Program (buyback program).

Table 26 – Buyback Land

Delivery Expectations	
Total size	To be determined in collaboration with the NSW RA
Supported for change to	A variety of zones will be considered, depending on the Precinct Plan findings.
Opportunities and Constraints	
Biodiversity	Impact and solutions to be determined via the Precinct Plans.
Buffers	
Important Farmland	

Appendix B – Baseline Report for Monitoring

Indicator	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Sustainable Growth					
Estimated Resident Population (ERP)	43,783	2024	ABS ERP		
Population Growth (ERP), 5-year average annual change	-0.03%	2019–2024	ABS ERP		
Population Growth (ERP), 10-year average annual change	+0.03%	2014–2024	ABS ERP		
Census Population	44,334	2021	ABS Census		
Working-age Population (20–64)	25,395 residents (57.8%)	2021	ABS Census		
Median Age	44 years	2021	ABS Census		
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Population	2,600 (5.9%)	2021	ABS Census		
Unemployment rate	5.2%	2021	ABS Census		
Labour Force Participation Rate	84.9%	2021	ABS Census		
Employment-to-Population Ratio	43.7% (19,391 employed / 44,334 population)	2021	ABS Census		
Total Dwellings	18,475 dwellings	2021	ABS Census		

Indicator		Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Economic Prosperity						
Total local jobs		25,889 jobs	2024	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
Employment	Health Care & Social Assistance	6,687 (25.8%)	2024	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Education & Training	2,815 (10.9%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Retail Trade	2,842 (11.0%		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Construction	2,431 (9.4%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Accommodation & Food Services	1,598 (6.2%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Public Administration & Safety	1,399 (5.4%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Manufacturing	1,188 (4.6%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	1,096 (4.2%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Transport, Postal & Warehousing	902 (3.5%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Administrative & Support Services	804 (3.1%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Other Services	796 (3.1%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	697 (2.7%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Financial & Insurance Services	603 (2.3%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Arts & Recreation Services	501 (1.9%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Information Media & Telecommunications	309 (1.2%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	305 (1.2%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		

Indicator		Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
	Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	202 (0.8%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Mining	14 (0.1%)		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
Employment growth – 1-year change		1.9%	2023 to 2024	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
Gross Regional Product (GRP)		$3.05 billion	2023–24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
GRP (Gross Regional Product)	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	$191 million	2023–24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Mining	$1 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Manufacturing	$150 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	$47 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Construction	$335 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Wholesale Trade	$66 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Retail Trade	$252 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Accommodation & Food Services	$291 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	$136 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	$62 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Administrative & Support Services	$298 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Public Administration & Safety	$248 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Education & Training	$298 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Health Care & Social Assistance	$735 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		

Indicator		Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
	Arts & Recreation Services	$39 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Other Services	$65 million		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
GRP growth – 1-year change		0.0%	2022–23 to 2023–24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
GRP growth – 5-year average annual change		1.8% p.a.	2019–20 to 2023–24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
GRP growth – 10-year average annual change		2.2% p.a.	2014–15 to 2023–24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
Registered businesses		4,433	June 2024	ABS Counts of Australian Businesses		
Industry Diversity Index (Economic Diversification)		Moderate diversity – health sector dominant	2024	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
New business registrations (net entries)		~405 net entries	2023–24	ABS Counts of Australian Businesses		
Number of First Nations-owned businesses		32 (1%)	2025	Various including Supply Nation / Indigenous Business Direct		
Median weekly household income		$1,319	2021	ABS Census		
Location Quotient – >1.25 represents industries that are uniquely significant to the local economy	Health Care & Social Assistance	2.2	2023-24	NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Education & Training	1.6		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Retail Trade	1.1		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Construction	1.0		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Accommodation & Food Services	1.3		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		

Indicator		Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
	Public Administration & Safety	1.4		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Manufacturing	0.8		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2.4		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Transport, Postal & Warehousing	0.9		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Administrative & Support Services	0.8		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Other Services	0.9		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	0.7		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Financial & Insurance Services	0.7		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Arts & Recreation Services	0.9		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Information Media & Telecommunications	0.5		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	0.6		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	0.6		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
	Mining	0.0		NIEIR / .id Economic Profile		
Annual engagements with Chambers of Commerce		Baseline to be established		Council Economic Development records		
Businesses participating in Council programs/workshops		Baseline to be established		Council program participation records		
Business satisfaction with Council support		Baseline to be established		Council business survey		
Investment enquiries facilitated by Council		Baseline to be established		Council CRM		

Indicator	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Value of grant funding leveraged with Council support	Baseline to be established		Council grants register		
Vacant commercial premises activated	Baseline to be established		Council place management		
Place-based activations delivered (annual)	Baseline to be established		Council events / place activation		
Employment land uptake	Baseline to be established		Council planning / development approvals		
Businesses implementing flood mitigation measures	Baseline to be established		Council programs		
Businesses completing Business Continuity Plans	Baseline to be established		Council program		
Participants in business resilience programs	Baseline to be established		Council economic development		
CBD vacancy rate	Baseline to be established		Council monitoring / surveys		
Priority industry roundtables convened	Baseline to be established		Council economic development		
Creative industries supported through Council programs	Baseline to be established		Council arts / economic development		
Tourism operators engaged in Council initiatives	Baseline to be established		Council tourism / Destination NSW partnerships		
Thriving Communities					
SEIFA – Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD)	966 (below NSW average ≈ 1000)	2021	ABS Census/SEIFA		
Lone-person households	30.4%	2021	ABS Census		
Couple families with children	35.9%	2021	ABS Census		
Average number of people per household	2.4 persons	2021	ABS Census		
Worked full-time (People who reported being in the labour force, aged 15 years and over)	50.3% (People who reported being in the labour force, aged 15 years and over)	2021	ABS Census		

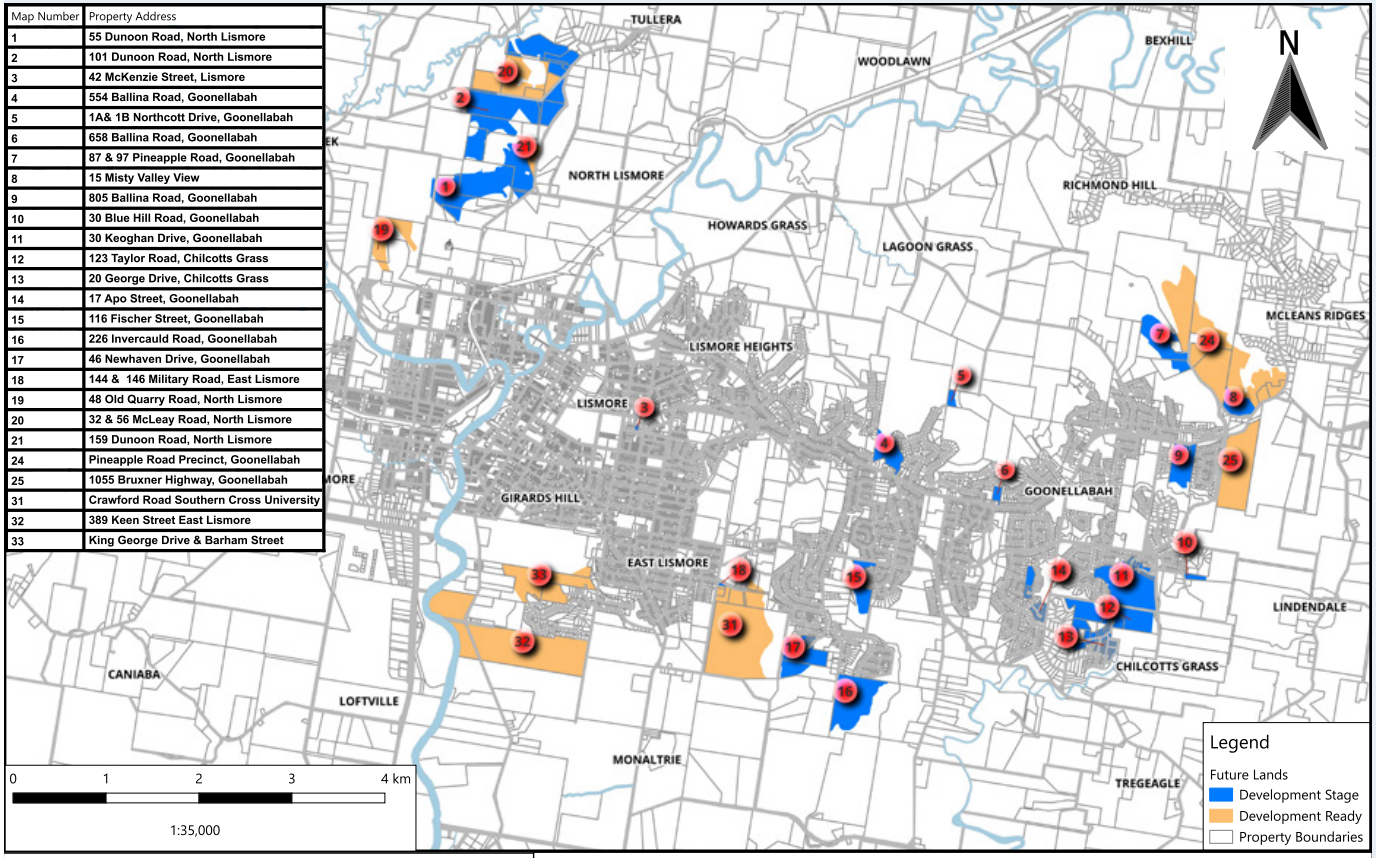
Indicator	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Worked part-time (People who reported being in the labour force, aged 15 years and over)	38.4% (People who reported being in the labour force, aged 15 years and over)	2021	ABS Census		
Residents worked 1-19 hours per week	15.6%	2021	ABS Census		
Residents worked 20-29 hours per week	14.5%	2021	ABS Census		
Residents worked 30-34 hours per week	10.4%	2021	ABS Census		
Residents worked 40-44 hours per week	17.3%	2021	ABS Census		
Residents worked 45 hours or more per week	14.%	2021	ABS Census		
Occupied private dwellings owned outright	37.6%	2021	ABS Census		
Owned with a mortgage	31.7%	2021	ABS Census		
Rental households	27.1%	2021	ABS Census		
Renter households with rent payments greater than 30% of household income	41.3%	2021	ABS Census		
New dwelling approvals – total (annual average)	144 dwellings per year	2001–02 to 2023–24	ABS Building Approvals		
New dwelling approvals – houses (annual average)	108 dwellings per year	2001–02 to 2023–24	ABS Building Approvals		
New dwelling approvals – other dwellings (annual average)	36 dwellings per year	2001–02 to 2023–24	ABS Building Approvals		
Did unpaid domestic work	71.3% (26,183 people)	2021	ABS Census		
Provided unpaid care for child/children	25.3% (9,304 people)	2021	ABS Census		
Provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability/health condition/old age	14.0% (5,146 people)	2021	ABS Census		

Indicator	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Did voluntary work through an organisation or group (last 12 months)	17.7% (6,494 people)	2021	ABS Census		
Dwellings – 1 bedroom	5.4% (931 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
Dwellings – 2 bedrooms	17.9% (3,077 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
Dwellings – 3 bedrooms	42.3% (7,264 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
Dwellings – 4 or more bedrooms	31.6% (5,426 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
State or territory housing authority landlord (public housing) – share of rented dwellings	9.2% (429 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
Community housing provider landlord – share of rented dwellings	5.1% (239 dwellings)	2021	ABS Census		
Median house price (LGA)	$610,000	2025	Pricefinder		
Major sports events hosted	Baseline to be established	2027	Council event records / Destination NSW / sporting organisations		
Major arts events hosted	Baseline to be established	2027	Council event records / arts organisations / cultural institutions		
Community cultural events hosted	Baseline to be established	2027	Council event records / tourism partners / community organisation		

Indicator	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Source	2030 Reporting Value	Change (+/-)
Resilient Environments					
Endangered Ecological Communities area	7,743 Ha	2019	Landmark 2019, Landmark 2011 (HCV Category 2)		
Big Scrub Rainforest area	7,377 Ha	2019	Landmark 2019, Landmark 2011 (HCV Category 8)		
Koala Habitat area (Primary, Secondary A & B)	13,053 Ha	2019	Landmark 2019, Landmark 2011 (HCV Category 6)		
Area of occupancy of available habitat by Koala population	73.25%	2024	Biolink, 2024 3-yearly CKPoM Population Monitoring		
Area of restoration funded through Rural Landholder Initiative (cumulative)	380 Ha	2025	LCC internal reporting (RLI R1-R11)		
Area of land under restoration by LCC (BMS programs only)	132 Ha	2025	LCC internal reporting (Bushland, Riparian, Landcare, Roadside HCV programs 2024-25)		
Number of NSW & Commonwealth listed threatened species (presence known in LGA)	279 species	2026	BioNet Atlas (Report generated 9/3/26)		
Waterway Health- Richmond River Catchment grade	C-	2024	Richmond River Ecological Health Program Richmond Riverkeeper		
Landcare groups actively supported in urban areas	10	2026	LCC internal reporting (Urban Landcare Program)		

Appendix C – Existing Residential Pipeline

Map Number	Property Address
1	55 Dunoon Road, North Lismore
2	101 Dunoon Road, North Lismore
3	42 McKenzie Street, Lismore
4	554 Ballina Road, Goonellabah
5	1A& 1B Northcott Drive, Goonellabah
6	658 Ballina Road, Goonellabah
7	87 & 97 Pineapple Road, Goonellabah
8	15 Misty Valley View
9	805 Ballina Road, Goonellabah
10	30 Blue Hill Road, Goonellabah
11	30 Keoghan Drive, Goonellabah
12	123 Taylor Road, Chilcotts Grass
13	20 George Drive, Chilcotts Grass
14	17 Apo Street, Goonellabah
15	116 Fischer Street, Goonellabah
16	226 Invercauld Road, Goonellabah
17	46 Newhaven Drive, Goonellabah
18	144 & 146 Military Road, East Lismore
19	48 Old Quarry Road, North Lismore
20	32 & 56 McLeay Road, North Lismore
21	159 Dunoon Road, North Lismore
24	Pineapple Road Precinct, Goonellabah
25	1055 Bruxner Highway, Goonellabah
31	Crawford Road Southern Cross University
32	389 Keen Street East Lismore
33	King George Drive & Barham Street



LISMORE CITY COUNCIL

While all reasonable care has been taken the council does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained on this map and any reliance placed on such information shall be at the sole risk of the user. As acknowledged on signed application. Digital Cadastral Database (c) Land Information Centre

Future Residential Development Map (March 2026)

Disclaimer: The mapped Areas are indicative only and in some instances extended beyond the developable area of an allotment

Printed: 30/03/2026

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Lismore
City Council


Economic
Development
Strategy
2026–2036
Part of Lismore's
Strategic Planning Framework
DRAFT
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
Lismore City Council

Executive summary

The Economic Development Strategy positions Lismore for planned, resilient growth, reinforcing its role as the civic, cultural and economic heart of the Northern Rivers. As the region's designated Regional City, Lismore anchors the institutional, professional and service systems which support a catchment of more than 250,000 people across Northern NSW.

The Strategy translates the land use direction of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) into practical economic action, with a strong focus on job creation, local enterprise, investment readiness, regional collaboration, and capability to support a city of 60,000 people and beyond.

Lismore has entered a new phase defined by opportunity, resilience and locally driven renewal. The Strategy strengthens industry foundations, diversifies employment, and positions investment where it can deliver long term benefits for the community. Central to this is a community wealth building approach which builds local ownership, enhances local skills and grows local businesses so that prosperity stays in Lismore and is reinvested back into the community over time.

Lismore's economic future is not simply about growth; it is about ensuring local people, local businesses and local industries share in that growth, creating a more resilient, more inclusive and community anchored regional capital for the Northern Rivers. The Economic Development Strategy is a blueprint for economic renewal, recognising Lismore's past whilst also building on its present strengths to position Lismore confidently for the next generation of regional leadership.

1 Jobs & Growth

6,500 new jobs to support long-term population aspirations, strengthen local career pathways and keep economic benefit circulating locally. Powered by business expansion, skills development and new investment.

2 Diverse & Future-ready Industries

Strength in health, education, agriculture, creative industries, manufacturing, visitor economy, and emerging circular and climate adapted sectors that support local, long-term prosperity.

3 Place-based Regional Capital

Lismore serves a regional catchment of 250,000 people, anchoring services, capability and region-wide collaboration. Growth shaped by resilience, culture and strong local identity.

4 Local Business Strength

Over 4,400, 98% small and locally owned, forming a resilient economic base that retains wealth within the community.

5 A City of Resilience & Innovatio

A commitment to climate adaptation, flood resilient design, clean technology, circular practices and research led innovation that supports new locally based industries.

6 Collaboration which Accelerates Delivery

Council, First Nations organisations, industry, community and education partners working together to grow local capability, support local procurement and ensure shared prosperity.

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Mayor's Foreword

A Message from Steve Krieg
Mayor, Lismore City Council

There is no community in Australia quite like Lismore. Our people are creative, courageous, and deeply connected to place, each other, and our region. Through the toughest of times, we have stood tall. In the face of unprecedented natural disasters, our community did not break - it rose - stronger, louder, and more determined to define our own future.

This LSPS is our blueprint for that future. It marks a generational shift - a pivot from recovery to regeneration, from hardship to hope. It is a statement not just of land use intent, but of civic pride and ambition. Flood lines or headlines will no longer define Lismore. We will be defined by what we do next.

Our vision is bold: to grow to a regional city of 60,000 people, supported by 6,500+ new jobs, up to 10,000 new homes, and the infrastructure to match. We're planning for a diverse, inclusive and connected city that is climate-resilient, economically vibrant, and rich in culture, nature and opportunity.

Lismore is not a place that fits a traditional mould. We are a university city, a regional health hub, a creative powerhouse, a centre of innovation, and a gateway to the World Heritage rainforests. We are also the Regional Capital of Northern NSW - a role we embrace with pride and purpose. Lismore is the economic, cultural and service centre for one of the fastest-growing regions in the state. Our influence stretches from the coast to the ranges, from Tweed to Grafton, and across generations.

We know the challenges ahead are complex - from climate adaptation to housing affordability, economic transition and ecological restoration. But we also know that no other regional city has shown the capacity to lead and to galvanise like Lismore. The community's response to the 2022 floods was not just a show of strength but the beginning of a transformation.

This LSPS tells our story on our terms. It outlines where growth should occur, how infrastructure will be delivered, what land will be protected, and how our unique character will be celebrated. It ensures that every decision we make reflects the values of our community and the lessons of our past, while casting our eyes firmly toward the future.

Let this be the moment that history looks back on as the turning point. A time when Lismore stepped forward - not as a city rebuilding what was lost, but as a city reimagining what's possible.

Let this be our story - written not in response to crisis, but in pursuit of greatness.

Lismore City Council

1. About this Strategy

1.1: Purpose of the Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy sets out how Lismore will build a prosperous future by placing people and community at the centre of local economic development. Its purpose is to shape a dynamic and resilient economy which genuinely serves the community and ensures everyone can access opportunities through quality jobs, thriving local businesses and a strong, diverse economic base.

The Strategy outlines a clear pathway for growing a fair, inclusive and resilient economy which enables people to live well and affordably in Lismore now and into the future. It supports Council's long-term vision for locally anchored prosperity, community empowerment and shared economic benefit. It also provides a practical framework for coordinated action, investment and innovation across Council and its partners.

A key principle of this Strategy is community wealth building. In this context, it refers to strengthening local ownership, skills, employment and enterprise so economic value created in Lismore is retained within the community and reinvested for long-term benefit. By focusing on local people, local capability and locally driven business ecosystems, the Strategy ensures the benefits of growth remain in Lismore and contribute meaningfully to community wellbeing.

Lismore faces several long-term economic pressures, which means coordinated action is essential to protect jobs and support sustainable growth. This Strategy provides the leadership and direction needed to guide Lismore through these challenges and strengthen its position within the Northern Rivers.



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Economic Development Strategy is part of Lismore City Council's *Strategic Planning Framework*, it sits underneath the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) Lismore 60,000.



The LSPS sets out Council's long-term vision for the area. It explains where jobs, homes, services and activity should be located and how change will be managed over time. The LSPS is about the big picture and provides the direction for land use planning across the Local Government Area and long-term vision for the area use planning across the community.

The Economic Development Strategy, focuses on how Council will support local jobs and the local economy within that long-term vision. It translates the LSPS into practical actions, such as supporting businesses, attracting investment, growing key industries and working with partners to deliver that vision.

Put simply:

- The LSPS explains the long-term direction.
- The Economic Development Strategy explains the actions Council will take in relation to economic development.

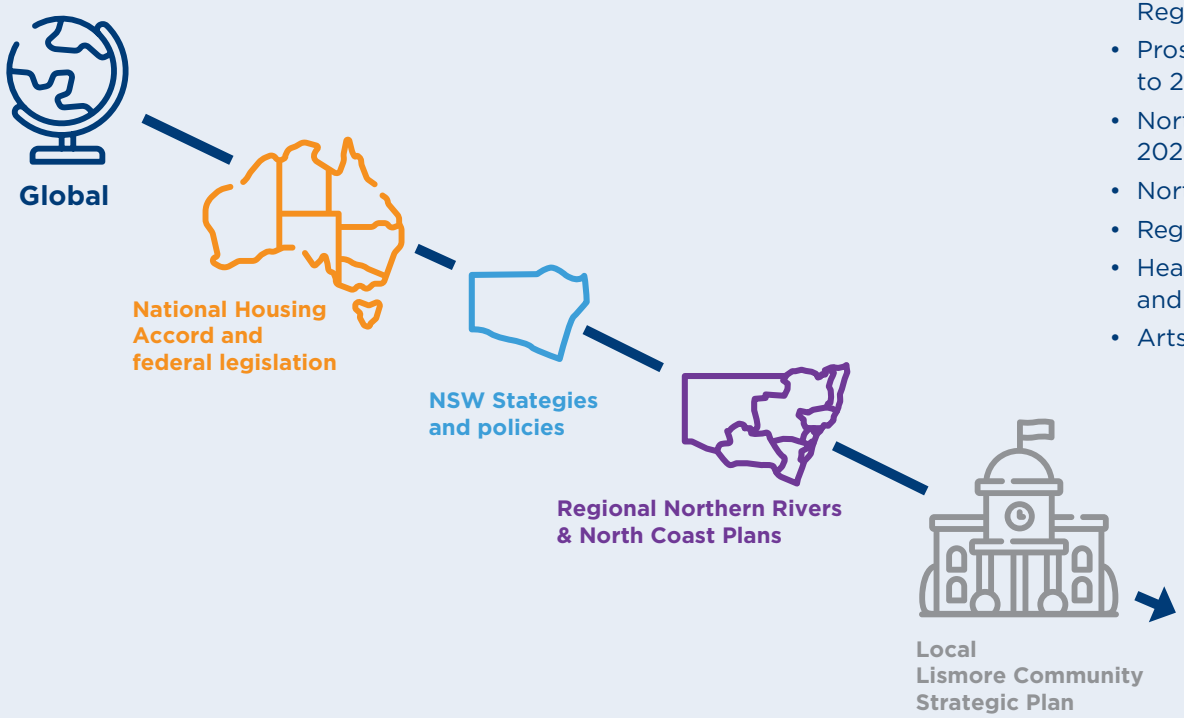
1.2: Strategic Alignment



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Economic Development Strategy has been developed in alignment with regional, state, national and international drivers, policy and legislation, including:

- National Regional Investment Framework
- NSW Smart Places Strategy
- NSW Trade and Investment Strategy 2035
- NSW Regional Development Framework
- NSW Industry Development Strategies
- North Coast Regional Plan 2041
- Northern Rivers Joint Organisation Strategic Regional Priorities 2025-2029
- ProspER Regional Economic & Environmental Plan to 2040
- Northern Rivers Economic Development Strategy 2023 Update
- Northern Rivers NSW Brand Values
- Regional Arts NSW Strategic Plan 2026-2028
- Heartland: A Plan for Regional NSW Arts, Culture and Creative Industries 2026-2035
- Arts Northern Rivers 'Who We Are'



1.3: Economic Context

Regional Advantage and Positioning

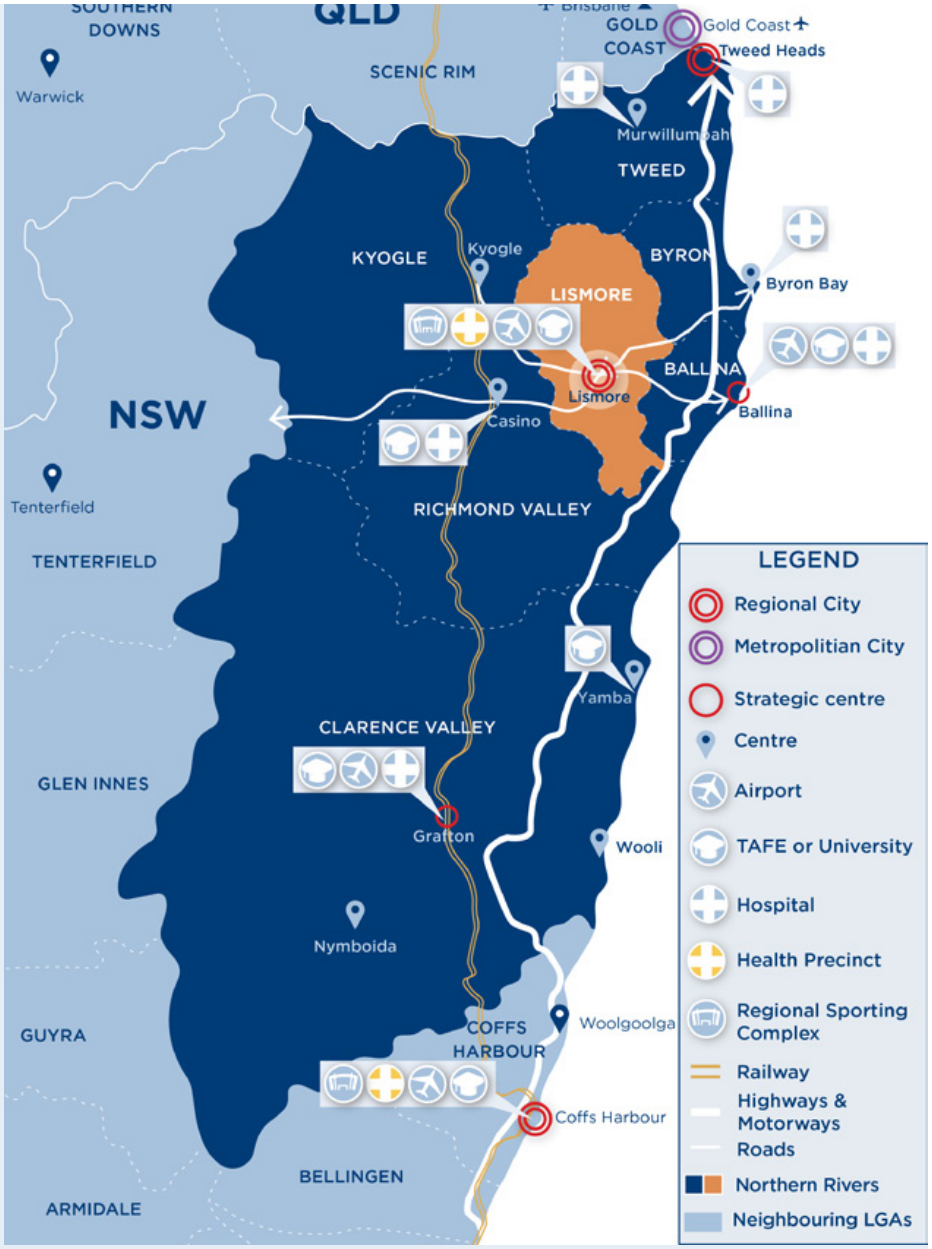
Within the Northern Rivers, Lismore is part of a strong and interconnected network of communities which together form one of NSW's most distinctive regional economies. Each Local Government Area (LGA) contributes unique strengths which, when combined, create a diverse, resilient and competitive region. Rather than competing with our neighbours, Lismore works alongside them to support shared economic outcomes, regional priorities and cross boundary opportunities.

Lismore's role within this regional ecosystem is shaped by its position as the inland civic, cultural and service centre of the Northern Rivers. While coastal LGAs face pressures such as limited land supply, higher costs and rapid population growth, these dynamics create opportunities for collaboration rather than competition. Our real competition is not each other, but the pull of Sydney-focused government attention and the rapid growth of South East Queensland. Lismore complements the coast by offering space, capability and services which support the region as a whole.

Together, these attributes position Lismore as a key regional partner which helps anchor investment, support industry growth and strengthen the long-term resilience of the wider Northern Rivers economy.

Lismore also operates within the broader Northern Rivers–South East Queensland economic corridor, where cross border workforce flow, supply chains and professional networks create shared opportunities. As Lismore expands its strengths in health, education, resilience innovation, creative industries and agrifood, it contributes to a regional capability which can compete with large metropolitan centres, including South East Queensland and Sydney.

By working collaboratively with its regional neighbours, and by focusing on shared challenges such as Sydney centric decision-making, infrastructure investment and cross border growth pressures, the Northern Rivers can leverage a powerful collective advantage. Lismore plays an important part in this regional effort, partnering with communities, businesses and institutions to strengthen the entire region's economic future.



1.3: Economic Context

Lismore contributes to the Northern Rivers' collective strength by offering:

- Competitive industrial and commercial land
- A university, hospitals and research facilities within a regional city setting
- Strong links to the hinterland, agriculture and natural capital
- Diverse, more affordable housing options
- A skilled and adaptable workforce drawn from across the region
- A strong community identity and social infrastructure
- Central regional connectivity with easy access to neighbouring LGAs
- A growing creative, cultural and knowledge based economy



Global Economic Trends

The economic environment in which regional cities operate is shifting rapidly.

Global forces – including technological disruption, demographic change, and geopolitical shifts – are increasingly shaping the way people live, work and engage with the economy.

At the same time, positive drivers – such as the rise of regional work, the accelerating transition to low-carbon, resilient and circular economies, growing demand for purpose-driven employment, and increased recognition of local community, cultural identity, and place-based economies – are creating new opportunities for renewal and transformation on a global scale.

Key National and State-Level Drivers

Key national and state-level drivers include:

- Decentralisation of jobs and government services
- Investment in regional transport and digital infrastructure
- Workforce shortages and migration trends
- Rising interest in renewable energy and nature-based economies
- Regional competitiveness
- Cost-of-living pressures and inflation
- Growing demand for sustainable local food systems
- Shift toward new economic strategies, including place-based and circular models
- Expansion of the care and wellbeing economy
- Investment in disaster resilience and climate adaptation
- Regional skills and education reform agendas
- Increasing emphasis on social enterprise and impact investment
- Digital transformation of essential services.



1.4: How We Got Here

This Strategy builds on years of feedback from the Lismore community. Through the Community Strategic Plan (CSP), Community Scorecard, flood recovery engagement, LSPS development and ongoing conversations with residents, businesses and community organisations, Council has gathered deep insight into what matters most to people who live, work and invest in Lismore. These processes consistently highlighted the need for more local jobs, a stronger and more diverse economy, a confident and resilient CBD, better training and career pathways, and opportunities that keep prosperity circulating within the community.

The Economic Development Strategy adds to this foundation with targeted one-on-one engagement carried out before broader community consultation. Council met with local business owners, industry leaders, education and health institutions, government agencies and community organisations to understand their priorities and challenges. These conversations explored Lismore's economic identity, barriers to growth and opportunities for investment. Stakeholders shared place-based insights and practical experience from across sectors and locations within the LGA.

Common themes included the need to rebuild confidence, grow and diversify local jobs, improve workforce readiness, strengthen strategic land use planning, and position Lismore as a confident, credible destination for people, enterprise and ideas. These insights directly shaped the themes, actions and priorities in this Strategy.



2. Our Economy

2.1: Our Economic Snapshot

For more insight and examples into Lismore's people, businesses and economic indicators, see our Population and Economic Snapshot here

84.9% are employed

4.4% workforce are First Nations

26,000 Workers

71% of residents work locally

26% of jobs in Health Care

$1,319 Median weekly household income (+45% since 2011)

53% of people have Certificate III+ qualifications

$3.05B Gross Regional Product (GRP) 2023-24

$69,593 GRP per Capita

+$780M GRP Growth (since 2001)

4,433 registered businesses

98% of businesses are small (0-19 employees)

761,000 annual visitors

$181.0M annual visitor spend

$490.0M investment pipeline

2 hospitals

2 universities

City Hall

Sources: ABS, ABS Census (2011 & 2021), ABS Data Explorer, Lismore City Council Annual Financial Statements 2023-24, National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, Informed Decisions, Small Area Labour Markets (SALM) Lismore City Council, Tourism Research Australia

2.2: Where and Who We Are

Lismore is the civic, cultural and economic heart of the Northern Rivers.

Lismore stands on Widjabul/ Wia-bal Country and carries stories, cultural memory, and continuing leadership of the Bundjalung peoples. This place has always been a meeting ground, where waterways, trade routes, ideas, and cultures converge. That spirit of connection continues to shape Lismore's identity today.

Lismore's LGA spans multiple micro-climates, enabling production from cool-climate crops to subtropical agriculture within a compact geographic area, strengthens our competitive position in affording diverse agriculture and year-round production.

As the only designated Regional City in the Northern Rivers, Lismore is more than a population centre. It is the region's anchor — the service hub, cultural centre and a key location for health, education, government, logistics, creative industries, sport and small business. Together, these services support more than 250,000 people across the wider region. Lismore is also well connected to major cities through nearby airports, including Ballina Byron Gateway Airport (30 minutes), Gold Coast Airport (1 hour 20 minutes) and Brisbane Airport (2 hours 40 minutes). These connections reinforce Lismore's role as a regional centre and support opportunities for growth, trade, visitation and investment.



2.2: Where and Who We Are

Lismore is where regional strengths meet opportunity, where ideas take shape and where communities rely on one another.

The city sits within the Casino–Lismore–Ballina freight triangle, an important inland logistics base that supports production, processing and distribution across the region. Lismore's economy is powered by educators, carers, growers, artists, entrepreneurs, makers and professionals who choose to live and work here.

This strong people base is supported by excellent connectivity. Lismore's road networks allow easy movement between the city and its surrounding villages, and support efficient movement of goods across the region. The M1 and Bruxner Highway provide direct north–south and inland–east connections, while the city's proximity to the Queensland border strengthens economic and social links with South-East Queensland.

Lismore's economy includes 25,889 local jobs and 4,433 businesses, with 98% being small businesses. This reflects a strong culture of entrepreneurship, locally driven enterprise and community focused economic activity. The city is also home to a growing number of First Nations–owned businesses across creative industries, health, media, education and professional services.

Lismore is recognised for leadership across several nationally and regionally significant sectors. This includes First Nations enterprise, with the Koori Mail serving as a leading national voice in Indigenous media and business. Major institutions such as Southern Cross University, the University Centre for Rural Health, Lismore Base Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital anchor the city's health, research and education economy. Lismore is also home to influential agricultural and food producers including Norco and Mountain Blue, as well as emerging industries such as hemp cultivation, natural product development and regenerative farming innovation. In the creative economy, Arts Northern Rivers serves as the region's peak body for arts and cultural development, reinforcing Lismore's long-standing influence across arts, culture and creative enterprise. Widjabul Wia bul leaders also hold roles on state-level Commissions, demonstrating the strength and visibility of First Nations leadership across multiple sectors.



These strengths make Lismore a place where communities, industries and ideas come together, creating a strong foundation for a resilient and prosperous future for the whole Northern Rivers.

2.3: Our Key Industries

Lismore's economy is supported by a diverse mix of established and emerging industries that underpin its regional role and provide the platform for future growth and diversification. Lismore's key industries closely align with the broader economic strengths of the Northern Rivers.

As a region, we are strongest when we work together, and Lismore's industry base complements the coastal, valley and hinterland economies. Our shared strengths in health, education, agriculture, creative industries, tourism and emerging green and circular industries form a cohesive regional economy which is more competitive, resilient and attractive to investment when viewed as a whole.

These industries and areas of economic activity align closely with the themes in this Strategy and represent the key drivers of employment, innovation and investment:

These industries represent the foundation of Lismore's economic identity and the key focus areas for targeted growth, diversification and investment attraction.

Agriculture and Agri-Business

Producing volumes and quantities of agricultural produce at a globally recognised scale, Lismore's agricultural sector is made up of many parts, with more smallholdings than other big producing areas – signalling a testament to the people as a collective rather than a monopoly of big players. Lismore's rural lands support a diverse and high-value agricultural base, including macadamias, dairy, beef, nurseries, broadacre crops, and essential oils, several at concentrations well above NSW averages Access to distinct climate zones supports crops from cold weather viticulture to tropical sugarcane, underpinning resilient, diversified agrivalue chains. The region plays a major role in the development of bush foods and bush medicines, grounded in Bundjalung cultural knowledge and presents opportunities for emerging commercial pathways and First Nations-led enterprise. The LGA has longstanding strengths in cooperative agriculture and value-add food production and speciality products, supported by regional supply chains, and enabled by regional research capability and end product innovations. Growing interest in regenerative farming practices, functional foods, medicinal horticulture and agri-innovation, plus the emergence of hemp as a crop, is reinforcing Lismore's role in resilient, future-focused agri-business.

Creative and Cultural Industries

The creative and cultural sector is a defining strength of Lismore's economy and identity. The LGA has one of the highest concentrations of creative practitioners outside capital cities, supported by regionally significant organisations and venues including City Hall, Arts Northern Rivers, NORPA and the Lismore Conservatorium. A strong ecosystem of artists, performers, makers and creative enterprises, combined with festivals, live music, performance and public art, contributes to employment, tourism, CBD activation and Lismore's reputation as the cultural capital of inland Northern NSW, with Nimbin providing an additional nationally recognised creative anchor. Cross-sector programs which refer people to creative and community activities for their health and wellbeing create new opportunities for artists to partner with the health sector.

2.3: Our Key Industries

Education, Research and Innovation



Lismore is a regional centre for education, research and skills development, anchored by Southern Cross University (SCU), the University Centre for Rural Health, TAFE NSW and a diverse mix of public and private education providers, including the Living School in the CBD.

Together, these institutions support applied research, professional training and workforce development across health, agriculture, climate resilience, sustainability and the creative industries, with strong collaboration between education providers, industry and community.

Additionally, SCU provides major research facilities, such as a clinical trials centre and licensed labs which can do advanced medical testing. This ecosystem is complemented by nationally and internationally recognised centres for regenerative practice and land-based learning, including Djanbung Gardens (home to Permaculture College Australia) in Nimbin and Zaytuna Farm near The Channon, which contribute to education, research, innovation and enterprise in sustainable agriculture, food systems and environmental practice.

Collectively, Lismore's education and research ecosystem underpins innovation, attracts students and professionals, and strengthens the city's role as a knowledge-driven regional centre.

Manufacturing and Circular Economy



Lismore supports a base of small and medium manufacturers operating in food processing, materials and fabrication, including specialist trades that service agriculture, construction and regional industries.

Manufacturing (of all scales) plays a key role in value-adding to local production and supporting recovery and rebuilding activity across the LGA. There are growing opportunities to expand this sector through circular-economy innovation and low-carbon manufacturing, including the local production and application of sustainable and bio-based materials, natural products, food and beverage innovation, waste-to-resource solutions, and resilience-focused construction and manufacturing.

These opportunities build on local skills, enterprise capability and emerging innovation pathways.

Health, Aged Care and Social Assistance



A cornerstone sector for Lismore and the wider Northern Rivers, anchored by Lismore Base Hospital, St Vincent's Private Hospital and the headquarters of the Northern NSW Local Health District, which services communities across the region.

The sector is supported by a strong allied health and community care workforce, close links to the University Centre for Rural Health, and growing demand for health professionals, training pathways and precinct-based investment that reinforce Lismore's role as the region's primary health hub.

2.3: Our Key Industries

Visitor Economy and Events

Tourism, sport and cultural events are important contributors to local jobs and business activity in Lismore. Festivals, performances, sporting events and cultural programming support hospitality and retail, activate public spaces and the CBD, and draw visitors to Lismore and surrounding villages throughout the year.

Emerging wellness and medical tourism, from retreats and spas to specialist treatment centres, adds year round visitation and higher value spend. Lismore's natural assets support growth in nature-based tourism connected to regenerative landscapes and cultural experiences, and compliment coastal destinations in the region. Together with Nimbin's nationally recognised visitor profile, this sector reinforces Lismore's position as the cultural capital of inland Northern NSW.

Renewable, Environmental and Nature-Based Activities

Emerging opportunities in renewable energy generation and services, carbon and nature-based markets, and climate-aligned innovation. In Lismore, this sector is informed by strong environmental values, expertise in regenerative land management, and growing links to research, education and resilience-led enterprise. Activity in this area aligns with renewable energy services, nature-based solutions, carbon and nature-based markets, and climate adaptation initiatives that build on local skills, innovation and lived experience of recovery and regeneration.

Night-Time Economy

A re-emerging area of economic activity in Lismore, centred on evening arts, entertainment, hospitality and cultural activation, particularly within the CBD. This sector supports local businesses and employment, contributes to a vibrant and welcoming city centre, and reflects community aspirations for a stronger, more diverse and active after-dark offering that complements Lismore's broader arts, culture and events economy.

2.4: Our Economic Enablers and Challenges

Lismore's economy is built on strong institutional, cultural and community foundations. However, like many regional cities, it operates within a complex environment of structural pressures, market shifts and climate risk. A coordinated response to understanding how to leverage our enablers and address the challenges is key to defining why a proactive Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is necessary.

Economic Enablers (what we can build on)



Regional City Strengths
Lismore's status and institutional depth create a stable base for jobs, services and investment.

Knowledge, Health and Education Hub
Strong clusters in health, research, training and education provide high value job pathways and drive innovation.

Diverse, Locally Owned Economy
A broad mix of industries and a strong small business base (98% locally owned) underpin resilience and community retained economic value.

Housing Affordability and Lifestyle Advantage
Lismore offers more affordable and diverse housing options, supporting worker attraction, family retention and local liveability.

Connectivity and Logistics Advantage
Road, airport and freight triangle connections enable trade, supply chains and regional service delivery.

First Nations Leadership and Enterprise
Strong cultural leadership and growing enterprise presence strengthen inclusive growth and place based capability.

Leadership, Regulation and Business Support
Council's enabling role in planning pathways, precinct planning, strategic landuse direction, streamlined approvals, advocacy and partnerships, supports business creation, investment readiness and coordinated economic development.

Economic Challenges (what holds us back)



Flood & Insurance Risk
Ongoing Affordability, lending risk and investor confidence remain barriers to private investment, especially in affected precincts.

Skills Shortages & Workforce Gaps
Shortages in key sectors (such as health, trades, construction, childcare and hospitality) limit business growth.

Land & Infrastructure Readiness
Opportunity exists, though coordinated rezoning, servicing and delivery pathways are needed to be investment ready.

Industry Transition Pressures
Shifts in retail, services and production call for support of emerging sectors such as circular economy, renewable services and advanced manufacturing.

Housing Supply & Liveability Constraints
Attracting and retaining workers depends on the availability and diversity of housing, as well as broader liveability factors such as access to services, amenities, and long-term rental options.

Competition for Government Attention and Capital
The Northern Rivers must compete with Sydney-focused policy and the rapid growth of South East Queensland for funding and investment.

Together, these enablers and challenges show why a coordinated Economic Development Strategy is needed. The Strategy focuses effort where it will have the greatest impact, guiding job creation, industry growth, investment readiness and community centred economic development so Lismore can build a resilient, inclusive and prosperous future.

A detailed economic evidence base, including SWOT analysis, demographic trends, industry performance and strategic justification, is provided in Appendix 2 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).

Lismore City Council

3. Vision and Objectives

3.1: Vision

In 2036, Lismore is thriving as the civic, cultural and economic heart of the Northern Rivers.

Recognised as the regional capital, Lismore's leadership in resilience is innovation-driven rather than disaster-defined, grounded in its long tradition of creativity and adaptation. Its heartbeat reverberates through the rivers, over the rolling hillsides and gullies, travelling through the laneways and plazas of our urban centres and out into the broader setting of the North Coast.

Together, our people have shaped this Regional City we all love, whether we live here or come for its many services. The community and its visitors thrive together with access to recreation, events, jobs, services and the arts.

Our economic heart, built on both diversity and cohesion, has been strengthened by collaboration and support across industries, and guided by sustainable practices that respect our environment and heritage. With two-eyed seeing, both Indigenous and Western perspectives and solutions are embraced and integrated into the way we have commanded our economic resilience.

Through harnessing the passion of our community, the knowledge of our institutions, and the opportunities of new technologies and infrastructure, Lismore is a hub for health, education, professional services, creative industries, agriculture, tourism, and local enterprise.

Our prosperity fosters inclusivity, with legacy businesses flourishing and a continuous flow of emerging entrepreneurs opening doors across the LGA. Our people and places are prepared to meet challenges, seize opportunities and apply innovative and collaborative solutions to challenges that come our way. It is through this resilience, innovation and connectivity that Lismore thrives and is recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in flood excellence.

This prosperity is built locally through strong institutions, local enterprise and employment that retain, grow and reinvest wealth within the Lismore community for long-term benefit.

It reflects a commitment to an economy where investment, skills and opportunity are anchored in place, strengthening local ownership and shared prosperity over time.

The vibrant economy simply reflects the strength and spirit of the people.

Lismore is and will continue to be a City with deep roots, strong connections and bold ambition.

This Vision is delivered through a clear set of Strategic Objectives that guide investment, partnership and action to support inclusive growth, job creation and long-term economic resilience.



3.2: Strategic Objectives

As outlined within the LSPS, Lismore City Council has a long-term population aspiration of 60,000 residents. Achieving this requires a strong and diverse economy supported by job creation, workforce capability and coordinated industry development. Current workforce shortages and identified regional skills gaps (particularly across health, trades, construction, agriculture, early childhood education, and logistics) highlight the urgency of targeted action to generate approximately 6,500 new jobs.

Job creation is therefore a central pillar of this Strategy. The Strategic Objectives set the direction for coordinated and inclusive growth supported by enabling infrastructure, a dynamic local economy, and housing, skills, and industry settings which allow people to live and work well in Lismore. As we progress to this aspiration, the aim of the Strategic Objectives and Actions is to ensure prosperity is retained and shared across the whole community.

The Strategic Objectives define the key focus areas required to deliver the Vision and guide coordinated action across Council, industry, government and the community. They align with the LSPS and provide the framework for implementation, targeted investment, industry diversification and performance monitoring to ensure job creation, skills development and population growth occur hand-in-hand. These objectives are underpinned by a community wealth building approach which prioritises local ownership, local skills, local procurement and pathways which keep economic benefits circulating within the Lismore community.

The Strategic Objectives will be delivered through a combination of the seven (7) turbocharger programmes, and a detailed set of actions Council's Economic Development team will implement.





3.2: Strategic Objectives

1 Business Growth and Investment Attraction	2 Innovation and Entrepreneurship	3 Skills, Workforce and Knowledge	4 Industry Development and Diversification	5 Collaborative Leadership, Governance and Delivery
Strengthen Lismore's business ecosystem and attract new, value-adding investment that generates new jobs and supports diversification.	**Foster a culture of innovation, research and creative enterprise that drives productivity and new business formation, across both established and emerging industries.**	**Build a skilled, adaptable and inclusive workforce aligned with current and emerging industry needs.**	**Strengthen Lismore's established industries while enabling growth in emerging sectors to build a diverse, resilient economy.**	**Support economic growth with clear leadership, coordinated governance and strong partnerships across community, industry and government..** **Strengthen partnerships with First Nations organisations and leaders to support inclusive economic development and greater participation of Blak businesses in Lismore's economy.**
Rationale: Transitioning into a modern regional city requires a proactive approach to business retention, expansion and inward investment to drive sustained job creation. The city's affordable land, central location and institutional base provide strong foundations for attracting private capital and new enterprises that generate employment opportunities for Lismore's current and future workforce.	**Rationale:** Lismore's strength in education, health and the creative economy, combined with its established industries in agriculture and manufacturing, positions the city as a Northern Rivers hub for innovation and knowledge-based enterprise. Innovation and entrepreneurship are expected to occur across all sectors, from agri-business and food production to manufacturing, health, creative industries and services. Partnering with Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW and private enterprise will help translate local ideas, research and practical know-how into investable ventures, new businesses and jobs across the economy.	**Rationale:** Sustainable growth depends on people, and on ensuring local residents can access secure, well-paid employment and clear pathways into work. Addressing skills shortages and attracting new talent underpins investment success, while strengthening pathways between education providers and employers helps retain graduates, lift workforce participation, and translate economic growth into lasting community benefit and locally retained wealth. Retention is as critical as attraction, with housing access, liveability and secure pathways essential to keeping skilled people in Lismore.	**Rationale:** Lismore's economic identity is anchored in health, education, agriculture, manufacturing, creative industries and tourism, which together generate employment, innovation and regional export value. Alongside these established strengths, emerging industries — including the night-time economy, renewable energy and environmental markets, circular economy activity, digital services and advanced manufacturing — play an increasing role in job creation, city activation and economic diversification. Expanding across these areas will reduce vulnerability to external shocks and support long-term sustainability.	**Rationale:** Government leadership is a critical foundation for economic development and attraction. Implementation success depends on collective effort. Together, the Northern Rivers present a diverse yet cohesive setting for place-based success. Establishing transparent delivery structures, performance reporting and inter-governmental collaboration will build confidence among investors, stakeholders and the community.

4. Implementation and Actions

Council already plays a vital role in economic development. The following are principal activities, relevant strategies and policies that compliment this Strategy. These will continue to support the implementation of this Strategy.

4.1: Existing Services and Supporting Strategies

Principle activities – what we will continue to do

Service Team	Service Description
Statutory Planning	• DA concierge/ duty planning service for tailored business
Strategic Planning	• Industrial and commercial land identification and rezoning • Annual housekeeping reviews of planning legislation • Place-based plans to develop public realm and connectivity improvements • Integrated transport planning
Economic Development	• Business engagement and support through one-on-one assistance, networking and small business programs • Investment attraction and marketing to position Lismore as a regional centre for enterprise and innovation • Economic data and insights reporting to inform decision-making, grants and strategic planning (e.g. CBAiQ, Neighbourlytics, Profile ID) • Project facilitation and advocacy with state and federal agencies to enable investment, workforce and industry growth to benefit Lismore and the broader region • Coordination of strategic economic projects and partnerships • Night-time economy coordination, fostering safe and vibrant evening activities in the CBD

4.1: Existing Services and Supporting Strategies

Service Team	Service Description
Destination Management	• Fostering the Nimbin destination brand • Supporting the accommodation • Destination marketing and promotion to attract visitors • Development and implementation of visitor economy strategies • Support for tourism operators and product development • Collaboration with regional tourism bodies • Placemaking and public space activation initiatives to enhance visitor experience and community use
City Activation (Events and Facilities)	• Delivery and support of major events and festivals • Partnerships to attract conferences and sporting events • Infrastructure planning and support for nighttime events, festivals, and arts activation, supporting vibrancy and safety • Management and activation of Lismore's key venues including Oaks and Crozier sporting fields/ facilities and City Hall
City Brand and Advocacy	• Advocacy for support, funding and partnerships across Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework

4.1: Existing Services and Supporting Strategies

Principle Strategies – what we are already committed to delivering

Complementary Strategies	Action Summary
Destination Management Plan	• Guide tourism development, marketing, and visitor experience improvements
Events Strategy	• Sporting events • Music events
CBD Activation Plan	• Actions to enhance vibrancy, business activity, and public realm in the CBD
Climate Adaptation and Resilience Strategy	• Identifies actions for key sectors and industries to increase resilience and adaptive capacity, including the built environment of our central business district
Rural Land Use Strategy	• Identifies areas for maximised agri-tourism • Identifies areas for agricultural protection
Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy	• Identifies community needs for access to housing • Commits Lismore City Council to a suite of actions to enable housing diversity and affordability
Lismore Centre, North Lismore and South Lismore Precinct Plans (draft)	• Identifies the future use of all vacant buyback land • Improves connectivity within and across the precincts, including along the riverfront • Identifies building height and other planning control changes within the Health Precinct and CBD
Nimbin Place Plan	• Supports cultural tourism and local economic development in Nimbin

4.1: Existing Services and Supporting Strategies

Supporting Policies	Action Summary
Affordable and Diverse Housing Policy	• Discounted contribution fees for shop top housing etc
Approvals And Use Of Land Owned Or Managed By Council Policy	• Provides framework for leasing, licensing, and approvals for Council-owned land.
Local Approvals Policy	• Streamlines approval processes for business and events.

4.2: Council's Roles

Advocate:

Represent the community's interests and actively engage with other levels of government to influence policy and outcomes.

Facilitate:

Working with others to arrange and support the delivery of a function or outcome.

Deliver:

Project implementation.

Legislate and policy creation:

Set and enforce controls such as building and development to best enable a desired outcome.

Service provision:

Delivery of functions and services such as infrastructure.



4.3: Action Table

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
Strategic Objective 1:					
1.1	Update and re-promote the 2021, "Enabling the Agri-Economy" video case studies featuring local agribusinesses (Five Sixty Farms, CannaPacific, Mountain Blue Farms, Nimbin Valley Dairy and Table Under a Tree), including a follow-up "Where are they now?" series highlighting business growth, innovation and investment outcomes since the previous Strategy.'	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time Council budget	
1.2	**LSPS TURBOCHARGER: CBD Renewal** Activate the CBD Renewal turbocharger as a flagship mixed-use precinct, transforming the city centre into a regional-scale flood-resilient, future-ready hub of commercial activity, culture and community life. A key focus of the CBD renewal will be to integrate the river into the cbd through improved public realm and public spaces. This includes coordinating precinct planning, investment attraction, public realm activation, adaptive reuse, creative and cultural programming, and night-time economy initiatives to restore confidence, identity and economic activity in the CBD.	Facilitate Advocate Deliver	1–2 years	Staff time External funding	NSW Reconstruction Authority

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
1.3	Develop a suite of tailored investment prospectuses that promote key industries, including: • agriculture and agri-business • creative and cultural industries • education, research and innovation • health, aged care and social assistance • manufacturing and circular economy • visitor economy and events • renewable and environmental activities • night-time economy. The prospectuses should be used to proactively seek investment, partnerships, funding and business development opportunities.	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	
1.4	Establish a biannual Business and Investment Roundtable involving local and regional partners and key industry and investment representatives — to support collaboration, identify emerging opportunities and attract new enterprise and capital to the region.	Facilitate	1–2 years	Staff time	RDA Northern Rivers Business NSW Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD)

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
1.5	Develop and maintain a publicly accessible online land identification portal that maps commercial and industrial land. The platform will feature investment-ready, currently available, and future-supported sites, along with planning information, infrastructure status, workforce data and available incentives.	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time	
1.6	Investigate opportunities to facilitate the establishment of co-working and creative enterprise spaces across the Lismore LGA. Investigations may include preparing a business case, conducting a feasibility assessment and engaging relevant stakeholders.	Facilitate Legislate	1–2 years	Staff time	Regional, state-wide and national co-working operators Business NSW RDA Northern Rivers Arts Northern Rivers
1.7	Develop and implement a coordinated night-time economy program, including updated policies and procedures, targeted public-realm and infrastructure improvements, and a curated calendar of evening events to activate key precincts.	Facilitate Deliver	1-2 years	External funding required	Business Lismore Nimbin Chamber of Commerce Business NSW
1.8	Consider introducing a Special Entertainment Precinct under the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) guidelines. Considerations include conducting community and stakeholder engagement and identifying a certain area within the CBD	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	Business Lismore

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
1.9	Carry out an EOI process to secure the future re-activation of City Hall as a key Northern Rivers cultural and community facility.	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	
1.10	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business Growth Initiative to increase the number, visibility and capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses in Lismore. This could include strengthening procurement pathways, mentoring and business support, improving access to networks and investment readiness programs and leveraging Indigenous Business Month (October) to promote and showcase local enterprises.	Facilitate Advocate Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time Council budget External funding opportunities	Business Lismore Nimbin Chamber of Commerce Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council Widjabul/ Wia-bal Gurrumbil Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business networks

Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
Strategic Objective 2:				
2.1 **LSPS Turbocharger: City of Resilience** Establish an integrated research, innovation and commercialisation ecosystem aligned with Lismore's strengths in climate science, regenerative agriculture, flood-resilient design, health technology, creative digital industries and First Nations knowledge systems. Position Lismore as a City of Resilience through targeted knowledge sharing campaigns and partnerships. This includes supporting partnership governance, innovation programs, start-up and scale-up attraction, pilot projects and industry linkages that translate research capability into new enterprises, investment and high-value jobs.	Facilitate Advocate	1–2 years (governance and program activation) Ongoing	Staff time External funding (as required)	Southern Cross University TAFE NSW University Centre for Rural Health Research institutes Industry partners Start-ups and entrepreneurs NSW and Commonwealth agencies
2.2 Investigate and facilitate opportunities to utilise Lismore Airport for emerging aviation services—such as medical and agricultural drone operations, training and recreational uses. Opportunities to attract Defence and government aviation activity will also be explored. This includes assessing the airport's capability to accommodate aircraft such as the Royal Australian Air Force C-27J Spartan and support specialised training, emergency response and regional operations.	Facilitate Advocate	2–5 years	Staff time External Funding Required	

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
2.3	Support Circular Economy & Repair Initiatives through actions such as: • promoting the Northern Rivers Repair Trail • supporting community-led repair related initiatives such as repair cafes or hubs • identifying commercial opportunities for circular products • linking innovators with grants or SCU labs	Facilitate Advocate	Ongoing	Staff time	Southern Cross University (SCU) Interested businesses

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
Strategic Objective 3:					
3.1	**LSPS Turbocharger: Lismore Health, Care & Wellbeing Precinct** Progress the Lismore Health, Care & Wellbeing Precinct turbocharger by coordinating expansion, integration and investment across the hospital, university, allied health, training and research ecosystem. This includes supporting precinct planning, workforce development pathways, training and research partnerships, and advocacy for infrastructure and service investment to position Lismore as a nationally recognised hub for regional health innovation and care.	Facilitate Advocate	1–2 years (precinct coordination and investment readiness), then ongoing	Staff time External funding (as required)	Northern NSW Local Health District Southern Cross University University Centre for Rural Health TAFE NSW NSW Reconstruction Authority
3.2	Develop talent pipelines to address workforce needs across priority sectors. This includes: • establishing a Local Skills Collaboration Group with education and industry partners • mapping skill gaps (audit) • coordinating targeted attraction campaigns • partnering with tertiary and vocational providers to co-design training aligned to precinct-based demand (e.g. health, Construction, agri-food).	Facilitate Advocate	1–2 years	Staff time	TAFE NSW Southern Cross University Schools Industry groups RDA Northern Rivers DPIRD

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
3.3	Develop and deliver campaigns to promote Lismore as a destination for professionals and skilled workers. Use cost-effective digital tools such as social media, short-form videos to tell local stories and showcase career, lifestyle, and housing advantages. Align campaign messaging with broader investment, housing and population attraction strategies to reinforce Lismore's value proposition as a vibrant regional centre. Align campaign messaging to sectors experiencing critical workforce shortages — including allied health, childcare, trades and hospitality leadership.	Deliver Advocate	2-5 years	Staff time External funding required	RDA Northern Rivers
3.4	Provide targeted business education and capability-building programs that respond to local business needs. Ensure education content is responsive to local conditions and industry needs, with flexibility to evolve over time.	Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time External funding required	Nimbin Chamber of Commerce Business Lismore
3.5	Through promotion, advocacy and collaborations, ensure local education and training is supporting clear pathways to employment in Lismore for all ages and entry-levels.	Facilitate Advocate	Ongoing	Staff time	TAFE NSW, Southern Cross University NSW Department of Education Local high schools and industry groups

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
3.6	Work with state and federal governments to attract more skilled workers to our region, particularly in health, agriculture, education and trades.	Advocate	Ongoing	Staff time	
Strategic Objective 4:					
4.1	**LSPS Turbocharger: Creative Industries and Cultural Hubs** Deliver the Creative Industries and Cultural Hubs turbocharger through coordinated precinct planning, investment in venues and programs, and targeted support for creative enterprises across music, performance, digital media, design and visual arts. This could include: leveraging existing festivals and cultural programming, supporting creative start-ups and makers through affordable spaces and incubation, embedding First Nations cultural expression, and strengthening evening and night-time economy activation across the CBD and surrounding villages.	Facilitate Deliver Advocate	1–2 years (planning, activation and early delivery) 2–5 years (program and infrastructure expansion)	Staff time External funding (as required)	Arts Northern Rivers First Nations organisations Creative sector businesses Destination NSW

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
4.2	**LSPS Turbocharger: Agri-Food Innovation and Logistics Excellence** Advance the Agri-Food Innovation and Logistics Excellence turbocharger by supporting infrastructure, enterprise development and investment that strengthen regenerative agriculture, food manufacturing, value-add production and regional logistics capability (e.g. Casino-Lismore-Ballina freight triangle). This includes scoping facilities for processing, storage and distribution, supporting innovation in alternative and functional foods, and strengthening logistics connections that link regional producers to coastal and national markets.	Facilitate Advocate	1–2 years (feasibility, scoping and investment readiness) 2–5 years (delivery and industry growth)	Staff time External funding (as required)	DPIRD Northern Rivers Producers and processors Logistics operators Southern Cross University Industry associations
4.3	**LSPS Turbocharger: Circular Economy Innovation** Progress the Construction, Circular Economy Innovation Turbocharger as a region-wide initiative positioning Lismore as a national leader in circular economy innovation. This includes supporting circular economy ventures, promoting reuse, repair, recycling and th testing of innovative ideas that demonstrate what's possible in resource recovery across sectors.	Facilitate Advocate	1–2 years (partnership model, pilots and investment readiness) 2–5 years (scaling, industry growth and national positioning)	Staff time External funding (as required)	Southern Cross University Waste and circular economy operators NSW and Commonwealth agencies

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
4.4	Facilitate Lismore as a regional and rural service specialist with regards to rural industries and agriculture. This may include pursuing a range of avenues such as: • initiating a capability-mapping and gap analysis to assess existing rural servicing industries across Lismore • engaging with service providers and farming associations to identify unmet needs • partnering with TAFE NSW and SCU to develop specialist training • supporting establishment of a Rural Service Hub and developing	Facilitate Advocate	1–3 years	Staff time	Agribusinesses NSW Department of Primary Industries TAFE NSW (engineering, mechanical trades, agricultural machinery training) Southern Cross University (engineering, applied science) RDA Northern Rivers Local producers and farming associations
Strategic Objective 5:					
5.1	Support Business Lismore and the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce as key local networks with sustainable funding and governance, coordinated business events, training and local procurement.	Facilitate Support	Ongoing	Staff time Council Budget	Business Lismore Nimbin Chamber of Commerce
5.2	Look into new partnership models which let Council and others invest together and deliver projects faster, and push for any legal changes needed to make these models possible.	Advocate Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time	NSW Government (Department of Planning; NSW Treasury) Commonwealth Government (as relevant) Others as relevant

Action		Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
5.3	Collaborate across the Northern Rivers for shared funding and advocacy opportunities.	Facilitate Advocate	Ongoing	Staff time	Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO)
5.4	Collaborate with insurers, financial institutions and government stakeholders to address flood-related barriers to property investment in the CBD and South Lismore – focusing on risk mitigation, insurance accessibility, and banking confidence to support reinvestment and commercial activity.	Facilitate Advocate	Ongoing	Staff time	Insurance Council of Australia Insurance providers and industry associations NSW Reconstruction Authority NSW Treasury / Department of Customer Service (insurance policy) RDA Northern Rivers Business Lismore Property owners and developers
5.5	Provide grant application support to early-stage entrepreneurs, local innovators, new businesses.	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff Time	New Businesses

Monitoring

This EDS is one strategy that, together with a range of other theme-based strategies, contribute to the future vision for Lismore. Collectively, the Strategic Planning Framework aims to improve all aspects of daily living that make Lismore a great place to live. These quality-of-life indicators are monitored across the framework as a whole and are detailed within Appendix B of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The indicators will be monitored and published every four years and/or as and when Census data is available. In addition, monitoring and reporting against delivery of actions set within the Economic Development Strategy, and any associated qualitative data, will be provided annually.

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Lismore City Council


Lismore
Rural Land Use
Strategy
2026–2036
Part of Lismore's
Strategic Planning Framework
DRAFT
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
Lismore City Council

Executive summary

Lismore's rural lands underpin the region's economy, identity and longterm resilience, making up 88% of the local government area and accommodating more than 16,000 rural residents, a diverse agricultural sector, and landscapes of deep cultural significance to the Widjabal/ Wiabal people. Highvalue soils, a subtropical climate and proximity to major markets position Lismore as a key contributor to regional food security and a hub for emerging agricultural industries.

Agriculture remains central to the rural economy, generating more than $100 million annually and over 1,000 jobs. Macadamias, beef, dairy, sugar cane, horticulture and nurseries dominate production, while new industries such as lemon myrtle, hemp and regenerative farming are gaining momentum.

The Rural Land Use Strategy responds to modern micro and macro challenges and opportunities by setting a clear direction for how rural land will be protected, managed and activated into the future, balancing both rural industries and rural living. It aligns with the Local Strategic Planning Statement, regional and State planning frameworks, and extensive community feedback gathered through a Discussion Paper process. Community priorities emphasised food security, sustainable farming, protection of productive land, support for emerging industries, and careful management of development pressures.

To achieve the collective visions for Lismore's rural lands, the Strategy outlines actions to retain and refine rural zoning, protect highvalue agricultural land, guide compatible development, support regenerative and smalllot farming, encourage local processing and supply chains, and improve the wellbeing and amenity of rural communities. It also recognises the role of villages and alternative housing models in supporting rural communities without undermining agricultural productivity.

Together, these measures aim to secure Lismore's rural lands as a foundation for economic prosperity, environmental health, cultural continuity and community wellbeing—now and for future generations.



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Mayor's Foreword

A Message from Steve Krieg

Mayor, Lismore City Council

A thriving rural future for Lismore depends on the choices we make today, and this Rural Land Use Strategy sets out a clear, confident path forward. At its heart is a commitment to protecting the land, landscapes, and livelihoods that define our region, while embracing the opportunities that will shape the next generation of rural living.

This Strategy strengthens the foundations of our rural lands, and by default our LGA, by:

- safeguarding highvalue agricultural land and the natural capital that sustains it
- supporting diverse and resilient agricultural industries
- encouraging innovation in local food production, agritourism, and ecotourism
- planning for vibrant, wellserviced rural communities that remain great places to live

Our community has been clear about what matters: protecting rural character, supporting sustainable growth, and ensuring that rural areas remain great places to live, work, and raise families. This Strategy reflects those values. It takes a forwardlooking approach that considers how rural lifestyles are evolving and how we can support the next generation to build their futures here. It encourages innovation, strengthens local enterprise, and provides a framework for rural communities to remain vibrant, connected, and resilient. By aligning land use planning with longterm economic and environmental goals, the Strategy helps ensure our rural areas remain productive, liveable, and resilient.

Lismore's rural future is bright. With this Strategy, we honour our past, respond to the present, and plan confidently for what lies ahead. Together, we can ensure that our rural areas continue to flourish, sustaining both the people who live on the land today and those who will care for it tomorrow. Most importantly, it reflects a shared vision—one shaped by the voices, values, and aspirations of the people who live and work on this land every day.

Together, we can ensure that Lismore's rural areas continue to thrive for generations to come.

Lismore City Council

1. About this Strategy

1.1: Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this Rural Land Use Strategy is to support and enable vibrant and sustainable agricultural industries for a thriving rural community into the future. The Strategy aims to protect key agricultural land and natural capital resources, grow the rural economy and provide great places to live. It takes a future-focused approach that considers rural lifestyle values into the future and reflects the community's needs. It encourages the next generation of rural living, local food production and promotes a sense of pride for rural industries, including agri- and eco-tourism.



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Rural Land Use Strategy is part of Lismore City Council's Strategic Planning Framework; it sits underneath the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).



Council's LSPS sets a 20-year place based vision for the future of Lismore as a local government area, including an increased population of 60,000 people. The LSPS is about the big picture and provides direction for land-use planning across the community. The Rural Land Use Strategy is a supporting strategy to the LSPS and sits alongside a suite of other theme-based strategies.

The Rural Land Use Strategy focuses on how Council will protect key agricultural land and natural capital resources, grow the rural economy and provide great places to live. It translates the LSPS vision into practical actions.

Put simply:

The LSPS explains the longterm "why and where" (i.e. direction).

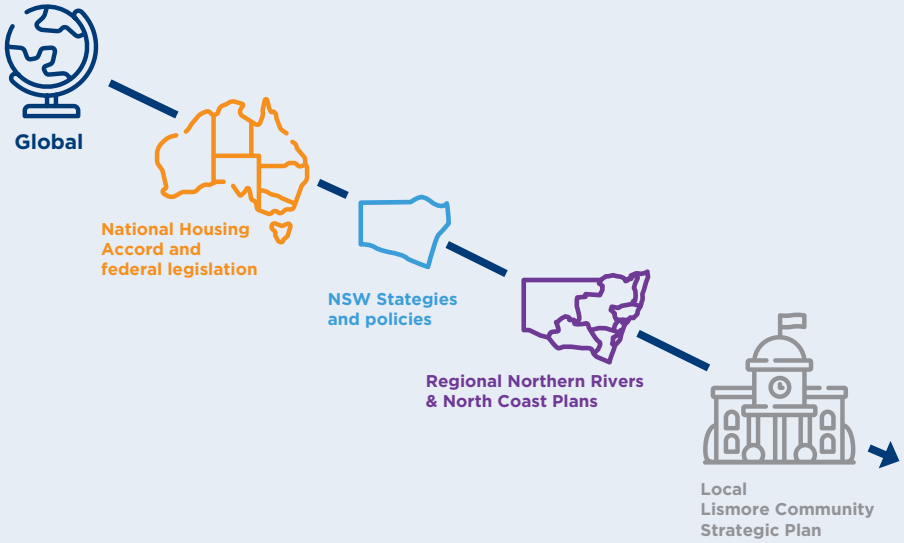
The Rural Land Use Strategy explains the practical "how and what" (i.e. actions).

1.2: Strategic Alignment (continued)



1.2: Strategic Alignment (continued)

The Rural Land Use Strategy has been developed in alignment with regional, state, national and international drivers, policy and legislation, including:



- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021
- Ministerial Direction 1.5 Rural Lands
- State Significant Agricultural Land Map (draft 2021) identifies areas of the best agricultural land in NSW and is considered an essential component of land use planning.
- NSW Planning for Agriculture in Rural Land Use Strategies 2022 provides guidelines for councils on how to plan for the needs of agriculture in land use planning.
- NSW Right to Farm Policy 2015 and Right to Farm Act 2019, sets out responsibilities and rights of farmers to undertake lawful agricultural practices and includes approaches to land planning to minimise conflict and improving education and awareness about agricultural production.
- *Local Land Services Act 2013*
- *Rural Fires Act 1997* and associated NSW Strategic Guide to Planning for Natural Hazards
- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
- *Heritage Act 1977*
- *Water Management Act 2000*
- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
- *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983*
- *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)*
- *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*
- NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2041

1.3: How we got here

In 2024, Lismore City Council consulted widely on a Rural Land Use Discussion Paper which explored some of the features of Lismore's rural lands and the ways it is currently used, particularly in relation to agriculture. The consultation process explored the strengths and weaknesses, and potential opportunities for our rural lands. More than 90% of respondents lived and/or worked rurally from all across Lismore LGA.

A consultation report provided feedback analysis, including:

- Food security through local food production, processing and selling is important
- The region's highly productive soils and climate suit a range of high value agricultural products
- Sustainable practices that promote environmental stewardship and climate resilience are important
- Demand for flood-free housing is putting pressure on rural land
- Extreme weather events, exacerbated by climate change, are a challenge for rural land management
- There are opportunities for agritourism and ecotourism based on the area's natural beauty and high agricultural values
- Emerging agricultural industries need to be supported
- Development should be restricted to less productive land

This feedback, along with community feedback gathered during the preparation of Council's Community Strategic Plan has guided the drafting of this strategy.

Key strengths	• highly productive soil and climate • the area's natural beauty and biodiversity • the community focus and lifestyle
Key opportunities	• agritourism and ecotourism • emerging agricultural industries • regenerative agriculture and improving natural areas • local food production
Key challenges	• extreme climate events • difficult economic environment • Poor land management
Key threats	• subdivision and development • the impacts of poor land management on rural land • Lack of vision • Biosecurity

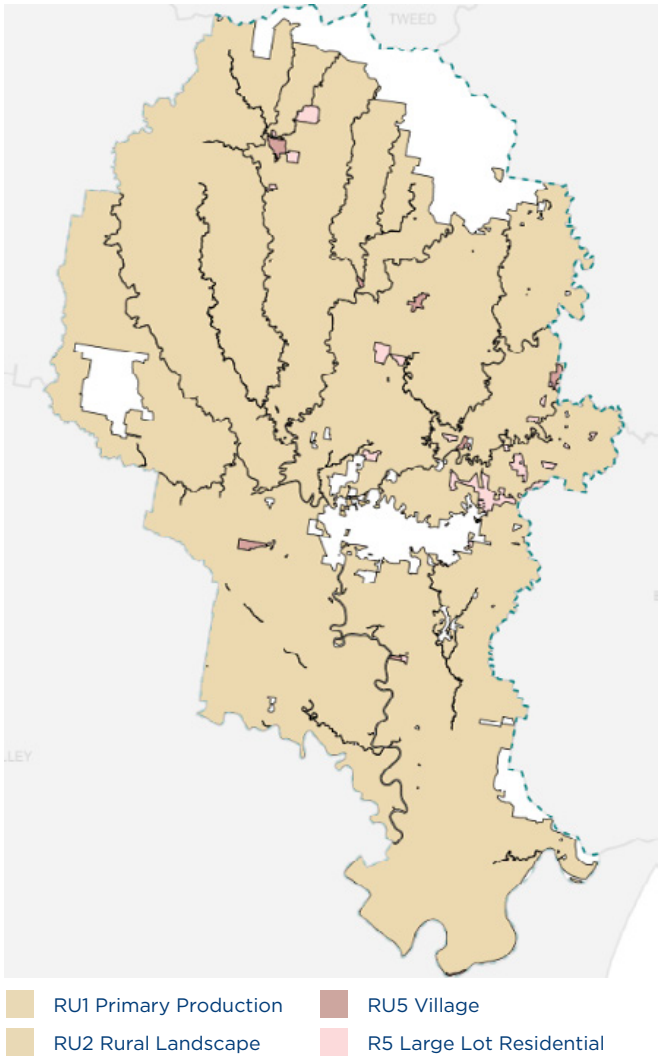
2. Our Rural Lands

Lismore's rural lands form the foundation of the City's landscape character, cultural identity, alternative living and lifestyle options and our economy. Stretching from the fertile floodplains of the Wilsons River and southern sugarcane lands to the elevated ridges and forested ranges, these lands support a diverse mosaic of productive agriculture, environmental stewardship, rural communities and emerging land-based enterprises.

Rural Lismore is not a single condition or landscape. It is a system of distinct rural places - including working agricultural heartlands, mixed farming and rural residential areas, environmentally significant forests and waterways, and culturally distinctive settlements - each with different land capabilities, risks and opportunities. These rural lands serve a distinct role in the community, in providing the space, resources and cultural grounding that communities rely on every day — even if most people don't live on rural land themselves. Rural land gives a community the space, resources and character that make the whole Lismore LGA work. It's where our food is grown, where local jobs and small businesses thrive, where nature and waterways are protected, and where First Nations cultural connection to Country continues. These open landscapes also shape the look and feel of the region and provide room for essential services and outdoor recreation that towns can't always accommodate.

In planning terms, this is land with a rural zoning under the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP), including:

- RU1 Primary Production
- RU2 Rural Landscape
- RU5 Village
- R5 Large Lot Residential



Map 1 - Rural Lands to which this Strategy applies

2.1: Caring for Country on rural lands

The Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation are the traditional owners of the land the Lismore LGA sits on. They retain deep cultural connections to the land, waterways, vegetation, sea and the community.

The land and waterways were cared for by the Widjabul/Wia-bal for thousands of years. With European settlement, the Widjabul/Wia-bal people's hunting grounds and places of cultural, spiritual and ritual significance were fenced off and changed beyond recognition by farming activities.

This brought devastation and hardship to Indigenous people, but their cultural heritage and knowledge have been kept alive and today, is recognised and celebrated, with agreements and frameworks to protect areas of cultural significance from further damage.

This will be particularly important for Lismore's rural land, and the LSPS includes working in partnership with First Nations People to embed Caring for Country principles in land use planning, including cultural mapping, integrating cultural knowledge into Council's planning services and formalising governance arrangements around planning decisions.

Their knowledge can also support future efforts to regenerate healthy soils, vegetation and waterways.



2.2: A Brief History of Working the Land

Farming and timber were Lismore's first major industries. Early settlers relied on the river to move goods, and as land was cleared, farming included cattle grazing, sugarcane, maize, dairy and other staple crops. By the early 1900s, dairying became a major part of the local economy, leading to the establishment of Norco, now Australia's oldest and largest 100% farmer-owned dairy co-operative. Throughout the 1900's new farming technologies and transport corridors continued connecting Lismore to wider markets, enabling Lismore to be a significant agricultural centre, providing supporting services in related manufacturing, repair and sales to a broad region.

Over time, the region's agriculture continued to diversify. Bananas, avocados, nurseries and vegetables became major products. Commercial macadamia production began in the early 1960s with successful grafting techniques and mechanical processing and grew rapidly in the 1980s to become the highest value agricultural commodity in Lismore LGA, with a gross value of $36M in 2020/21.

Today, agriculture remains a prime use and function across all our rural lands in Lismore. Important to our economy, and our food systems, Lismore's rural lands provide the space and soil requirements to enable agricultural production now and into the future, regardless of the commodity and market fluctuations.

With excellent soils, significant processing, research and training facilities alongside great connectivity via the M1 Pacific Highway to major population centres up and down the east coast, Lismore offers a great place for agricultural business.



2.3: Today's Rural Economy

Our rural areas are now home to new and evolving businesses, including agritourism, valueadded products, cultural tourism, environmental services and homebased enterprises. These changes reflect shifting markets, new technologies and community aspirations.



38% Lismore's population living in a rural area

1,148 jobs in agriculture

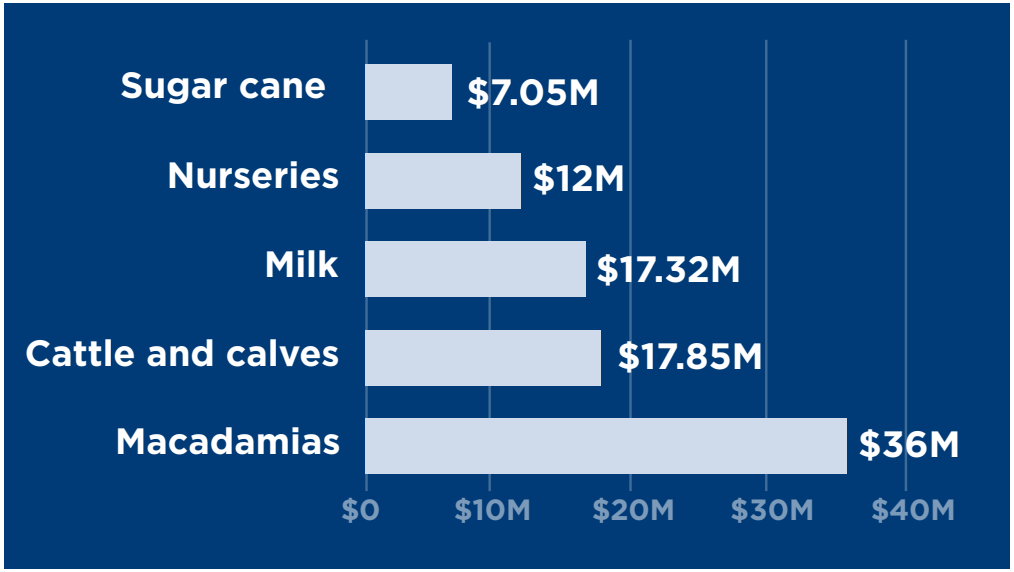
73% Lismore's land used for agriculture production

$106.15M Total agriculture value





Industry Contribution to GRP



AgTrack Agricultural and Land Use Dashboard https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/lup/agriculture-data-for-planning/dashboard

2.4: Looking to the future

Lismore's rural lands are evolving, and so are the lifestyles, practices, skills and opportunities that shape them. As our industries, communities and landscapes continue to change, there is growing interest in approaches that build longterm liveability, increase rural productivity, support new generations of landholders, and strengthen the capacity of farms and rural businesses to adapt and thrive.

Building Knowledge and Capacity

Many landholders are exploring new ways of managing their properties — from improving soil health and water retention to experimenting with regenerative and lowinput farming methods. These approaches help strengthen the land for future production, reduce longterm costs, and open new market opportunities. Local organisations, educational institutions and farming groups play a key role in sharing knowledge, training and practical resources that help landholders make informed decisions about their land.

Growing New Rural Opportunities

Local interest in valueadded agriculture, agritourism, smallscale farming and homebased enterprises continues to rise. These emerging ventures offer pathways for young farmers, returning residents and new landholders to enter the industry and diversify income streams. Opportunities also exist for locallyproduced food to reach expanding urban markets in southeast Queensland, strengthening both local food security and regional economic resilience.

Supporting Rural Communities and Rural Living

As more people choose to live in rural areas, there is an increasing need for landuse planning that supports safe, welllocated rural housing while protecting productive agricultural land. Minimising landuse conflict, managing expectations about rural lifestyles, and ensuring good access and connections remain important to keeping rural communities strong.

Preparing Rural Land for the Next Generation

The planning system plays a major role in shaping the future of rural areas. A review of the existing rural zones — RU1, RU2, RU5 and R5 — and the introduction of RU4 will help ensure rural land is used in ways that reflect its capability and longterm value. Strengthening these tools will protect highquality agricultural land, encourage innovation, and make it easier for the next generation of landholders to build viable rural futures.

A Shared Path Forward

Looking ahead, the focus is on supporting the people who live and work on rural land — helping them diversify, innovate, build skills, and respond to changing conditions. By working together across industries, government and the community, Lismore can continue to grow a rural sector that is productive, adaptable and ready for the opportunities of the future.

3. Strategy Vision and Objectives

3.1: Vision

In 2036, Lismore's rural lands support a resilient, diverse agricultural sector, coexisting with boutique tourism opportunities in a healthy, thriving natural environment, providing a prosperous and sustainable future for all. Agricultural production taps into the opportunities from a range of markets and emerging agritourism and ecotourism and the desire for locally produced healthy and sustainable food.

3.2: Strategic Objectives

The vision statement guides the following strategic objectives:

Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship	Support Productivity and Sustainability in Farming and Industry	Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities
Home to thousands of residents and rural industries, the strengthened rural land use planning minimises land use conflict and provides a balanced approach for enabling both rural communities and agricultural economies	A long-standing and stable industry in Lismore's sector, the strategy strives to inspire, enable and encourage greater productivity and support primary production to occur on our most fertile soils	Across villages, hamlets and rural homes, Lismore's rural lands play a key role in the way in which residents live and work. The strategy seeks to ensure rural communities are coherent, supported and connected.
Aims: • Productive agricultural land is retained for current and future agricultural uses • Smaller scale and organic farming operations are supported, offering greater productivity and environmental benefits. • Land use conflict is minimised • The diverse needs and interests within Lismore's rural areas are balanced. • Non-agricultural development that diminishes rural and scenic amenity is carefully managed.	**Aims:** • Agricultural land uses complement the repair and regeneration of natural capital such as soils, water and natural ecosystems • Agricultural activities protect Lismore's scenic qualities, biodiversity, and natural ecosystems. • The economic viability of the agricultural sector is supported. • The rural economy is robust and supports the next generation of farmers and contributes to local food security and economy.	**Aims:** • Villages and alternative housing models complement and support rural land uses, local character and agricultural activities. • Rural living opportunities minimise impacts on agricultural productivity and the rural environment. • First nations cultural heritage is protected and celebrated. • Rural land users are empowered through knowledge and education.

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship

Rural land is critically important to the agriculture industry, allowing the space and soil requirements that enable production now and into the future, regardless of the commodity and market fluctuations.

At the same time, rural lands are appreciated by the community for the value and lifestyle they offer. The role of planning, and land use zoning, is therefore to balance these interests and ensure a robust and considered land use framework applies across Lismore LGA to minimise conflict, enable varied scales of agricultural production and create pathways for entry-level or hobby farming.

Various rural zones exist in NSW to help councils best manage their rural lands. To date, Lismore has not applied a robust zoning framework across our rural lands and as such, much of our zoned land contradicts NSW zone objectives and guidelines. Table 1 outlines the intent of the zone alongside the way in which its currently applied in Lismore.

Table 1 - Rural Zones in NSW as they apply to Lismore

NSW Zones that can apply to Rural Lands	Application in Lismore
RU1 Primary Production - Encourages sustainable and diverse agriculture, minimises landuse conflict, and protects the ongoing viability of rural land. Allows other compatible uses that do not impact agriculture or the scenic rural character. NSW guidelines dictate that this zone should be applied to highly productive agricultural lands and not be used as a default zone for leftover or non-urban areas.	RU1 Primary Production - Encourages sustainable and diverse agriculture, minimises landuse conflict, and protects the ongoing viability of rural land. Allows other compatible uses that do not impact agriculture or the scenic rural character. NSW guidelines dictate that this zone should be applied to highly productive agricultural lands and not be used as a default zone for leftover or non-urban areas.
RU2 Rural Landscape - Supports sustainable primary industry and a limited range of development that does not harm ecological values. Prioritises maintaining rural landscape character and ensuring development is compatible with flood hazards.	To date, the RU2 Rural Landscape zone has not been applied across Lismore LGA in accordance with the zone objectives. Rather, it has been applied in select urban areas that are subject to flooding. A large portion of this land will be rezoned to a more suitable zone when Council and the NSW Reconstruction Authority partner on delivering Precinct Plans to determine the Future Use of the Buyback Land.
RU4 Small Lot Primary Production - Provides for smalls cale agriculture and rural living while maintaining rural character. Ensures development does not conflict with agriculture, protects scenic and environmental values, and avoids fragmentation that reduces productive potential.	Not currently applied.
RU5 Village - Provides for housing, services and facilities for small rural communities. Maintains village character, protects residential amenity, and supports local economic activity without harming surrounding rural or environmental areas.	Applied throughout Lismore LGA at our key villages.
R5 Large Lot Residential - Provides low density housing in a rural or semirural setting while protecting landscape and environmental qualities. Minimises conflict with nearby rural uses and allows limited ancillary activities that do not detract from scenic or residential amenity.	Applied throughout Lismore LGA on the urban fringe and within or adjacent to villages.

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

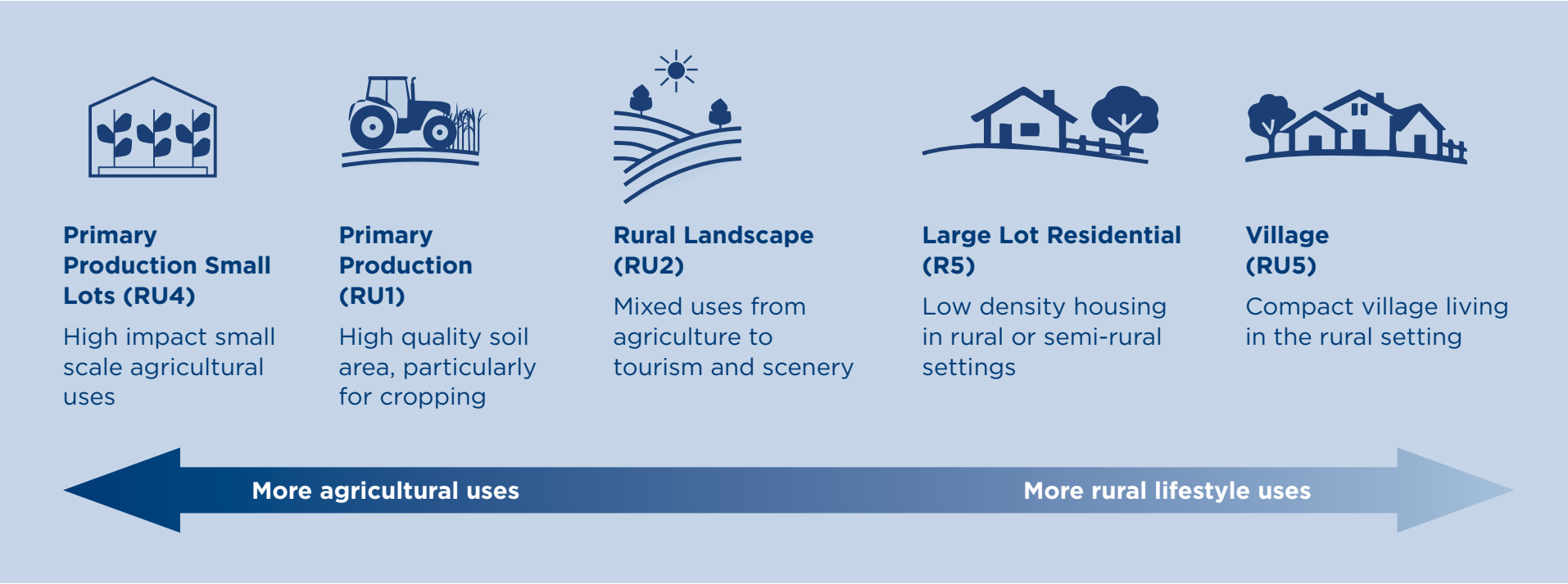


Figure 1 - Rural Land Use Hierarchy

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Why a new rural zoning framework is required

Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework sets clear ambitions that can be enabled through a new rural zoning framework. These include:

- supporting the agricultural economy,
- enabling agri-food innovations and processing and logistics improvements,
- growing our population with distributed settlements, including the support for strengthened rural communities, and
- enabling well-placed rural recreation, tourism and agri-tourism.

This current zoning application, while has been diversified in terms of permissible uses, is still rigid in its approach; preventing small-scale and entry level farming opportunities; limiting rural living opportunities on low-quality farmland; and missing out on opportunities for rural recreation, tourism and agribusiness.

Early community and stakeholder feedback identifies key issues and opportunities that the new zoning framework will address.



Figure 2 - Identified Issues and Opportunities for Lismore's Rural Lands

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Introducing a new zoning framework

A new approach of managing rural land that proactively seeks to recognise and protect our prime agricultural lands, while providing certainty for non-agricultural uses to occur in appropriate localities is proposed under this Strategy.

The new framework applies the zones in accordance with NSW guidelines, and priorities set within the CSP and LSPS, whilst providing a structured hierarchy to rural land use.

The following principles underpin the revised approach:

- Strengthen the role of RU1 Primary Production by aligning it to areas of prime agricultural land and reducing opportunities for land use conflict and fragmentation within the zone.
- Apply the RU2 Rural Landscape zone to rural areas that are not considered prime agricultural land, as well as areas that have high scenic value - this zone would no longer apply specifically to flood affected land.
- Provide a pathway for landowners to rezone their land to RU4 Primary Production Small Lots to activate opportunities for small lot and/or entry level farming.

The process used to determine the geographical extent of each zone seeks to recognise our most important farmland, while simultaneously applying a systematic approach to identify land that is less important to agricultural production, has high scenic amenity value, or is strategically important to tourism. This will provide for a clearer framework for how different activities need to respond across different parts of our rural lands.

To facilitate this transition, Council will revise permissible uses within each zone and implement development controls that work together to achieve the preferred outcomes in each zone. This will include amendments to LEP provisions, rural related DCP controls and buffer provisions.



3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Application of the RU1 Primary Production and RU2 Rural Landscape zones

The following criteria outline how land will be differentiated between the RU1 Primary Production zone and the RU2 Rural Landscape zone as part of the revised rural zoning framework. These criteria ensure that zoning reflects the land's agricultural capability, landscape values and strategic role within the broader rural environment.

Areas where the RU1 Primary Production zone is expected to be retained include:

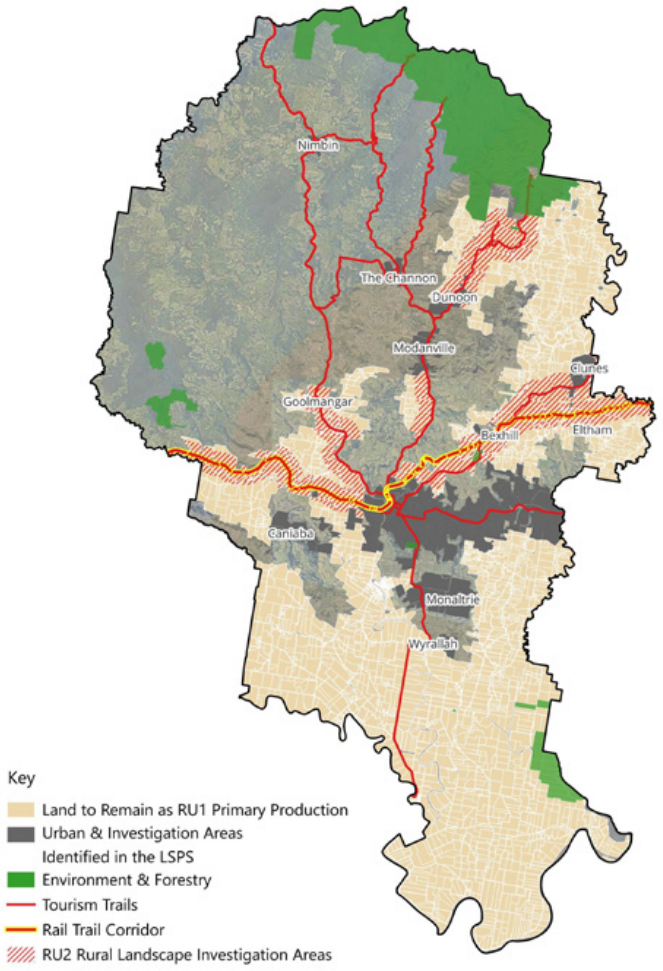
- land mapped as 'Important Farmland' under the Far North Coast Farmland Mapping prepared by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)
- land within Lismore's southern floodplains that is wholly flood-affected and currently used for agricultural production

Areas where the RU2 Rural Landscape zone will be considered include:

- land not mapped as 'Important Farmland' under DPIRD's Far North Coast Farmland Mapping
- localities with high scenic amenity
- land with steep slopes or topographic constraints that limit agricultural use, such as slopes greater than 18 degrees (33%) or land located near ridgelines
- areas with strategic tourism value, including land along rail-trail corridors and tourist drives

Using these criteria, map 2 illustrates the potential extent of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone. Some refinements have been applied to ensure that land parcels are assigned wholly to either RU1 or RU2 (avoiding split zoning) and that the resulting spatial pattern is contiguous, without isolated pockets of either zone.

Detailed descriptions of both revised zones, including the full range of permissible land uses, are provided in Appendix 1.



Map 2 - Indicative application of the RU1 and RU2 zones

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Minimum Lot Size Provisions

Maintaining larger minimum lot sizes in the RU1 Primary Production zone is critical to protecting land with the highest agricultural value. Larger lots help prevent fragmentation for residential or non-agricultural purposes, reduce land-use conflict, and limit the introduction of dwellings and other sensitive uses. They also support the economies of scale required for viable farming operations and associated supply chains. For example, facilities such as the Marquis Macadamia Processing plant and the Broadwater Sugar Mill rely on a substantial area of surrounding farmland to sustain production and remain viable. For these reasons, no changes are proposed to the existing minimum lot size provisions in the RU1 zone.

As the RU2 Rural Landscape zone will not apply to highly productive agricultural land, the justification for retaining a 40-hectare minimum lot size is no longer relevant. A revised minimum lot size of 20 hectares will apply to the RU2 zone. This reflects the broader range of land uses supported by the revised zoning while ensuring that any new subdivision remains consistent with the established rural character of the locality.

Importantly, existing lot sizes will not determine future zoning. Landowners with lots larger than the minimum lot size will not be required to subdivide, and existing undersized lots will not be rezoned to RU2 unless they meet the zoning criteria outlined in the preceding section.

Lismore City Council will commence the process of applying the above RU2 zone upon adoption of this Strategy. Affected residents will be informed of any changes.



3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Dwelling entitlements

Demand for the use of rural lots without existing dwelling entitlements has grown significantly in recent years. This has been driven in part by the NSW Reconstruction Authority's Resilient Homes Program, which has enabled residents in flood-affected areas to relocate their homes to higher ground. The scale of property acquisition following the 2022 flood events has placed considerable pressure on residential land supply across the Lismore LGA, leading to increased interest in relocating dwellings to rural land.

Council has supported this demand to date by introducing temporary special-circumstance provisions within the development application process to streamline the relocation of flood-affected houses. However, many rural lots in the Lismore LGA do not carry an entitlement to construct a dwelling. A large proportion of these lots were historically part of larger agricultural holdings and were subdivided before modern planning legislation introduced today's entitlement requirements.

To protect the long-term viability of productive rural land, and consistent with advice from the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Growth, this Strategy proposes introducing a sunset provision that will prevent new dwelling-entitlement searches in the revised extent of the RU1 Primary Production zone after a defined period. This approach supports the ongoing role of the RU1 zone in safeguarding prime agricultural land, reducing land-use conflict, and avoiding further fragmentation.

In contrast, land within the RU2 Rural Landscape zone generally has lower agricultural capability and includes areas valued for their scenic qualities rather than for large-scale agricultural production. Council therefore proposes to remove planning provisions that currently prevent dwellings being constructed on lots without dwelling entitlements in this zone. Under this change, all previously subdivided land within the extent of the revised RU2 zoning will be eligible for a dwelling entitlement, subject to meeting other relevant planning controls and site constraints such as flood risk, bushfire protection, and biodiversity considerations.

This approach protects Lismore's most productive farmland while creating clearer, more flexible housing opportunities in less sensitive rural areas.

Upon adoption of this strategy Lismore City Council will:

- in the RU1 zone, apply a two-year sunset period in the RU1 zone, after which dwelling-entitlement searches will no longer permitted.
- in the RU2 zone, amend planning provisions to ensure all previously subdivided lots are granted a dwelling entitlement.

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Pathway

The introduction of the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone intends to create new opportunities for small-scale agricultural enterprises by enabling producers to access land at a size and cost suited to their operations. The zone could support a range of production activities, including intensive horticulture operations where crops are grown under structures that modify growing conditions and reduce exposure to adverse weather.

Allowing landowners to rezone to RU4 also seeks to provide an affordable pathway for new entrants to agriculture, for existing producers wishing to downsize, and for landowners interested in trialling emerging industries or innovative farm management practices. Lismore's favourable soils and climate, combined with strong community interest in locally grown food and existing support infrastructure, make small-lot primary production both viable and attractive. Establishing an RU4 zoning pathway reflects the evolving nature of agriculture, where emerging market trends and protected-cropping techniques enable producers to operate profitably on smaller parcels of land and with reduced reliance on natural soil characteristics.

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Process for identifying land suitable for the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone

Council will not pre-identify or rezone land to RU4 as part of this Strategy. Rather, the Strategy sets out situational and principles-based criteria that landowners can use to determine whether their land may be appropriate for RU4 zoning.

Circumstances where the RU4 zoning may appeal to landowners include:

- on underutilised portions of land currently held by existing farms operations or lifestyle landowners
- where current agriculture production is coming to the end of its lifespan
- where landowners are looking to move on or downsize
- where land is within proximity of any future agri-food hub, food distribution centre or other logistical asset.

Each location and potential application will need to be considered on its merits, however to provide certainty for landowners and potential farmers, Council will apply the following principles when considering whether a location is appropriate for RU4 zoning application:

- land can be in either the RU1 or RU2 zone
- the locality should be in proximity to key transport corridors and accessible by a sealed road
- the proposed site should not be located where it would significantly impact prominent rural vistas or existing views from urban areas. For example, not along prominent ridgelines or where protected infrastructure would impact views from urban land (including land identified in growth areas)
- the locality should avoid flood affected areas unless the design can demonstrate suitable building envelopes outside of probable maximum flood level
- any proposal must incorporate sufficient landscape buffers to land zoned as RU5, RU2 or any urban residential zone, preferably through the use of landscaping and/or conservation zoning in accordance with Council's DCP
- minimum lot size will be dependent on natural characteristics of the land, however the applicant should demonstrate that proposed minimum lot sizes are sufficient for market demand for agricultural activities
- processing consistent with 'rural industries[2]' land use definition will be supported but no residential, commercial or industrial zoning will be supported within a small lot agricultural production estate.

If land appears to meet these criteria, landowners should contact Council so that staff can provide guidance on the steps involved to rezone the land.

Depending on the locality and size of existing parcels, it would be Councils preference to facilitate precinct scale development for small lot agriculture, rather than isolated lots. Prior to engaging Council, interested landowners are encouraged to consult with their neighbours to gauge interest in creating a precinct scale proposal.

[2] Rural industry is a defined term within the Lismore Local Environment Plan. Types of uses consistent with this definition include the handling, treating, production, processing, storage or packing of animal or plant agricultural products for commercial purposes

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Permissible Uses

The range of permissible uses in the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone will closely align with those in the RU1 zone, as the primary purpose remains focused on agricultural production. The zone is intended to support small-scale primary production while also enabling value-adding rural industries such as processing and manufacturing. It is envisioned that RU4 zoning will facilitate precincts where small-lot producers can co-locate and benefit from shared infrastructure, for example, by providing access to nearby markets for selling produce or facilities for value-adding activities.

As the zone is designed to accommodate smaller production lots, housing will be limited to one dwelling per lot. Given the small scale of operations and the proximity to existing urban areas, additional dwellings for workers or supplementary on-farm income are not considered necessary. This approach enables small-scale producers to live where they farm while minimising potential land-use conflicts and providing greater certainty for ongoing agricultural production.

The proposed detail for this zone, including the range of permissible uses allowed within the zone, can be found at appendix 2.

Minimum Lot Sizes

Council will not zone any land as RU4 unless requested to do so by a landowner. Minimum lot sizes will therefore be determined at the time of rezoning, and in accordance with the site specifics and principles set above for the zone.

Anticipated lot sizes within the RU4 zone will need to consider market demand but will also need to be of a large enough manage on-site impacts associated with the high impact nature the zone. It is acknowledged that minimum lot size provisions will likely be less than allowed for in RU1 or RU2 as high-level spatial analysis indicates that existing small production activities within Lismore LGA are typically less than 10ha. Council will work closely with any interested landowner to ensure that proposed lot size standards sufficiently respond to the characteristics of the land and ensure that surrounding lot owners are not affected by any new small lot production precinct.

3.2.1: Objective 1 Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship (continued)

Table 2 - Summary of Lismore's Proposed Rural Land Use Zones

The following table details the core function of each zone proposed under the new rural land use zoning framework and how the planning provisions will respond to proposed uses within each zone:

		Proposed application of Rural Land Use Zones in Lismore		
		RU1 *Agricultural uses that require large holdings – predominately aimed at regional/international markets.*	**RU2** *Rural uses, not solely agricultural focused, that take advantage of rural scenic amenity opportunities.*	**RU4** *High intensity small lot agriculture - predominately aimed at local markets.*
Type of Activity	Large scale low impact agriculture such as grazing	The appropriate zone for this type of activity. Any non-farming activities are expected to mitigate impacts to land that can be used for large scale agriculture.	Permissible, however soil types and land characteristics may not be as favourable compared to farming in RU1.	Permissible, but unlikely to occur due to the small lot nature of the zone and an inefficient use of strategically important production land.
	Intensive agriculture	The appropriate zone for this type of activity. Any non-farming activities are expected to mitigate impacts to land that can be used for intensive agriculture.	Permissible, but right to farm practices will not be as strong as in RU1 meaning any new intensive agriculture practices will need to mitigate impacts to surrounding land.	Permissible, but unlikely to occur due to the small lot nature of the zone and inefficient use of strategically important production land.
	Small scale agriculture / horticulture	Permissible but will likely need to be accompanied by other agricultural or lifestyle uses on the site to ensure financial viability.	Permissible but new developments will need to manage operational and visual impacts to ensure ongoing viability of surrounding land uses.	The appropriate zone for this type of activity.
	Tourism and outdoor recreational uses	Limited to small scale agri-based tourism only. Intent is to provide supporting income opportunities to the primary agricultural use the land without introducing land use conflict.	The appropriate zone for this type of activity.	Not supported.
	Rural housing and accommodation	Supported where it does not introduce land use conflict and limited to a small proportion of the site. Provides opportunity for generational change, workers accommodation and limited off-site income.	Supported where it does not introduce land use conflict and limited to a small proportion of the site. Provides opportunity for generational change, workers accommodation and limited off-site income.	Limited to one dwelling only. Allows for small businesses to live and work on small production landholdings.

3.2.2: Objective 2 Support Productivity and Sustainability in Farming and Industry

Lismore's subtropical climate and fertile soils enable a wide range of agricultural commodities that has sustained the local economy over decades. These natural attributes, coupled with community and farming interest, has led to the uptake of various sustainable farming practices.

Sustainable practices ensure continued use of natural capital for continued high production, providing economic and wellbeing benefits for producers and consumers. When valuing and improving the natural capital of a farm – soil and water quality, native vegetation and biodiversity value – primary producers can benefit from improved drought & flood resilience, strengthened crops, continual crop productivity and new opportunities for income such as through carbon credits.

Healthy soils underpin agricultural production, providing plant nutrition and moisture. Good soil structure allows water to penetrate the soil, reducing runoff, which moves soil and nutrients into waterways. Protecting the soil, enhancing soil carbon, preventing runoff and improving fertiliser management all benefit the natural capital that supports agricultural productivity.

Activities in Lismore's rural land such as fencing to prevent livestock access to riparian areas, reducing erosion from intensive horticulture such as macadamias, and revegetating steep slopes and riparian zones, are examples of natural capital improvements through farm management – creating a positive cycle of reciprocal benefits for the land and the farm.

Two farming practices that have longstanding uptake across Lismore LGA, as well as more recent renewed interest, are 'regenerative agriculture' and 'organic farming' operations. These farming practices are operational choices that can contribute to long-term productivity as well as environmental benefits.

These benefits extend well beyond individual farms, strengthening the wider community through reliable local food production, stable rural employment, cleaner waterways, healthier ecosystems, and more enjoyable recreational spaces. As a secondary benefit, the management and improvement of this natural capital contribute to the aspirations set within Council's Strategic Planning Framework for healthy and resilient environments.

Regenerative farming - is a holistic, nature-based approach that restores soil health, boosts biodiversity, and improves water retention to create resilient food systems

Organic Farming - is an agricultural system that produces food without using synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, growth hormones, or genetically modified plants or animals. It focuses on ecological balance, soil health, and biodiversity through techniques like crop rotation, composting, and biological pest control to create sustainable, environmentally responsible food systems.

3.2.2: Objective 2 Support Productivity and Sustainability in Farming and Industry (continued)

Agricultural Support

Agriculture is the most significant industry to Lismore's local economy. Council's Strategic Planning Framework, specifically through the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy, establish commitment to the industry across existing commodities, emerging commodities and ancillary sectors such as manufacturing, food production, distribution and the like.

Supporting farmers and rural residents to manage productive farms is a key priority for Council, whether that be through partnerships, facilitation or direct support.

Examples of the type of support Council could provide include;

- supporting new farmers with what to expect from farming and farming conditions in the local area,
- support and knowledge sharing around diversification opportunities such as agritourism,
- support on planning matters such as rezoning potential for RU4 small lot rezonings and precinct creation,
- providing support to implement sustainable farming practices suitable to land and commodity,
- support for local food selling, access to markets and value-add food manufacturing opportunities,
- support for small scale start-ups and urban food growing ventures,
- knowledge sharing on available services, grants and loans,
- building networks of farmers to share ideas and learnings,
- post-disaster support,
- community food awareness campaigns,
- create partnerships to connect primary production to research, pilot projects, training opportunities, manufacturing and more.

Supply chains and connectivity

Agricultural supply chains taking food from farms to processing and distribution facilities and then onto consumers. This supporting infrastructure is critical for the economic viability of the industry and local and regional food supply. The efficiency of the infrastructure and the supply chains affect incomes for farmers, ancillary businesses and the value of the final product.

On-farm and other local value adding for products creates new economic opportunities for the region. These products can be used in local cafes and restaurants, or sold locally or further afield, taking advantage of the Northern Rivers – Southeast Queensland economic corridor. Products grown and sold locally keep the benefits local, while promoting our produce nationally and internationally particularly when innovation and processing enable functional food and emerging high value products such as hemp, alternative materials and nutraceuticals.

Some of the products that have first stage processing within or close to Lismore include macadamia nuts, berries, pork, dairy, sugar and beef. Enabling further processing and value-adding opportunities benefits the Lismore community in employment, access to fresh food and supporting the visitor economy through authentic agritourism such as paddock-to-plate food and farming opportunities.

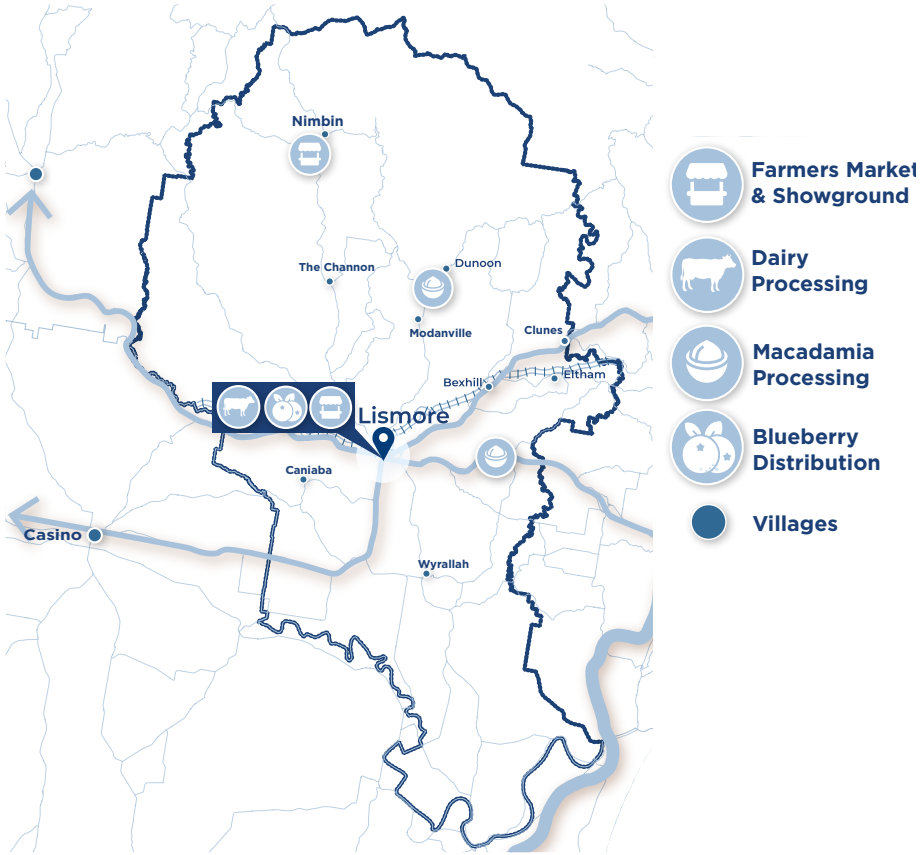
Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework commits to investment attraction work across the agricultural sector as well as a program of work to enable an agri-food innovation and logistics. This turbocharger will encourage clusters of enterprises, infrastructure, research capability and supply-chain functions that support regenerative agriculture, food manufacturing and logistics across the Northern Rivers, positioning Lismore as the central place where producers, processors, logistics, knowledge and markets connect. It will strengthen supply chains and link production areas to coastal markets, national distribution networks and global opportunities.

3.2.2: Objective 2 Support Productivity and Sustainability in Farming and Industry (continued)

Council will act as a facilitator of the agri-foods centre of excellence, supporting land-use settings and infrastructure planning and advocating for investment, funding and policy settings that strengthen regional food systems and supply chain resilience.

Lismore's road network is extensive, with 804 kilometres of sealed road, 411 kilometres of unsealed, 118 bridges and 278 culverts managed by Lismore City Council. With additional rural population and economic activity, road use will increase to some extent, which may impact the road maintenance and renewal frequency. It is anticipated that the increase in road use will primarily be light vehicles including visitors and residents, with some increases due to agricultural activities.

Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework commits and folds into Council's Long Term Asset Management Plans – meaning maintenance and scheduled works are planned in accordance with the new rural land use zoning framework and any uptake of intensified farming and/or living.



Map 3 - Agricultural processing and distribution

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities

Rural living in Lismore offers natural beauty, welcoming and diverse communities, and a slower, more grounded pace that residents find fulfilling. Residents work locally in agriculture or in one of the villages or commercial centres, with a picturesque commute through lush landscapes of agriculture and bushland. There are several villages and hamlets which add a sense of community. Many have schools, one or more shops, community halls and some have small medical clinics. Limited areas outside of the larger urban areas have sewer or reticulated water and there is mixed access to digital infrastructure.

This Strategy aims to support and enhance rural industry as well support and improve the wellbeing of rural communities. 16,700 people live in our rural areas, some involved in primary production and others choosing to live rurally for the lifestyle it offers. As the rural lands continue to serve multiple needs, Council will continue to ensure that rural life is balanced and enhanced through access to key services and amenities.

While agricultural production causes activities such as noise and dust from harvesting, odour from livestock farming, ash residue from sugarcane burning or spray drift from pest management, conflict can also arise from concerns around weed, pest and biosecurity management. The proposed rural zoning framework is set out to provide clear mitigations and guidance to the expectations of rural activity and living – reinforcing key areas where farming is a principle use and others where rural living may be more common. On top of this, this Strategy supports additional resources to ensuring that land use conflict is minimised and rural wellbeing is enhanced.

Right to Farm

A NSW policy that allows farmers to continue, improve, or expand their operations without interference from neighbouring land users, including other agricultural operations or residential complaints. In July 2024, the NSW Government implemented an 'order of occupancy' as a key factor in noise complaints, protecting established, lawful venues from noise complaints brought about by newer businesses or residents. These two NSW policies assist Council to understand and manage complaints in rural areas.

On-Farm Weed Management

In NSW, all landholders have a responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 2015 to manage biosecurity risks from pests, weeds and diseases. Local Land Services provide information, tools and support to help with identifying and managing weeds and pests. Rous County Council have responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 2015 for weed management in the Northern Rivers, and work with local stakeholders to provide comprehensive and cost-effective control of targeted weeds in the region.

Council's DCP Buffer Provisions

A landuse buffer is a designated area, often made up of vegetation, open space, or lowintensity uses, that separates different types of development to reduce conflicts between them. Council's Development Control Plan includes specific buffer provisions designed to minimise landuse conflict between potentially incompatible activities. The standards within these provisions are informed by best practice, of which Council intends to continuously revise as new approaches and accepted techniques becomes available.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Lismore's Villages

Villages in Lismore are character-rich semi-rural settlements that function as a social and economic anchor for its surrounding hinterland. These villages are shaped by the region's alternative culture and lifestyle desires, strong community networks, and connection to the natural environment. They often serve as gateways between Lismore's regional centre and the dispersed rural population.

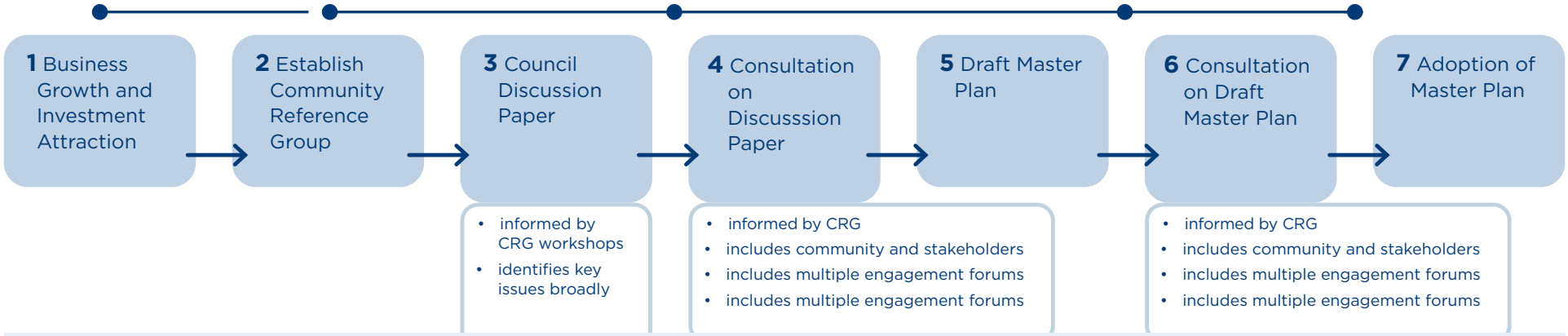
Lismore's villages generally have a small vibrant mixed-uses, across commercial, community and retail uses surrounded by small-scale residential development. Each village in Lismore is unique and varied – with its own identity, lifestyle offerings, scale and typology of housing. To support the retention of this character, whilst also enabling growth under Council's Strategic Planning Framework, village master plans will be prepared for Bexhill, Canaiba, Eltham, Modanville, Dunoon, The Channon and Wyrallah.

Village master plans provide a framework for future development, including land use, infrastructure and public spaces. They are developed by Council to manage land use change, roads and infrastructure needs for a village undergoing growth. They are developed in consultation with the community to include local perspectives on community and recreation needs and preserving local character, ensuring community values, objectives, opportunities and constraints are fully understood before commencement. With this approach, the master plan includes planning controls that are place-based, proactively addressing land use conflict, biodiversity, socio-economics and other elements.



3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Village Master Plan Process: Council decision points



Community Reference Group (CRG)

The CRG brings local voices, experience and perspectives into the project. The group acts as a key link between the community and the project team, helping to ensure that decisions are informed, transparent and grounded in local knowledge.

The Community Reference Group will:

Provide local knowledge and insights: members share their understanding of local issues, priorities, opportunities and community expectations.

Inform the project team: the group offers feedback on project proposals, plans and engagement materials to help ensure they are clear, relevant and community-focused. Support informal community consultation: where appropriate, members may gather community views outside of formal engagement processes, helping the project team hear a broader range of perspectives.

Help identify emerging issues and opportunities: the group can raise matters of interest or concern and highlight opportunities that may benefit the project or community.

Participate in sub-committees (where needed): for particular topics or areas of interest, smaller sub-groups may be formed to explore specific issues in more detail and report back to the full CRG.

A Terms of Reference (ToR) will be established prior to the formation of any Master Plan CRG, that outlines how the Community Reference Group (CRG) will operate, setting out its purpose, roles, responsibilities and ways of working to ensure the group functions fairly, transparently and effectively.

The CRG is not a decision-making body, but it plays an important advisory role. Members contribute constructively, share information with their networks (where appropriate), and help ensure that the project remains responsive to community needs.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Bexhill

Bexhill is a small, picturesque village located just 8.5 kilometres from the Lismore city centre, offering a semi-rural lifestyle within easy reach of the city's main services. With a population of around 523 people, including its surrounding rural area, Bexhill is experiencing modest residential growth while retaining its strong village identity. The community has a primary school, local shops, sporting facilities, and a community hall, creating a well-rounded social and service hub.

Bexhill is also known for its scenic qualities and cultural landmarks, including the historic Open-Air Cathedral, which offers expansive views across the countryside and has become a popular location for community gatherings and outdoor events. Its location along Bangalow Road and its siting along the Northern Rivers Rail Trail positions Bexhill to benefit from emerging tourism and recreation opportunities. Nearby natural assets such as Rocky Creek Dam and the surrounding subtropical landscapes further enhance the village's lifestyle appeal.

The village is set within a fertile agricultural landscape characterised by cattle grazing, perennial horticulture, and cropping, with new industries such as hemp cultivation beginning to take hold. This productive setting contributes to Bexhill's rural charm and reinforces its role in the broader agricultural economy of the Northern Rivers.

The LSPS identifies flood-free areas to the west of Bangalow Road for residential expansion, with an expected additional 100 dwellings and/or alternative land uses such as tourism, cultural or community uses.

Caniaba

Caniaba is an elevated, floodfree village located southwest of Lismore city centre and within 10 kilometres of the city centre, giving residents convenient access to services, amenities and employment. With around 430 people in the village and another 390 in the surrounding rural area, Caniaba benefits from a central position between Lismore and Casino that supports strong connectivity and a high level of liveability.

The village is serviced by reticulated water and sewerage and includes a primary school, sports field with ancillary recreation and hall facilities, together these form the core of local community life. Caniaba's contemporary residential character is shaped by the Perradenya estate, modern village development first approved in 1998.

Areas to the north and east of the village have been identified in the LSPS as suitable for additional large lot residential, providing a potential additional 700 dwellings in total, over a number of growth stages.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Clunes

Clunes is located on the eastern boundary of Lismore LGA with a small part of the community living in Byron Shire LGA. Clunes is approximately 18km north-east of Lismore city centre and 27km south-west of Byron Bay. Bangalow Road, a State-owned highway connects the village in both directions, offering easy access to daily services.

Clunes has a population of 564 and services a population around the village of around 900 people. The core village area is west of Bangalow Road, where there is a pre-school, a primary school, a village hall, a village common, tennis courts and local retail and gastronomy outlets. A village park sits to the east of the village centre, offering a picnic area to villagers and visitors. Thanks to its semi-rural setting and community efforts and values, the village includes areas of high biodiversity value. As a result, Clunes has strong and close-knit community with active community-led organisations and social networking opportunities.

Agricultural production surrounds the village and is primarily perennial horticulture (macadamias, coffee) and grazing. Inadequate buffers between agricultural activities and residential areas was a key issue addressed in the recently adopted Clunes Village Master Plan (2026).

The master planning process benefitted from strong community input and resulted in a long-term framework to guide low-impact growth while preserving village character. The Master Plan is anchored by five key moves: supporting diverse housing options, protecting and enhancing natural assets, improving safety and amenity, upgrading public facilities and supporting community initiatives, and establishing long-term western connectivity. Together, these actions ensure Clunes evolves as a connected rural village cluster, balancing growth with environmental stewardship and community values. The growth area determined in both the Master Plan and the LSPS is expected to accommodate at least 200 additional homes.



3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Dunoon

Dunoon is a well established village located 17 kilometres north of Lismore city centre and just beyond Modanville, with a village population of around 510 people and a further 750 residents living in the surrounding rural catchment. Dunoon has a long and proud tradition of macadamia nut production, processing and marketing. The major nutprocessing facility located south of the village has the capacity to process up to 10,000 Mt of nutinshell each year, making it a significant contributor to the regional agricultural economy.

The village is framed by productive macadamia, coffee and fruit orchards, cattle farms, and rolling green hills, giving Dunoon a strong landscape identity closely tied to agriculture.

Dunoon provides an important service role for its community and the wider rural area, offering a primary school, recreation facilities, sports club, a community hall, general store and a local doctor – all of which are actively used and loved by the community. These facilities support a cohesive, family-oriented village environment and reinforce Dunoon's role as a key social hub in Lismore's rural lands.

The LSPS identifies areas around Dunoon for potential expansion that could accommodate 300 dwellings.

Eltham

Eltham is a charming historic village nestled in a scenic valley 16 kilometres northeast of Lismore city centre, with a population of around 337 people. Its picturesque rural setting, framed by fertile farmland and pockets of subtropical vegetation, gives the village a strong sense of identity and lifestyle appeal. Eltham's heritage character is reflected in its classic country hotel—wellknown for live entertainment, meals and accommodation—and the neighbouring gallery housed in a beautifully preserved vintage building. Together with local recreation facilities, these assets create a vibrant cultural and social heart for the community.

The village's location along the Northern Rivers Rail Trail provides opportunities to bring new tourism activity, support smallscale commercial ventures, and strengthen Eltham's role as a destination for visitors seeking authentic rural experiences.

The LSPS identifies approximately 100 additional dwellings.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Modanville

Modanville is a small, scenic village located 14 kilometres north of Lismore city centre, set upon a ridgeline amongst fertile farmland. Home to around 527 residents, the village offers a peaceful rural lifestyle supported by a primary school, a wellloved bakery, and local recreation facilities. Its landscape character is defined by surrounding macadamia and fruit orchards, cattle farms, and remnants of subtropical rainforest, giving Modanville a distinctly green, open, and agricultural setting. The village's elevated position provides sweeping views across the Corndale Valley, contributing to its strong sense of place and lifestyle appeal. Its semirural character, lowdensity pattern, and connection to the region's agricultural heritage reflect the broader identity of the Northern Rivers hinterland.

Despite its modest size, Modanville plays an important role as a community hub for the surrounding rural population but also has connections to Dunoon - a bigger village just 5 minutes drive to the north that offers expanded services.

The LSPS identifies land around Modanville as suitable for potential largelot residential growth, with capacity for approximately 240 additional dwellings. A village master plan will carefully balance growth with the protection of surrounding agricultural production, ensuring adequate buffers to maintain but also enhance the village's rural character and offerings.

Nimbin

Nimbin is the biggest village in Lismore LGA, 30km north of Lismore city centre set within a dramatic landscape of World Heritagelisted rainforests, escarpments and rolling green hills. With a population of around 2,400 residents, Nimbin is known nationally for its strong legacy of locally led action, volunteerism and community resilience. These qualities have shaped its reputation as a centre for sustainability, creativity and alternative lifestyle.

Nimbin's contemporary identity was profoundly influenced by the 1973 Aquarius Festival, which drew thousands of people seeking new ways of living grounded in environmental awareness, communal values and artistic expression. The festival sparked a wave of new residents—artists, musicians, environmentalists and social innovators—whose influence remains visible today. The village's main street is lined with colourful shopfronts, local businesses, community organisations and creative spaces that reflect the diverse interests and passions of its people.

Nimbin continues to host a wide range of festivals, markets and community-led events that celebrate its vibrant culture and reinforce its role as a regional destination for arts, sustainability and alternative thinking. This strong cultural identity is matched by a closeknit and inclusive community that actively participates in shaping the village's future.

The community's commitment to local decisionmaking was central to the development of the Nimbin Place Plan, finalised in 2024. The plan identifies a series of actions to revitalise the village, enhance public spaces and expand recreational opportunities—particularly for young people. Upgrades to the public realm in Nimbin were prioritised across Allsopp Park, Peace Park, and the main street revitalisation.

Growth in Nimbin has previously been considered, however key servicing infrastructure is required to enable any growth.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

The Channon

Nestled in the foothills of the Nightcap Ranges and bordering Nightcap National Park, The Channon serves as a gateway to one of the Northern Rivers' most remarkable natural landscapes—an area rich in cultural heritage, environmental significance and scenic beauty. The village is home to around 331 residents and supports a further 670 people living throughout the surrounding rural valleys, forming a close-knit community with strong ties to the land and local history.

The Channon is widely known for hosting Australia's oldest art and craft market, the iconic Channon Craft Market, which draws visitors from across the region and beyond. This longrunning event has become a defining feature of the village's cultural identity, showcasing local creativity, produce and community spirit. The village also offers a range of essential services and gathering places, including a primary school, general store, community hall and the muchloved tavern housed in the historic butter factory on the banks of Terania Creek. These facilities contribute to a vibrant village centre and support both residents and visitors exploring the surrounding national parks, waterfalls and walking trails.

Areas within The Channon have previously been supported for residential expansion however are now considered for long-term investigation only, pending further flood modelling and considerations.

Wyrallah

Wyrallah is a historic riverside village on the banks of the Wilsons River, just downstream from Lismore city centre. Once a busy river port, it is now a peaceful rural community of around 489 residents, supporting another 940 people in the surrounding districts. The village includes a primary school, community hall and public recreation areas, serving as a small but important hub for local families.

Wyrallah is surrounded by productive grazing land, with cropping to the wes and south and pockets of horticulture to the east. The area is rich in cultural and environmental significance, including the Aboriginal Bora Ring at nearby Tucki Tucki and its location within the Lismore Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management area. Together, these features give Wyrallah a strong sense of place and highlight the importance of protecting its natural and cultural landscape.

The elevated areas north, south and east of the Wyrallah village have been identified in the LSPS as suitable for village growth, providing an additional 150 dwellings.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Hamlets and Other localities

There are other localities in Lismore's rural areas that have some facilities, such as a school, a community hall or recreational facilities and that could be suitable for expansion and into a village to support additional housing or provide localised services. Each area has characteristics and restrictions that support or limit growth, such as schools, services, physical constraints (flooding or slope) or being identified within important farmland mapping. Expansion of hamlets and localities would require careful consideration to ensure the right balance with prime agricultural production, including consideration of suitable buffers between residential and agricultural activities. The proposed changes to rural land zones (update RU2 and introduce RU4) could provide guidance for areas that are more suited to village growth.

Further development of hamlets and the creation of new villages will be subject to the following principles:

- New villages need to consider current land use and zoning, and buffers to primary production land
- New villages should be located to take advantage of existing facilities within the locality, and have access to at least two roads.
- Village development and approval will be subject to a village planning process.



3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Rural Living Outside of Villages

The provision of housing on rural lots – building envelope

As established, Lismore's rural lands offer dual benefits and opportunities for primary production and rural living. Across our rural lands, landowners are allowed to have 2 homes, subject to Council's consent via a Development Application (DA). Community feedback gathered during the writing of Council's now adopted Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy and Community Strategic Plan led to the inclusion of actions to investigate the accommodation of 3 homes on rural land, subject to DA consent.

Utilising the widely accepted provision of locating housing within 100m of each other to minimise land use conflict, this Strategy proposes that one or more additional dwellings to be built within a diameter of 100m from one of the farms existing (legally established) dwellings. This building envelope approach would allow landowners to identify and prioritise one of their existing dwellings as the 'primary home', and cluster additional dwellings around the secondary house. It will be up the landowner to determine how many additional houses they choose to have within a cluster and demonstrate the capacity of the land to do so in accordance with key planning provisions such as flood controls.

These provisions would only apply to lots over 20ha, which aligns with existing minimum lot sizes in RU1 and the proposed minimum lot sizes for RU2. Existing provisions that allow for two dwellings will continue to apply for lots under 20ha and for developments up to two dwellings. Access to any additional provision of housing would need to utilise existing road access from either of the existing dwellings.

Importantly, these provisions will not allow for subdivision of land to occur as that would lead to irreversible fragmentation of land. Land-owners may wish to consider utilising temporary forms of dwellings that can be relinquished to free up capital when no longer required, however there will be no provision within the LEP requiring this.

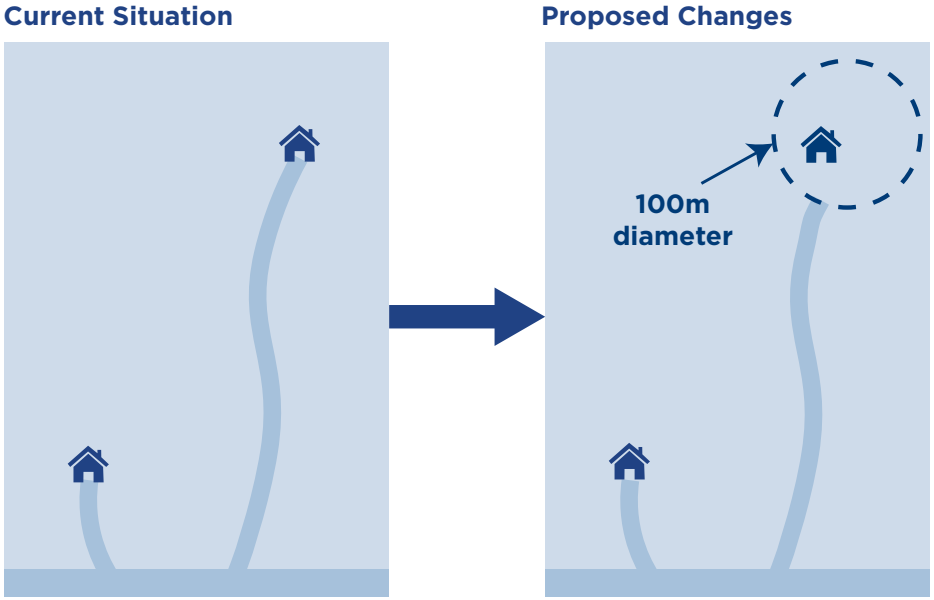


Figure 3 – Conceptual Building Envelope Control

Lismore City Council will amend its Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) to enable multiple dwellings within a 100m radii building envelope across both the RU1 and newly formed RU2 zones.

Note (within diagram): There would be no requirement for landowners to formally specify which house is the primary dwelling, but at the development application stage the proponent will need to specify which of the two existing houses carries the additional building envelope.

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Rural Landsharing Communities

Rural Land Sharing Communities (also known as multiple occupancies) is a type of development where a group of people, not necessarily related to each other, live together and share a large rural property. RLC's have existed in Lismore since the mid 1970's and are unique to other forms of rural living situations as they generally combine aspects of shared ownership, environmental stewardship and community governance to provide a community living situation.

The Lismore LGA currently contains 77 approved RLC's – considerably more than anywhere else in the region. These range in size from small communities with only three (3) dwelling sites to larger communities with over 100 dwelling sites. RLC's have traditionally played an important role in providing low-cost housing and many people within the communities have been leaders in the environmental movement of restoring depleted rural lands.



3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Why we need new controls for Rural Landsharing Communities

Many of Lismore's RLCs were approved a long time ago, before modern standards regarding bushfire and on-site septic system requirements were introduced to the NSW planning system. RLCs today, can only come forward where the Lismore LEP has mapped their permissibility and where they can meet modern standards.

Demand for new RLC's has dwindled since the 1990's, and meeting modern standards with Lismore's natural environment is challenging for many of the remaining mapped areas. Anecdotally, there are many factors that could be attributed to the decline in demand, including:

- banks being unlikely to provide finance for new rural landsharing communities, or for dwellings within existing communities, due to the nature of tenure. This can present challenges for obtaining finance and succession planning;
- legislative changes over time making it more costly to establish new communities;
- potential buyers becoming more aware to the intricacies of communal living;
- increases to the cost of land; and/or
- societal changes.

In an effort to resolve some of the issues that existing RLC's have faced since their inception, in 2018, Council implemented a clause within its LEP to allow RLC's that were established prior to that year to convert to 'community title' if facilities are upgraded to modern standards. This pathway, in effect, allows subdivision of existing rural RLC's to occur so that properties can obtain individual title. This in turn provides more opportunities for accessing finance and divestment. The ability to obtain community title is also beneficial for Council as it provides a more equitable rating structure by requiring each dwelling to pay Council rates.

Unfortunately, the transition to community title conversions has been slow. This is in part due to the substantial cost of infrastructure upgrades required in some communities, the presence of illegal dwellings/structures in some circumstances, coordination of multiple parties within a community and the uncertainty of process. Some communities prefer not to convert to community title as the concept goes against the underlying ethos of sharing (and therefore not owning) land.

Definition: *'Community title'* – each dwelling can obtain its own title, rather than owning a share in the community

3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Introducing a new pathway for modern Rural Landsharing Communities

While it is recognised that the demand for RLC's appears to be stagnating, providing alternative forms of housing arrangements is a re-emerging trend (as witnessed through 'eco-villages'). Providing pathways for diverse housing and lifestyle options is something that Council supports as it is important for Lismore's Strategic Planning Framework growth visions, including the objective to grow our population to 60,000 and beyond.

This strategy therefore proposes a new framework for considering the location of new RLC's, while also seeking to provide opportunities for potential development to come forward with community title. This will be achieved by amending Lismore LEP to allow RLC's to be considered anywhere in the amended RU2 zone – as detailed earlier in this document, and amending the LEP and DCP to allow any RLC's to be considered for community title, regardless of when they were created. This will allow flexibility to consider RLC's in a range of other locations while simultaneously delivering on the key strategic objective of protecting our most valuable farming lands.

The strategy does not propose to amend any of the current provisions that relate to RLC's (other than minor matters that are needed to implement the changes). As there will no longer be a map contained within the LEP that acts as a trigger for potential development, issues such as bushfire and flooding will be considered through the development application process.

Lismore City Council will amend its Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) to enable Rural Land Sharing Communities to occur, with community title, in the newly formed RU2 zone.

Definition: *'Eco Village'* – an eco-village is not a planning term, it is a concept of intentional communal living with the aims to become more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. It is a common term that has no ties to planning approvals or land tenures.



3.2.3: Objective 3 Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities (continued)

Large lot Residential Development

Large lot residential is a rural living product which typically does not contain an agricultural component. The product appeals to people who are generally seeking a rural ambience with greater living space when compared to typical urban living arrangement, or those pursuing living opportunities closer to nature.

The areas in which Council will consider land rezoning requests from landowners are identified in Appendix 1 of the LSPS. Large lot residential will primarily be supported within the identified village growth areas as higher densities are expected within the urban fabric. To assist landowners when considering their options, Council will consider the following principles when determining the appropriateness of each large lot residential proposal:

- An application will not be supported where located on high value agricultural land;
- Any proposal must incorporate buffers to existing agricultural uses, or land zoned as RU1 or RU4 and contains high agricultural potential rural land uses, preferably through the use of landscape buffers and/or conservation zoning.
- The locality of the proposal should not separate or divide any RU1 zoning. For clarity this means that where a proposal neighbours RU1 land, there should be a continual connection of RU1 zoning around the proposed site.
- The proposed site should not be located where it would significantly impact prominent rural vistas.
- All lots must be a minimum of 2500m2 (unless serviced with sewer) and able to accommodate a suitable building platform above the probable maximum flood level.
- The estate should be located in proximity to an existing urban centre or village (unless the land is identified as growth area within the LSPS).
- No commercial or industrial land use zoning will be supported within a large lot residential estate.

In addition, any proposal will also need to satisfy Ministerial Direction 9.4 (Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast) which provides direction for planning proposals that seek to rezone rural land to urban or rural residential, as well as ensuring that sufficient servicing is provided at no cost to council.

4. Implementations and Actions

4.1: Existing Services and Supporting Strategies

Council already plays a vital role in economic development. The following are principal activities, relevant strategies and policies that compliment this Strategy. These will continue to support the implementation of this Strategy.

Principle Activities – what we will continue to do

Service Team	Service Description
Economy, Planning and Environment	• DA concierge / duty planning service for tailored business including agribusinesses • Land use planning • Annual housekeeping reviews of planning legislation, including modernising permissions to enable agri-tourism, artisan food and drink and other compatible uses that help farmers diversify their businesses • Collaborate closely with key stakeholders such as Rous County Council and Local Land Services • Rural Landholder Initiative • Urban green corridors plan? (Landcare group support) • Business engagement and support through one-on-one assistance, networking and small business programs. • Investment attraction and marketing to position Lismore as a regional centre for enterprise and innovation. • Economic data and insights reporting
People and Community	• Destination management • Communication and engagement activities
Water, Waste & Open Spaces	• Waste-education programs to improve recycling and reduce contamination • Asset condition assessments and renewal planning • Planning, delivery and maintenance of parks, gardens and facilities.
Roads and Infrastructure	• Capital works programming and on-ground delivery • Infrastructure design, standards and support
Corporate Sustainability	• Strategic asset management across all Council-owned and managed assets such as roads, bridges, buildings, parks, facilities, stormwater systems and water/sewer infrastructure. • Integrate service needs and operational insights into lifecycle plans, funding requirements, and risk visibility.

Principle Strategies – what we are already committed to delivering	
Complementary strategies	**Action Summary**
Local Strategic Planning Statement	• Sets out potential growth areas across Lismore LGA to support population growth to 60,000 people. • Commits to 8 Turbochargers, including for Catalyst Infrastructure and Agri-Food Innovation
Biodiversity Management Strategy	• Supports the protection of biodiversity, vegetation, soil cover, weed management/avoidance, water quality improvements, including on rural lands. • Supports regenerative agriculture and activities that can attract / be the basis for biodiversity and/or carbon offsets.
Economic Development Strategy	• Facilitates investment, attraction and collaboration to support emerging agricultural crops and related businesses, including processing and manufacturing • Supports skills, innovation and collaboration to strengthen rural enterprises and emerging agricultural opportunities. • Works with the RLUS to ensure economic growth aligns with rural landuse capability and community benefit.
Climate Adaptation and Resilience Strategy	Identifies actions for key sectors and industries to increase resilience and adaptive capacity, including climate risk management on farms (eg drought / floods / bushfire), infrastructure for a variable and changing climate (eg use of shade trees and shelter sheds)
Open Space Strategy	Guides the planning, development and maintenance of Lismore's open space network, improving the amenity and accessibility of villages and neighbourhoods, supporting and encouraging healthy and active lifestyles.
Nimbin Place Plan	Captures community ideas to create a roadmap for the future use, activation and development of Nimbin's spaces. Sets out a list of projects and actions for council and stakeholders to implement.
Clunes Master Plan	Developed together with the Clunes community, the Clunes Master Plan provides clear growth pathways, environmental priorities and infrastructure needs. The Master Plan was adopted by Council in February 2026.
Supporting Policies	**Action Description**
Farmers Market Guidelines	Supports farmers markets, allowing the community to access fresh, locally produced food products direct from the grower
Land Policy	Sets out responsibilities of Council and the community to manage the land well, including raising awareness of the community's duty of care in relation to natural resources and minimising the impacts of agriculture which covers the majority of land area by adopting industry codes of practice.
Sustainability, viability and amenity of rural and urban land policy	Seeks to reduce conflict and uncertainty in rural zones, encourages sustainable land-use practices and limits land use change that diminish scenic amenity.

4.2: Council's Role in Implementation

Council has an important role to play in enabling and fostering Lismore's economy. Depending on what is needed, Council's role can vary, including:

- **Advocate:** Represent the community's interests and actively engage with other levels of government to influence policy and outcomes.
- **Facilitate:** Working with others to arrange and support the delivery of a function or outcome
- **Deliver:** Project implementation
- **Legislate and policy creation:** Set and enforce controls such as building and development to best enable a desired outcome
- **Service provision:** Delivery of functions and services such as infrastructure.

4.3: Actions

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
1. Strengthen Rural Land Use Planning and Stewardship					
1.1	Review permissible uses in the RU1 zone to ensure these areas are used primarily for agricultural activities and fragmentation is prevented, to protect productive agricultural land.	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time	
1.2	Strategically re-align the RU2 zone across Lismore LGA to areas where there are agricultural production constraints and/or opportunities for diversification, such as agritourism. Commence this work with a Scoping Report to key NSW state agencies.	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time	
1.3	Develop DCP controls for RU4 Primary Production Small Lots and amend all relevant existing DCP controls in relation to the new rural land zoning.	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time	
1.4	Collaborate with industry experts and rural landowners to activate new RU4 agricultural areas with produce choice suited to the location.	Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time	industry
1.6	Assess options under LSPS Turbocharger program for 'Agri-food Innovations', to support processing and supply chains that underpin prosperity in rural, including an agrifood processing and/or distribution precinct, providing a space for value-adding, selling, packaging, marketing and distribution of local farm produce and encouraging agri-tourism in the area.	Deliver and Advocate	1-2 years	Staff time	industry

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
2. Support productivity and sustainability in farming and industry					
2.1	Investigate opportunity for a food and agriculture extension officer position, including the shared opportunity with nearby councils.	Facilitate	1-2 years	External funding required	DPI, BSC, RC
2.2	Work with SCU to build on, share and promote the regenerative agriculture work across Lismore LGA and region, including to primary producers, agricultural businesses and potential investors.	Partner Deliver			SCU
2.3	Support North East Waste to consider having FOGO processed and used locally	Partner			NE Waste
2.4	Promote good land management practices, including erosion management, soil health, fertiliser use and weed management, with a focus on supporting new landowners.	Advocate Facilitate			LLS, Rous CC
2.5	Work with Rous County Council and State Government agencies to develop additional advice avenues and resources for landholders regarding pest control and emerging biosecurity threats.	Facilitate advocate	2-5 years	Grant for ag extension officer	Rous CC LLS
2.6	Work with primary producers to improve their natural capital within the context of their agricultural production and/ or diversification opportunities (such as eco-tourism).	Facilitate advocate	2-5 years		Landcare DCCEEW
2.7	Investigate partnership opportunities to facilitate uptake of emerging agricultural commodities and practices.	Facilitate	1-2 years	Staff time	

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
3. Support the Wellbeing of Rural Communities					
3.1	Develop communications material and a welcome pack for rural residents about rural living, including: • summary of agricultural activities and seasonal considerations • summary of key villages, services and amenities • contacts for key supporting agencies such as Rous County Council and Local Land Services	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	
3.2	Collaborate with Local Land Services to host Welcome Nights in the rural areas	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Local Land Services
3.3	Develop village master plans for: • Bexhill, • Canaiba, • Dunoon, • Eltham, • Modanville, • The Channon; and • Wyrallah.	Deliver	5-10 years	Staff time	Village reference groups
3.4	Advocate for improved government and non-governmental services that support rural living such as: • digital connectivity • tele-health and community health practices	Advocate	3-5 years	Staff time	NBN Essential Energy Local Health District

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	Partner
3.5	Amend existing LEP provisions including the Rural Landsharing Community Development Map and DCP chapter to allow new rural landsharing communities (RLC) to be considered with community title in accordance with the discission at section 3.2.3 of this strategy	Delivery	1-2 years	Staff time	
3.6	Ensure that LEP and DCP provisions continue to provide the ability for existing RLC's to convert to community title.	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff Time	
3.7	Allow dwelling entitlement searches to continue in RU1 for a period of two years, after that amend the LEP to prevent any future dwelling entitlement applications in RU1.	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	
3.8	Amend clause 4.2B so that it does not apply to land in the RU2 zone, thereby allowing all lots within the zone to have a dwelling entitlement.	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	

5. Monitoring

This Rural Land Use Strategy is one strategy that, together with a range of other theme-based strategies, contribute to the future vision for Lismore. Collectively, the Strategic Planning Framework aims to improve all aspects of daily living that make Lismore a great place to live. These quality-of-life indicators are monitored across the framework as a whole and are detailed within Appendix B of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The indicators will be monitored and published every four years and/or as and when Census data is available.

In addition, monitoring and reporting against delivery of actions set within the Rural Land Use Strategy, and any associated qualitative data, will be provided annually through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R).

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Details of the proposed RU1 and RU2 zone

RU1 Primary Production	
Zone Overview	Primarily to promote agricultural production and environmental protection and minimise fragmentation. The zone is generally allocated to land where the main function is primary production, particularly lands with better conditions and soils for agriculture.
Zone Objectives	• To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base. • To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area. • To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones. • To preserve rural resources by ensuring that the viability of rural land is not extinguished by inappropriate development or incompatible uses. • To enable a range of other uses to occur on rural land providing such uses do not conflict with existing or potential agriculture and do not detract from the scenic amenity and character of the rural environment.
LCC Directive	The RU1 Primary Production zone will be refocused to protect Lismore's most valuable agricultural land by removing tourist, commercial and other non-agricultural land uses, ensuring RU1 is reserved exclusively for productive rural industries and activities which directly support agriculture.

Appendix 1 – Details of the proposed RU1 and RU2 zone (continued)

RU1 Primary Production	Existing	Proposed
Permitted without Consent	Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home occupations; Home occupations (sex services); Intensive plant agriculture;	****no new land uses proposed.**
Permitted with Consent	Agritourism; Airstrips; Animal boarding or training establishments; Aquaculture; Artisan food and drink industries; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Camping grounds; Caravan parks; Cellar door premises; Cemeteries; Community facilities; Creative industries; Dual occupancies; Dwelling houses; Eco-tourist facilities; Environmental facilities; Extractive industries; Farm buildings; Flood mitigation works; Garden centres; Helipads; Home-based child care; Home businesses; Home industries; Information and education facilities; Intensive livestock agriculture; Jetties; Kiosks; Landscaping material supplies; Mooring pens; Open cut mining; Plant nurseries; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (outdoor); Restaurants or cafes; Roads; Roadside stalls; Rural industries; Rural supplies; Tourist and visitor accommodation; Turf farming; Water recreation structures	Industrial retail outlet;
Prohibited	Backpackers' accommodation; Hotel or motel accommodation; Local distribution premises; Serviced apartments; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3	Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3

Appendix 1 – Details of the proposed RU1 and RU2 zone (continued)

RU2 Rural Landscape	
Zone Overview	To encourage agriculture and other supporting uses and maintain the rural landscape character of the land. The zone is often applied to lands with high scenic or biodiversity value where agriculture and other supporting uses are considered appropriate. This zone is routinely applied to land where there are greater agricultural constraints due to landscape or soil.
Zone Objectives	• 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. • To enable a range of other uses that are compatible with the flood hazard associated with the land. • To provide for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on the ecological values of the land. • To provide for a range of tourist and visitor accommodation-based land uses, including agri-tourism, eco-tourism and any other like tourism that is linked to an environmental, agricultural or rural industry use of the land.
LCC Directive	The **RU2 Rural Landscape** zone will be expanded to accommodate rural land uses which are not suitable in **RU1**, including tourism, lifestyle-supporting and diversification activities, on land with agricultural constraints such as slope, flood risk or high scenic value.

Appendix 1 – Details of the proposed RU1 and RU2 zone (continued)

RU2 Rural Landscape	Existing	Proposed
Permitted without Consent	Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home occupations; Home occupations (sex services); Intensive plant agriculture	****no new land uses proposed.**
Permitted with Consent	Agritourism; Airstrips; Animal boarding or training establishments; Aquaculture; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Camping grounds; Cellar door premises; Cemeteries; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Eco-tourist facilities; Environmental facilities; Farm buildings; Farm stay accommodation; Flood mitigation works; Garden centres; Helipads; Home-based child care; Home businesses; Information and education facilities; Intensive livestock agriculture; Jetties; Kiosks; Landscaping material supplies; Light industries; Mooring pens; Plant nurseries; Recreation areas; Recreation facilities (outdoor); Restaurants or cafes; Roads; Roadside stalls; Rural industries; Turf farming; Vehicle repair stations; Water recreation structures	Artisan food and drink industries; Caravan parks; Creative Industries; Dual occupancy; Function centres; Garden centres; Industrial retail outlet; Recreation facility (outdoor); Restaurants or cafes; Tourist and visitor accommodation;
Prohibited	Any development not specified in item 2 or 3	

Appendix 2 – Details of proposed RU4 zone

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	
Zone Overview	To encourage agriculture on smaller lots while allowing for rural living opportunities. The zone is primarily intended to facilitate small-lot, intensive agricultural production and create a viable pathway for new and emerging agricultural enterprises, which are not appropriately supported in RU1 or RU2.
Zone Objectives	• 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. (These are as per the objectives listed in the Standard Instrument – Principal LEP. No additional objectives have been included for this zone.)
LCC Directive	The **RU4 Primary Production Small Lots** zone will be applied to support small-scale, high-intensity and emerging agricultural enterprises by enabling productive, local-market farming on smaller lots. The zone will strictly limit non-agricultural uses, allow only **one dwelling per lot**, and prohibit tourism, lifestyle and commercial activities which would undermine agricultural productivity. **RU4** will provide a clear pathway for innovative and entry-level farming while ensuring development remains compatible with surrounding rural land uses.

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	Proposed
Permitted without Consent	Environmental protection works; Extensive agriculture; Forestry; Home occupations; Home occupations (sex services); Intensive plant agriculture;
Permitted with Consent	Agriculture; Agricultural produce industries; Agritourism; Animal boarding or training establishments; Aquaculture; Boat launching ramps; Boat sheds; Building identification signs; Cellar door premises; Dwelling houses; Educational establishments; Environmental facilities; Environmental protection works; Farm buildings; Forestry; Home businesses; Home industries; Industrial retail outlet; Industrial training facility; Intensive plant agriculture; Landscaping material supplies; Plant nurseries; Roads; Roadside stalls; Rural supplies; Signage; Water recreation structures; Water supply systems;
Prohibited	Any other development not specified in item 2 or 3.

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Lismore City Council


Biodiversity
Management
Strategy
2026–2036
Part of Lismore's
Strategic Planning Framework
Revised 3rd Edition
April 2026
DRAFT
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
Lismore City Council

Executive summary

Lismore's natural environment is central to our community's identity, wellbeing and resilience. From our rainforests and waterways to our villages, farms and urban green spaces, biodiversity shapes the places we live and sustains the lives we lead. The Biodiversity Management Strategy (BMS) sets out how Council, community and partners will work together to protect, restore and connect these landscapes over the next decade. The BMS covers the breadth of the Lismore Local Government Area (LGA) and was first developed in 2015 and revised in 2020.

This third edition of the BMS is built upon the outcomes of a 5-year implementation review, which considered changes in the operating environment and future needs. The revised strategy leverages a decade of delivery, and strengthens our long-term approach to caring for Country, responding to the challenges of a changing climate, increasing development pressures, and the growing needs of our ecosystems and community. It brings clearer direction, a simpler structure, and a stronger focus on healthy rivers, resilient habitats, and community participation.

The Strategy is built around four themes that guide how we protect and restore nature:

1. **Resilience and Adaptation:** Strengthening our ecosystems to withstand a changing future.
2. **Protect and Enhance Natural Habitats and Waterways:** Safeguarding the places and species that sustain our region.
3. **Improve Green Corridors and Liveability:** Connecting people, places, and nature for a healthier Lismore.
4. **Monitor and Communicate:** Improving the way we collect, share and use ecological information, and fostering community participation.

The 3rd edition of the BMS renews Lismore's commitment to protecting what makes our region unique. Resourced primarily through a permanent Special Rate Variation and Council funds, it provides a practical, community driven roadmap to restore ecosystems, build climate resilience, strengthen cultural connections, and ensure that nature continues to thrive for future generations.

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Mayor's Foreword

Lismore is a region defined by its people – their strength, generosity, and deep connection to this place we call home. Our waterways and landscapes are an important part of our story, and they remind us of the importance of caring for what sustains us.

In recent years, we've faced challenges that tested us like never before. Yet through it all, the spirit of Lismore has shone brightly. We've come together, supported one another, and shown what resilience and community really mean.

The Biodiversity Management Strategy is about continuing that journey together. It's about protecting and restoring the natural places that give us life, so that future generations can enjoy the same beauty and benefits we do today. A healthy environment supports healthy communities – and that is something we all value.

This strategy is built on collaboration. It calls on all of us, residents, businesses, farmers, government and community groups, to work together to create connected landscapes, support sustainable practices, and make decisions that reflect our shared values. By doing this, we strengthen the bonds that make Lismore such a special place.

Let's move forward together and create a future that is strong, caring, and connected.



1. About this Strategy

1.1: Purpose of the Strategy

The Biodiversity Management Strategy (BMS) aims to provide a long-term framework for protecting and enhancing the unique biodiversity of the Lismore Local Government Area. The strategy aims to:

- Safeguard local ecosystems and species by identifying key biodiversity values and mitigating against their threats.
- Restore and maintain habitats, including urban green corridors and rural landscapes.
- Engage and educate the community about the importance of biodiversity and sustainable land management.
- Collaborate with landholders, residents, First Nations people, industry and community partners to implement integrated actions to affect synergistic environmental improvement outcomes across the lands and waters of the LGA.
- Support climate resilience and social and cultural wellbeing
- Provide transparency of Special Rates expenditure to the community through regular review and reporting
- Inform Council decision making and development processes.

It underpins initiatives like the Rural Landholder Initiative and Urban Green Corridors Plan, focusing on habitat restoration, waterway health, and wildlife corridors to maintain a connected, biodiverse environment.



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Biodiversity Management Strategy is part of Lismore City Council's Strategic Planning Framework; it sits underneath the Local Strategic Planning Statement.



Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets a 20 year place based vision for the future of Lismore as a local government area, including an increased population of 60,000 people. It explains the long term direction for growth and change, including where housing, jobs, services, environmental protection and infrastructure should be located. The LSPS is about the big picture and provides direction for land-use planning across the community. The Biodiversity Management Strategy is a supporting strategy to the LSPS and sits alongside a suite of other theme-based strategies.

The Biodiversity Management Strategy focuses on how Council will protect, manage, and enhance biodiversity within the long term vision. It translates the LSPS vision into practical actions, to conserve important environmental areas, manage impacts, and support healthy ecosystems such as The Big Scrub, which was once the largest Lowland Subtropical Rainforest in Australia.

Put simply:

- The LSPS explains the long term "why and where" (i.e. direction).
- The Biodiversity Management Strategy explains the practical "how and what" (i.e. actions).

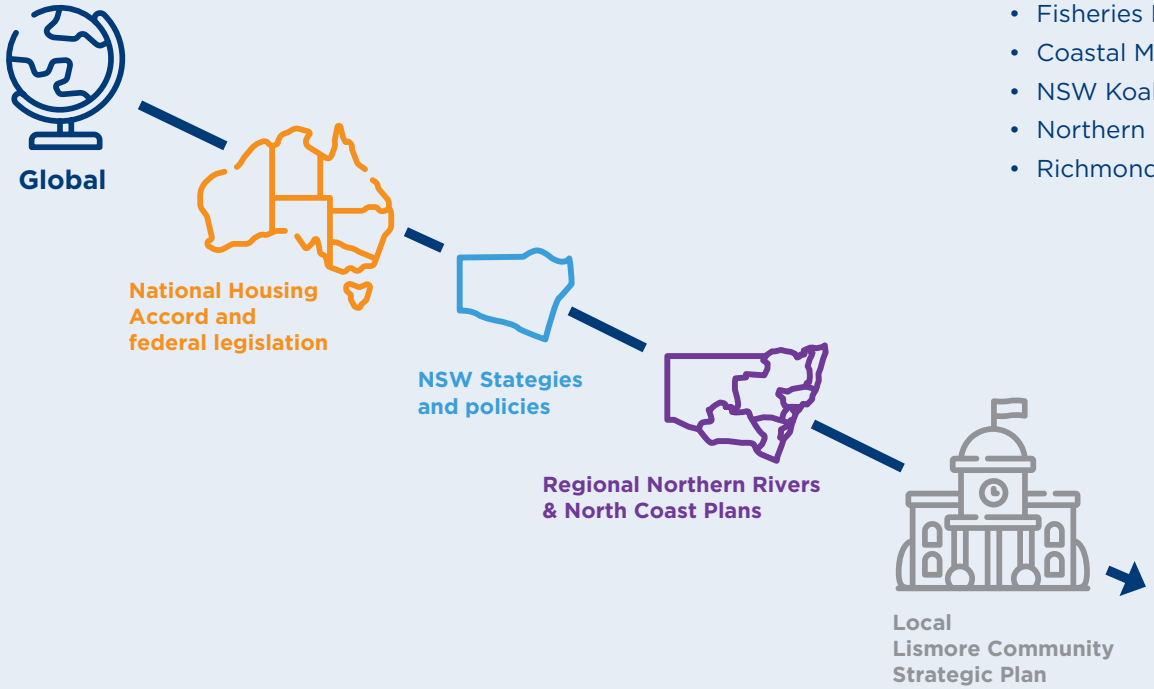
1.2: Strategic Alignment (continued)



1.2: Strategic Alignment (continued)

The Biodiversity Management Strategy has been developed in alignment with regional, state, national and international drivers, policy and legislation, including:

- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
- Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994
- Fisheries Management Act 1994
- Coastal Management Act 2016
- NSW Koala Strategy 2021–2026
- Northern Rivers Regional Biodiversity Management Plan (2010)
- Richmond River Coastal Management Plan



1.3: What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity simply means the variety of life on Earth. It includes:

- All living things – plants, animals, and microorganisms
- Their genetic differences
- The ecosystems and landscapes they live in

Biodiversity is always changing. It can increase through natural genetic changes, or decrease when species, subspecies, or local populations become extinct.

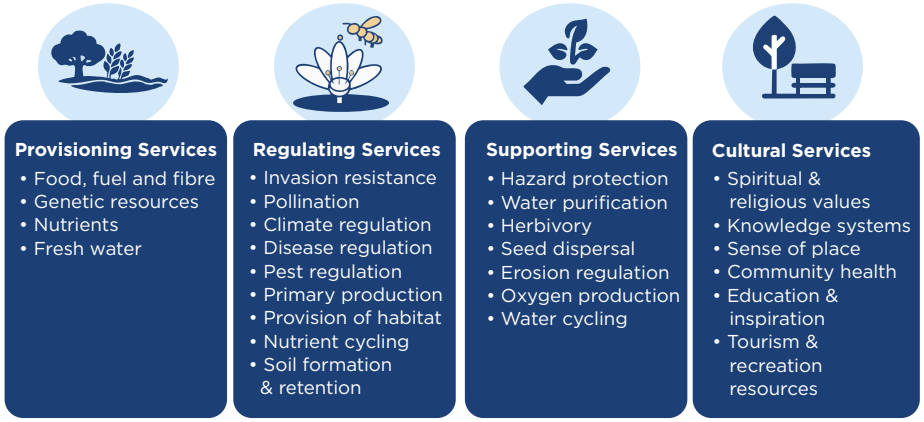
Biodiversity is usually described at three levels:

- **Genetic diversity:** The variety of genetic information within individual species (for example, different variations of the same type of plant or animal).
- **Species diversity:** The number and variety of different species in an area – what most people think of when they hear "biodiversity."
- **Ecosystem diversity:** The range of different habitats, ecological communities, and natural processes that support life.

Overall, biodiversity highlights how all living things are connected and depend on each other.

Protecting biodiversity is vital because it keeps our planet's life support systems working. We rely on nature for the essentials we all need – clean air to breathe, fresh water to drink, healthy soil to grow food, and natural materials for shelter and energy.

These benefits, known as **ecosystem services**, are the essential things nature provides us when ecosystems are healthy. They depend on biodiversity – how many species live in an area, how abundant they are, and how they interact with each other.



1.4: How we got here

Regional Advantage and Positioning

This is the third edition of the Lismore City Council Biodiversity Management Strategy. The Strategy was initiated in 2015 in direct response to the Lismore community's request for Council to provide environmental leadership to protect and enhance biodiversity on public and private land in both urban and rural landscapes.

This revision of the strategy builds on the achievements and learnings of the previous 10 years, through iterative consultation with the community, environment groups and industry and in response to changed internal management structures. This edition of the Biodiversity Management Strategy also responds to significant external environmental changes, shifts in social awareness, and the establishment of cultural protocols to ensure the Biodiversity Management Strategy continues to be a critical delivery mechanism for regional action. The BMS also reflects biodiversity management recommendations outlined in overarching regional strategies, research and existing Council policies.

Key Findings from the independent Biodiversity Management Strategy Review

Both external and internal stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the BMS, with key findings including (6 in total);

- The current format and style of the document is difficult to engage with. The increased use of graphics, maps, images and flow charts could increase in engagement as a public facing document
- LCC has a key role as a networker and facilitator for collaborative projects between community and industry partners. The development of an environmental education and science communicator role is needed to maximise the delivery of the BMS
- An increased focus on river health would improve linkages between community and industry
- There is a need to develop a framework for implementing biodiversity offsets on council owned land
- Amending the LEP to include a specific clause requiring biodiversity management for identified/mapped areas
- The development of a collaborative strategic framework for climate resilient, riparian restoration works

1.4: How We Got Here (continued)

Why do we need a Biodiversity Management Strategy in the Lismore LGA?

Since the last review of the Biodiversity Management Strategy in 2019, the Lismore LGA has experienced major impacts from natural disasters and increased pressure on the natural systems from climate change. These impacts compound the ever-increasing pressures already placed upon global biodiversity by habitat loss. This has resulted in significant changes to planning strategies, biodiversity management and ecological restoration practice.

The scale of recent natural disasters has placed considerable stress on local biodiversity and heightened the need for Council, community and industry to demonstrate stronger accountability as land and water resource stewards. Although many of the environmental and planning issues faced by Lismore City Council and its community are common to local governments in NSW and across Australia more broadly, they require a local response. Consequently, a locally focused Biodiversity Management Strategy is essential to ensure that our unique local ecosystems, species and genes survive in their natural habitat, and that connection and stewardship of land is nurtured locally as well. Furthermore, natural systems take time to change and recover and so a long-term vision and commitment is required.

The Biodiversity Management Strategy will be critical in guiding how we manage these increasing pressures while also playing a significant role to achieve Lismore 60,000 – supporting an increased population of 60,000 people living in a connected, resilient and thriving Lismore - ensuring development is aligned with the sustainable protection and restoration of the region's biodiversity.

Reimagine Lismore: A Plan for the Future

Community Strategic Plan 2025 -2035

In late 2024, Council conducted its most comprehensive community survey to date, inviting residents and business owners to share their views on local services, priorities and overall quality of life. The resulting Lismore Community Scorecard provided valuable insights into community expectations and aspirations, informing future planning and decision making across Council's five key performance areas: the built environment (place), the natural environment, community wellbeing, economic development (prosperity) and governance.

Value and protect local biodiversity, natural landscapes and waterways, and strengthen resilience to natural hazards.

Key natural environment priority projects identified include:

- Support community groups to implement the Urban Landcare Program.
- Prioritise and implement projects in the Urban Rivers and Catchment Project: Regenerating for resilience in Lismore's urban endangered rainforests.
- Partner with Rous County Council to deliver the Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative Project for Lismore to improve catchment health, natural flood mitigation, water security and landscape hydration.
- Investigate potential biobanking sites in Lismore for Biodiversity Conservation Trust stewardship to offset the impact of development on biodiversity
- Identify key urban areas for streetscape rejuvenation in Lismore and villages.

1.5: Key Definitions, Terms and Acronyms

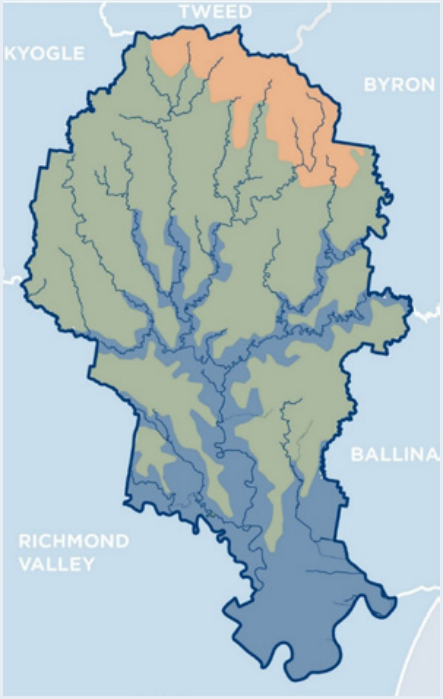
Key Term	Acronym	Definition/Purpose
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (NSW)	BC Act	Establishes a framework for protecting threatened species, ecosystems, and biological diversity in NSW.
Coastal Management Program	CMP	Will provide long-term strategy and management actions for the Richmond River estuary.
Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for South-east Lismore	CKPoM	Provides a blueprint for the continued coexistence of koalas and people in south-east Lismore
Friends of the Koala	FoK	Lismore based organisation committed to the conservation of the Northern Rivers koala population and the preservation and enhancement of koala habitat.
High Conservation Value	HCV	Land designated by Lismore City Council as being of high conservation value
Key Threatening Processes	KTP	A threat may be listed as a key threatening process under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 if it: • adversely affects threatened species or ecological communities. • could cause species or ecological communities to become threatened.
NSW State Vegetation Type Mapping	SVTM	State-wide mapping guided by sample plots of PCTs, Vegetation Class and Vegetation Formation.
Plant Community Type	PCT	The finest level in the NSW vegetation classification hierarchy.
Rural Landholder Initiative	RLI	Lismore City Council initiative delivering annual grants to rural landholders that protect and enhance critical areas of ecological importance.
State Environmental Planning Policy (NSW)	SEPP	Policies controlling land use and development across NSW.
Threatened Ecological Community	TEC	A naturally occurring group of native plants, animals and other organisms living in a unique habitat.
Urban Green Corridor Plan	UGCP	Aims to protect and restore Lismore's urban bushland and improve habitat connectivity

2. Our Biodiversity

Lismore is a vibrant regional centre shaped by its diverse communities, productive agricultural landscapes, and iconic areas of rainforest. Spanning urban areas, rural villages, farmland, and significant natural environments, the region's distinctive landscape patterns underpin a rich social, cultural, and ecological identity.

The Lismore Local Government Area (LGA) covers approximately 1,290 square kilometres, including fertile floodplains, rural farmland, and forested ranges.

Located in one of Australia's most biologically rich regions, Lismore sits within the Northern Rivers, an area renowned for its extraordinary diversity of plants, animals, and habitats. This remarkable biodiversity is a defining feature of the landscape and a key part of what makes Lismore unique.



Escarpment ranges - Steep northern ranges and mountains with rugged gorges and upper river catchments. Key land uses include nature conservation, forestry and forest grazing.

Midland hills - Undulating foothills and low ranges north of the coastal plains, with grazing and forestry as primary land uses. The area includes numerous villages, hamlets and rural estates.

Coastal plains - Broad, flat river valleys and floodplains featuring estuaries, beaches, headlands, lakes and sand masses. Outside urban areas, land use is mainly cropping and grazing.

2,109 hectares of waterways

10 active urban Landcare groups

7.8% Parks environment and conservation zoning

2. Our Biodiversity (continued)

High Conservation Value (HCV) areas are places that contain species, habitats, or ecosystems of exceptional importance. These may be recognised under international, national, or state legislation, or they may hold strong local conservation value because of their rarity, condition, or role in supporting wildlife.

Because all species depend on their surrounding environment, protecting whole habitats and not just individual species is essential. For example, the estuarine and freshwater wetlands of the Richmond River floodplain provide vital feeding and nesting areas for threatened migratory birds and many other animals.

Within the Lismore LGA, Council has identified nine categories of HCV land, helping guide conservation efforts and protection for the region's most valuable natural areas.

No.	Category
HCV-1	Areas of land identified as containing threatened species or population and/or of local conservation priority
HCV-2	Area of land identified as containing endangered ecological communities (EECs)
HCV-3	Area of land identified as key habitat for priority vertebrate assemblages
HCV-4	Mapped coastal management areas under the Coastal Management SEPP 2018
HCV-5	Areas of land identified as providing very high habitat corridor values
HCV-6	Areas of land identified as Primary, Secondary A and Secondary B koala habitat as mapped by Landmark Ecological Services 2011 and 2019
HCV-7	Areas of land identified as supporting riparian, wetland and estuarine native vegetation other than Coastal Management SEPP mapped wetlands
HCV-8	Areas of land identified as supporting any type of rainforest
HCV-9	Areas of land identified as supporting native vegetation defined as old-growth forest

Further details of the species, populations, communities and habitats within the Lismore LGA are included in Appendix C.

2.1: Caring for Widjabul/Wia-bal Country

Caring for Country is central to the culture, identity and wellbeing of Widjabul/Wia-bal people, the Traditional Custodians of the lands now known as Lismore.

Connection to Country is lived through story, language, ceremony, songlines and totemic relationships, and through the ongoing responsibilities of looking after land, water, plants, animals and the places that hold cultural significance. These knowledge systems have sustained the Widjabul/Wia-bal people and the landscapes of the Bundjalung Nation for thousands of generations.

For First Nations communities, caring for Country is not a project or a program - it reflects a relationship in which people care for Country, and Country in turn cares for the people. This deep and enduring connection continues today, despite significant and ongoing disruption caused by colonisation, dispossession and landscape change.

In Lismore, many people, First Nations and non Indigenous, care about nature for a range of reasons. For Widjabul/Wia-bal people, caring for Country is an expression of culture, belonging and identity. For others, it stems from valuing the beauty of nature, recognising its right to exist, or understanding the essential services that healthy ecosystems provide.

Acknowledging and supporting caring for Country is fundamental to protecting and restoring biodiversity across Lismore. This Strategy recognises the crucial role of First Nations knowledge in guiding land management, shaping restoration efforts and strengthening the health of Country. By working alongside First Nations communities, Council seeks to support cultural practices, enable meaningful partnerships, and embed Indigenous knowledge into the planning and management of Lismore's landscapes.

It's the responsibility of everyone to care for Country. By recognising, understanding and working together, we can honour and carry forward generations of knowledge to support this shared commitment.



NSW Government. (2022). *Historic native title agreement for Northern Rivers* (Media Release). https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/documents/news-and-media/media-releases-archive/2022/12/Speakman_Franklin_med_rel__historic_native_title_determination_for_Widjabul_Wiabal_people.pdf

2.1: Caring for Widjabul/Wia-bal Country (continued)

Widjabul/Wia-bal Native Title Determination

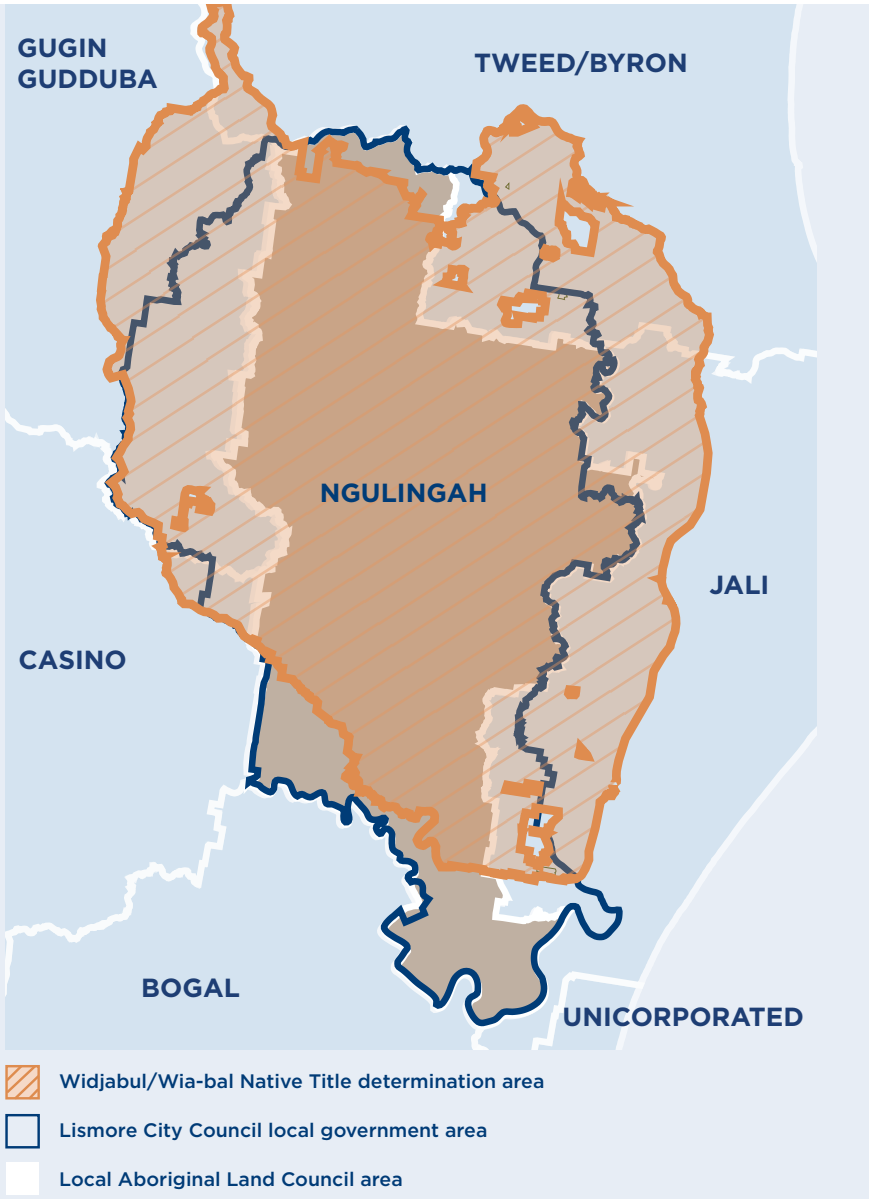
The Widjabul/Wia-bal Gurrumbil Aboriginal Corporation hold Native Title over public land and waters in the area around Lismore, in trust for the Widjabul Wia-bal Peoples. The 2022 Native Title determination area is approximately 11,700ha and bounded by Bagotville, Tuckean Nature Reserve and Tucki Tucki to the south, Bungabee State Forest and Cawongla to the west, Nightcap National Park in the north and Wollongbar and Alstonville in the east.

The NSW government has entered into an Indigenous land use agreement with the Widjabul/Wia-bal as part of the settlement of the native title claim.

The settlement also included an agreement to disregard historical extinguishment of native title in national parks within the native title determination area, paving the way for the future recognition of native title over an additional 2,600ha of national parks (NSW Government, 2022).

Local Aboriginal Land Councils

NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) play a central role in land management, cultural heritage protection and community wellbeing for Aboriginal people. Ngulingah LALC's operational area covers most of the Lismore LGA, and sits alongside neighbouring LALCs: Tweed Byron, Gugin Gudduba, Casino and Jali.



Map 1 – Local Aboriginal Land Council and Native Title Determination Areas

2.2: Our Rainforest Regions

The Border Ranges Rainforest region

A significant portion of the Lismore LGA lies within the Border Ranges Rainforest region, an area of exceptional ecological value that spans north eastern New South Wales and south eastern Queensland. This region extends from Beenleigh in the north to Evans Head in the south, and westward to Killarney, encompassing a landscape where tropical and temperate biodiversity converge.

The area forms part of the MacPherson–Macleay Overlap, a nationally recognised zone where the southernmost limits of many tropical species meet the northernmost limits of temperate species. This overlap contributes to an unusually high diversity of plants and animals, making the Border Ranges region one of Australia's 15 National Biodiversity Hotspots—areas identified as supporting largely intact ecosystems, rich native species assemblages, and high concentrations of locally endemic species.

Within the Lismore LGA, however, only fragments of the original rainforest, wetland, and lowland ecosystems remain, following extensive clearing and land use change since European settlement. These remnants are now critical refuges, supporting threatened species and ecological communities that rely on the unique climatic and biogeographical conditions of the Border Ranges.

The Big Scrub

Supported by fertile, basalt-derived soils and substantial rainfall, the Big Scrub was Australia's largest tract of lowland subtropical rainforest. Covering an area of approximately 75,000 hectares before European settlement, the almost continuous tract of rainforest extended from the Nightcap Range in the north to Meerschaum Vale in the south and from Ballina on the coast to Lismore in the west. The Big Scrub was dominated by White Booyong (Heritiera trifiolata) and Australian Red Cedar (Toona ciliata). The latter was eagerly sought by the 'cedar-getters' for its fine quality timber. Historical accounts suggest that only a small part of the Big Scrub rainforest was cleared in the mid-1880s but, by the 1920s, the Big Scrub had been almost entirely cleared. The Big Scrub now covers an area of about 700 hectares in small, scattered remnants that represent less than 1% of the original area of rainforest before European settlement. About half of the remaining area of the Big Scrub is in the Lismore LGA.

2.2: Our Rainforest Regions (continued)

Strengthening our natural areas

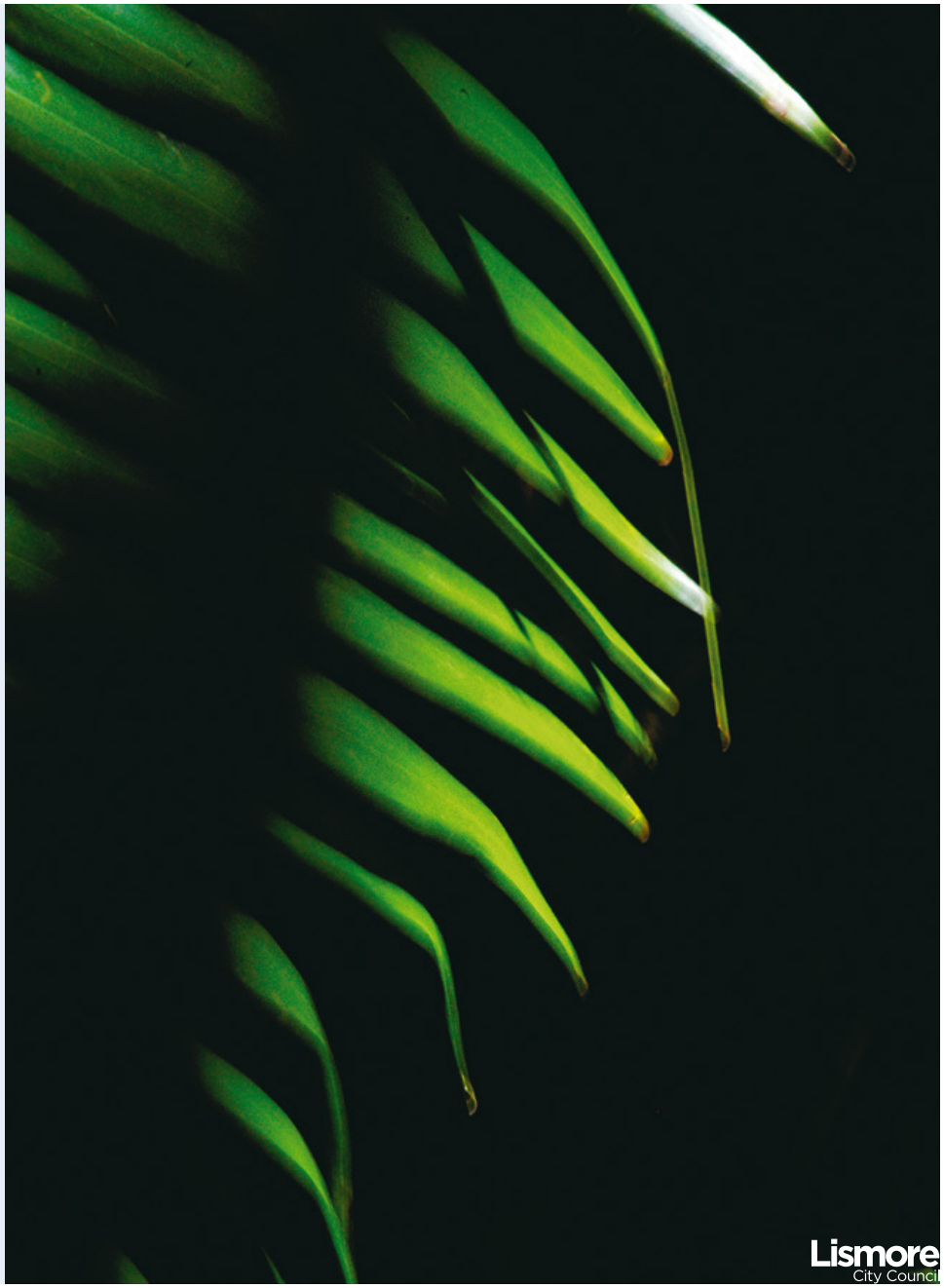
Research carried out after the 2022 floods shows that Lismore's High Conservation Value (HCV) riparian ecosystems are naturally resilient, but closely timed disasters place extra pressure on recovery. While many areas began to bounce back after the first flood, the second event, occurring so soon after, intensified impacts and slowed natural regeneration.

This research helps landholders, community groups, and Council understand how to better protect and restore our rivers and rainforests. By knowing which species are more resilient and how ecosystems respond to back-to-back disasters, we can make smarter decisions about where to focus regeneration efforts.

Ongoing genetic research in the Big Scrub is also contributing to stronger, healthier ecosystems. By improving genetic diversity in remaining rainforest patches, scientists and land managers are helping ensure these areas can adapt to future pressures and continue providing longterm environmental benefits.

Since the last review of the Biodiversity Management Strategy, several new guides and manuals have been released to support best practice bush regeneration and ecological restoration:

- Bush Regeneration in Progress; An Ongoing Management Guide for Landholders in the North Coast (LLS, 2025)
- Measuring the success of ecological restoration (DCCEEW, 2025)
- Koala habitat restoration guidelines (DCCEEW, 2022)
- Monitoring Manual for Invasive and Native Flora (DCCEEW, 2022)
- Saving our Species Hygiene guidelines: Protocols to protect priority biodiversity areas in NSW from Phytopthera cinnamomic, Myrtle Rust, amphibian chytrid fungus and invasive plants (NSW DPIE 2020)
- Australian Rainforest Seeds: A Guide to Collecting, Processing and Propagation (Dunphy, McAlpin, Nelson & Chapman, 2020)
- Weedlings and Seedlings- A field guide to seedling identification for Bush Regeneration (Linnane, 2024)



2.3: Our Green Spaces

Urban environments

The urban area of Lismore is rich in natural assets, comprising a diverse range of vegetation and habitat types. From Big Scrub rainforest remnants at Rotary Park and Currie Park, to eucalypt forests supporting breeding koala populations in East Lismore, biodiverse bushland and winding waterways are a key feature of our cityscape. Across our villages and towns, our natural environment is a fundamental part of regional life.

Our green spaces provide essential benefits to the community by improving air and water quality, moderating urban heat, enhancing climate resilience, and supporting mental and physical wellbeing through access to natural spaces. However, Lismore's urban biodiversity is increasingly challenged by pervasive weed invasion, habitat fragmentation, invasive and domestic animals, illegal dumping, disturbance and encroachment, fire-exclusion impacts, climate-driven stressors, and flood-related erosion and pollution, all of which undermine ecological condition and long-term resilience.

Council's Urban Green Corridors Plan identifies a network of wildlife corridors through Lismore's urban area and prioritises areas within the network for bush regeneration and revegetation programs. Through this plan, Council enhances the network of natural areas within Lismore City, providing opportunities for the community to enjoy urban green spaces through activities such as walking, riding, and connecting with the environment.

As Lismore rebuilds and grows, biodiversity is an essential feature of urban planning, for present and future generations of plants, animals and people.



2.3: Our Green Spaces (continued)

Green connections

Biodiversity exists everywhere in our environment, from the fungi and microorganisms beneath our feet to the tall trees atop our mountains. The net amount of habitat across the LGA is critical in supporting the wide range of our unique biodiversity, meaning all habitats have value. Hubs of biodiversity can be found in core areas of mature forests, such as those supported in our nature reserves and National Parks. Paddock trees, roadside vegetation, and windrows planted to protect horticulture and crops also provide important stepping stones and habitat for wildlife.

Connecting these critical hubs is a system of key habitats and wildlife corridors, which was developed for the entire LGA in 2012. These corridors identify key wildlife habitat and priority areas for conservation and restoration, extending into the Lismore urban area and linking to regionally significant habitats in neighbouring LGAs.

The role of wildlife corridors in conserving biodiversity is widely recognised to reduce isolation, fragmentation, and degradation of native vegetation and wildlife habitats. Landscapes with healthy native vegetation support the visitor economy, with tourist drives, kayaking, walking and biking all activities that are vastly enhanced with natural vegetation adding beauty and shade. It also provides cooling benefits for livestock and people,and strengthens cultural and community stewardship and partnerships. In the rural area, conservation is largely driven by private landholders and community groups, for the vast majority of land is held in private hands.

Rural Landscapes

Lismore's rural landscapes span farmland, forested ridgelines, valleys and rural settlements that form the character of the wider LGA. These areas contain some of our most significant biodiversity values, with tracts of remnant native vegetation, high quality riparian corridors and some of the country's best agricultural soils.

Across localities from Nimbin and The Channon to Clunes, Wyrallah and North Woodburn, landholders, community groups and Landcare networks play a vital role in caring for the land and maintaining ecological health. These rural landscapes offer some of the greatest opportunities for large-scale habitat protection, regenerative agriculture and long-term land stewardship that benefits both the environment and the community.

Rural Landholder Initiative

The Rural Landholder Initiative is Council's flagship rural partnership program, designed to conserve and restore areas of high conservation value on private land through education and incentives. The initiative bridges environmental stewardship with viable farm management to deliver on-ground biodiversity and natural capital improvements. Between 2015 and 2025, this pioneering effort has driven 236 projects, planted 56,500 trees, and managed 380 hectares of vital land, fostering active community engagement and emerging leaders.

With a dedicated staff member supporting the program, the initiative offers annual grants to rural landholders, providing resources and labour for on-ground projects that protect and enhance critical areas like koala habitats, riverbanks, and remnant vegetation; or support regenerative agricultural practices. Successful projects are distinguished by careful planning, community consultation, and strong landholder commitment.

2.4: Our Waterways (continued)

Lismore's aquatic environments span the eastern Richmond River catchment - from the cool, forested headwater streams of the upper catchment, through the mid catchment creeks and river corridors, to the expansive floodplains and tidal estuarine reaches downstream. Together, these interconnected waterways support a diversity of ecosystems and species, underpin water quality and landscape resilience, and shape the ecological identity of the region.

Headwater streams in the upper catchment play a crucial role in regulating flows, filtering sediments and nutrients, and providing cool water refuges for native species. Mid catchment rivers and creeks transport water, organic matter and sediment, sustaining riparian forests, freshwater wetlands and groundwater dependent habitats. Further downstream, the floodplain and tidal reaches of the Richmond River form one of the largest coastal floodplain systems in NSW, supporting floodplain wetlands, swamp sclerophyll forest, and lowland rainforest, as well as key fish habitats and estuarine ecosystems.

These environments are deeply interconnected: conditions in the upper catchment influence the health of creeks, wetlands and estuarine areas downstream. They link to landscape-scale aquifers and recharge groundwater levels throughout the environment. Protecting and restoring each part of the system is essential for maintaining the ecological function of the catchment as a whole.



2.4: Our Waterways (continued)

Nature-based Solutions - Strengthening ecosystems and building flood resilience

The scale and unprecedented nature of the 2022 natural disaster flood events prompted extensive scientific investigation into catchment wide hydrology and the drivers of extreme flooding in Northern NSW. Recent modelling indicates that although the February 2022 event broke records for flood height and volume, future events of equal or greater magnitude remain likely. Events of this scale can have significant impacts on biodiversity, particularly in ecosystems where resilience has been reduced by historical land use change, degradation, and habitat fragmentation.

Over the next decade (aligned with the duration of this Biodiversity Management Strategy) projects that incorporate diverse and soft engineering approaches have the potential to deliver dual benefits: providing localised flood mitigation while also supporting the persistence and adaptive resilience of biodiversity across the Lismore LGA.

Nature based Solutions (NbS) pilot studies are already underway in the Richmond River catchment, aiming to demonstrate how scientifically-informed, collaboratively delivered interventions can contribute to holistic ecological restoration. When NbS methods are tailored to local landscapes, they may help to lessen the impact of small to moderate flood events while delivering long term co benefits for biodiversity and landscape productivity.

These co benefits include:

- Increased habitat availability and connectivity
- Improved water quality and enhanced aquatic habitat conditions
- Strengthened ecosystem services, including climate resilience functions
- Reduced impacts from flood events through catchment scale buffering
- Enhanced capacity for primary producers to allocate land for resilience building and ecological restoration

When strategically planned and integrated with conventional flood mitigation efforts, NbS represent an important opportunity for Lismore to build ecological and community resilience in a changing climate.



What are Nature Based Solutions?

Nature-based solutions are actions that work with the functions of nature to provide benefits to communities, and at the same time restore ecosystems. They can complement traditional engineering solutions to flood mitigation.

2.5: Our Threatened Species

174 flora and fauna species within the LGA are listed as threatened under State and Commonwealth legislation, including 18 new listings since the 2nd edition of the Biodiversity Management Strategy in 2020.

Records of sighted or known entities listed as threatened under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act (BC Act) and/or Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) in the LGA is currently:

28 fauna species

146 flora/fungi species

18 Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs)

35 Key Threatening Processes (KTPs)

1 Endangered Population

The additional flora and fauna species that have recently had their conservation status upgraded (ie they are considered to be under greater threat) under the BC Act or EPBC Act are shown in Appendix B. Most of the 18 flora and fauna species that have had their conservation status upgraded since 2020 are threatened primarily by habitat loss and climate change (Table 2.2). Additional pressures include feral animal predation, disease, weed invasion, and, to a lesser extent, illegal collection, altered water flows, and infrastructure maintenance activities. Overall, the data shows that broad-scale landscape pressures – particularly habitat loss, climate change, and fire – are the dominant threats contributing to recent status upgrades.

Key threats to 18 newly listed flora and fauna

15 out of 18 Habitat loss and land clearing	**14 out of 18** Climate change	**11 out of 18** Adverse fire regimes
9 out of 18 Impact of feral animals	**4 out of 18** Disease impact	**3 out of 18** Weed invasion
2 out of 18 Illegal collection	**2 out of 18** Alteration of natural water flow regimes	**1 out of 18** Infrastructure maintenance activities

Table 2.2 (above). The key threats that have contributed to the upgrading of the conservation status of the 18 flora and fauna species known to occur in the Lismore LGA since 2020. Information from the NSW threatened species scientific committee determinations for recently listed/upgraded species.

2.6: Our Koalas

Koalas are an iconic part of Lismore's identity and an important indicator of the health of our local forests and landscapes. The Lismore region supports one of the most significant koala populations in NSW, which makes our role in their protection critically important.

Burrabee (koalas) carry deep cultural significance for the Widjabul Wia-bal people and hold a special place in the hearts of our community. Their presence supports our identity as a nature rich region and contributes to community pride, local tourism, and a shared sense of responsibility for caring for Country.

Nationally, koalas are now listed as endangered across much of their range, and populations have declined sharply due to habitat loss, disease, climate pressures, and vehicle strike. This means that stronghold populations, like those in Lismore, play a vital role in the species' survival in the wild. Lismore's koala population has recently been identified as critical to maintaining the genetic diversity of the species, further representing their unique importance to ensuring long term survival[1].

The most recent koala survey (2023) in the CKPoM area revealed that our population does not appear to be experiencing the declines being seen in neighbouring LGAs or across NSW. Results suggest that the CKPoM population may have plateaued as remaining koala habitat is likely near the maximum number of koalas it can support. This means that without increasing habitat the local koala population is unlikely to grow further, and the population is more vulnerable to unexpected events like a new disease or a change in the environment. This shines a light on the importance of looking after existing koala habitat and the need to connect and create appropriate new habitat across the LGA.

As a Koala Friendly City, Lismore is committed to protecting this much loved species. By partnering with Friends of the Koala (FoK) and other community groups, undertaking a range of habitat restoration projects, responsible land use planning, and ongoing monitoring, we are working to support a healthy and resilient koala population for generations to come.

[1]Research conducted by Lott et al 2022; McLennan et al 2025



2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity

Our natural environment has been shaped by many decades of human activity, and the landscapes we see today reflect choices made across generations. People have always relied on the land for homes, farming, transport, and industry - these activities have helped build the communities we value. But they have also placed pressure on our biodiversity, affecting the plants, animals, and natural processes that support healthy Country.

Some of these impacts are historical and still influence the environment today, while others are ongoing or emerging. Understanding these pressures isn't about assigning blame, it's about recognising how past and present land uses affect biodiversity so we can protect and enhance what remains and restore what has been lost.

The following sections outline the key pressures on biodiversity in the Lismore LGA, including several recognised as **Key Threatening Processes (KTPs)** under NSW legislation. These pressures help us understand the challenges facing our ecosystems and guide the actions we need to take to maintain, repair, and strengthen the natural systems we depend on.

Clearing and fragmentation of native vegetation

Historical clearing across the Lismore LGA remains the primary driver of biodiversity loss. The direct impact of this clearing includes the loss of habitat, a reduction in species numbers and has left vegetation fragmented into small, isolated patches. This fragmentation weakens ecosystem function, increases vulnerability to invasive species and restricts the movement of native wildlife.

Today, most vegetation loss occurs through small scale urban and rural residential development, along with secondary impacts such as under scrubbing and bushfire protection works. Additional clearing happens through routine agricultural activities permitted under current land management laws, as well as illegal clearing. Many other environmental pressures in the region either stem from or are intensified by this ongoing clearing and fragmentation.

Increasing urbanisation

Increasing urbanisation of the landscape concentrates more people and development into small areas, which puts extra pressure on local bushland and the plants and animals that depend on it. Beyond the direct loss of habitat from clearing land for houses, roads and infrastructure, everyday urban activities can harm biodiversity in surrounding bushland. These impacts include:

- Wildlife road strike
- Predation of native animals by domestic pets
- Illegal dumping of rubbish and green waste that spreads weeds and attracts pest animals
- Changes to natural fire patterns,
- Unmanaged recreational activities like trail-bike riding that damage soil and vegetation

Together, these pressures make it harder for native species to survive in urban and peri-urban environments.

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Weeds

Weeds are unwanted plants that cause economic, environmental and social impacts. They invade native ecosystems, out compete local species and contribute to problems such as habitat degradation and riverbank erosion. They are one of Australia's most significant environmental threats, with some species like lantana, formally listed as key threatening processes under state and federal legislation.

Because many invasive plants are already widespread, management in the Lismore region focuses largely on reducing their impacts in high value conservation areas rather than eradication. However, the eradication of certain priority weeds is still considered critical to long-term control.

Pest animals

Our native wildlife is highly vulnerable to introduced pest animals, many of which thrive due to traits like rapid reproduction, broad diets and an ability to adapt to disturbed landscapes. Species – such as Indian Mynas, cane toads, foxes, feral cats, wild dogs, rabbits and goats – cause major impacts in the Lismore LGA by preying on native fauna, competing for food and nesting sites, degrading habitat and spreading disease. Several pest animal impacts are formally recognised as key threatening processes under state and federal legislation, placing them alongside weeds and diseases within Australia's broader biosecurity framework.

Feral deer are an emerging threat in the Lismore LGA as expanding populations move into one of the last deer-free areas on the NSW north coast. With no natural predators and an ability to thrive in modified landscapes, they cause extensive environmental and agricultural damage, including destruction of vegetation, spread of weeds, and degradation of waterways.

Water quality and hydrological changes

Historical draining of the Richmond River floodplain and clearing of native vegetation communities, including the Big Scrub rainforest, have changed how local waterways function, leading to poorer water quality and less healthy aquatic habitats. These changes have altered natural water flows, increased sediment and nutrient runoff, and made waterways more vulnerable to pollution, erosion and fish kill events after floods.

Across our local catchments, activities like intensive agriculture can worsen these problems—for example, dense macadamia orchards with little groundcover can lead to soil erosion and nutrient rich runoff entering streams. Together, these impacts make rivers and wetlands less resilient and reduce the quality of habitat for native plants and animals.

Higher levels of stream bank erosion also contribute to sediment plumes, reduced water clarity, infilling of pools, smothering of aquatic vegetation, and the long term loss of riparian habitat. These processes threaten species reliant on shaded banks, woody debris, and stable substrates.

Importantly, the tidal section of the Richmond River within the Lismore LGA is mapped as key fish habitat (KFH) by the Department of Primary Industries. Sedimentation, riparian decline, and destabilised banks are all expected to reduce the quality and extent of these critical habitats.

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Impacts of increasing natural hazards on biodiversity

Climate change is reshaping Australia's environment, bringing hotter temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns and more frequent extreme events like droughts, fires and floods. These changes place extra stress on ecosystems, especially when combined with other pressures such as habitat loss, weeds and pest animals, and many natural systems may struggle to adapt quickly enough. The fragmentation of habitats makes biodiversity even more vulnerable to these hazards.

Improving our understanding of natural hazards will increase our ability to reduce damage, support the resilience of our biodiversity and guide long term adaptation of management actions in a rapidly changing climate.

The 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires burned approximately 3,200 hectares within the Lismore Local Government Area. The scale, duration, and intensity of the fires resulted in significant biodiversity impacts with direct relevance to the delivery of the Biodiversity Management Strategy, including:

Increased psychosocial trauma and shifting community attitudes toward fire, affecting stewardship and expectations for recovery.

- **Burning of World Heritage Gondwana Rainforests**, damaging fire-sensitive ecosystems and dependent species.
- **Unplanned native vegetation clearing during emergency response,** contributing to habitat loss.
- **Loss and degradation of Koala habitat,** contributing to their uplisting to Endangered.
- **Widespread impacts on other threatened species** through reduced food, altered habitat, and changed behaviour.

A natural disaster flooding event in February 2022 and a major flooding event in March 2022 heavily impacted the natural assets of the Lismore LGA and highlighted the extremities of pressure that biodiversity must endure in a changing climate. These flooding events resulted in:

- Major soil loss through streambank erosion and landslips
- Increased sedimentation of our waterways
- Death and decline of riparian vegetation from prolonged inundation and/or smothering by sediments and debris
- Mass input of gross and chemical pollutants into the Richmond River
- Extensive fish kills
- Introduction of weeds into HCV ecosystems

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Adverse fire regimes

Fire is a vital ecological process in many Australian vegetation communities. It supports plant regeneration, maintains open understorey structure, cycles nutrients, and sustains habitat for a wide range of fauna. Since European settlement, fire regimes have shifted significantly, with fire exclusion becoming the norm and most fire-dependent forests experiencing low or no fire frequency. This can have a significant impact on our remaining koala habitat as the dry fire dependant eucalypt forest begins to transition to a more rainforest-like vegetation community.

Following the catastrophic impacts of the 2019-20 Black Summer bush fires, interest in First Nations cultural fire practice has grown significantly. A growing body of scientific research, developed in collaboration with First Nations knowledge holders, demonstrates the ecological, social and cultural benefits of these fire practices.

This research directly informs and supports key BMS priorities by demonstrating:

- The maintenance of ecosystem structure and diversity in fire-dependent ecosystems
- Reduction in the severity of high intensity wildfires, helping to protect sensitive ecosystems, threatened species habitat and community assets.
- Support for the restoration and long-term resilience of koala habitat through low intensity burns that promote appropriate vegetation structure and reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fire risk.
- Strengthening of First Nations Caring for Country practices, enhancing cultural connections, intergenerational knowledge transfer and collaborative land stewardship.

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Pressure	Changes since 2019	Biodiversity impacts
Clearing and fragmentation of native vegetation in rural and urban land 	**51.5 ha of legal land clearing** **Unknown area of illegal land clearing** **499ha of revegetation and restoration works**	**Loss of habitat and ecosystem services from vegetation clearing** **Reduced connectivity between habitat patches** **Creation of habitat through revegetation and restoration works**
Urbanisation 	Increased urban development in Koala habitat and other threatened species habitat Increased urban development in TEC habitat	Loss/reduction in Koala and other species habitat Increased risk of vehicle strikes and domestic animal attacks on native fauna Fragmentation of habitat and increased edge effects on remaining habitat
Climate change 	Increase scale and distribution of weather events and associated natural disasters, including fire, floods, landslides Ecosystem transition via shifting climate gradients	Loss of biodiversity Ecosystem degradation Exacerbated impacts from interacting natural disasters Loss of landscape function and collapse Reduced quality and availability of natural resources Potential ecosystem collapse and species extinction Change in species composition in ecosystems and ecosystem transition Tidal inundation

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Pressure	Changes since 2019	Biodiversity impacts
Vehicle strike 	Emergence of new wildlife road strike hotspots, especially at Tatham/Bruxner Highway	Mortality to native and threatened fauna by vehicle strike
Weeds 	63 regional priority weeds listed in North Coast Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-27 29 species for eradication 26 species for containment Rous County Council additional 40 priority species	Degradation/loss of ecosystems Native vegetation mortality Loss and transformation of native species habitat
Pest animals 	Yellow Crazy Ants (Anoplolepis gracilipes) have not been reported in Lismore since 2021 but remain a high alert species in the Lismore LGA Fire Ants (Solenopsis invicta) are a major biosecurity threat and have been identified in the Tweed and Ballina LGA's Growing recognition and understanding of the role of Dingo as an important native keystone species and not as a pest species The expansion of feral Deer, pig and goat populations approaching the LGA	Loss of native ground-dwelling fauna Ecosystem degradation and species collapse Impacts to waterways through hoof trampling Secondary introduction of pathogens and disease via feral animals

2.7: Pressures on Our Biodiversity (continued)

Pressure	Changes since 2019	Biodiversity impacts
Water quality and hydrological changes	Increased sedimentation and aquatic pollution following-flood events Bank erosion from high-flow events, notably within the tidal reaches of the Richmond River in the Lismore LGA, including: 4.1 km of highlevel bank erosion 3.9 km of moderate bank erosion 5.7 km of lowlevel bank erosion 7.6 km of negligible bank erosion (Richmond River NEAP Assessment)	Reduced water quality Reduced aquatic biodiversity Reduced aquatic habitat quality Loss of riparian vegetation/habitat Loss of culturally significant sites
Livestock grazing	Increased exclusion of cattle from waterways via Landcare initiatives, Rural Landholder Initiatives, Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative	Reduced riparian erosion, habitat impacts and sedimentation Reduced impact on water quality

Table 2.1 Contemporary pressures to biodiversity relevant to Lismore LGA Infographic – A summary of key changes in pressures on biodiversity in the Lismore LGA is provided in Table 2.1

3. Strategy Vision and Objectives

3.1: Vision

In 2036, Lismore's biodiversity is resilient and celebrated by the whole community. Healthy rivers, creeks and wetlands flow clean and support abundant life. Our natural landscapes are host to diverse ecosystems, while rural lands and urban green spaces provide refuge for native species. Threatened ecological communities and species are safeguarded through restoring degraded ecosystems, improving landscape connectivity and reducing key threats through planning, land management and on-ground works. Biodiversity is valued as essential to culture and general wellbeing with Traditional Owners, landholders, community and Council working together to care for Country for future generations.

The Biodiversity Management Strategy guides coordinated action to achieve this vision. It prioritises protecting high conservation value ecosystems, restoring degraded landscapes, improving habitat connectivity and embedding biodiversity considerations into planning, land management and community decision-making. Through strong partnerships, sustainable investment, monitoring and adaptive management, the Strategy supports practical outcomes on the ground and ensures biodiversity is protected and enhanced in the face of climate change and future growth.



3.2: Strategic Themes and Objectives

Biodiversity underpins the health of our landscapes, waterways, and communities. To guide how we protect and restore nature across Lismore, this Strategy is organised into four key themes.

These themes consolidate the strategy's previous 'streams' to bring together the many actions identified through the Community Strategic Plan, Local Strategic Planning Statement and BMS into clear areas of focus that help us care for Country, support resilient ecosystems, and strengthen community stewardship.

Although each theme highlights a different aspect of biodiversity management, in reality they are all interconnected and overlap—reflecting the way our natural systems work together. Each theme is supported by strategic objectives to guide decision making and project delivery, with specific actions outlined in the Implementation Plan.

1. Resilience and Adaptation

- Incorporate climate and natural hazard risks into biodiversity management approaches
- Promote ecological restoration approaches that improve resilience
- Enhance connectivity across landscapes

2. Protect and Enhance Natural Habitats and Waterways

- Manage and reduce threats to biodiversity
- Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the planning framework
- Strengthen governance systems to support consistent biodiversity management
- Increase biodiversity outcomes across rural landscapes

3. Improve Green Corridors and Liveability

- Support community connection to biodiversity
- Implement best-practice biodiversity management in Council operations
- Collaborate with First Nations communities in biodiversity management

4. Monitor and Communicate

- Increase community education on biodiversity management
- Monitor and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes
- Develop and maintain high-quality spatial data to improve biodiversity planning, monitoring, and decision making.
- Strengthen partnerships to improve coordinated biodiversity management and conservation outcomes

3.2: Strategic Themes and Objectives (continued)

Theme 1: Resilience and Adaptation

Strengthening our ecosystems to withstand a changing future.

Building ecological resilience is essential for supporting Lismore's long-term environmental health and capacity to adapt to change. Our natural landscapes face increasing pressures from climate change, natural hazards, invasive species and historical land-use impacts. This theme aims to strengthen resilience of local ecosystems by ensuring biodiversity management incorporates future climate scenarios, supports ecological restoration and reconnects fragmented landscapes.

A resilient natural environment not only protects valuable species but also enhances the community's ability to adapt to climate-driven events such as floods, droughts, heatwaves and bush fire.

Restoration and reconnection of landscapes enhance ecosystem stability and biodiversity while supporting the natural processes that underpin community resilience, such as clean waterways, soil stability, and carbon storage.

Objectives

- Incorporate climate and hazard risks into biodiversity management approaches.
- Promote ecological restoration approaches that improve resilience.
- Enhance connectivity across landscapes.

Opportunity: Strengthening landscape resilience to a changing climate

By integrating climate hazard information and ecological data into all stages of planning and restoration, Council can avoid escalating future risks and reduce the need for repeated interventions. Embedding future climate projections into site selection, species choice, and corridor design will make investments more durable, resilient, and cost effective over time.



3.2: Strategic Themes and Objectives (continued)

Theme 2: Protect and Enhance Natural Habitats and Waterways

Safeguarding the places and species that sustain our region.

Lismore's natural habitats and waterways support biodiversity, enhance liveability, and provide ecological benefits that help sustain both our environment and community.

This theme focuses on protecting our areas of high biodiversity value, improving environmental conditions in degraded ecosystems and embedding strong safeguards within planning and land-use decisions, supporting the maintenance of ecosystem integrity and function and biological diversity. Ensuring new development aligns with biodiversity outcomes is critical to balancing growth with environmental protection. By identifying and managing threats such as habitat loss, erosion and weeds, Council aims to prevent further decline. Supporting rural landholders and working within a fit-for-purpose planning framework will enable coordinated, long-term improvements across the landscape.

Objectives

- Manage and reduce threats to biodiversity.
- Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the planning framework.
- Strengthen governance systems to support consistent biodiversity management
- Increase biodiversity outcomes across rural landscapes

Opportunity: Strengthening Native Vegetation Protection

There is a strong opportunity to enhance the protection of high value native vegetation by embedding clear, evidence based biodiversity provisions within Lismore's Local Environmental Plan (LEP). Although Council's Development Control Plan (DCP) includes biodiversity safeguards, incorporating them into the LEP would provide greater statutory weight, improve decision making consistency, and offer clearer expectations for landholders, developers, and planners.

To support this, updated vegetation and biodiversity corridor mapping is required to ensure robust, data informed planning. While valuable mapping was completed in 2013 and 2019, new mapping should be commissioned to accurately identify sensitive ecological areas and underpin contemporary protections. Whilst a significant investment, particularly given Lismore's challenging terrain, updated spatial data will deliver significant strategic value, helping prioritise effort and strengthening the foundation for effective biodiversity conservation within the LEP.

There is also an opportunity to establish a clear and transparent biodiversity offsetting policy to ensure unavoidable impacts are properly accounted for, guided by updated mapping, strong assessment criteria, and a preference for on ground restoration within the LGA. A consistent offsetting framework will complement strengthened LEP provisions, give proponents greater certainty, and secure meaningful biodiversity gains where they are most needed.

3.2: Strategic Themes and Objectives (continued)

Theme 3: Improve Green Corridors and Liveability

Connecting people, places, and nature for a healthier Lismore.

Green corridors and natural spaces are vital to Lismore's identity, liveability, and ecological function. This theme aims to create a connected network of healthy green spaces that support wildlife movement, enhance urban resilience, and improve community access to nature. Strengthening biodiversity within Council managed land, parks, and roadside corridors contributes to cleaner air, cooler neighbourhoods, and attractive public spaces. A connected landscape also improves ecosystem function by allowing species to migrate, disperse, and adapt. Meaningful collaboration with First Nations communities is central to this theme, recognising their ecological knowledge and cultural connections to Country. Enhancing community engagement and fostering local stewardship helps ensure these green corridors are valued, protected, and maintained for future generations.

Objectives

- Support community connection to biodiversity.
- Implement best practice biodiversity management in Council operations
- Collaborate with First Nations communities in biodiversity management.

Opportunity: Building on Lismore's Strong Foundation of Community Led Greening

Lismore has a long history of community driven ecological restoration, with residents, Landcare groups, schools, and volunteers contributing thousands of hours to restoring bushland, revegetating creek lines, enhancing parks and reserves, and caring for local wildlife. These efforts have already strengthened green corridors across the LGA, supported threatened species, and created much loved natural spaces that connect people with nature. The BMS offers a valuable opportunity to build on this strong foundation by leading with best practice approaches in Council managed land and deepening partnerships with First Nations knowledge holders and community groups.

Theme 4: Monitor and Communicate

Tracking change, sharing knowledge and empowering action

Following Council's review of the BMS, this theme consolidates what we've learned so that monitoring, reporting and engagement are more targeted and useful. By improving the collection, analysis and sharing of ecological information, we can support informed decision making. Ongoing monitoring of biodiversity helps to identify emerging threats, track restoration outcomes and adjust our approaches as conditions change.

Building community understanding of biodiversity values encourages landholders, volunteers and organisations to support on-ground actions.

Objectives

- Increase community education on biodiversity management.
- Monitor and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes.
- Develop and maintain high quality spatial data to improve biodiversity planning, monitoring, and decision making.
- Strengthen partnerships to improve coordinated biodiversity management and conservation outcomes.

Opportunity: Leverage strong collaborations to strengthen continued understanding

Lismore has a well established network of community groups, First Nations knowledge holders, universities, landholders, and regional partners who already contribute valuable local knowledge and on ground experience. There is a significant opportunity to harness these relationships to improve how biodiversity data is collected, shared, and interpreted across the LGA. By aligning Council monitoring with community observations, regional research, and cultural knowledge, Lismore can build a more complete, reliable evidence base while also expanding opportunities for education and engagement. Strengthening these partnerships will help create consistent data, clearer communication, and a more informed community—supporting better biodiversity decisions at every level.

4. Implementation and Actions

4.1: Existing Services and Strategies

Principle Activities – what we will continue to do	
Service Team	**Service Description**
Planning, Economy and Environment	• Implementation of on-ground, educational and strategic biodiversity programs • Partnership and collaboration at local and regional scales • Internal advice and support for positive biodiversity outcomes across Council operations • Industrial and commercial land identification and rezoning • Annual housekeeping reviews of planning legislation • Place-based plans to develop public realm and connectivity improvements • DA concierge/ duty planning service for tailored business • Evaluation of planning permit applications for new development proposals and alterations to land use activities • Tree Removal permits • Maintain relationships and collaboration with Rous County Council on biosecurity and catchment health • Maintain relationships with regional partners, such as the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation
Water, Waste & Open Spaces	Open Spaces team within Water, Waste & Open Spaces directorate manages all open spaces including Parks, gardens and facilities such as Cemeteries. Services include grass maintenance, weed management outside bushland areas, and management of parks and recreational assets.
Roads and Infrastructure	On ground delivery of works associated with several management actions such as those related to the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan or wildlife roadstrike infrastructure.

4.1: Existing Services and Strategies (continued)

Principle Strategies – what we are already committed to delivering	
Complimentary Internal Strategies	**Action Description**
Climate Adaptation and Resilience Strategy	Strategic plan that sets out how Lismore will prepare for, respond to, and adapt to a changing climate by strengthening natural systems, reducing risk, and supporting a safer, more resilient community.
Rural Land Use Strategy	Land use planning for rural areas, realigning rural zones to better protect agricultural production and compatible tourism opportunities. Encourages land management that complement repair and regeneration of natural capital such as soils, water and natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and scenic qualities.
Economic Development Strategy	A framework for growing a diverse, resilient economy which strengthens local industry, builds skills, and encourages investment. The Strategy ensures economic growth is coordinated, place-based, and benefits the whole community.
Community Engagement Strategy 2025	Strategic plan outlining Council's principles for community engagement and notifications for planning processes, establishes guidelines for staff and the community on how Council will communicate with and involve the community in Council decision-making.
Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for South-east Lismore 2013	Legislated Plan of Management for Koalas covering the south-east portion of the Lismore LGA, providing a regulatory Development Assessment Framework and non-regulatory management activities designed to increase habitat for Koalas and address a range of threats.
Urban Green Corridors Plan 2026	Operational plan which aims to identify and enhance green corridors within Lismore city's urban area, providing a strategic and coordinated approach to the conservation and restoration of biodiversity values in the urban area.
Roadside Vegetation Management Plan 2018	Operational plan guiding routine maintenance of roadside vegetation for the protection and conservation of high conservation value vegetation and threatened plant species.
Reconciliation Management Plan 2025	Sets out Council's corporate commitment to reconciliation with our First Nations communities.

4.2: Council's Role in Implementation

Council has the prime responsibility for implementing the BMS. In doing this, Council holds a position of influence to foster a whole of community approach and model the BMS as a co-delivery program. Supported by the purpose-specific Special Rate Variation (SRV), Council has a critical role in enabling and fostering Lismore's environmental stewardship, maintaining a respected place in the collaborative efforts.

- **Advocate:** Represent the interests of healthy land and waterways by actively engaging with industry, community, and all levels of government to influence policy, funding, and outcomes.
- **Facilitate:** Work collaboratively with partners, landholders, and community groups to design, coordinate, and enable the delivery of shared biodiversity outcomes.
- **Deliver:** Deliver or secure funding, resources, and on ground implementation to achieve agreed biodiversity and land management outcomes.
- **Legislate and policy creation:** Set, strengthen, and enforce planning controls, policies, and regulatory mechanisms to achieve consistent and desired biodiversity outcomes.
- **Service provision:** Provide functions and services that support biodiversity management, including expert advice, guidance, and community education.



4.2: Council's Role in Implementation (continued)

All our systems, whether natural, built, social, or economic, are interconnected. Achieving lasting biodiversity outcomes relies on Council, residents, community organisations, businesses, and government partners working together, and in collaboration with nature. We all have a role to play in conserving Lismore's biodiversity and contributing to a healthier, more connected and climate resilient future.

Residents and Individual Landholders

Residents play an essential role in protecting and enhancing Lismore's biodiversity. Everyday actions, such as planting native species, reducing weeds, implementing sustainable farming practices, improving habitat in backyards, and caring for waterways, make a significant difference. Households and landholders have already shown strong commitment to rebuilding and caring for nature. The BMS will continue to support residents and individual landholders in rural and urban areas with practical programs, resources, and initiatives that make biodiversity positive choices easier and more accessible.

Community Organisations

Lismore's strong network of Landcare groups, volunteer organisations, schools, and environmental groups are central to local biodiversity outcomes. These organisations lead on ground restoration, community education, and citizen science activities. The BMS will build on this strength by supporting coordination, encouraging collaboration, and creating more opportunities for shared action on habitat protection, ecological restoration, and long term landscape resilience.

Rural Industry Groups

Across Lismore's rural industries, many collaborative networks and representative bodies support better outcomes for land management and primary production. By collaborating with rural industry groups, Council is able to target specific sectors to support uptake of industry-relevant practice improvements offering mutual benefit for production and biodiversity. These sectors include beef grazing (eg Casino Food Co-Op), dairying (eg Norco), orchard production (eg Australian Macadamia Society, SoilCare), and floodplain cropping (eg NSW Canegrowers Association).

Business

Local businesses contribute to biodiversity through responsible land management, nature positive practices, and environmental leadership. Many enterprises already support conservation through sustainable landscaping, reducing waste, protecting waterways, and partnering in restoration projects. The BMS will work with businesses to expand these efforts, promoting biodiversity friendly operations, supporting green infrastructure, and linking local brands to Lismore's identity as a region committed to healthy natural environments. Key business partnerships for the implementation of the BMS include networking affiliations, professional bush regeneration contractors, ecologists and specialist suppliers such as native plant nurseries.

Government Agencies

State and federal agencies play a key role in delivering biodiversity outcomes by providing funding, data, legislation, and technical guidance. Collaboration with these agencies supports habitat conservation, biosecurity, natural disaster recovery, and long term landscape planning. Through coordinated policy, investment, and regulatory alignment, government partners help strengthen ecological resilience and ensure protection of Lismore's unique natural values.

4.2: Council's Role in Implementation (continued)

Resourcing

Implementation of the BMS is primarily funded by the Special Rate Variation (SRV) that commenced on 1 July 2016 and has been permanently secured in the rates base.

As of 2024/25 the SRV comprises ~$609,000 annually plus an increase by up to the rate peg percentage determined each year by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). This is supplemented by an operating budget for bushland restoration funded by Council.

Predicted funding for implementation of the BMS from the Special Rate Variation for the next five years is provided in Table 4.1. In addition to direct allocation to projects identified in the BMS Actions. The SRV will also be used to leverage external funding to carry out projects directly by Council and in partnerships. External grant funding is regularly accessed to amplify the impact of the BMS.

Table 4.1 Predicted funding for implementation of the BMS for the next 5 years

Financial Year	Budget
2026/27	$642,500
2027/28	$661,800
2028/29	$681,700
2029/30	$702,200
2030/31	$723,300



4.3: Action Table

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
Resilience and Adaptation					
Objective 1: Incorporate climate and hazard risks into biodiversity management approaches.					
1.1	Undertake ongoing assessment of biodiversity impacts from floods, bush fires and other natural events, and apply these findings to guide restoration activities	Facilitate Deliver	2-5 years, Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community Groups and individual landholders, Rural Industry groups; Universities; contractors
1.2	Develop an understanding of anticipated future impacts of the changing climate and natural hazards on biodiversity in the Lismore City Council area to inform restoration projects	Facilitate Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time SRV	Universities; Community Groups, Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies
Objective 2: Promote ecological restoration approaches that improve resilience.					
2.1	Investigate and apply innovative approaches to ecological restoration that have potential to improve biodiversity and reduce the impacts of natural hazards.	Advocate Deliver Facilitate	Ongoing	SRV Staff time	Community Groups and individual landholders, Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies; Universities
2.2	Prepare an educational resource for improving flood resilience through nature-based solutions that will complement traditional engineering solutions to flood mitigation	Facilitate Deliver	2-5 years	SRV Staff time	Community Groups; Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies;

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
Objective 3: Enhance connectivity across landscapes.					
3.1	Encourage and prioritise biodiversity management and ecological restoration effort to improve connectivity in high conservation value vegetation and wildlife corridors	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	SRV External funding required	Community Groups and individual landholders, Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies
3.2	Expand the urban greencorridor network through village master planning to strengthen ecological connectivity and enhance community access to nature	Facilitate Deliver Service Provision	5-10 years	External funding required Staff time	Community Groups and individual landholders, Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies; Universities
Protect and Enhance Natural Habitats and Waterways					
Objective 4: Identify and manage threats to biodiversity.					
4.1	Continue to identify threats and pressures to biodiversity and undertake mitigation projects where required	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External funding required	Community Groups; individual landholders, Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies
4.2	Develop and maintain knowledge of current and emerging biosecurity issues that have the potential to impact biodiversity and habitat restoration projects	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community Groups; Rural Industry groups; Government Agencies,
4.3	Continue to implement mitigation measures identified in Council's Wildlife Roadkill Mitigation Report 2019 and monitor their effectiveness	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External funding required	Community Groups; Government Agencies,

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
4.4	Maintain any installed road strike mitigation infrastructure including retrofitted culverts, fencing, grids, pavement markings and signs	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	SRV External funding required	Community Groups; Government Agencies,
4.5	Collect data on wildlife roadstrike, in collaboration with community partners and other stakeholders, to inform mitigation and management	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time External funding required	Community Groups; Government Agencies
4.6	Develop a regional approach to mitigating wildlife roadstrike together with neighbouring councils and other stakeholders	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time External funding required	Community Groups; Government Agencies
4.7	Provide education for pet owners to understand and minimise impacts on biodiversity	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community Groups; Government Agencies
Objective 5: Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity within the planning framework					
5.1	Integrate the aims and objectives of the BMS into other Council the Local Environmental Plan	Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	1-2 years	Staff time	
5.2	Provide biodiversity related expertise for inclusion in all council plans, policies and projects that could have environmental impact	Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	Ongoing	Staff time	

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
5.3	Provide a biodiversity management induction for new staff	Service provision	Ongoing	Staff time	
5.4	Collaborate with Rous County Council, Richmond Valley Council and Ballina Shire Council on the preparation and delivery of the Richmond River Coastal Management Program (CMP)	Advocate Facilitate Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	1-10 years	Staff time	Community Groups; Government Agencies; Rous
5.5	Support and contribute to the review of the Lismore Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management.	Facilitate Deliver Legislate and policy creation	1-5 years	Staff time External funding required	Community Groups; Government Agencies
5.6	Incorporate advice for best practice biodiversity resilience outcomes in development assessment approval processes (e.g. Conditions of Consent; Offset standards, Contributions, Recognition of cumulative impacts)	Facilitate Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	Ongoing	Staff time	

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
Objective 6: Strengthen governance systems to support consistent biodiversity management					
6.1	Maintain a record of Council land suitable for ecological rehabilitation works that could be used to offset vegetation and habitat removal	Deliver Service provision	Ongoing	Staff time	
6.2	Develop a policy for providing offsets within the Lismore LGA for vegetation and habitat removal: a. required by Council works/activities, b. proposed by development applications where on-site offsetting is not feasible and the vegetation removal is not governed by the NSW biodiversity offset scheme (BOS), and/or c. where Council has successfully pursued compliance and enforcement for vegetation and habitat removal	Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	1-5 years Ongoing	Staff time External funding required	Government Agencies
6.3	Continue land acquisition of suitable excess land within subdivision DAs where the land presents opportunities for ecological restoration or creation	Advocate Deliver Legislate and policy creation Service provision	1-5 years	Staff time	Government Agencies
6.4	Investigate the potential for Council to enter into biodiversity stewardship agreements	Advocate Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time	Government Agencies

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
6.5	Update biodiversity provisions within the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012 to give effect to revised vegetation mapping	Facilitate Deliver	2-5 years	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Government agencies; Research partners; contractors
Objective 7: Increase biodiversity outcomes across rural landscapes					
7.1	Continue to employ the RLI Extension Officer to deliver a small grants program supporting rural landholders in improving biodiversity on private land	Deliver Service provision	Ongoing	SRV	Individual landholders; Community groups; Rural industry group; Government agencies; Contractors
7.2	Report on the 2025–2028 trial of alternating grant delivery to individual landowners and community groups, and implement review outcomes	Deliver Service provision	3-5 years	SRV Staff time	Individual landholders; Community groups; Rural industry group; Government agencies; Contractors; Universities
7.3	Incentivise ongoing monitoring of ecological restoration projects funded by RLI grants	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time SRV	Individual landholders; Community groups; Government agencies; Contractors; Universities
7.4	Develop an implementation plan to guide the delivery of the RLI Program	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time SRV	
7.5	Deliver the rural landholder engagement and partnership actions of the CKPoM	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Individual landholders; Community groups; Government agencies;

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
7.6	Deliver a koala habitat restoration program in line with the actions of the CKPoM	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Individual landholders; Community groups; Government agencies;
Improve Green Corridors and Liveability					
Objective 8: Support community connection to biodiversity					
8.1	Facilitate bush regeneration in high conservation value areas and in association with habitat restoration projects	Deliver Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Individual landholders; Community groups; Government agencies;
8.2	Assist schools and community groups in applying for funding opportunities and provide financial support for management of biodiversity values	Advocate Facilitate Service Provision	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Schools
8.3	Provide support for Landcare groups to conduct best practice bush regeneration	Advocate Facilitate Service Provision	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Individual landholders; Community groups;
8.4	Provide appropriate infrastructure and interpretation to connect residents with urban bushland reserves	Deliver Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Community groups; Government agencies;

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
8.5	Partner with organisations to deliver educational and wellbeing activities around local biodiversity	Deliver Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Community groups; Government agencies; Universities;
8.6	Identify and promote established citizen science projects	Deliver Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Community groups; Government agencies; Universities;
Objective 9: Implement bestpractice biodiversity management in Council operations					
9.1	Continue implementing the actions of the Urban Green Corridors Plan	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External Grant funding required	Community groups; Government agencies; Universities; Individual landholders; Schools
9.2	Continue implementing the actions of the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP)	Deliver Advocate Facilitate Service Provision	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External Grant funding required	Government agencies; Community groups
9.3	Review implementation of the RVMP to identify achievements, barriers and pathways for improvement	Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	Government agencies; Community groups Contractors
9.4	Continue implementing the Urban Landcare Program	Deliver Service Provision	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups Contractors

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
9.5	Encourage use of the Tucki Tucki Land Acquisition Strategy to carry out ecological restoration works throughout the Tucki Tucki Creek corridor	Advocate Facilitate	2-5years	Staff time	
9.6	Continue implementing the actions of the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management	Deliver Advocate Facilitate Service Provision	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External Grant funding required	Government agencies; Community groups
Objective 10: Collaborate with First Nations communities in biodiversity management					
10.1	Build opportunities for First Nations communities and organisations to have active input into biodiversity management activities	Deliver Advocate Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time	First Nations communities and organisations
10.2	Establish partnerships with First Nations organisations to achieve shared goals in caring for Country	Deliver	1-2 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	First Nations communities and organisations
10.3	Facilitate improved cultural awareness regarding caring for Country within the broader community	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Community groups; Government agencies; Individual landholders

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
10.4	Ensure ecological restoration works consider Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and First Nations knowledge within design and delivery	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups; Contractors
Monitor and Communicate					
Objective 11: Increase community education on biodiversity management					
11.1	Contribute to community education in contemporary biodiversity management including: Fire management in preferred koala habitat Low-chemical and 'chemical free' weed management techniques The importance of healthy waterways Holistic benefits of ecological restoration	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies
11.2	Deliver at least three field days per year to promote the RLI small grants program and the benefits of implementing ecological restoration on private land	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies; individual landholders; Industry groups; contractors

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
11.3	Deliver at least one public event per year to promote the benefits of ecological restoration and the relationship between riparian vegetation and aquatic ecosystem health	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies; individual landholders; Industry groups; contractors
11.4	Hold one event per year to recognise, acknowledge and celebrate our community's biodiversity management achievements	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies; individual landholders; Industry groups; contractors
11.5	Share biodiversity information on Council's website that is current and correct, and promotes opportunities for the community to participate in biodiversity management	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	
11.6	Communicate local results of established citizen science projects	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups; Government agencies

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
11.7	Investigate employment of a science education and communications officer to develop an integrated communications plan for biodiversity management actions and outcomes	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	1-2 years	Staff time	
11.8	Develop and share an annual summary report for the community on the achievements of the BMS and its biodiversity outcomes using appropriate communication methods.	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	
Objective 12: Develop and maintain high quality spatial data to improve biodiversity planning, monitoring, and decision making					
12.1	Review Council's spatial environmental data and identify opportunities for improvement in data recording, quality, and management protocols	Deliver	1-2 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	
12.2	Update GIS mapping with the locations of restoration projects funded under the BMS	Deliver	1-2 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	
12.3	Collaborate with Government agencies and research partners to share and update spatial environmental data	Advocate Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Government agencies; Research partners
12.4	Review and update LGA-wide vegetation mapping	Deliver Service Provision	1-2 years 2-5 years	Staff time SRV External grant funding required	Government agencies; Research partners; contractors

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
12.5	Continue to track, using spatial data, habitat lost, gained and enhanced from Approved development applications Council operations RLI projects Ecological restoration work on public land	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	
12.6	Incorporate spatial data on the extent of natural hazard events, including the 2022 floods and 2019 bush fires, into biodiversity management	Deliver	1-2 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Government agencies
12.7	Investigate the use of groundwater-dependant ecosystem mapping to better inform biodiversity management	Deliver	2-5 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Government agencies
Objective 13: Monitor and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes					
13.1	Monitor and report on activities (programs, projects and events) from the BMS undertaken during each financial year	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	
13.2	Develop a process to measure and evaluate biodiversity outcomes of the BMS	Deliver	2-5 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	
13.3	Develop and implement a standardised approach for recording ecological restoration activities	Deliver	2-5 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
13.4	Investigate development of a routine water quality and health monitoring program designed to detect changes associated with biodiversity management activities	Facilitate Deliver	2-5 years Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government Agencies
13.5	Conduct a study to estimate Koala density and population size within the CKPoM planning area every 3 years	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government Agencies
13.6	Undertake a comprehensive operational review of the BMS every 5 years, including: a. Updates to mapping, biodiversity databases, scientific knowledge, legislation and b. industry practice c. The progress on all actions, their prioritisation and resourcing needs d. Engagement with key internal and external stakeholders	Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies; individual landholders; Industry groups; Universities; contractors
Objective 14: Strengthen partnerships to improve coordinated biodiversity management and conservation outcomes					
14.1	Participate in collaborative regional projects to access external funds to achieve biodiversity outcomes	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups; Government agencies; Industry groups
14.2	Maintain a partnership with Richmond Landcare Inc. to increase local capacity for ecological restoration projects	Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups

4.3: Action Table (continued)

	Action	Council's Role	Priority	Resource	External Partners
14.3	Collaborate with industry, primary producers, community groups and other partners on current and emerging environmental projects.	Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time SRV	Community groups; Government agencies; individual landholders; Industry groups; Universities; contractors
14.4	Continue collaborative communication partnerships in the delivery of Koala programs	Facilitate Deliver	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups; Government agencies
14.5	Collaborate on the regional communications program to inform and educate the community on Koala projects	Facilitate	Ongoing	Staff time	Community groups; Government agencies; Industry groups; contractors

5. Monitoring

The Biodiversity Management Strategy is one strategy that, together with a range of other theme-based strategies, contribute to the future vision for Lismore. Collectively, the Strategic Planning Framework aims to improve all aspects of daily living that make Lismore a great place to live. These quality-of-life indicators are monitored across the framework as a whole and are detailed within Appendix 3 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The indicators will be monitored and published every four years and/or as and when Census data is available.

In addition, monitoring and reporting against delivery of actions set within the Local Strategic Planning Statement (Appendix B), and any associated qualitative data, will be provided annually through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R). Biodiversity-specific monitoring outcomes will be achieved through the implementation of the monitoring actions detailed in the actions table above.

Appendices

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment

Strategic Framework for Biodiversity	How the BMS activates the Strategic Framework
Global	
Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework	Adopted in 2022, and committed to by the Australian government, this framework sets a global target by 2030, of at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, and marine areas effectively conserved and managed. The BMS can help achieve this ambitious target through actions that support First Nations-led conservation, incentivise private landholders for biodiversity protection and integrate urban green spaces and ecological corridors.
National	
Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999	The EPBC Act is Australia's primary environmental legislation, protecting nationally significant biodiversity, including threatened species, ecological communities, and heritage areas. The BMS acknowledges this legislative context and ensures that local actions comply with national requirements for matters of national environmental significance (MNES). Delivery of the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management contributes to national recovery efforts mandated by the EPBC Act
Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024-2030	The national strategy pursues a "Nature Positive" approach to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and put nature on a path to recovery by 2050. The BMS contributes to Australia's national biodiversity targets under the Strategy for Nature by delivering priority local, on-ground actions including building climate resilience, and fostering community stewardship.

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment (continued)

Strategic Framework for Biodiversity	How the BMS activates the Strategic Framework
Relevant threatened species recovery plans	Several additional recovery plans: • National Recovery Plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox (Pteropus poliocephalus) – 19 Mar 2021 • National Recovery Plan for the Koala Phascolarctos cinereus (combined populations of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) (Phascolarctos cinereus) – 08 Apr 2022 • National Recovery Plan for Macadamia Species (Macadamia integrifolia, Macadamia jansenii, Macadamia ternifolia, Macadamia tetraphylla) – 13 Oct 2023 • National Recovery Plan for the Australasian Bittern (Botaurus poiciloptilus) – 23 Feb 2023 • National Recovery Plan for the Australian Painted Snipe (Rostratula australis) – 8 Mar 2023 • National Recovery Plan for the Swift Parrot (Lathamus discolor) – 30 Apr 2024
NSW State	
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 Local Land Services Act 2013 Biosecurity Act 2015 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994 Fisheries Management Act 1994 Crown Lands Management Act 2016 Coastal Management Act 2016	The BMS acts as a local delivery mechanism for state laws, translating legislative requirements into practical, place-based actions such as habitat restoration, species protection, cultural and biodiversity-sensitive planning. The opportunity exists for Council to lead the way in strategic delivery through targeting “net positive” biodiversity goals in line with the BC Act, including the development and implementation of a development offsets/compensation policy at the local level.

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment (continued)

Strategic Framework for Biodiversity	How the BMS activates the Strategic Framework
State Environmental Planning Policies – Biodiversity and Conservation 2021 Resilience and Hazards 2021 Transport and Infrastructure 2021	The BMS acts to implement SEPP requirements at the local level, ensuring that biodiversity conservation is integrated into land-use planning, hazard management, and infrastructure development, specifically involving: Vegetation in non-rural areas Koala habitat Coastal environment area Coastal wetlands Flood mitigation Parks and other public reserves Roads and infrastructure
Weeds Biosecurity Policy (DPIRD, 2025)	Follow standards and guidance for the management of biosecurity risks and impacts posed by weeds in the LGA
NSW Koala Strategy 2021–2026	The BMS operationalizes the NSW Koala Strategy at a local level by protecting habitat, embedding koala considerations in planning, collaborating regionally, and engaging the community
NSW Biodiversity in Place Framework	The BMS supports this framework by prioritizing urban green corridors, riparian restoration, and habitat connectivity within Lismore's city and villages,
NSW Coastal Design Guidelines 2023.	The updated guidelines reflect best–practice urban design and place-based planning. They provide clear guidance about planning proposal requirements in the coastal zone and balance environmental, economic, social and cultural needs. In the Lismore LGA, the coastal zone includes the estuaries of the Wilsons River, Terania Creek and the lower sections of Leycester Creek and Goolmangar Creek.

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment (continued)

Strategic Framework for Biodiversity	How the BMS activates the Strategic Framework
North Coast Region	
North Coast Regional Plan 2041 The local government narrative for Lismore includes *"Retain and protect local biodiversity through effective management of environmental assets and ecological communities"*.	Align with objectives to Protect regional biodiversity and areas of high environmental value, through Strategic planning and local plans that consider opportunities to protect biodiversity values. Prepare local and strategic plans that embed climate change knowledge and adaptation actions and consider the needs of climate refugia for threatened species and other key species. Sustainably manage and conserve water resources with strategic planning and local plans that consider opportunities to encourage riparian and coastal floodplain restoration works, and partner with local Aboriginal communities to care for Country and waterways
North Coast Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027	Applies to management of the impact of weeds on the land and water in the North Coast region: • Animal and plant industries (e.g., agriculture, horticulture, forestry, aquaculture, and recreational fishing in freshwater systems and eco-tourism) • Ecological communities and biodiversity, including those in natural urban and peri-urban environments • Human health, livelihood, lifestyle, cultural values, recreation, and landscape amenity • Infrastructure and service industries, including energy, transport, and water supplies.
North Coast Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan 2024–2028	shared responsibility and build capacity to prevent, eradicate, contain, and manage the risks and impacts of terrestrial vertebrate pest animals
Far North Coast Regional Water Strategy June 2023	
Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative	
Northern Rivers Disaster Adaption Plan (NSW Reconstruction Authority)	The BMS can inform environmental and ecological risks associated with natural disasters in the region, as well as provide input to adaptive measures that are sympathetic to ecological systems functions

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment (continued)

Strategic Framework for Biodiversity	How the BMS activates the Strategic Framework
Richmond River Coastal Management Plan (CMP) (in preparation) under the *Coastal Management Act 2016* (CM Act)	Identifies vulnerabilities and opportunities, in the following areas: • Catchment-wide risk-based planning for on-ground works. • Tidal inundation modelling and risk assessment. • Cultural values/engagement. to provide a long-term strategy to manage the Richmond River estuary and balance environmental, cultural, recreational, and commercial values, along with adaptation to emerging issues like sea-level rise and a changing population.
Local Lismore	
Lismore City Council Community Strategic Plan	The CES identifies the need to customise engagement strategies to stakeholders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Young and older People, People with disabilities, the Business community, rural village residents and People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The CES doesn't address targeting engagement that influences community practice for environmental stewardship such that the BMS will be critical to providing leadership in this service.
Lismore Local Strategic Planning Statement	Uphold and represent the environmental expectations of the community where planning priorities identify land as suitable for future housing, commercial and industrial purposes.
Lismore Flood Risk Management Plan	The BMS will interact where the flood behaviour modification measures have the potential to impact local biodiversity values

Appendix B – Species added to State and Commonwealth Threatened Species Lists since 2020

Species / community	Listing date	BC Act Status (NSW)	EPBC Act Status (C'wealth)
Antrophyum austroqueenslandicum	December 2022	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered
Atlas Rainforest Ground-beetle *(Nurus atlas)*	August 2023	Critically Endangered	-
Corokia whiteana	August 2023	Endangered	Endangered
Giant Barred Frog *(Mixophyes iteratus)*	April 2022	Endangered	Vulnerable
Koala *(Phascolarctos cinereus)*	May 2022	Endangered	Endangered
Large-eared Pied Bat *(Chalinolobus dwyeri)*	August 2024	Endangered	Endangered
Latham's Snipe *(Gallinago hardwickii)*	August 2024	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
New Holland Mouse *(Pseudomys novaehollandiae)*	April 2025	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Northern Long-nosed Potoroo *(Potorous tridactylus tridactlyus)*	November 2024	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Rainforest Cool-skink *(Harrisoniascincus zia)*	August 2024	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Red Goshawk *(Erythrotirorchis radiatus)*	December 2023	Endangered	Endangered
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *(Calidris acuminata)*	July 2025	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Shorter Rainforest Ground-beetle *(Nurus brevis)*	December 2023	Vulnerable	-
Smooth Scrub Turpentine *(Rhodamnia maideniana)*	November 2021	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered
South-eastern Glossy Black-Cockatoo *(Calyptorhynchus lathami lathami)*	June 2023	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
South-eastern Hooded Robin *(Melanodryas cucullata)*	December 2023	Endangered	Endangered
Southern Greater Glider *(Petauroides volans)*	November 2022	Endangered	Endangered
White-throated Needletail *(Hirundapus caudacutus)*	April 2024	Vulnerable	Vulnerable

Appendix C – Communities, populations and species of High Conservation Value in Lismore LGA

The following tables provide further details regarding HCV land and the species, populations and communities of HCV in the Lismore LGA. These areas are represented in Council's online mapping system and this data is used for strategic planning and decision making.

HCV–1: Areas of land identified as containing species or populations that are either threatened and/or of local conservation priority

Threatened species or populations listed under the BC Act or EPBC Act or of local conservation priority occurring in the Lismore LGA are shown in the following tables:

- **Table A1** – Terrestrial Vertebrate Fauna
- **Table A2** – Migratory Birds
- **Table A3** – Invertebrates
- **Table A4** – Flora

Table A1. HCV terrestrial vertebrates recorded in the Lismore LGA

	Status BC Act	EPBC Act	Dispersal capacity	Core habitat in LGA
Amphibians				
Green-thighed Frog *Litoria brevipalmata*	V		low	
Pearson's Tree Frog *Litoria pearsoniana*			low	✔
Whirring Tree Frog *Litoria revelata*			low–moderate	✔
Pouched Frog *Assa darlingtoni*	V		low	✔
Fletcher's Frog *Lechriodus fletcheri*			low	✔
Fleay's Barred Frog *Mixophyes fleayi*	E	E	low	✔
Giant Barred Frog *Mixophyes iterates*	E	V	low	✔
Loveridge's Frog *Philoria loveridgei*	E		low	✔

Appendix C (continued)

	Status BC Act	EPBC Act	Dispersal capacity	Core habitat in LGA
Reptiles				
Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko Saltuarius swainii			low	✔
Scute-snouted *Calyptotis Calyptotis scutirostrum*			low	
Three-toed Snake-toothed Skink *Coeranoscincus reticulatus*	V		low	
Major Skink *Bellatorius frerei*			low–moderate	✔
Land Mullet *Bellatorius major*			low–moderate	✔
McPhee's Skink *Bellatorius mcpheei*			low–moderate	✔
Martin's Skink *Eulamprus martini*			low–moderate	
Blue-speckled Forest-skink *Eulamprus murrayi*			low–moderate	✔
Short-limbed Snake-skink *Ophioscincus truncates*			low	✔
Orange-tailed Shadeskink *Saproscincus challengeri*			low	✔
Rose's Skink *Saproscincus rosei*			low	✔
Gully Shadeskink *Saproscincus spectabilis*			low	
Southern Angle-headed Dragon *Hypsilurus spinipes*			low	
White Crowned Snake *Cacophis harriettae*	V		moderate	
Dwarf Crowned Snake *Cacophis krefftii*			low–moderate	✔
Stephen's Banded Snake *Hoplocephalus stephensi*	V		moderate	✔
Rough-scaled Snake *Tropidechis carinatus*			moderate	✔
Rainforest Cool-skink *Harrisoniascincus zia*	V	V		

Appendix C (continued)

	Status BC Act	EPBC Act	Dispersal capacity	Core habitat in LGA
Birds				
Wompoo Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus magnificus*	V		high	✔
Superb Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus superbus*	V		high	✔
Rose-crowned Fruit-dove *Ptilinopus regina*	V		high	✔
Topknot Pigeon *Lopholaimus antarcticus*			high	
Marbled Frogmouth *Podargus ocellatus*	V		moderate	✔
Black Bittern *Ixobrychus flavicollis*	V		high	✔
Little Eagle *Hieraaetus morphnoides*	V		high	
Pale-vented Bush-hen *Amaurornis moluccana*	V		moderate–high	✔
Glossy Black-cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami*	V	V	high	
Black-necked Stork (Jabiru) *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*				
Little Lorikeet *Glossopsitta pusilla*	V		high	
Little Bronze-cuckoo *Chalcites minutillus*			high	
Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua*	V		high	
Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*	V		high	
Sooty Owl Tyto *tenebricosa*	V		moderate–high	✔
Masked Owl Tyto *novaehollandiae*	V		high	
Albert's Lyrebird *Menura alberti*	V		moderate	✔
Regent Bowerbird *Sericulus chrysocephalus*			high	✔
Eastern Bristlebird *Dasyornis brachypterus*	E	E	moderate	
Regent Honeyeater *Anthochaera phrygia*	E	E	high	
Little Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla megarhyncha*			moderate–high	✔

Appendix C (continued)

	Status BC Act	EPBC Act	Dispersal capacity	Core habitat in LGA
Paradise Riflebird *Ptiloris paradiseus*			moderate	✔
Pale-yellow Robin *Tregellasia capito*			moderate	✔
Grey-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*	V		moderate–high	
Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*	V		moderate–high	
Barred Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina lineata*	V		high	✔
Olive Whistler *Pachycephala olivacea*	V		moderate	
White-eared Monarch *Carterornis leucotis*	V		moderate–high	✔
Red Goshawk *Erythrotirorchis radiatus*	E	E		
South-eastern Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata*	E	E		
Mammals				
Spotted-tailed Quoll *Dasyurus maculatus*	V	E	moderate–high	
Subtropical Antechinus *Antechinus subtropicus*			low–moderate	✔
Common Planigale *Planigale maculata*	V		low–moderate	
Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*	E	E	moderate–high	✔
Yellow-bellied Glider *Petaurus australis*	V		moderate–high	
Squirrel Glider *Petaurus norfolcensis*	V		moderate–high	
Southern Greater Glider *Petauroides volans*	E	E	moderate	
Long-nosed Potoroo *Potorous tridactylus*	V	V	moderate	✔
Parma Wallaby *Macropus parma*	V		moderate	
Red-legged Pademelon *Thylogale stigmatica*	V		moderate	✔
Red-necked Pademelon *Thylogale thetis*			moderate	✔

Appendix C (continued)

	Status BC Act	EPBC Act	Dispersal capacity	Core habitat in LGA
Mammals				
Eastern Blossom-bat *Syconycteris australis*	V		moderate–high	
Eastern Tube-nosed Bat *Nyctimene robinsoni*	V		moderate	✔
Black Flying-fox *Pteropus alecto*			high	✔
Grey-headed Flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus*	V	V	high	✔
Eastern Horseshoe Bat *Rhinolophus megaphyllus*			moderate–high	✔
Yellow-bellied Sheath-tailed Bat *Saccolaimus flaviventris*	V		high	
Beccari's Free-tailed Bat *Mormopterus beccarii*	V		high	
East-coast Free-tailed Bat *Mormopterus norfolkensis*	V		high	
Little Bent-winged Bat *Miniopterus australis*	V		high	✔
Eastern Bent-winged Bat *Miniopterus schreibersii*	V		high	
Golden-tipped Bat *Kerivoula papuensis*	V		moderate	✔
Eastern Long-eared Bat *Nyctophilus bifax*	V		moderate	✔
Large-eared Pied Bat *Chalinolobus dwyeri*	E	E	moderate–high	✔
Eastern False Pipistrelle *Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*	V		high	
Southern Myotis Myotis *adversus*	V		high	✔
Greater Broad-nosed Bat *Scoteanax rueppellii*	V			✔
Central-eastern Broad-nosed Bat *Scotorepens sp.*			high	
Eastern Forest Bat *Vespadelus pumilus*			moderate–high	✔
Fawn-footed Melomys *Melomys cervinipes*			low–moderate	✔
New Holland Mouse *Pseudomys novaehollandiae*	V	V		
White-throated Needletail *Hirundapus caudactus*	V	V		

Appendix C (continued)

Status: E – Endangered; V – Vulnerable under both the BC Act and/or EPBC Act.

Key: Where they are not listed under either Commonwealth or State legislation, they are included in this list according to their local conservation priority. Local conservation priority is determined by the animal's dispersal capacity and presence of core habitat in the LGA, and is based on Table 1 in technical report 1 by Landmark Ecological Services (2012).

Table A2. Migratory birds known or predicted to occur in the Lismore LGA

These species are of HCV as they are listed under one or more of: China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA; DFAT 1995), Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA; DFA 1995) or Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA; DFAT 2007), or are listed as migratory and marine birds under the EPBC Act.

Species Name	Common Name	Listed
*Apus pacificus**	Fork-tailed Swift	C, J, K, M
*Anseranas semipalmata**	Magpie Goose	M
Ardea alba	Great Egret / White Egret	C, J, M
Ardea ibis	Cattle Egret	C, J, M
*Calidris acuminata**	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	C, J, K, M
*Cuculus optatus**	Oriental Cuckoo / Horsfield's Cuckoo	M
Gallinago hardwickii	Latham's Snipe	C, J, K, M
Haliaeetus leucogaster	White-bellied Sea-eagle	C, M
Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated Needletail	C, J, K, M
Merops ornatus	Rainbow Bee-eater	J, M
Monarcha melanopsis	Black-faced Monarch	M
Monarcha trivirgatus	Spectacled Monarch	M
Myiagra cyanoleuca	Satin Flycatcher	M
*Pandion haliaetus**	Osprey	M
Plegadis falcinellus	Glossy Ibis	C, M
Rhipidura rufifrons	Rufous Fantail	M
Rostratula benghalensis	Painted Snipe	C, M

*Denotes new records since the report generated for the original BMS in 2014.

Appendix C (continued)

Key: C – listed in CAMBA; J – listed in JAMBA; K – listed in ROKAMBA; M – migratory and marine.

Records acquired from:

1. *Atlas of NSW Wildlife database*, NSW DPIE BioNet (6 March 2020)

2. *Protected Matters Search Tool - Report by Region* 'Lismore LGA', Commonwealth DEE (20 May 2020)

3. *Birdata*, Birdlife Australia (20 May 2020)

Table A3. Threatened invertebrates known or predicted to occur in the Lismore LGA

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Carabidae	*Nurus atlas*	Atlas Rainforest Ground-beetle	CE	
Carabidae	*Nurus brevis*	Shorter Rainforest Ground-beetle	V	
Noctuidae	*Phyllodes imperialis* (southern subsp)	Southern Pink Underwing Moth	E	E
Nymphalidae	*Argynnis hyperbius**	Laced Fritillary	E	CE
Petaluridae	*Petalura gigantea*	Giant Dragonfly	E	
	Petalura litorea	Coastal Petaltail	E	
Camaenidae	*Thersites mitchellae*	Mitchell's Rainforest Snail	E	CE

*Predicted to occur as its larval food plant Arrowhead Violet (*Viola betonicifolia*) occurs in the Lismore LGA

Appendix C (continued)

Status: CE – Critically Endangered; E – Endangered

Records acquired from:

1. Atlas of NSW Wildlife database, NSW DPIE BioNet (6 March 2020)

2. Protected Matters Search Tool – Report by Region 'Lismore LGA', Commonwealth DEE (10 March 2020)

Table A4. Threatened flora known or predicted to occur in the Lismore LGA.

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Acanthaceae	*Isoglossa eranthemoides*	Isoglossa	E	E
Apocynaceae	*Cynanchum elegans*	White-flowered Wax Plant	E	E
	Marsdenia longiloba	Slender Marsdenia	E	V
	Ochrosia moorei	Southern Ochrosia	E	E
	Parsonsia dorrigoensis	Milky Silkpod	V	E
	Tylophora woollsii	Cryptic Forest Twiner	E	E
Argophyllaceae	*Corokia whiteana*	Corokia	E	E
Asteraceae	*Brachyscome ascendens*	Border Ranges Daisy	E	
	Ozothamnus vagans	Wollumbin Dogwood	E	V
	Rutidosis heterogama	Heath Wrinklewort	V	V
Brassicaceae	*Lepidium peregrinium*	Wandering Peppercress		E
Campanulaceae	*Wahlenbergia scopulicola*	Rock-face Bluebell	E	
Casuarinaceae	*Allocasuarina defungens*	Dwarf Heath Casuarina	E	E
Corynocarpaceae	*Corynocarpus rupestris subsp. Rupestris*	Glenugie Karaka	V	V
Cunoniaceae	*Davidsonia jerseyana*	Davidson's Plum	E	E
	Davidsonia johnsonii	Smooth Davidson's Plum	E	E
Cupressaceae	*Callitris baileyi*	Bailey's Cypress Pine	E	

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Cyperaceae	*Cyperus aquatilis*	Water Nutgrass	E	
	Cyperus rupicola	Cliff Sedge	V	
	Cyperus semifertilis	Missionary Nutgrass	E	V
	Eleocharis tetraquetra	Square-stemmed Spike-rush	E	
Dilleniaceae	*Hibbertia hexandra*	Tree Guinea Flower	E	
	Hibbertia marginata	Bordered Guinea Flower	V	V
Doryanthaceae	*Doryanthes palmeri*	Giant Spear Lily	V	
Droseraceae	*Aldrovanda vesiculosa*	Waterwheel Plant	E	
Ebenaceae	*Diospyros mabacea*	Red-fruited Ebony	E	E
Elaeocarpaceae	*Elaeocarpus sedentarius*	Minyon Quandong	E	E
	Elaeocarpus williamsianus	Hairy Quandong	E	E
Ericaceae	*Gaultheria viridicarpa*	Green Waxberry	E	V
	Melichrus sp. Gibberagee	Narrow-leaf Melichrus	E	E
	Melichrus sp. Newfoundland State Forest / Melichrus hirsutus	Hairy Melichrus	E	E
Euphorbiaceae	*Acalypha eremorum*	Acalypha	E	
	Baloghia marmorata	Jointed Baloghia	V	V
	Chamaesyce psammogeton	Sand Spurge	E	
	Fontainea australis	Southern Fontainea	V	V
	Fontainea oraria	Coastal Fontainea	E	E
Fabaceae (Caesalpinioideae)	*Caesalpinia bonduc*	Knicker Nut	E	
	Cassia marksiana	Brush Cassia	E	
	Senna acclinis	Rainforest Cassia	E	

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Fabaceae (Faboideae)	*Desmodium acanthocladum*	Thorny Pea	V	V
	Indigofera baileyi	Bailey's Indigo	E	
	Pultenaea maritima	Coast Headland Pea	V	
	Rhynchosia acuminatissima	Pointed Trefoil	V	
	Sophora fraseri	Brush Sophora	V	V
	Sophora tomentosa	Silverbush	E	
	Tephrosia filipes	Smooth Darling Pea	V	
Fabaceae (Mimosoideae)	*Acacia bakeri*	Marblewood	V	
	Acacia ruppii	Rupp's Wattle	E	E
	Archidendron hendersonii	White Lace Flower		
Flacourtiaceae	*Xylosma terrae-reginae*	Queensland Xylosma	E	
Grammitidaceae	*Grammitis stenophylla*	Narrow-leaf Finger Fern	E	
Juncaginaceae	*Maundia triglochinoides*	Woodrush	V	
Lamiaceae	*Plectranthus alloplectus*	Narrow-leaved Plectranthus	E	
	Plectranthus nitidus	Nightcap Plectranthus	E	E
	Prostanthera palustris	Swamp Mint-bush	V	V
	Prostanthera sejuncta		V	
Lauraceae	*Cryptocarya foetida*	Stinking Cryptocarya	V	V
	Endiandra floydii	Crystal Creek Walnut	E	E
	Endiandra hayesii	Rusty Rose Walnut	V	V
	Endiandra muelleri subsp. bracteata	Green-leaved Rose Walnut	E	
Linderniaceae	*Lindernia alsinoides*	Noah's False Chickweed	E	

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Lindsaeaceae	*Lindsaea brachypoda*	Short-footed Screw Fern	E	
	Lindsaea incisa	Slender Screw Fern	E	
Loganiaceae	*Mitrasacme pygmaea*	Pygmy Bishop's Hat	E	
Loranthaceae	*Amyema plicatula*	Box Mistletoe	E	E
	Muellerina myrtifolia	Myrtle-leaf Mistletoe	E	
Lythraceae	*Rotala tripartita*	Scrambling Lily	E	
Marattiaceae	*Angiopteris evecta*	Giant Fern	E	
Meliaceae	*Owenia cepiodora*	Onion Cedar, Onionwood	V	V
Menispermaceae	*Tinospora smilacina*	Tinospora Vine		
	Tinospora tinosporoides	Arrow-head Vine	V	
Moraceae	*Streblus pendulinus*	Sia's Backbone, Isaac Wood		E
Myrtaceae	*Angophora robur*	Sandstone Rough-barked Apple	V	V
	Callistemon linearifolius	Netted Bottle Brush	V	
	Choricarpia subargentea	Giant Ironwood	E	
	Eucalyptus glaucina	Slaty Red Gum	V	V
	Eucalyptus microcodon	Border Mallee	E	
	Eucalyptus tetrapleura	Square-fruited Ironbark	V	V
	Gossia fragrantissima	Sweet Myrtle	E	E
	Lenwebbia sp. Main Range		E	
	Melaleuca irbyana	Weeping Paperbark	E	
	Rhodamnia rubescens	Scrub Turpentine	CE	CE
	Rhodomyrtus psidioides	Native Guava	E	
	Syzygium hodgkinsoniae	Red Lilly Pilly	V	V
	Syzygium moorei	Durobby, Rose Apple	V	V
	Uromyrtus australis	Peach Myrtle	E	E

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Olacaceae	*Olax angulata*	Square-stemmed Olax	V	V
Orchidaceae	*Bulbophyllum globuliforme*	Hoop Pine Orchid	V	V
	Cryptostylis hunteriana	Leafless Tongue-orchid		V
	Dendrobium melaleucaphilum	Spider Orchid	E	
	Diuris byronensis	Byron Bay Diuris	E	
	Geodorum densiflorum	Pink Nodding Orchid	E	
	Oberonia complanata	Yellow-flowered King of the Fairies	E	
	Oberonia titania	Red-flowered King of the Fairies	V	
	Peristeranthus hillii	Brown Fairy-chain Orchid	V	
	Phaius tankervilleae var. australis	Lady Tankerville's Swamp Orchid, Southern Swamp Orchid	E	E
	Pterostylis bicornis	Horned Greenhood	E	V
	Pterostylis nigricans	Dark Greenhood	V	
	Sarcochilus dilatatus	Brown Butterfly Orchid	E	
	Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii	Ravine Orchid	V	V
	Sarcochilus hartmannii	Hartman's Sarcochilus	V	V
	Sarcochilus weinthalii	Blotched Sarcochilus	V	V
Orobanchaceae	*Centranthera cochinchinensis*	Swamp Foxglove	E	
	Euphrasia bella	Pretty Eyebright	V	V
Phyllanthaceae	*Phyllanthus microcladus*	Brush Sauropus	E	
Poaceae	*Ancistrachne maidenii*		V	
	Arthraxon hispidus	Hairy Jointgrass	V	V
	Dichanthium setosum	Bluegrass		V
	Elionurus citreus	Lemon-scented Grass	E	
	Paspalidium grandispiculatum	Panicum	V	V

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Polygalaceae	*Polygala linariifolia*	Native Milkwort	E	
	Persicaria elatior	Tall Knotweed	V	V
Polypodiaceae	*Belvisia mucronata*	Needle-leaf Fern	E	
	Drynaria rigidula	Basket Fern	E	
Primulaceae	*Myrsine richmondensis*	Ripple-leaf Muttonwood, Lismore Muttonwood	E	E
Proteaceae	*Eidothea hardeniana*	Nightcap Oak	E	CE
	Floydia praealta	Ball Nut, Possum Nut	V	V
	Grevillea banyabba	Banyabba Grevillea	V	V
	Grevillea masonii	Mason's Grevillea	E	E
	Grevillea quadricauda	Four-tailed Grevillea	V	V
	Hicksbeachia pinnatifolia	Red Boppel Nut	V	V
	Macadamia tetraphylla	Rough-shelled Bush Nut	V	V
	Macadamia integrifolia	Macadamia Nut		V
Psilotaceae	*Psilotum complanatum*	Flat Fork Fern	E	
Pteridaceae	*Antrophyum austroqueenslandicum*	Border Ranges Lined Fern	CE	CE
Ranunculaceae	*Clematis fawcettii*	Northern Clematis	V	V
Rhamnaceae	*Pomaderris notata*	McPherson Range Pomaderris	V	
Rubiaceae	*Oldenlandia galioides*	Sweet Morinda	E	
	Randia moorei	Spiny Gardenia	E	E
	Triflorensia cameronii	Cameron's Tarenna	E	

Appendix C (continued)

Family	Species Name	Common Name	Status BC Act	EPBC Act
Rutaceae	*Acronychia littoralis*	Scented Acronychia	E	E
	Boronia umbellata	Orara Boronia	V	V
	Bosistoa selwynii	Heart-leaved Bosistoa		V
	Bosistoa transversa	Three-leaved Bosistoa, Yellow Satinheart	V	V
	Coatesia paniculata	Axe-breaker	E	
	Melicope vitiflora	Coast Euodia	E	
	Zieria adenodonta	Wollumbin Zieria	E	
Santalaceae	*Thesium australe*	Austral Toadflax, Toadflax	V	V
Sapindaceae	*Cupaniopsis serrata*	Smooth Tuckeroo	E	
	Diploglottis campbellii	Small-leaved Tamarind	E	E
	Lepiderema pulchella	Fine-leaved Tuckeroo	V	
Sapotaceae	*Niemeyera whitei*	Rusty Plum, Plum Boxwood	V	
Simaroubaceae	*Quassia sp. Moonee Creek*	Moonee Quassia	E	E
Solanaceae	*Solanum limitare*	Border Ranges Nightshade	E	
Symplocaceae	*Symplocos baeuerlenii*	Small-leaved Hazelwood	V	V
Tiliaceae	*Corchorus cunninghamii*	Native Jute	E	E
Urticaceae	*Dendrocnide moroides*	Gympie Stinger	E	

Appendix C (continued)

Status: CE – Critically Endangered; E – Endangered; V – Vulnerable

Records acquired from:

1. *Atlas of NSW Wildlife* database, NSW DPIE BioNet (6 March 2020)

2. *Protected Matters Search Tool – Report by Region* 'Lismore LGA', Commonwealth DEE (10 March 2020)

HCV–2: Areas of land identified as containing endangered ecological communities (EECs)

Table A5 lists EECs listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act known to occur in the Lismore LGA. This includes EECs identified in technical report 1 by Landmark Ecological Services (2011).

Table A5. Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs) that occur in the Lismore LGA.

EPBC Act
Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicshowcommunity.pl?id=101
Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicshowcommunity.pl?id=118

Appendix C (continued)

BC Act
Coastal Saltmarsh in the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10866
Freshwater Wetlands on Coastal Floodplains of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10929
Lowland Rainforest in the New South Wales North Coast and Sydney Basin Bioregions http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/determinations/LowlandRainforestEndCom.htm
Lowland Rainforest on Floodplain in the New South Wales North Coast Bioregion http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10497
Subtropical coastal floodplain forest of the NSW North Coast bioregion http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10944
Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10945
Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on Coastal Floodplains of the New South Wales North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner Bioregions http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/profile.aspx?id=10786

Appendix C (continued)

HCV–3: Areas of land identified as key habitat for threatened species or priority vertebrate assemblages Table A6.

Key habitats supporting priority vertebrate assemblages in the Lismore LGA.

Table A6. Key habitats supporting priority vertebrate assemblages in the Lismore LGA.

Landmark mapping (2011, Grey and Blue Zones)	NRCMA mapping (2005, Green Zone)
Flooded Gum-Tallowwood–Brush Box	Sub-Tropical Rainforest
Brush Box tall moist forest	Sub-Tropical and Warm Temperate Rainforest
Subtropical Rainforest	Coastal Flooded Gum
Blackbutt–Tallowwood	Wet Flooded Gum–Tallowwood
Riparian rainforest – lower reaches	Northern Wet Tallowwood–Blue Gum
Riparian rainforest – mid reaches	Wet Bangalow–Brushbox
Dry Rainforest	Northern Moist Blackbutt
Forest Red Gum grassy open forest	Warm Temperate Rainforest
Forest Red Gum–Tallowwood	Turpentine
Forest Red Gum–Swamp Box	Escarpment Red Gum
Forest Red Gum–River Oak	Grey Box–Northern Grey Gum
Paperbark	Northern Ranges Dry Tallowwood
Paperbark–Swamp Oak	Open Shrubby Brushbox –Tallowwood
River Oak	River Oak
Swamp Oak	Wet Bloodwood–Tallowwood
Swamp Oak–River Oak	

Landmark mapping refers to identification of key habitats based on fine-scale mapping in southern and eastern two-thirds of the Lismore LGA (the Grey and Blue Zones); key habitats in the remaining third of the LGA (the Green Zone) were identified using Northern Rivers CMA mapping (2005). Landmark 2011 vegetation mapping can be viewed online on Council's mapping system. The NRCMA vegetation map is available online from NSW Spatial Data Catalogue. Note that the key habitats in each column are not aligned as equivalent communities.

Appendix C (continued)

HCV–4: Mapped coastal management areas under the Coastal Management SEPP 2018

Lismore LGA contains coastal wetlands and littoral rainforest areas and coastal environment areas, which are outlined in detailed interactive maps that accompany the CM SEPP.

HCV–5: Areas of land identified as providing very high habitat corridor values

Mapping of areas of very high habitat corridor values is based on Landmark Ecological Services (2012). Key habitats were identified and ranked on the basis of their known/potential value as habitat for threatened vertebrate species and for other conservation-priority terrestrial vertebrate species with core habitat in the Lismore LGA. The key habitats and corridors system contains 26 sectors, comprising five blocks and 21 connectors or corridors, together with riparian links. Sectors are ranked in order of significance according to conformity with the regional system of key habitats and corridors proposed by Scotts (2003) and suitability as habitat for the highest ranked assemblages. The connectors are ranked on the basis of their provision of links to significant blocks of habitat.

HCV–6: Areas of land identified as Primary, Secondary A and Secondary B koala habitat as mapped by Landmark Ecological Services 2011 and 2019

Definition of this category of HCV land is described in the CKPoM for South-east Lismore. Preferred koala habitat is now mapped and available for the Lismore LGA (Landmark 2011, 2019.)

HCV–7: Areas of land identified as supporting riparian, wetland and estuarine native vegetation other than Coastal Management SEPP mapped wetlands

The current available spatial data for these HCV areas is sourced from state agencies. Local scale occurrences and amendments to mapping will be made on a case-by-case basis by Council.

HCV–8: Areas of land identified as supporting any type of rainforest

Rainforest, of varying types, was included in vegetation mapping undertaken by Landmark Ecological Services 2011 and 2019.

HCV–9: Areas of land identified as supporting native vegetation defined as old-growth forest

Old-growth forest was included in vegetation mapping undertaken by Landmark Ecological Services 2011 and 2019.

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Website: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au

Lismore City Council


Resilience
and Adaptation
Strategy
2026–2036
Part of Lismore's
Strategic Planning Framework
DRAFT
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
2 | Lismore City Council: Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2026–2036
Lismore City Council

Executive summary

Lismore, like all places, is constantly evolving. In recent years, our community has faced significant challenges, from natural disasters to economic disruptions, that have highlighted the impacts of a changing climate. Through these experiences, we've already begun adapting, often in quiet and practical ways, as we adjust to new realities time and again.

This Strategy commits Lismore City Council to taking proactive and careful actions to adapt our systems and services. It also recognises the importance of supporting others - residents, businesses, community groups - to build resilience in their own ways. We all have a role to play, and every action contributes to a stronger, safer, and more connected Lismore.

The Strategy is guided by climate projections for the North Coast region, which show we can expect more hot days, less cold nights, continued rainfall variability, and increased risk of bushfires. These shifts affect every part of life in Lismore, from our homes and health to our economy and environment. As such, the Strategy explores risks and vulnerabilities across six focus areas that transect our daily lives. Each chapter outlines how we can reduce vulnerability and build resilience.



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Mayor's Foreword

A Message from Steve Krieg
Mayor, Lismore City Council

Lismore is a place of resilience, reinvention, and remarkable spirit. Time and again, we've faced challenges together, showing strength, compassion, and a deep commitment to our community.

Preparing for the future means being ready for uncertainty — whether it's economic pressures, extreme weather, or shifts in policy. That is why this Strategy focuses on the strengthening of our resilience and long-term sustainability. Shaped by the voices and values of our community, it sets out a practical path to support Lismore as we grow toward 60,000 people and create 6,500 new jobs.

Building a City of Resilience starts with strong foundations. We need reliable energy, water, and flood-mitigation systems that are built for Lismore and remain dependable every day and in times of emergency. Reducing risk gives residents and local businesses the confidence to plan, build, and invest, supports new housing, and helps ensure Lismore remains an attractive place to live, work, and thrive.

We are not defined by what happens to us, but by how we respond. And in Lismore, we choose to respond with vision, unity, and hope.

Together, we are building a City of Resilience: ready for growth, ready for opportunity, ready for the future.



A Message from Oliver Costello

Executive Director, Jagun Alliance

We live in a web of relationships that has been tethered by a range of factors, from colonialism to disasters. We need to see ourselves and re-establish relationships again, in the face of the climate emergency.

Looking around at the state of disrepair of our Country, lost forests, eroded riverbanks, extinct or endangered animals, it is evident to me that these natural problems are in fact human problems and cultural problems.

We, as humans, are so powerful yet so out of control. So intelligent yet so damaging. As we have the power to evolve and innovate, we also have the power to work together, to learn from mistakes and do better. We are in this together, as communities, as nations and as a planet. A connected and collective response is needed.

This Strategy is a platform for starting that collaboration, for enabling small but connected actions that together will enable us to make a better world.

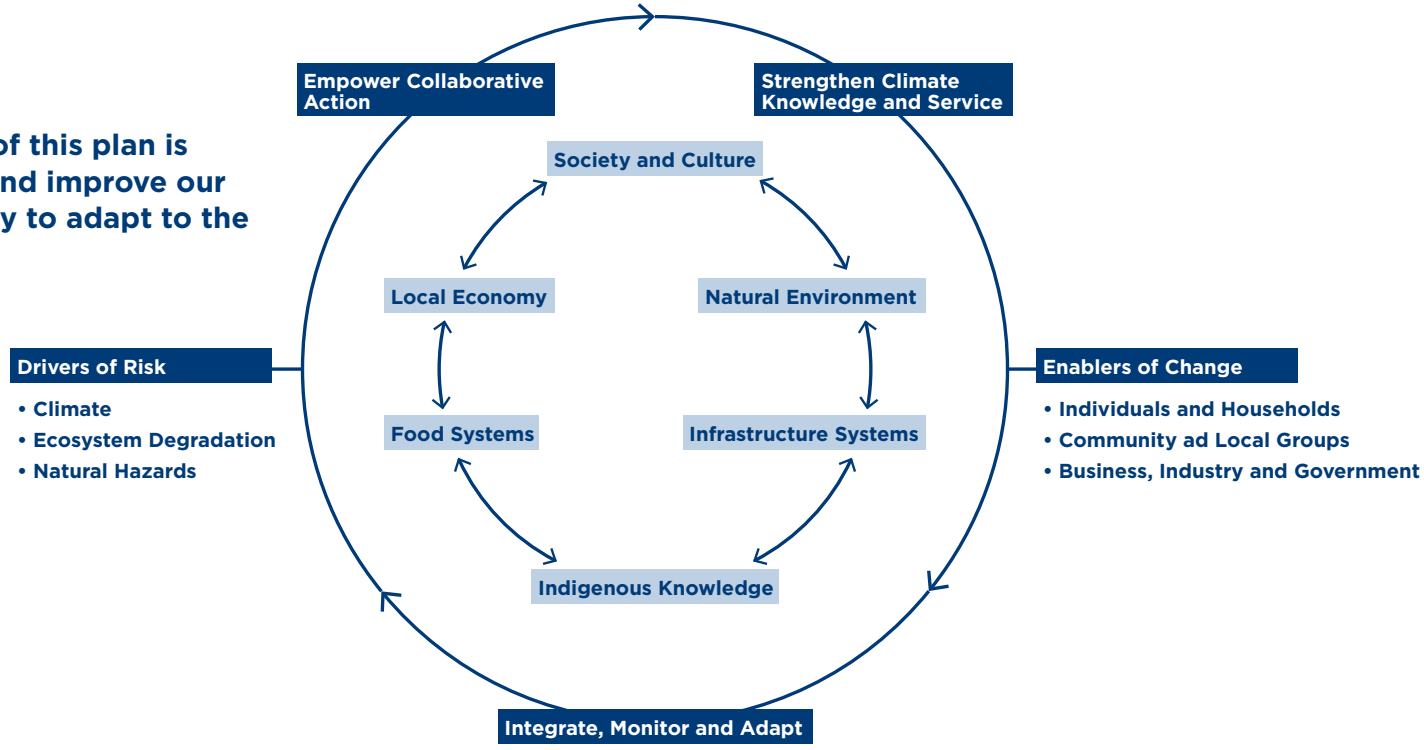
1. About this Strategy

1.1: Purpose of the Strategy

The Resilience and Adaptation Strategy provides a clear framework for making smart, climate-ready decisions and taking practical steps to protect our community. It also supports and empowers others - businesses, residents, and partners - to take their own adaptive actions. Because when we all act, we all become stronger.

By weaving climate resilience and sustainability into everything we do - our policies, urban planning, and infrastructure projects - Lismore is leading the way toward a future that embraces resilience and innovation for a thriving community.

The primary aim of this plan is to contribute to and improve our collective capacity to adapt to the changing climate.



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Resilience and Adaptation Strategy is part of Lismore City Council's Strategic Planning Framework and sits underneath the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS).



Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets a 20 year place-based vision for the future of Lismore as a local government area. It explains the longterm direction for growth and change, including where housing, jobs, services, environmental protection and infrastructure should be located. The LSPS is about the big picture and provides direction for land-use planning across the community. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy is a supporting strategy to the LSPS and sits alongside a suite of other theme-based strategies.

The Resilience and Adaptation Strategy focuses on how Council will reduce risk and build resilience to climate change and natural hazards within the longterm vision. It translates the LSPS vision into practical actions, to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related impacts.

Put simply:

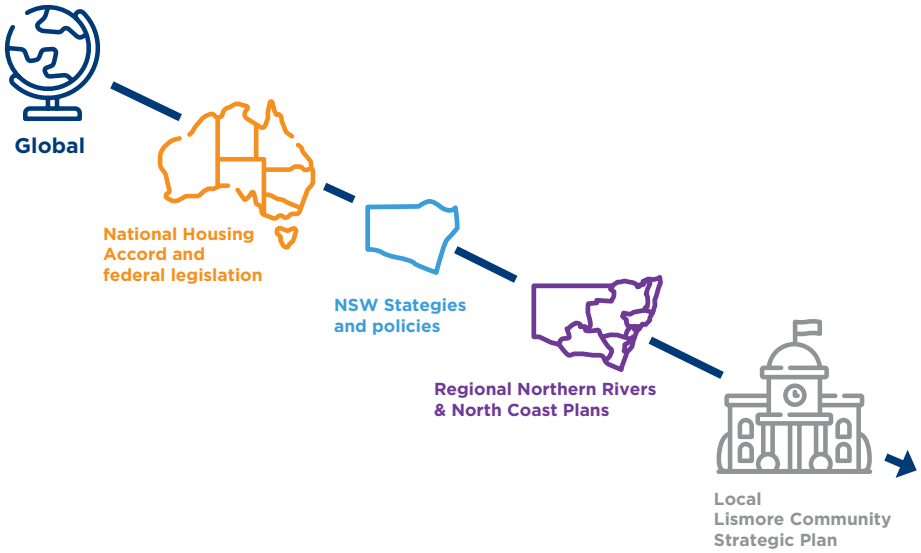
- The LSPS explains the longterm "why and where" (i.e. direction).
- The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy explains the practical "how and what" (i.e. actions).

1.2: Strategic Alignment



1.2: Strategic Alignment

The Resilience and Adaptation Strategy has been developed in alignment with regional, state, national and international drivers, policy and legislation, including:



- National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy
- National Electricity and Energy Sector Plan
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979
- Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act 2011
- Rural Fires Act 1997 and associated NSW Strategic Guide to Planning for Natural Hazards
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Water Management Act 2000
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- NSW Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- NSW Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023
- NSW Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020
- NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy
- NSW Hydrogen Strategy
- NSW Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program
- NSW State Disaster Mitigation Plan
- NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2041

This Strategy sits separately to the Richmond Valley, Kyogle and Lismore Emergency Management Plan and other legislative disaster response planning frameworks, including any future Disaster Adaptation Plan for Northern Rivers.

1.3: How we got here

In October 2023, Lismore City Council hosted workshops and conversations with stakeholders in the community. Throughout the month, over 50 local subject matter experts and over 60 local school students contributed to discussions that identified key risks and solutions for Lismore.

Throughout 2024, Council continued engagement through monthly drop-in sessions where residents shared concerns, expectations and ideas for strengthening climate resilience.

This Strategy builds directly on that input. Community feedback informed the situational analysis and shaped the impacts, risks and vulnerabilities identified. Recognising strong community interest in working together, suggested actions for others across each of the six focus area are provided in Appendix 1.

The Strategy uses AdaptNSW climate projections for the North Coast and is guided by principles of Just and Positive Adaptation. It recognises that climate impacts are uneven and that adaptation alone, without reducing emissions, is insufficient. Consistent with IPCC guidance, it emphasises equity, inclusion and rights-based approaches, acknowledging that effective adaptation can also advance social equity, climate mitigation and disaster preparedness

A Stakeholder Report summarised the findings and highlighted three clear messages:

1. **The social, emotional, cultural and mentalhealth impacts of climate change are significant.**
2. **Every action matters — resilience requires shared responsibility.**
3. **Solutions exist — action is needed now.**

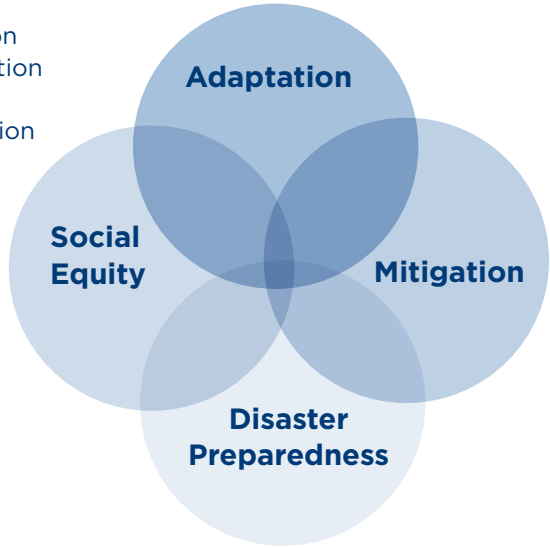
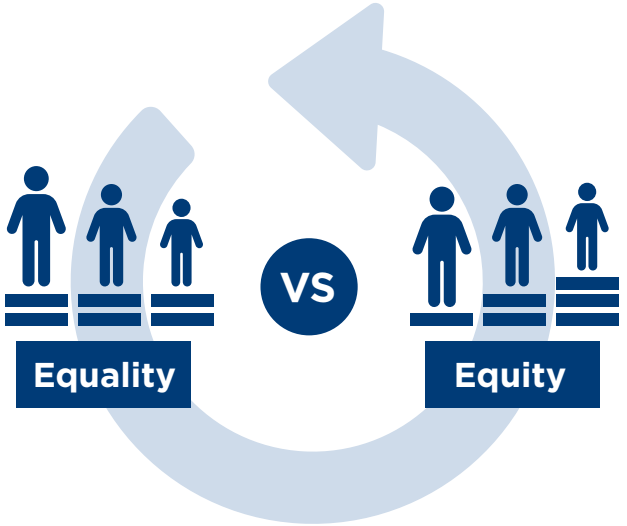


Figure 1: Adaptation intersections, variation of Digby Halls' © Positive Adaptation

1.4: Definitions

Key Term	Definition/Purpose
Adaptation	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects, in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)). In everyday terms, adaptation refers to the adjustments made in our lives to better withstand the projected changes in climate. Adaptation plays a key role in reducing exposure and vulnerability to climate change impacts.
Just Adaptation	Adaptation that fosters recognition, inclusion and capacity building for all Peoples. It "compels us to both recognise and correct the many layers of entrenched disadvantage while building upon the strengths intrinsic to these same communities" (Future Earth Australia, 2022). Through Just Adaptation social inequities can be rectified, rather than entrenched and/or worsened.
Positive Adaptation	Adaptation actions that contribute to mitigation and disaster preparedness.
Climate Mitigation	Actions that reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, therefore addressing the cause of climate change but, if done alone, do not address the consequences.
Disaster Mitigation	Actions that reduce the impact of disasters.
Disaster Preparedness	Actions that prepare us to survive and respond to climate related disaster events.
Maladaptation	Action that might contribute to adaptation in one way but cause detriment or increase risk or vulnerability elsewhere. Maladaptation especially affects marginalised and vulnerable groups adversely.



Not everyone in our community faces the same risks or has the same capacity to prepare and respond. This strategy aims to focus on equality because true fairness means recognising these differences and ensuring that support, resources, and protections reach the people and places who need them most.

2. Our Lismore

44,334
Current population

1,290 km2
Lismore's total area

4000 +
Local Businesses



7,079
Parcels of land are susceptible to flood

94%
Lismore LGA mapped bush fire prone land

60+
Complex landslips occured during 2022 natural disasters

1%
Big Scrub remains

1 Endangered Population

18 Threatened Ecological Communities



2.1: Our Changing Climate

Lismore's temperate climate, featuring warm summers and mild winters, supports the region's thriving agricultural base and active outdoor lifestyle, making it an appealing destination for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

Lismore and the broader North Coast of NSW are projected to continue experiencing significant climate shifts, including increased temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and greater fire danger.

The projections have been derived from the New South Wales (NSW) and Australian Regional Climate Modelling (NARCliM2.0) project, which considers weather averages and variability as well as the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change's (IPCC) emission profile data. As changes in the climate occur, the associated risks will escalate however Lismore City Council acknowledges the value of these projections in guiding future planning and decision-making.

Many of the projected impacts are already evident as natural hazards and disasters, highlighting the need for a comprehensive emergency management approach that includes prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. While extreme weather events can lead to disasters, gradual climate shifts will also create significant challenges and drive long-term changes in our lives. This Plan focuses on addressing these incremental changes through a combination of adaptive and transformational strategies designed to **enhance resilience and sustainability over the long term.**

PROJECTED CHANGES



	Low-emissions scenario		Medium-emissions scenario		High-emissions scenario	
	2050	2090	2050	2090	2050	2090
Increase in average temperature	+1.1˚C	+1.2˚C	+1.4˚C	+2.3˚C	+1.7˚C	+3.4˚C
Increase in hot days per year	+5.9	+6.0	+5.7	+12.3	+8.6	+19.4
Decrease in average winter rainfall	–15.8%	–13.3%	–23.9%	–19.1%	–22.1%	–18.2%
Increase in severe fire weather days per year	+0.4	+0.2	+0.2	+0.8	+0.5	+0.7

Why use three future climate scenarios?

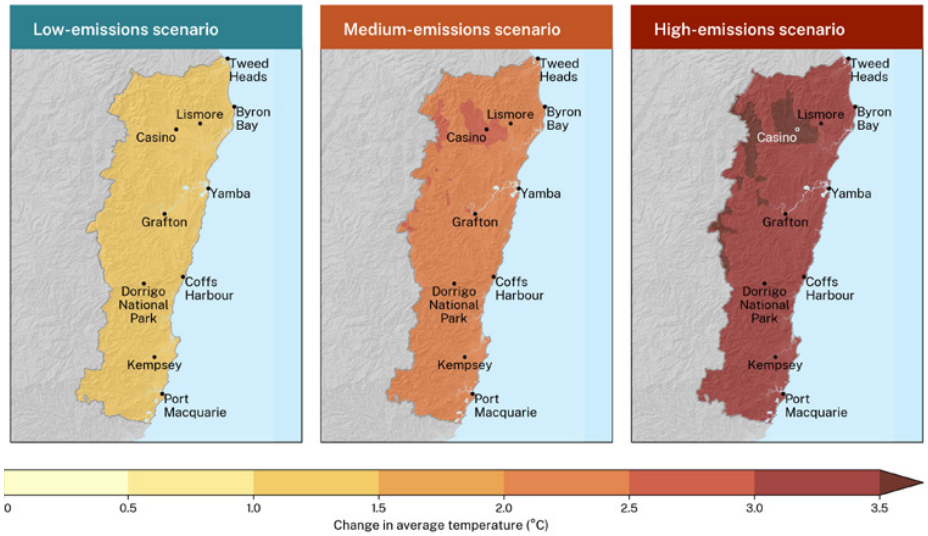
Because the future isn't fixed, NARCliM2.0 uses three different scenarios—low, medium and high—to help us understand a range of possible futures. These scenarios, known as Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs), explore how global changes in population, technology, land use, and economic development could influence the level of warming the world experiences.

Using three scenarios shows how today's choices shape tomorrow's climate conditions. By comparing these futures for both 2050 and 2090, we can see where projected changes are similar and where they differ sharply. This helps communities, planners and decision makers prepare for a range of potential risks and make more informed, resilient decisions.

2.1: Our Changing Climate (continued)

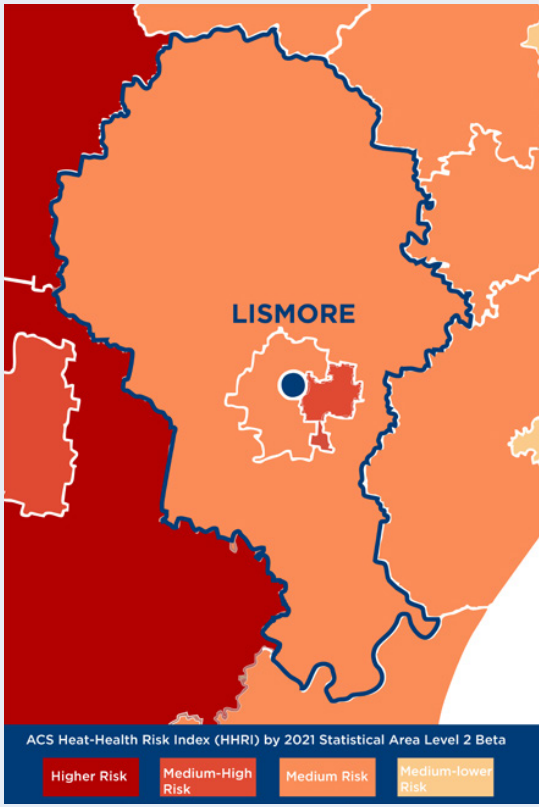
Rainfall Variability

Annual average rainfall in the region is projected to remain variable throughout this century.



Heat Variability

Urban heat happens when built-up areas get much hotter than nearby natural spaces. Hard surfaces like roads, carparks, and buildings soak up heat during the day and release it back into the air, making neighbourhoods feel warmer—especially in summer.



Lismore annual average rainfall : 1343mm

Care should be taken when interpreting changes in rainfall as the range of model outputs project changes of both wetting and drying. Modelling rainfall is challenging due to the complexities of the weather systems that generate rain.

Australian Climate Services (ACS) Heat-Health Risk Index (HHRI):

The study shows how extreme heat affects people's health—such as hospital visits and deaths—and uses a Heat Health Risk Index to map which communities are most at risk across Australia. Goonellabah is identified as medium-high risk, with the rest of the Lismore LGA medium risk.

2.2: Why We Need to Adapt and Increase Our Resilience

The rising cost of inaction

Inaction on climate resilience in Lismore and the Northern Rivers region poses significant economic and social risks. Recent disasters such as the 2019–20 bushfires, 2022 floods, and Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred, have already cost the region $4 billion in lost economic output and $6.9 billion in total socio-economic damages, including infrastructure losses, business disruption, and mental health impacts.

Key impacts for our Community

Rising recovery costs
The cost of rebuilding after disasters continues to rise, placing strain on local budgets and resources.

Damage to essential infrastructure
Major events can damage critical infrastructure such as roads, power, and communications, disrupting daily life.

Rising insurance costs
Insurance premiums have jumped 94% since 2021, making coverage increasingly difficult for households and businesses.

Aftereffects to local businesses
Major events often disrupt business activity, reducing trade (shop sales can drop by up to 10%), affecting jobs and livelihoods.

Health and wellbeing challenges
Experiencing a disaster can be stressful and may increase the need for health care and community support well beyond the initial crisis.

Interruptions to everyday services
Utilities, waste collection, and deliveries can be delayed or stopped during emergencies.

More detailed information on the cost of disasters in the Northern Rivers is available in the NSW Reconstruction Authority's Northern Rivers Economic Profile and Natural Hazard Impact Report.

Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (RCNNDA) (2020) states:

Increasingly, natural disaster recovery has been recognised as an opportunity to build resilience in disaster-affected communities – in effect, to 'build back better'. Building back better, to a more resilient standard, will help communities withstand the impacts of future disasters. Successful natural disaster recovery requires BBB as a long-term investment. BBB encourages rebuilding and reconstruction that considers disaster risk-reduction and community inclusiveness.

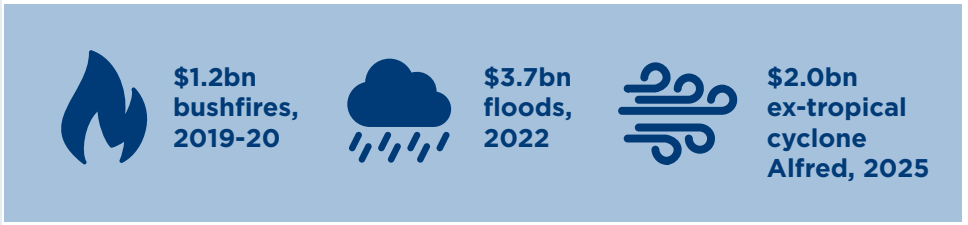


Figure 1 – Estimated socio-economic impact cost of natural hazard impact in the Northern Rivers (this is not the cost of any reconstruction)

Source: Deloitte Access Economics (2025).

3. Strategy Vision and Objectives

3.1: Vision

In 2036, Lismore is a resilient city where people, nature and the built environment thrive together. Our neighbourhoods, infrastructure and essential services are stronger, safer and designed to withstand a changing climate, while our landscapes, waterways and cultural places are healthy and protected. Communities, businesses and landholders are wellprepared, connected and informed, supported by robust data, clear communication and collaborative emergency planning. First Nations knowledge is embedded in how we care for Country, improving land management, guiding adaptation actions and strengthening cultural resilience across the region.

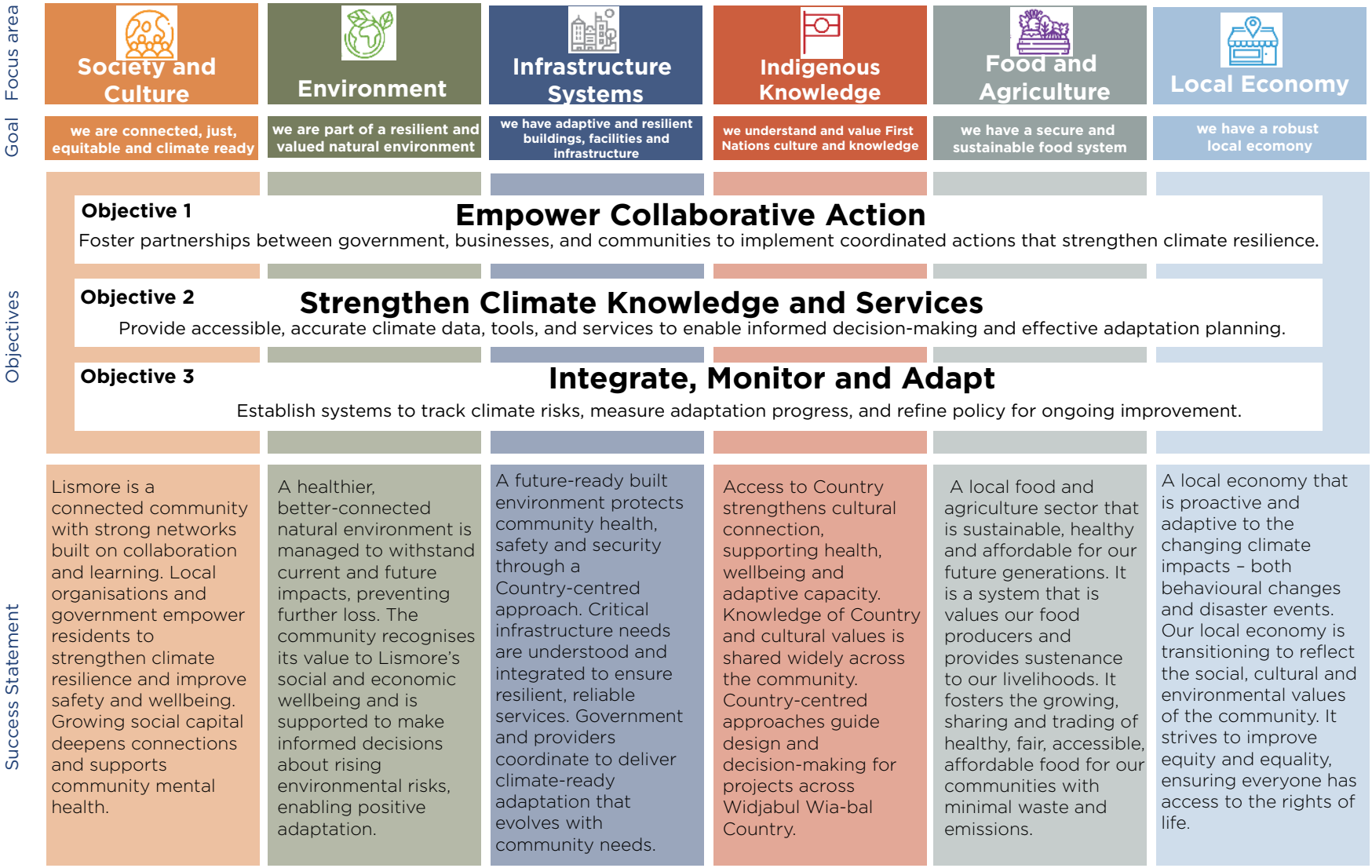
Climate resilience is recognised as essential to our wellbeing, economy and identity, with government, communities and industry working sidebyside to reduce risks, adapt systems and seize opportunities. Through coordinated planning, shared responsibility, sustainable investment and continuous monitoring, Lismore has successfully reduced vulnerability, enhanced local food and energy security, revitalised natural and built systems, and ensured our region can adapt confidently to climate change and future growth. The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy will guide this collective effort, enabling practical action, informed decisions and longterm resilience for generations to come.

Across each of these focus areas are three strategic objectives that work to achieve the strategy vision.

Each objective is supported by actions drawn from all six focus areas, recognising that effective adaptation requires a coordinated approach across rural land, community wellbeing, the environment, infrastructure, local economy and cultural values.



3.2: Focus Areas and Strategic Objectives



3.2.1: Focus Area 1 - Society and Culture

Situational Analysis

People of Lismore:

- 71.7% are adults, 28.2% are youth
- 37.5% have a long-term health condition
- 30.4% live alone
- Higher number of single parents then the rest of Regional NSW
- Religious diversity has been increasing since 2001
- 65.5% of urban residents travel to work in a private car,
- 60.3% of rural residents travel to work in a private car
  (post-flood data not available)

Challenges:

- 41.3% rental households Lismore are in housing stress and 13.9% mortgage households are in housing stress
- It's estimated that up to 6.5% of households in Lismore experience energy poverty
- Communities of cultural, ethnic and linguistically diverse backgrounds are often excluded or marginalised
- Loneliness is increasing in Australia

Strengths:

- Passionate, caring and committed individuals, groups and organisations exist within Lismore
- 82% of residents feel connected to the Lismore community
- Top 2 visitor descriptors of Lismore are: 1. Friendly and 2. Alternative
- Strong sense of community, particularly within villages.
- Strong creative communities and spaces for connection such as galleries, libraries and markets

3.2.1: Focus Area 1 - Society and Culture

Climate impacts on society and culture

Changes in climate are affecting many facets of our lives, and therefore significantly impacting how we live, connect and feel and of course our health. Likewise, the connections we have can keep us safe and supported.

The lived experience of consecutive natural hazard events in Lismore has facilitated strong ties amongst individuals and communities across professional and personal platforms. It is this social fabric that is a critical contributor to our ability to adapt and survive physically, mentally and spiritually. When we are connected, we achieve more, we are safer, our mental health and wellbeing strengthens, and we respond more efficiently. Research across the world demonstrates that this is consistent across cultures, backgrounds, genders and ages.

We know that climate change disproportionately impacts some groups more than others. Those most impacted by climate change in Australia include rural and remote communities, people experiencing homelessness, people with a pre-existing health condition or a disability, frontline workers and responders, LGBTQI+ peoples, Aboriginal peoples, youth and elderly and those on low incomes.

Housing Stress

When a household pays more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs

Energy Poverty

When a household is paying more than 10% of their income on electricity. Main contributors of energy poverty are energy cost, household income and the energy efficiency of the household.

3.2.1: Focus Area 1 - Society and Culture

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Health impacts (injury, heat stress) • Pressure on health systems & workers • Increased household costs • Reduced participation in sport/ recreation	Those who: • have less social networks • have pre-existing health conditions, including those needing life support equipment • have pre-existing trauma or mental health conditions • are locked out of, or with limited access to, the health system and services • are young or elderly • work outdoors • have limited access to cool refuges • who can't afford air conditioning or to retrofit their home • are renting • live or work in a flood or bushfire prone area • rely on rainwater for their household/ farm water • are primary producers
Rainfall Variability	• Social fragmentation • Burnout from response & recovery work • Service access disruption • Loss of work & income	
Decreased rain in winter	• Reduced agricultural income • Food insecurity • Dust & air quality issues • Water insecurity	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• Loss of life and property • Smoke-related health issues • Insufficient fire-response capacity	
any/ all of the four projections	• Discrimination in recovery • Civil unrest / anti-social behaviours • Climate anxiety	

3.2.2: Focus Area 2 - Environment

Situational Analysis

Regional and National Importance:

- The Border Ranges Rainforest Region, with connections to the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana, is one of 15 National Biodiversity Hotspots in the country.
- Around half of the remaining area of Big Scrub is estimated to be within Lismore, the total remaining Big Scrub is less than 1% of its original size.
- The koala population of Lismore LGA is recognised as one of the most important in New South Wales and most populated in the Northern Rivers.

Local importance:

- 146 known threatened plant species
- 28 threatened native wildlife species
- 18 endangered ecological communities
- The Richmond River floodplain has the highest koala occupancy known in the Northern Rivers (Biolink/LCC koala survey 2023)

Strengths:

- Natural environment is intrinsic to the lifestyle of region's residents
- High levels of knowledge, research and passion within the region
- Prolific capacity for natural ecosystems to regenerate given the right treatment/ management inputs

3.2.2: Focus Area 2 - Environment

Climate impacts on environment

The natural environment is made up of many assets such as our estuaries, rivers and wetlands, rainforests, soils and any other naturally occurring or growing areas as well as animals and microorganisms. Natural environments provide us with food, water, shelter, recreation, spirituality, and beauty. We all rely on a healthy natural environment to carry out our lives.

Biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth, it includes all living species and the landscapes that make up our living world. It consists complex systems that create balance and the changing climate is impacting these systems and how they work. By adopting a Nature-positive approach to managing our "natural capital" and recognising that we are not separate to nature, we can mitigate further biodiversity loss, which is essential to safeguarding our planet and our livelihoods.

Healthy waterways, gullies, vegetation, and soils in the upper catchments are vital for reducing drought impacts and influencing the speed and volume of water moving through the landscape. Strengthening local water cycles will also help contribute to mitigate the effects of reduced winter rainfall.

The changes and future projected changes to our region could negatively impact all these necessities. Increased and decreased rainfall causes changes in what can grow and where, including weeds, as well as cause soil erosion, water pollution and animal displacement. Warmer temperatures and drought are contributing to animal stress, decreasing production and making animal welfare an issue. Increased fire danger threatens crop, plant species and animal life.

National Biodiversity Hotspots:

Areas that support largely intact natural ecosystems where native species and communities are well-represented, and where a high diversity of locally endemic species persists.

Big Scrub:

Australia's largest expanse of lowland subtropical rainforest that once covered 75,000 hectares. It is the highest proportion of remnant Gondwana-descended species of any rainforest in Australia.

Coastal Floodplain:

An area of land adjacent to a flood prone water body. Floodplains a dynamic, resource rich areas of natural environment that support important biodiversity.

Nature Positive:

term used to describe circumstances where nature – species and ecosystems – is being repaired and is regenerating rather than being in decline.

3.2.2: Focus Area 2 - Environment

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Heat stress reducing species abundance & distribution • Lower water availability & more algal blooms • Reduced vegetation nutrition impacting food webs • Pressure for dams affecting threatened habitats	All flora and fauna, especially: • Endangered Ecological Communities • Riparian habitats and other thin corridor vegetation • Aquatic habitat • Those in riparian zones • Livestock • Ecosystems which are not adapted to bushfire Those who are: • Involved in bush regeneration • Have connections to Country
Rainfall Variability	• Increased soil erosion & degraded water quality • Polluted runoff harming aquatic ecosystems • Reduced access for regeneration and restoration • Landslips & riverbank instability damaging habitat	
Decreased rain in winter	• Loss of aquatic and plant-dependent habitat • Reduced food availability for fauna • Species migration/displacement for water • Long-term drought reducing resilience & genetic diversity	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• More intense/frequent fires destroying habitat • Rapid biodiversity decline & species isolation • Fragmentation reducing genetic diversity • Loss of tree hollows impacting breeding	
any/ all of the four projections	• Loss of climate-sensitive ecosystems & species • Increased wildlife deaths • Decline in water quality & supply • Long-term vegetation & ecotype change • Reduced community connection to nature	

3.2.3: Focus Area 3 - Infrastructure Systems

Situational Analysis

Community Infrastructure:

- ~18,000 dwellings in the LGA
- There is a shortage of suitable, resilient and affordable housing to meet the needs of the community
- 62.9% of residents live in the urban area
- 60.3% of homes have roof-top solar
- 502 solar installations on commercial buildings
- 14,403 parcels of land within the Lismore LGA are subject to bush fire
- 7,079 parcels of land are susceptible to flood
- In the last 20 years, an average of 116 new homes were approved to be built each year

Council infrastructure:

- 804km of sealed road
- 411km of unsealed road
- 118 bridges
- 278 culverts
- 354km of water mains
- 376km of sewer mains
- Council collects 16,098 landfill bins, 16,079 recycling bins and 13,141 food and garden waste bins from residents
- Responsible for: 7 water pumping stations, 3 wastewater pumping stations, 18 reservoirs, 1 dam, 1 weir, 2 water treatment plants, 3 waste water treatment plants

Non Council Owned Infrastructure and Services:

- Bulk Water – Rous County Council owned
- Rail corridor – Transport for NSW
- Electrical – Essential Energy, NSW State Government
- Communications – NBN, Federal Government

3.2.3: Focus Area 3 - Infrastructure Systems

Climate Impacts on Infrastructure Systems

Known to the Widjabul Wia-bal as Dundarimba (meaning a place of boggy/swampy ground), Lismore was designed and built on and around a floodplain. For the early settler communities, the river acted as the primary transport, enabling the developing timber and agricultural industries. As road and rail networks established, the demand for the inland river port steadily dropped but not before the bustling township was established on the banks of the Wilson River.

Lismore's infrastructure systems include a variety of human-made surroundings like buildings, public spaces, essential services (such as water, sewer, electricity, stormwater, communication) and infrastructure (like roads and bridges), all of which play an essential role in supporting our day to day lives.

The impacts of the changing climate have the potential to significantly disrupt and directly damage all aspects of the built environment. To ensure the continued liveability, health and safety of all who reside in the Lismore region, we must adapt our built environment to withstand the projected climate changes and keep us safe from harm in a way that does not contribute to further climate change.

Addressing climate change in the built environment has already become an area of significant interest, research and investment. The 2024 Planning Institute of Australia, when summarising the future trends that impact the profession of town planning stated "The ultimate goal for planners, when it comes to addressing climate change, is to create sustainable cities by being proactive and innovative, integrating climate resilience into urban planning to ensure the safety and well-being of urban populations. This isn't just about the future – it's about addressing immediate threats today while laying the groundwork for a resilient, sustainable and responsive tomorrow."

3.2.3: Focus Area 3 - Infrastructure Systems

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Urban heat island effect increases air temperature • Damage to infrastructure • Increased need for maintenance and retrofitting • Increased demand on the electricity grid • Increase frequency of power outages	Those who: • Are young or elderly • Are renting • who can't afford air conditioning or to retrofit their home • have pre-existing health condition • use mobility devices or have impaired vision • Live or work in flood or bushfire prone areas and/ or on unstable terrain • Live in rural areas or areas that could become isolated • Are reliant on rainwater • Rural businesses and industries
Rainfall Variability	• Landslips damaging buildings and infrastructure • Failures of poles, drainage and pavements • Disruption to supply chains and critical infrastructure • Loss of housing and road access across the LGA	
Decreased rain in winter	• Increased risk to underground services and building stability • Street trees and vegetation becoming unsuited to climate • Water shortages for rainwater-reliant households and businesses • Dust and storms increasing wear on machinery and infrastructure	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• Higher demand on water infrastructure • Buildings and assets damaged or lost to bushfire • Smoke infiltrating buildings and reducing indoor air quality	
any/ all of the four projections	• Increased pressure on emergency services, utilities and essential infrastructure • Greater disruption to daily life, access to services, and community functioning • Higher financial costs for households, businesses and councils • Heightened stress, anxiety and reduced sense of safety in the community	

3.2.4: Focus Area 4 - Indigenous Knowledge

Situational Analysis

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community profile:

- 5.9% of Lismore's population
- 39.8% are between 0 and 17, (20.9% for broader Lismore population)
- 5.8% aged 65 years and over (20.9% for broader Lismore population)
- Our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population are more likely to have long term health conditions then others in Regional NSW
- The number of Lismore residents speaking an Australian Indigenous language has risen 495% in the last 20 years
- 20.9% work in community and personal service compared with 13.9% for the broader Lismore population
- Cultural landscapes and sites exist everywhere across Widjabul Wia-bal Country including Nimbin Rocks, Whian Whian Falls, Rocky Creek Dam, Tucki Tucki Bora Ring, and Protesters Falls

Challenges:

- Historical loss of and disconnection from country
- Loss of knowledge concerned with an aging population
- Cultural knowledge is not widely recognised
- Protecting cultural protocols and knowledge sharing with Free Prior and Informed Consent

Strengths:

- Many longstanding Indigenous owned and led organisations, such as; The Koori Mail, Gnibi College, Jagun Alliance, Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council, Jarjum Centre, Rekindling the Spirit, Amarina AARI
- Caring for Country work being carried out by Aboriginal rangers and other community-based organisations
- Cultural fire management is being re-established
- Cultural lores and practices are being transferred to young people

3.2.4: Focus Area 4 - Indigenous Knowledge

Climate impacts on indigenous knowledge

The impacts of recent fire and flood disasters have been driven by local landscape degradation and human induced climate change. These drivers occurred historically, and sadly they continue in the Northern Rivers and globally. The widespread clearing of the ancient forests and the draining of waterways have not only created massive carbon emissions but also resulted in enormous declines in Cultural Heritage, landscape health and diversity that has not been recovered.

The Cultural values, trees, plants, animals and people all gave identity to these landscapes. They have emerged and found relative balance in these high rainfall areas and fertile landscapes. The removal and destruction of these entities created extensive changes in landscape functions and associated cultural values. These changes also impact on cultural indicators of the health of Country - for example changed timing of seasonal changes, affecting access and availability of resources, making it harder to read Country and plan management responses.

Historical loss of, and disconnection from, Country means that rebuilding and maintaining relationships with the land is essential for sustaining cultural identity and the community connections needed to repair Country and adapt to climate change. Climate-driven increases in heat particularly affect Elders, who are vital knowledge holders and cultural guides. As interest in Bundjalung languages grows, Elders provide irreplaceable linguistic and cultural knowledge that helps interpret past cultural landscapes and understand what belongs on Country. Language strengthens understanding of the cultural landscape, and language speakers are central to this work.

3.2.4: Focus Area 4 - Indigenous Knowledge

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Community spending more time indoors impacts physical and mental health due to a loss of connection with Country • Elders unable to have presence on country due to heat. Disconnects elders, less culturally active and healthy, loss of stories and loss of science • Increase in people accessing local water holes together with limited knowledge about cultural significance of these sites leads to damage and disrespect of cultural lores and a disconnection for elders	Those who: • Are First Nations • Are Elders • Are indigenous and have a health condition • • Communities living on flood-prone Country • • Cultural knowledge holders and land carers • • Volunteers responding to fire events
Rainfall Variability	• Community lose housing then have to move off country; dislocated communities and loss of stories • Communities on Country remain at risk of flood • Damage to Country	
Decreased rain in winter	• Rivers and wetlands dry up – lost source of drinking water, food, ceremony, traditional practices and healing. Understanding cultural water lore	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• Damage to country • Lost connection with Country and sites of cultural significance through fire destruction • Overload on volunteers, long shifts for mob, trauma, mental health	
any/ all of the four projections	• Loss of intergenerational knowledge due to repeated disasters • Reduced opportunity for cultural practice and ceremony • Disconnection from Country through displacement and environmental change • Ongoing emotional, cultural and spiritual stress	

3.2.5: Focus Area 5 - Food and Agriculture

Situational Analysis

Agricultural significance:

- 73% (93,500ha) of the land area in the Local Government Area is utilised for commercial agriculture
- 39ha of land and 13 businesses produce vegetables
- 196 businesses produce nuts and fruit on 4902ha
- 67% of Gross Value in agriculture is made from nuts, cattle and milk
- 1,148 people work in agriculture -> 4.4% of all industry jobs
- 34 agricultural commodities commercially harvested
- Two annual agricultural shows in the LGA, the Lismore Show dating back to 1885, and the Nimbin Country Show dating back to 1919

How we eat:

- 4 farmers markets a week in; Lismore CBD; Lismore Showgrounds; and Nimbin.
- 406 food businesses, ranging from cafes, to food vans to supermarkets
- 53 of those are general stores or supermarkets, selling ingredients rather than already cooked or prepared food
- Many urban and rural residents grow their own food and run roadside stalls to sell, swap or gift what they have grown
- Two community gardens in; Lismore CBD; and Nimbin
- At least eight different organisations run food pantries

Challenges:

- Reliance on supermarkets
- High cost of land limits new take-up of agriculture
- Affordability and lack of time impact the way we cook and eat

Strengths:

- We have fertile soils and a warm subtropical climate with high average rainfall, this supports a range of crops without irrigation
- 'New' easy to grow food crops such as rain-fed rice, hemp, lemon myrtle, soy beans, cassava and others are emerging and have potential
- High community interest and knowledge in regenerative agriculture and local food economies
- Agri-tourism and carbon offsetting opportunities exist to help farmers diversify their income and resilience

3.2.5: Focus Area 5 - Food and Agriculture

Climate Impacts on food and agriculture

Food growth occurs in a complex and balanced system of soil health, sunlight, and climate. Certain crops are suited to certain climates and need specific temperatures and amounts of water. With a changing climate, the foods we can grow, the weeds that takeover and the pests that are attracted are also changing, impacting what, where and when we can grow food. Despite this, many nutritious fruits and vegetables will still be easy enough to grow in our region, we may just need to learn how to grow, harvest, sell, cook, preserve, and eat them.

Agriculture is a major part of Lismore's economy and a large part of our community fabric. Impacts to the agricultural sector will have flow-on affects to the families, communities and industries involved. With majority of our locally grown food being exported, and majority of the ingredients we eat in Lismore being imported, is easy to see how we are vulnerable. Crop success and supply chain disruptions impact all of us who eat. For example, when areas of the country experience crop failure from heat, storms or floods, major supermarkets have empty shelves and tell us exactly why that is. Although there are many edible products filling other shelves, access to and affordability of, actual food (items that are made from food that has been grown) is critical to our health and wellbeing, in everyday life and even more so during a disaster event.

As we look to adapt our local food and agricultural systems, we need to consider if they are fit for purpose now, and will they be fit for purpose in the future?

Agritourism:

Agritourism is a form of tourism that connects people to produce or experiences on a farm

Sustainable Agriculture:

Involves implementing farming techniques and practices that maintain farming systems, including soil health, water resources, pollution, biodiversity.

Regenerative Agriculture:

Involves implementing farming techniques and management systems that continuously renew and regenerate the land and water resources to improve the ecosystem health and farming landscape. It is farming in sync with nature and with the aim to improve ecosystems, health, equity and the climate. The result is a more resilient landscape and 'natural capital' that supports agricultural production.

3.2.5: Focus Area 5 - Food and Agriculture

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Change in crop ability and viability for farmers • Heat stress results in lower milk and beef production • Reduced availability of food drives demand and increases prices • Inability to work outdoors during the day or during heatwaves, reducing productivity and financial security	Those who: • Are farmers • Live in a rural area • Grow food • Run food or transport businesses • Eats food
Rainfall Variability	• Supermarkets closed/unable to restock and increased reliance on imports • Import supply chain networks interrupted due to flood • Increased risk of slope instability and erosion, loss of animal stock and crops • Window to harvest reduces	
Decreased rain in winter	• Increased risk of new disease and weeds • Increased overall risk for loss of crops, farms, homes and livelihoods • Reduced crop yield and poor animal health • Low availability of stock feed and increased cost to supply water and feed	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• Increased risk of new disease • Increased risk of new weeds • Loss of or damage to crops and animal stock • Loss of income and productivity	
any/ all of the four projections	• Compounding impacts on crops, livestock and food production across multiple seasons • Disruption to transport, storage and supply chains reducing access to affordable food • Increased cost of living and financial stress as food prices rise and availability becomes less predictable	

3.2.6: Focus Area 6 - Local Economy

Situational Analysis

Industries of Lismore:

Industries contributing to Lismore economic value (GRP $3.05b)

- Health Care and Social Assistance 21.0% ($528.0m)
- Education & Training 11.8% ($296.6m)
- Retail trade 9.5% ($238.5m)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 6.4% ($161.1m)
- Administrative and Support Services 5.9% ($149.4m)
- Construction 5.9% ($147.3m)
- Manufacturing 5.6% ($141.3m)
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing 4.4% ($109.7m)
- Accommodation and Food Services 3.8% ($95.1m)
- and other smaller industries make up the rest.

Industries generating local jobs

- Health care and social assistance, generating 26% of all employment
- Education and training 11%
- Retail trade 11%
- Construction 10%

Tourism

- The whole sector is a vital component of the local economy in terms of expenditure and employment adding $181 million to the Lismore LGA Economy
- Nature and culture are key attractor for people coming to Lismore (wildlife and rainforests, arts and music)

Employment:

- 4,433 businesses registered in Lismore
- 73% of residents work in the LGA, 23% of residents work outside the LGA, majority of which travel to Ballina
- 34.2% of households earn a low income (less than $500 per week) – indicating that we don't have a lot of opportunity for discretional spending

Potential:

- Interest and knowledge in circular economy
- Opportunity for green energy represents potential for new businesses and employment in the area
- Eco and sustainable tourism, events and markets are great attractors for people coming to the area
- Northern Rivers Rail Trail to bring new cyclists with more focus on healthy lifestyle, nature and natural experiences

3.2.6: Focus Area 6 - Local Economy

Climate impacts on the local economy

Or is the question how can the local economy value and positively respond to climate change and the environment? Early stakeholder engagement for this Plan uncovered a key principle of valuing the natural resources ahead of valuing the current economic systems. Whilst the local economy is vital to our sustained life in Lismore, a transitioned economy may better align with the communities' values and aspirations and offer protection and sustainability into the future. New economic initiatives and frameworks are required to adjust economic settings to allow for sustainable regrowth within climate-adapting societies.

Notwithstanding this, the changes we are facing in the climate impact our local economy and will continue to do so. In Lismore we have already seen this over multiple climate related disaster events resulting in lost and damaged property, infrastructure, service provision and continuity and financial stability. And the cost of disaster creates an economy in of itself, where the community and the government lose billions of dollars. On top of climate related disasters, and across NSW as a whole, its predicted that up to 2.7 million days of work will be lost every year by 2061 because of more frequent and intense heatwaves (AdaptNSW, Economy Impacts).

3.2.6: Focus Area 6 - Local Economy

Risk Snapshot

	Key Impact	Who's most vulnerable?
Increased heat	• Shopping habits change as people stay inside to avoid the heat or go to air-conditioned centres instead of CBDs and high streets, resulting in less trade and foot traffic • Increased air conditioning use at home increases energy bills and cost of living, decreasing availability of discretionary spending • Loss of population living within close proximity to the CBD results in decreased foot traffic and trade • Increased plastic water bottle consumption, leading to more waste	Those who: • Run businesses on high streets • Can't afford, or aren't allowed to, air condition or retrofit their business premises • Rely on businesses that run in a flood prone area • Are farmers or work in a primary production industry • Volunteer • Rely on volunteers
Rainfall Variability	• Destruction of physical buildings and shops • Loss of stock • Extended period of closure and loss of income • Loss of electricity and internet to trade online • Increased risk of civil unrest, anti-social behaviour and looting of businesses during and after a disaster	
Decreased rain in winter	• Drought could lead to more plastic water bottle consumption, leading to more waste • Dust storm impact on the high street causes disruption and deters trade • Disruption to primary production industries and contribution to local economy • Disruption to agri-tourism	
Increased severe fire weather days per year	• High workload for Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire and Rescue, putting more strain on the volunteer industry	

4. Implementation and Actions

4.1: Implementation Principles

In implementing the Lismore City Council commits to the following principles:

- Climate projections are dynamic and the most recent AdaptNSW data will be used for all project delivery.
- Bundjalung knowledge and wisdom in how to care for Country is valued and embedded into project design and delivery.
- Increasing community equity and adaptive capacity is integral to ensuring all our community can adapt, Just Adaptation is considered in project design and delivery.
- Adaptation efforts are acknowledged as just one way to address the changes we face, delivering mitigation and reducing emissions are both acknowledged as valuable and complimentary.

Known barriers to effective adaptation efforts include:

- Funding
- Private and individual engagement
- Mobilisation
- Low climate literacy
- And more

These barriers apply to Lismore City Council and adapting the climate is not something any one organisation can do alone.

As such, a table of suggested actions for individual and organisations involved in each focus area across Lismore has also been included in Appendix 1 and collaboration is welcomed.

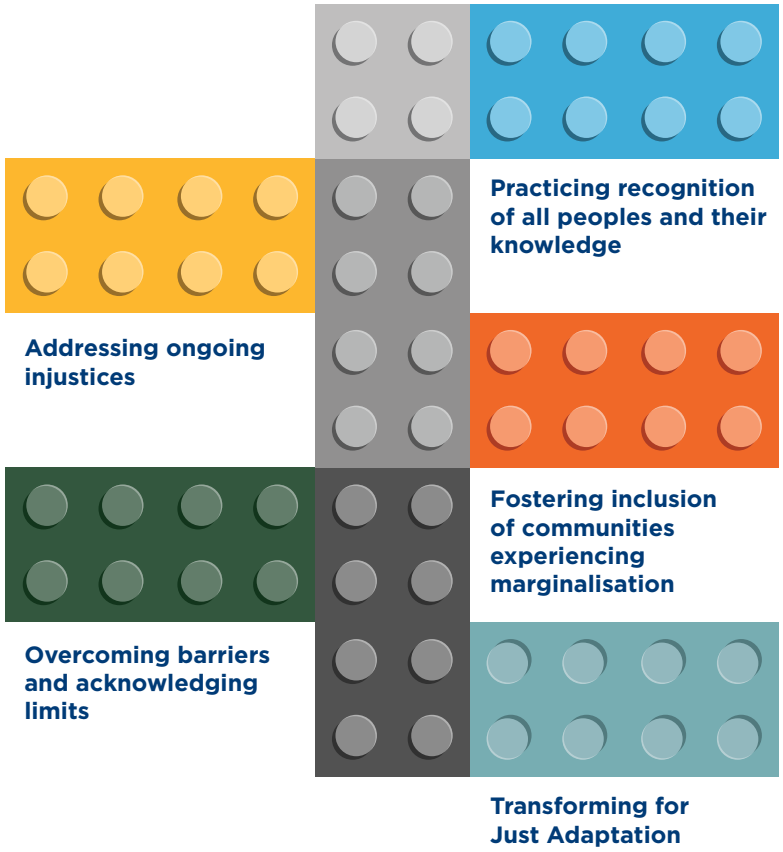


Figure 2 – The building blocks of Just Adaptation

4.2: Existing Services and Strategies

Principle Activities – what we will continue to do	
Service Team	**Service Description**
Economy, Planning and Environment	• DA concierge / duty planning service
Water, Waste & Open Spaces	• Economic data and insights reporting • Land use planning including rezoning and place-based plans to develop public realm and connectivity improvements • Annual housekeeping reviews of planning legislation • Supports landowners to improve environmental outcomes through the Rural Landholder Initiative • Implementation of on-ground, educational and strategic biodiversity programs • Partnership and collaboration at local and regional scales • Waste-education programs to improve recycling and reduce contamination • Asset condition assessments and renewal planning • Planning, delivery and maintenance of parks, gardens and facilities
Roads and Infrastructure	• Capital works programming and on-ground delivery • Infrastructure design, standards and support
Corporate Sustainability	• Strategic asset management across all Council-owned and managed assets such as roads, bridges, buildings, parks, facilities, stormwater systems and water/sewer infrastructure • Integrate service needs and operational insights into lifecycle plans, funding requirements, and risk visibility
People and Community	• Communication and engagement opportunities
Flood Restoration Portfolio	• Restores all flood-affected Council assets to operational condition across road, bridges, buildings, waste, water, wastewater and flood mitigation

4.2: Existing Services and Strategies (continued)

Principle Activities – what we are already committed to delivering

Complimentary Internal Strategies	Action Description
Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	• Sets out potential growth areas across the LGA to support population growth to 60,000 people. • Commits to 8 Turbochargers, including Catalyst Infrastructure and City of Resilience.
Rural Land Use Strategy	Land use planning for rural areas, realigning rural zones to better protect agricultural production and compatible tourism opportunities. Encourages land management that complement repair and regeneration of natural capital such as soils, water and natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and scenic qualities.
Economic Development Strategy	A framework for growing a diverse, resilient economy which strengthens local industry, builds skills, and encourages investment. The Strategy ensures economic growth is coordinated, place-based, and benefits the whole community.
Open Space Strategy	Guides the planning, development and maintenance of Lismore's open space network, improving the amenity and accessibility of villages and neighbourhoods, supporting and encouraging healthy and active lifestyles.
Biodiversity Management Strategy	Supports the protection and restoration of biodiversity, native vegetation, and ecological resilience by enhancing soil health, improving water quality and strengthening landscape resilience through responsive practices that build environments that are able to withstand and adapt to changing climate.
Community Engagement Strategy 2025	Strategic plan outlining Council's principles for community engagement and notifications for planning processes, establishes guidelines for staff and the community on how Council will communicate with and involve the community in Council decision-making.
Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for South-east Lismore 2013	Legislated Plan of Management for Koalas covering the south-east portion of the Lismore LGA, providing a regulatory Development Assessment Framework and non-regulatory management activities designed to increase habitat for Koalas and address a range of threats.
Urban Green Corridors Plan 2026	Operational plan which aims to identify and enhance green corridors within Lismore city's urban area, providing a strategic and coordinated approach to the conservation and restoration of biodiversity values in the urban area.
Lismore Urban Stormwater Management Plan	Operational plan which aims to improve sustainability of Lismore's urban stormwater systema management by focusing on both stormwater quality and quantity.
Reconciliation Management Plan 2025	Sets out Council's corporate commitment to reconciliation with our First Nations communities.

4.2: Existing Services and Strategies (continued)

Principle Activities – what we are already committed to delivering	
Supporting Policites	**Action Description**
Local Environmental Plan 2012	The Lismore Local Environmental Plan (LEP) controls and guides proposed development. It contains land-use zones, development standards and other matters to consider when assessing potential development. There are also a range of provisions relating to flooding, heritage, subdivision, vegetation removal etc. The LEP 2012 applies to all land in the LGA excluding areas affected by the Ministerial review into Environmental Protection Zones E2 and E3. The Lismore LEP 2000 will continue to apply in these areas until the review is complete.
Development Control Plan	Provides controls and guidelines for development that will assist in achieving the aims and objectives of the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012. Chapter 8 Flood Prone Lands and Chapter 14 (Vegetation Protection) is especially relevant to the ongoing adaptation to natural hazards.

4.3: Council's Roles

Lismore is a community that knows the meaning of resilience. As the level of government closest to the community, Lismore City Council plays a vital role in safeguarding our local communities and positioning Lismore for long-term success. Our Council is committed to working hand in hand with residents, businesses, and partners to create a future that is sustainable and prepared for change. From rebuilding after floods to planning for a changing climate, we focus on practical solutions that protect what makes Lismore unique: its people, its culture, and its environment. While state and national governments provide frameworks and funding, and the private sector drives innovation, it's here at the local level where ideas become reality. Together, we're shaping a Lismore that not only recovers but thrives.

Council

Advocate: Champion climate resilience and emissions reduction by actively engaging with industry, community, and all levels of government to influence policy, funding, and climate positive outcomes.

Facilitate: Work collaboratively with various stakeholders to design, coordinate, and enable shared climate-resilience and adaptation initiatives

Deliver: Deliver or secure funding, resources and on-ground implementation of projects and initiatives that reduce climate risk and support resilience and adaptation across the LGA

Legislate and policy creation: Set, strengthen and enforce planning controls, policies and regulatory mechanisms that support climate-smart development, risk reduction and long-term resilience.

Service provision: Provide functions and services that enhance climate resilience, including expert advice, technical guidance and community education.

All our systems, natural, built, social and economic are interconnected. Building climate resilience and strengthening our capacity to adapt relies on Council, residents, community organisations, businesses and government partners working together to reduce risk, respond to change and support community wellbeing. We all have a role in preparing Lismore for a changing climate and contributing to a safer, more resilient future. We all have a role to play in preparing Lismore for a changing climate and supporting a safer, more resilient future.

Residents and Individual Landowners: Residents and landholders are central to Lismore's climate resilience. Everyday decisions like improving home energy efficiency, investing in solar and batteries, and participating in local initiatives, can directly influence how well our community adapts to a changing climate.

Community Organisations: Strong community leadership is a hallmark of Lismore. Local organisations have been at the heart of recovery and resilience efforts, and we will amplify this momentum by supporting coordination, fostering collaboration, and creating more opportunities for shared action on resilience and climate adaptation.

Business: Lismore is home to innovative and resilient businesses that are vital to our region's future. Through operational decisions, innovation, investment and leadership, businesses can reduce emissions, adopt sustainable practices, strengthen supply chain resilience and support a cleaner, more competitive local economy.

Government: State and federal agencies support climate resilience by providing essential data, policy direction, funding, emergency management capability and infrastructure investment. Their responsibilities span natural hazard management, the energy transition, disaster recovery, land-use regulation and long-term climate adaptation planning. Through coordinated policy, joint investment and aligned regulation, government partners will help Lismore prepare for future climate risks, strengthen community resilience and deliver the systems and infrastructure needed for a sustainable, climate-ready future.

4.4: Actions

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
Objective 1: Empower Collaborative Action						
1.1	Contribute to the NSW Reconstruction Authority's Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan and all aspects of the Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program	ALL	Advocate Facilitate	FNN	<2yrs	NSW Reconstruction Authority Northern Rivers Councils
1.2	Encourage opportunities for community gardens, local growers, and urban and smallscale agriculture initiatives.	Food Systems Society and Culture	Service provision	FNN	<2yrs	Community Groups
1.3	Advocate for and support collaborative, local foodsystem governance, including Council's endorsement of the Urban and Regional Food Declaration.	Food Systems	Advocate Legislate and policy creation	FNN	<2yrs	
1.4	Facilitate targeted emergency planning and readiness programs to support to local businesses throughout the LGA, including: • CBD and South Lismore, • Villages, and • rural tourism accommodation operators	Local Economy	Facilitate Deliver	BA	<2yrs Ongoing	Government Business Lismore Industry SES
1.5	Support geographical communities to create Resilience Plans and Kits, and facilitate the establishment and ongoing delivery of communityled resilience initiatives.	Society and Culture	Facilitate Deliver	SF or BA	Ongoing	Government Community Groups

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
1.6	Partner with stakeholders, including the NSW Government, to identify and promote incentives and small grants that enable community groups to deliver local resilience initiative.	Society and Culture	Facilitate Deliver	SF or BA	2-5yrs	Government Community Groups
1.7	Collaborate with the Resilient Building Council to enable multi-hazard home assessments for Lismore's residents.	Infrastructure Systems	Facilitate Service provision	SF	2-5yrs	Industry
1.8	Collaborate with network providers to undertake a localised Grid Capacity Assessment to identify current constraints, future load growth, and climaterisk exposure of electrical infrastructure and transmission corridors.	Infrastructure Systems	Advocate Facilitate	SF or BA	2-5yrs	Utility Providers
1.9	In accordance with **turbocharger 2 *City of Resilience***, seek funding to showcase communityled climate and floodresilience innovation to attract aligned investment and partnerships.	ALL	Advocate	SF or BA	Ongoing	Industry Universities
1.10	In accordance with **turbocharger 2 *City of Resilience***, advocate for disaster funding and insurance frameworks that prioritise preparedness and resilience by shifting investment from recovery to proactive measures, including adaptive rebuilding, improved coverage, and greater affordability for homes and businesses.	Infrastructure Systems Local Economy	Advocate	FNN	Ongoing	Industry

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
1.11	In accordance with **turbocharger 1 *Catalyst Infrastructure***, partner with regional and State stakeholders to support regionalscale flood management approach for the Richmond River Catchment that reduces risk and support longterm community resilience.	all	Advocate Facilitate	FNN	Ongoing	Government
1.12	In accordance with **turbocharger 2 *City of Resilience***, undertake postevent analysis with researchers, practitioners, and the community, to make findings publicly available and enable ongoing community resilience through shared learning initiatives.	All areas	Facilitate Deliver	FNN	ongoing	Government Universities Industry
1.13	Seek grant funding and act as a grant aggregator to upgrade the community halls to ensure they can be safe and resilient community hubs. Upgrades should include elements such as: • Off-grid power source • Air conditioning • Air filtering	Infrastructure Systems	Facilitate Deliver	SK	Ongoing	Government Community Groups
1.14	In accordance with **Turbocharger 1 *Catalyst Infrastructure***, collaborate with state agencies to futureproof regional transport connections, particularly those critical for evacuation, supply chains, health access or economic activity.	Infrastructure Systems Local Economy	Advocate Facilitate	FNN	Ongoing	Government Industry

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
1.15	In accordance with **Turbocharger 1 *Catalyst Infrastructure***, collaborate with state agencies, utilities, and regional partners to advance coordinated, longterm water security planning, aligning policies, standards, investment priorities, and regional water supply investigations.	Infrastructure Systems Local Economy Food and Ag	Advocate Facilitate	SF	Ongoing	Government Rous Northern Rivers Councils
1.16	Advocate for changes to Building Code of Australia (BCA) to include consideration of climate change.	Infrastructure Systems	Advocate	FNN	Ongoing	Northern Rivers Councils
1.17	Support events that promote climate change action through sponsorship, information stalls, expert speakers and communications material that promotes actions patrons can take to reduce their emissions.	Local Economy	Advocate Facilitate	BA	Ongoing	
1.18	In accordance with **Turbocharger 8 *Circular Economy Innovation***, support Lismore-specific initiatives and ventures that enable circular economy and reduced wasterelated emissions. Examples of initiatives to investigate include: • the ReDress Hub in Launceston, a collaborative venture aimed to reducing clothing waste to landfill; • North East Waste, working to reuse and recycle of construction and demolition waste; and • Re Tuna, world's first recycling mall where all goods are either recycled or reused	Local Economy	Facilitate	SF or BA	Ongoing	Industry

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
1.19	In accordance with **turbocharger 1 *Catalyst Infrastructure***, Advocate for priority upgrades to electrical infrastructure serving identified growth areas or areas with high outage frequency.	Infrastructure Systems Local Economy	Advocate	FNN	Ongoing	
1.20	Support businesses in installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support the transition to electric vehicle use and electric vehicle tourism.	Local Economy Infrastructure Systems	Facilitate Service provision	FNN	Ongoing	
Objective 2: Strengthen Climate Knowledge and Services						
2.1	Develop capability within Council to manage, analyse and publish spatial data on climate hazards, climate projections, socioeconomic indicators, critical infrastructure, environmental assets and community resources through the interactive mapping platform to support evidencebased planning and engagement.	Infrastructure Systems Society and Culture	Service provision	SF or BA	<2yrs	
2.2	Develop a Heat Map for the urban area. Integrate spatial data into Action O2.1 and use key findings to inform ongoing policy development.	Infrastructure Systems Envir Society and culture	Service provision	SF	<2years	

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
2.3	Establish a renewable transition plan to guide Council's shift from ICE to renewablepowered machinery, including the development of a Public EV Charging on Council Land Procedure and updates to Council's Fees and Charges.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and policy creation	FNN	<2 years	
2.4	Support the creation of a 'From Coast To Big Scrub' seasonal calendar that provides information on seasonal indicators of health of Country from the ocean to the top of the catchment.	Indigenous Knowledge	Facilitate	SF or BA	<2yrs	First Nations communities and organisations
2.5	Identify and map critical powersupply dependencies across Council's essential services, including water treatment, pumping, emergency operations, and transport infrastructure, to guide Council's operational decisionmaking and resilience strategies.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and policy creation	FNN	<2yrs	
2.6	Source 'home energy auditing kits' for the Richmond Tweed Regional Library so that residents can borrow and use the kit to better understand the energy use of appliances in their home and improve their energy efficiency.	Infrastructure Systems Society and Culture	Deliver	SF	<2yrs	
2.7	Investigate options for providing equitable community access to cool spaces within Council facilities across the LGA during extreme heatwave conditions.	Society and Culture	Service provision	SF or BA	<2yrs	

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
2.8	Conduct an LGA-wide landslip and slope stability risk assessment. Integrate spatial data into Action O2.1 and include provisions within the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012 to give effect to the landslip and stability mapping.	Infrastructure Systems Natural Environment	Deliver Legislate and policy creation	SF	2-5yrs	
2.9	Undertake a Rural Flood Risk Management Study and Plan, that identifies flood-prone rural areas, assesses future climate impacts, prioritises mitigation measures, and provides clear guidance for land-use planning, emergency management, and community resilience.	Infrastructure Systems Environment Society and Culture	Deliver Facilitate Service provision Legislate and policy creation	SF	2-5yrs	Government Rous SES
2.10	Undertake an urban overland flood study and integrate the findings into future revisions of the Urban Stormwater Management Plan to inform infrastructure upgrades, enhance LEP/DCP planning controls, and strengthen climateresilient stormwater management to reduce local flooding impacts.	Infrastructure Systems Environment	Deliver Service provision Legislate and policy creation	SF	2-5 years	
2.11	In accordance with **turbocharger 3 *Healthy Waterways***, examine options for co-funded water quality monitoring programs focusing on estuarine health and key climate change indicators.	Environment	Facilitate	FP or BA	2-5yrs	Government Community Groups

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
2.12	Enhance recognition of culturally significant places through engagement with First nations communities, installation of signage with QR codes linking to further information, use of dual language, and mapping of appropriate sites on Council's public mapping platform.	Indigenous Knowledge	Facilitate Deliver	SF or BA	2-5yrs	
2.13	Improve waste management at cultural sites and waterholes.	Indigenous Knowledge Natural Environment	Service Provision	BA	2-5yrs	First Nations communities and organisations
2.14	In accordance with **turbocharger 2 *City of Resilience***, develop and implement an annual communications plan that increases awareness of seasonal risks and adaptive actions across climate projections. Use climate emergency language, science and expected impacts in communication. The plan should include: • Health impacts and resources • Grant and rebate opportunities • guidance on understanding disaster warnings • Information and contacts for responsible agencies and their remits • educational information to improve climate and disaster terminology • Get Ready campaigns under the NSW Get Ready program.	Society and Culture	Deliver	IP F	ongoing	Government

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
2.15	Develop and share resources and best-practice guidance on sustainable house design and retrofitting, including: • Grant opportunities for energy efficiency and sustainability upgrades • Water catchment and conservation strategies • Cooling and heating solutions, including a Lismore-specific adaptation of Cooling Your Home (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) • Renewable energy and storage options • Roofing solutions, such as living roofs or light-coloured materials to reduce heat absorption	Infrastructure Systems	Deliver	SF	Ongoing	Government
2.16	Encourage and utilise Bundjalung or dual language within new developments and public infrastructure.	Indigenous Knowledge Society and Culture		FNN	Ongoing	First Nations communities and organisations
2.17	Support wellbeing programs initiatives such as peer support networks, mental health first aid, and posthazard event debriefing opportunities	Society and Culture	Facilitate	FNN	Ongoing	Government Community Groups

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
Objective 3: Integrate, Monitor and Adapt						
3.1	Undertake a revised Climate Risk Assessment to inform future adaptation planning and ensure climaterelated risks are embedded across Council's strategic and risk management governance frameworks.	Infrastructure Systems Natural Environment Society and Culture Local Economy	Service Provider Legislate and Policy Creation	SF or BA	<2yrs	
3.2	Investigate and plan for Nimbin's longterm water security in the context of climate change, including assessment of future supply and demand, climaterelated risks and adaptation options.	Infrastructure Systems	Service provider Legislate and Policy Creation	IP	<2yrs	
3.3	Prepare a revised DCP for floodprone land that aligns local development controls with current state requirements while enabling balanced, placespecific approaches. The DCP will be progressively revised as the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative regional flood model is completed, following the finalisation and review of the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan, and as updated flood mapping becomes available.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	IP	<2yrs ongoing	

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
3.4	Investigate opportunities for new solar energy generation and efficiency upgrades across Council buildings, infrastructure, and facilities, and implement a monitoring system for existing solar installations to improve performance visibility, reporting, and maintenance planning.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	BA	<2years ongoing	
3.5	Following the finalisation of the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan, undertake a comprehensive review of the Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy to ensure alignment with regional priorities, integrate updated climaterisk information and adaptation pathways, and reprioritise actions to support effective, coordinated implementation across Council and the community.	ALL	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	2-5years	Government
3.6	Integrate droughtresilience measures, such as identifying and safeguarding priority ecological refuge areas, into future updates of relevant strategic planning documents.	Environment	Legislate and Policy Creation	BA	2-5yrs	
3.7	Include consideration of urban heat data (O2.2) in updates to Council's LEP and DCP to strengthen provisions which reduce paved surfaces, enhance shade and canopy cover, retain more water in the landscape and provide cooling amenities.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	2-5yrs	

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
3.8	Undertake an investigation of, and appropriately integrate coastal hazard considerations for the southern areas of the Lismore LGA into the Lismore LEP.	Environment Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	SF	2-5yrs	Government
3.9	Develop a financially focussed Emissions Reductions Roadmap for Council's operational scope 1 and 2 emissions, with consideration of scope 3 emissions, that is underpinned by financial sustainability principles to ensure costeffective, responsible, and achievable implementation.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	SF or BA	2-5yrs	
3.10	Embed bestpractice Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) requirements and climateresilient planning principles into the LEP and DCP Chapter 22 Water Sensitive Design, and integrate into future reviews of the Urban Stormwater Management Plan to protect the health and function of Lismore's waterways, rivers, and floodplains.	Environment Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	SF or BA	2-5years	Rous County Council
3.11	Mainstream climate resilience by embedding adaptation principles into strategic planning, investment decisions, and service delivery.	Infrastructure Systems Local Econ	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	Ongoing	
3.12	Embed principles and approaches of the NSW Biodiversity in Place and Northern Rivers Connecting with Country into all new village master plans, public open space and recreation designs.	Environment Indigenous Knowledge	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	Ongoing	

	Action	Focus Area	LCC Role	Resource*	Priority	Partner
3.13	In accordance with **turbocharger 1 *Catalyst Infrastructure***, integrate the NSW Guiding Principles to Build Back Better into all relevant council policies, including strategic planning, development assessment, infrastructure design, and disaster recovery processes.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	Ongoing	
3.14	Review electricity, water and transport capacity every five years with updated population modelling and climate projections.	Infrastructure Systems	Legislate and Policy Creation	FNN	Ongoing	Utility providers
3.15	Investigate latest road surfacing technology and road building practices that could better withstand heat, water ingress and improve drainage.	Infrastructure Systems	Service Provision	FNN	Ongoing	

Legend

Resource and Status:

F	Funded by Council or existing grant	BA	Council budget allocation required
SF	Seek funding, most likely through a grant program	IP	In progress
FNN	Funding not needed		

5. Monitoring

The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy is one strategy that, together with a range of other theme-based strategies, contribute to the future vision for Lismore. Collectively, the Strategic Planning Framework aims to improve all aspects of daily living that make Lismore a great place to live. These quality-of-life indicators are monitored across the framework as a whole and are detailed within Appendix 3 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The indicators will be monitored and published every four years and/or as and when Census data is available.

In addition, monitoring and reporting against delivery of actions set within the Economic Development Strategy, and any associated qualitative data, will be provided annually through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R). Resilience and Adaptation-specific monitoring outcomes will be achieved through the implementation of the monitoring actions detailed in the actions table above.

Appendices

Appendix 1

How others can support the journey

Government and Government Agencies

- Revise the current grant system to eliminate the competitive nature that can pit community groups against each other
- Fund long term community resilience programs, not only disaster response programs.
- Support culturally safe services through funding for Aboriginal led trauma and healing programs.
- Fund social infrastructure upgrades (resilient community centres, cooling spaces, evacuation hubs).
- Identify and map areas at risk of erosion and priority areas for riparian and creek-bank restoration – and methods for cost-effective restoration
- Provide extension support and funding for riparian restoration on private land
- Provide funding and technical support
- Build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to enable the management and ultimate handover of the National Parks and Wildlife Services estate
- Increase regular funding support for indigenous-led cultural fire management
- Resolve policy, legislative and insurance barriers and develop easier approval pathways for cultural burning
- Increase focus on landscape scale fire management and wildfire preparedness
- Work with farmers and other landholders to promote good soil management practices
- Incorporate cultural indicators of healthy Country and change factors to help with more rapid assessment and management responses in the face of an increasingly changing climate
- Support development of field based monitoring equipment and smartphone apps can share real time data and images enabling Indigenous Rangers to better plan for and respond to management issues and emergency events in partnership with relevant Agencies.
- Increase use of Bundjalung language in land and water management programs
- Scale up invasive species control programs to reflect climatedriven changes in pest behaviour.
- Invest in regional climateecology monitoring systems (vegetation condition, wildlife movement, hydrology).
- Investigate incentives for home retrofits to improve climate resilience for vulnerable and low income earners.
- Provide funding mechanisms to implement the finalised Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan
- Invest in resilient emergency management infrastructure, including evacuation centres, backup power systems and evacuation route upgrades.
- Investigate the potential for exemplar sustainable urban development on crown land.

Appendix 1

- Upgrade and climateproof critical stateowned infrastructure (transport, energy, digital, water) to withstand future flood and heat conditions.
- Strengthen redundancy in essential services (power, communications, transport).
  - Collaborate with telecommunications providers to improve the resilience and redundancy of mobile and digital infrastructure in highrisk areas.
  - Expand drought and flood scenario modelling to test water supply resilience under future climate projections
- Fund Indigenous ranger programs to deliver Caring for Country activities that strengthen climate resilience and increase capacity to respond to fire and flood events.
- Increase recognition of and support for use of cultural indicators of health of Country to guide decision-making and contribute to education and planning.
- Provide long-term reliable funding for food pantries, acknowledging that until local food systems are transitioned to be affordable and robust, food pantries will be critical in getting healthy food to a large percentage of many communities
- Ensure the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan addresses food and agriculture
- Implement a National and NSW Food Plan and Food Security Strategy with supporting legislative changes
- Fund a role within the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation to address food
- Fund and support bush tucker gardens in schools
- Provide incentives and rebates for off-grid energy solutions
- Fund transition initiatives
- Support businesses to transition to low-carbon and circular practices.
- Deliver regional workforce development programs (skills for circular economy, renewable energy, resilience trades).
  - Improve enabling infrastructure for economic resilience (digital connectivity, resilient industrial land).

Community Organisations/ Groups and Business

- Deliver education and resources to improve awareness and responses to trauma, both pre and post disaster related trauma, including triggers and responses
- Co-locate offices/ hubs outside of the flood zone
- Create an integrated workforce plan with regional system/ staggering network of staff/ volunteers for community service providers
- Build and maintain inter and intra-regional networks with volunteer groups/chapters to have volunteer exchange systems
- Issue timely, clear and accessible communication on water and fire bans
- Embed principles and practices of rest and employee support programs to minimise staff burnout.
- Provide mental health first aid to community groups and individuals
- Provide nature based social events and programs to improve nature connection and mental health support
- Contribute to the crowd-managed database of projects and events to improve transparency of actions and enable new residents to join

Appendix 1

- Initiate projects
- Engage and involve local communities
- Strengthen cooperation between groups
- Participate in the development of communityled resilient hubs (cooling, community bateries, energy backup, emergency support).
- Engage Aboriginal ranger groups and contractors to support land restoration and climate adaptation projects.
- Incorporate Cultural Indicators of Healthy Country (e.g., from seasonal calendars) into communityled monitoring and stewardship programs.
- Incorporate Cultural indicators of Health of Country into monitoring programs (e.g. from seasonal calendars)
- Fund and support First Nations food initiatives
- Support local food through direct procurement, re-sale, sponsorship or other mechanisms
- Get involved in swap and donate initiatives, such as donating food waste to growers for composting or edible waste to a local food pantry
- Establish food events, workshops and festivals that can contribute to the local food economy and also provide inspiration and education around food processing
- Support volunteer industry through paid leave provisions
- Facilitate communityled enterprises that create local jobs (repair cafés, reuse hubs, local food).
- Support local procurement initiatives.
- Install electric vehicle chargers to support EV driving centred tourism and local transition
- Get involved/ learn from the Southern Cross University ReCirculator Accelerator
- Develop climateresilient business continuity plans.
- Invest in heatsmart infrastructure to protect staff, customers and productivity.
  - Participate in local circular supply chain networks.

Agriculture Sector

- Consider joining the Northern Rivers Harvest Food Trail
- Investigate opportunities for agritourism to diversify and support business sustainability
- Consider selling produce at a local farmer market
- Investigate the possibilities of farm share initiatives
- Carry out a climate risk assessment for your business
- Reach out to Local Land Services for any support
- Log your roadside stall or other sales/swap/gift point on local food apps such as uForage, At The Garden Gate, The Roadside Stalls website, or others
- Explore regenerative practices to build resilience and reduce input costs.
- Collaborate in farmer cooperatives for shared infrastructure or marketing.

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Health Sector

- Resource ongoing clinically trained mental health practitioners specialising in working with young people in disaster recovery with support delivered in person by way of outreach. Clinical support should be flexible, and available after hours (Advocate for Children and Young People, Disaster recovery and preparedness report (ACYP), 2024).
- Utilise nature/ cultural connection for wellbeing and reduce anxiety,
- Share information and resources on health impacts of heats,

Researchers/Education Sector

- Increase the provision of school counsellors at all schools across the Northern Rivers and ensure the provision of school infrastructure supports the confidentiality and privacy of students accessing counselling (ACYP, 2024).
- Produce and communicate research to help decision-making on priorities, methods and species selection for increased landscape resilience
- Engage with community knowledge-holders and include local indigenous knowledge in early learning
- Continue researching and producing guidelines and resources on food security in the Northern Rivers including food access and affordability
- Continue sharing research and guidance on circular economy transition and acceleration
- Partner with Council/business chambers to model economic risks and opportunities across industries.
- Support pilot projects for circular, regenerative and climateresilient economic systems

All

- Build social connections with neighbours and local groups to improve mutual support during emergencies.
- Look after your wellbeing by maintaining rest, boundaries and healthy routines, especially during highstress periods.
- Participate in local volunteering, including emergency support, community groups or cultural organisations.
- Stay informed using trusted sources during fire, flood and heat events and share accurate information with others.
- Advocate respectfully for fair and inclusive community services and trauma informed approaches.
- Care for local waterways and bushland by avoiding litter, reducing chemical use, keeping drains clear, and reporting erosion or pollution.
- Plant climateresilient native species at home or in community spaces to support biodiversity, shade, cooling and habitat.
- Keep pets under control (especially near riparian areas or wildlife habitat) to reduce disturbance to native species.
- Advocate for healthy ecosystems, supporting community groups, local restoration efforts and government investment in environmental resilience.

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- Stay informed about risks, including heat, fire, storms and floods, by signing up to local warning systems and regularly checking trusted sources.
- Prepare a household emergency plan covering evacuation routes, communications, pets and essential items.
- Strengthen your home's resilience by maintaining gutters, shading windows, sealing gaps and improving ventilation where possible.
- Reduce waste and recycle correctly, supporting circular systems and lowering demand for resource intensive infrastructure.
- Engage with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) when planning or undertaking work on Country to ensure cultural protocols are respected and knowledge holders are consulted.
- Create opportunities for community to be involved in climate change conversations and decisions
- Learn about local Country, including language, stories, seasonal cycles and cultural indicators of Healthy Country, through publicly available resources, guided walks or community events.
- Utilise the Indigenous Knowledge System app developed by Conservation Futures for sharing knowledge, planning and understanding health of Country.
- Avoid harmful behaviours on Country, such as disturbing culturally significant sites, removing plants, or entering areas without permission.
- Advocate respectfully for the inclusion of Aboriginal knowledge and governance in climate adaptation, planning and natural resource management.
- Buy local food wherever possible to support growers, keep money circulating locally, and strengthen the region's food economy.
- Reduce food waste at home through planning, storage, preservation or donating surplus edible food to local pantries or community fridges.
- Choose seasonal produce to reduce supplychain emissions and support local growers.
  - Participate in local food events, workshops or farm tours to learn, connect and contribute to a stronger local food culture.
- Consider amending working hours to minimise heat exposure for outdoor workers
- Embed risk and resilience considerations in event planning
- Undertake risk assessments and work on reducing your own risk
- Review and prioritise procurement policies and supply chains
- Participate in community energy or resourcesharing initiatives (tool libraries, community solar, repair workshops)

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Lismore
City Council


Rural Land Use
Discussion Paper
Consultation Report
2025
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
2 | Lismore City Council: Rural Land Use Discussion Paper
Lismore City Council

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Background

In 2024, Lismore City Council developed a Rural Land Use Discussion Paper, the first step in creating a Rural Land Use Strategy. During development of the Discussion Paper, Council staff met with agricultural industry groups to understand some of the key issues and opportunities for agricultural production in the Lismore Local Government Area (LGA) including berries, horticulture, sugar cane, cropping, beef, and dairy.

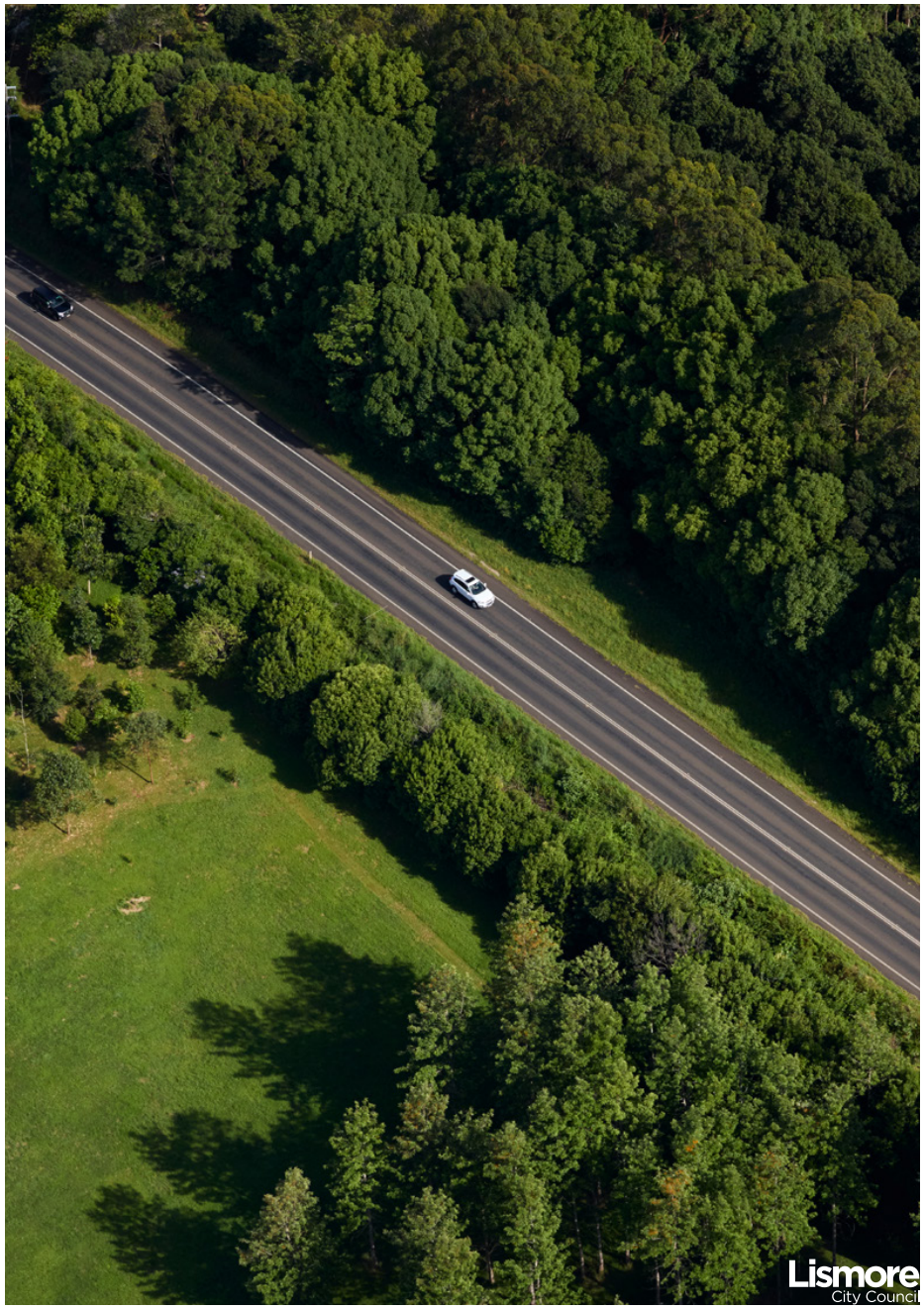
The Discussion Paper explored the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats facing our rural lands, and sought to test these with, and hear more from, the community.

The Discussion Paper was placed on public exhibition between 15 May – 3 July 2024. Feedback was sought through completion of an online survey and/or written submissions to Council. The Discussion Paper was promoted via:

- Lismore City Council's (LCC) Your Say website,
- LCC newsletters,
- Promotion at Lismore Saleyards,
- Promotion at Primex,
- Promotion to rural residents via the rural halls meetings, and
- Direct stakeholder engagement.

Council received 68 submissions, received via the following methods:

- 53 survey responses
- 15 submissions (email and open submissions via the Your Say page)



Who responded?

The survey included questions related to demographics to gain an understanding of respondents' background in the context of a cross-section of Lismore's rural lands.

Most respondents (57%) were aged 60 years or over however feedback from younger generations was also received (Figure 1a). 92% of survey respondents lived and/or worked in a rural area of Lismore (Figure 1b).

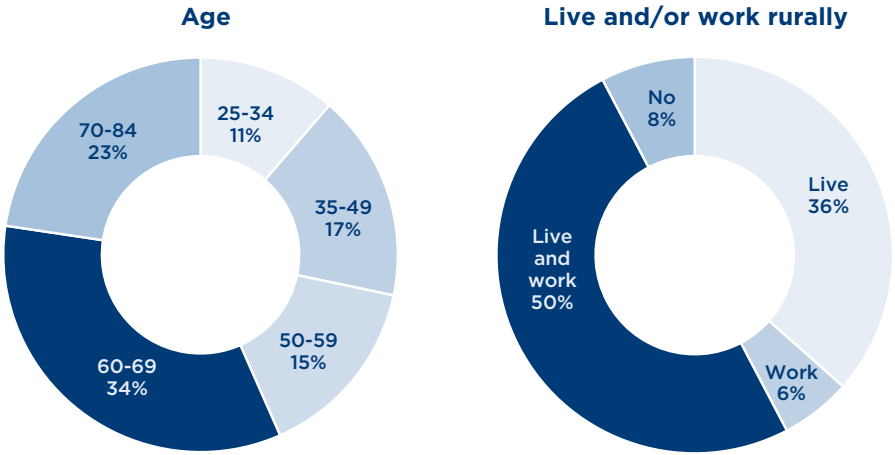


Figure 1
Demographics of the survey respondents (a) age groups of respondents and (b) respondents' connection to rural areas in Lismore.

Surveys were received from a broad range of rural residents, covering a good cross section of localities within the LGA (Figure 2). Each of the green dots in Figure 2 represents the residential location of a submitter. There were 4 submissions from Nimbin and 3 from Jiggi, Eltham, Dorroughby and Wyrallah.

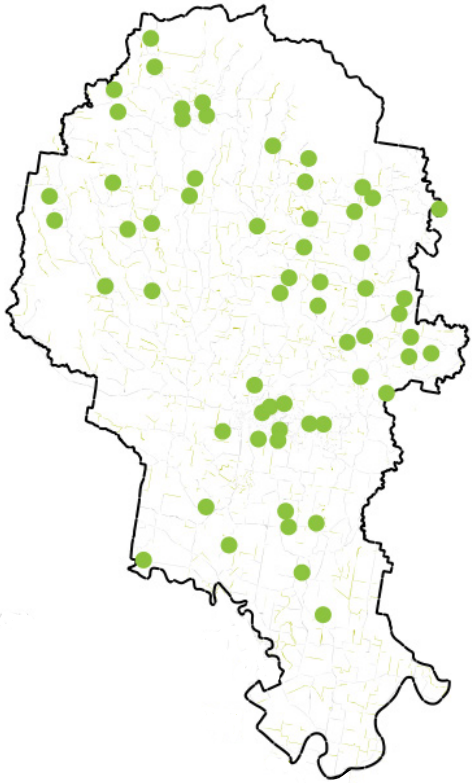


Figure 2
Locality coverage of the survey respondents, indicating responses from across the Lismore LGA.

Respondents were asked what they valued most about Lismore's rural environment (Figure 3). The primary reason given was biodiversity value – the plants and animals that inhabit Lismore's rural areas. This was followed by the agricultural economy and the peacefulness. Many who chose 'other', responded that they valued multiple aspects of Lismore's rural areas.

Who responded? (continued)

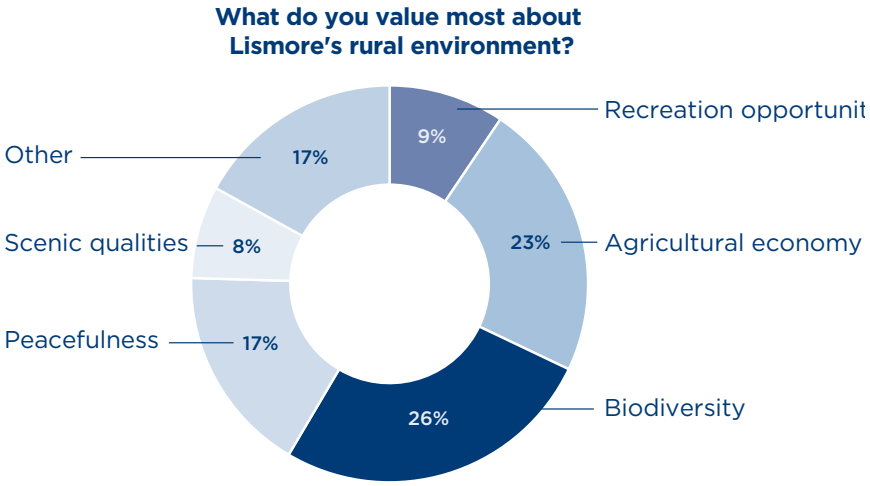


Figure 3
Survey respondents' most valued aspects of Lismore's rural environment

Reasons for living rurally

Of the 80% of residents who responded that they lived rurally, the majority (59%) identified lifestyle as the primary reason for living in a rural area. Another 30% said the main reason was due to their farming or agriculture-related work (Figure 4).

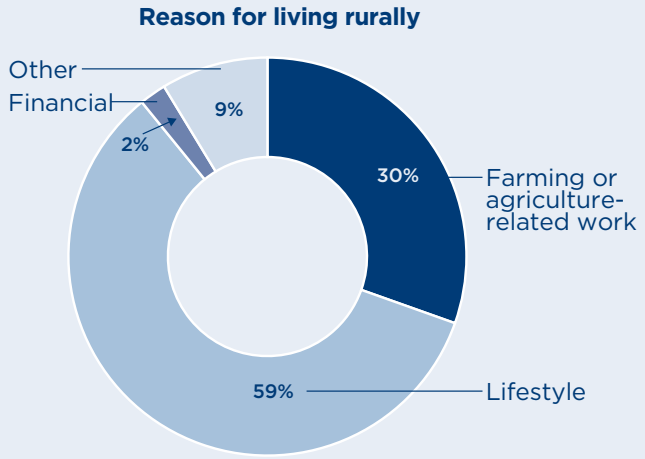


Figure 4
Reasons given in the survey for living rurally


What we heard
– Key themes
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Planning Objectives

The Discussion Paper contained several preliminary planning objectives that are listed in Figure 5, which also provides the percentages of respondents who ticked 'Very important' or 'Somewhat Important' for that objective in the survey.

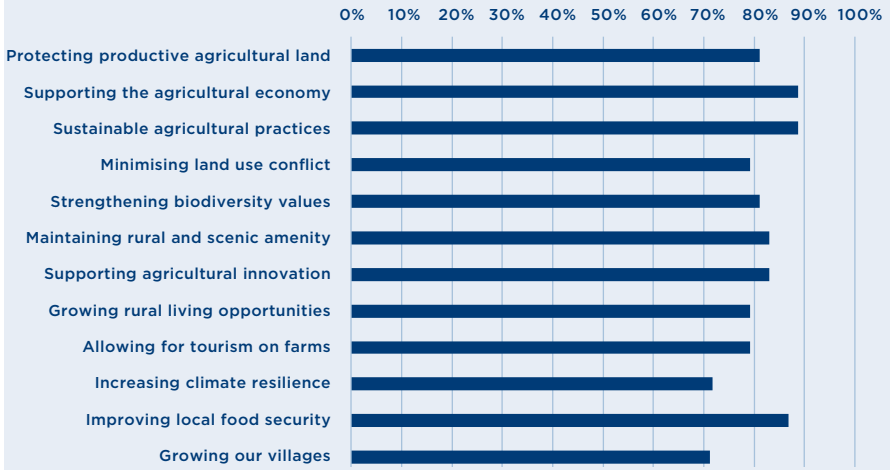


Figure 5
Percent of respondents who considered the listed objective to be very or somewhat important for Lismore's rural community and economy.

Survey respondents felt most strongly about 'Supporting the agricultural economy', 'Sustainable agricultural practices' and 'Improving local food security'. While all the objectives were considered important, 17% of respondents considered 'Growing our villages' not important to Lismore's rural community and economy.

The survey results combined with written submissions and feedback from industry groups indicates strong support for addressing all the listed objectives in the Rural Land Use Strategy.

Feedback during consultation indicated support for including another objective, to **'Protect sacred First Nations lands and sites'**.

Agriculture

Protecting agricultural land

Submissions and feedback from industry highlighted the importance of protecting agricultural land for economic and food security benefits. Concerns were raised about the impact on agricultural productivity from allowing additional housing in rural lands, but most survey submissions supported investigating options for additional housing in rural areas. More detail about rural housing is provided in the next section.

When asked about better protecting rural land for agriculture, less than half of the survey respondents thought this was necessary (Figure 6). This response together with the very strong support for the planning objectives 'Supporting the agricultural economy' and 'Sustainable agricultural practices' (Figure 5) may indicate that current land use and growth management controls are sufficient in protecting agricultural interests.

Some survey respondents thought that 'maybe' (Figure 6) rural land use should have additional protection. Follow up commentary from this cohort suggested focusing protection on the most productive, fertile agricultural land rather than all rural land, some of which may not have high agricultural value or production potential.

Do you believe rural lands need to be better protected for agricultural purposes?

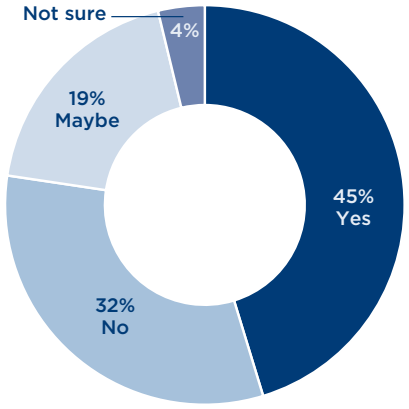


Figure 6
Survey responses about better protecting rural land for agricultural purposes

Lismore City Council

Protecting agricultural land (continued)

A potential action identified in the Discussion Paper was whether Council should consider identifying and mapping more land that may be rezoned to RU2 Rural Landscape and investigating the uses and the minimum lot sizes that may be suitable in such a zone. RU2 typically has smaller lots and land with greater agricultural constraints. 58% of respondents agreed with this potential action, whereas only 21% disagreed (Figure 7).

Do you support Council investigating RU2 zoning or less agriculturally productive / more constrained land?

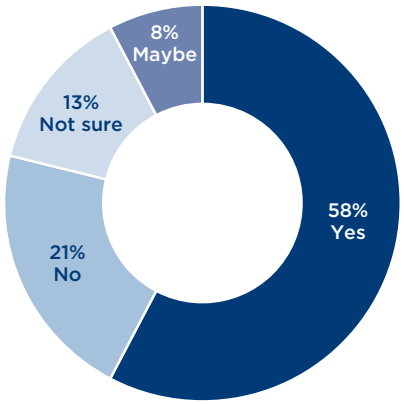


Figure 7
Survey responses on RU2 zone land for less productive agricultural land

Rural and scenic amenity and agricultural intensification

The Discussion Paper raised the idea of requiring some intensive agricultural developments to lodge a development application (DA), with controls, such as visual screening with trees, for developments that may have a significant impact on the rural landscape.

41% of survey respondents supported Council implementing additional controls on agriculture to protect rural and scenic amenity. Nearly a quarter (22%) of respondents were 'not sure'. Industry groups indicated that rural and scenic amenity impacts are currently managed well through industry best-practise guidelines and state government requirements, that have been developed as agriculture intensifies.

There was also a view that additional Council planning controls could discourage some agricultural industries from establishing. Introducing additional DA requirements may require Council to have the right expertise, such as an agriculture officer, to ensure impacts are effectively assessed. Extensive agriculture (cropping and grazing) and horticultural plantations do not currently require farmers to submit a DA.

Emerging agricultural industries

Survey responses and industry feedback suggested that key emerging agricultural industries that Lismore could be planning for include agritourism, hemp production and regenerative agriculture.

Rural land use conflict

There was an almost even split amongst the survey respondents who said they had experienced rural land use conflict (51%), and those who had not (49%). The most common conflict issues experienced were chemical spray drift, noise (from both agriculture and non-agricultural activities) and issues with uncontrolled pets affecting native animals. Industry groups are aware of the rural land use conflicts and their suggestions for managing conflict with residential infrastructure included buffers, industry guidelines, self-imposed restrictions, and information for prospective buyers about what to expect living near agricultural and supply chain operations.

There was also support for creating a new role within Council for an Agricultural Extension Officer who could support farmers to adopt best-practice farming techniques, and to act as a liaison and champion for farmers within Council (Figure 8).

Do you support the creation of a Council agricultural extension officer to support farmers?

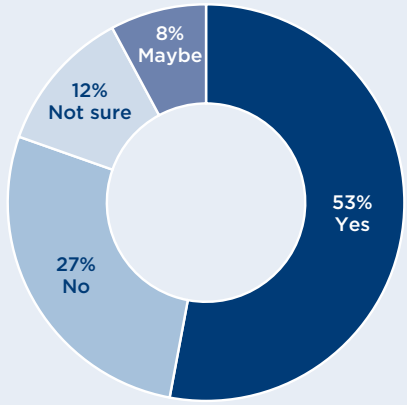


Figure 8
Survey responses on a Council agricultural extension officer to support farmers

Rural Living

While there was consensus on the importance of supporting agriculture, there was a split regarding whether more housing should be accommodated in rural areas and how to protect agricultural land, productivity and supply chains amidst increasing development pressures. Most of these concerns were raised in industry group discussions and the written submissions, including from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

Around half of the survey respondents supported increasing housing opportunities on rural land and almost a third were opposed to it (Figure 9). Throughout the survey and written submissions, there was repeated feedback that Council needed to carefully consider agricultural productivity, road infrastructure and land use conflict if choosing to increase housing in rural areas

Industry groups raised concerns with additional rural housing leading to increasing complaints in response to normal farming operations such as the noise and dust associated with harvesting and transporting produce to processing facilities. There were also concerns raised that additional houses in rural areas could have an impact on rural road infrastructure and traffic, and increases to land value, making it more economically difficult for new entrants into agricultural industries locally.

Do you believe rural lands should accommodate more housing?

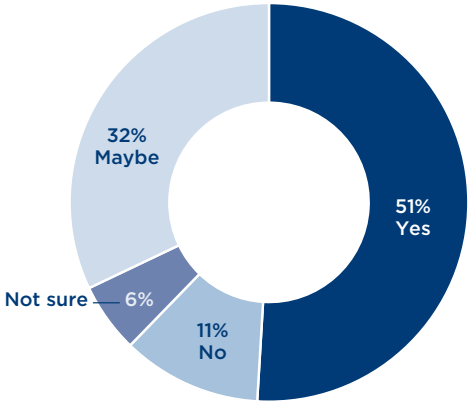


Figure 9
Survey responses about additional housing in rural land

Rural Living (continued)

In Figure 9, the responses to the 'maybe' (32%) included support for the options provided with the question on types of rural housing (see Figure 10) and concerns about jeopardising agricultural land use and increasing land value, and the need for adequate buffers and wildlife corridors. Feedback suggested it should only be looked at after urban options for housing are exhausted.

Survey respondents who supported additional housing were asked about the types of housing opportunities. The most selected option was allowing additional dwellings on current lots (Figure 10). However, many of the respondents also chose 'Other' and provided clarification, for example limiting additional housing to family or farm workers and additional dwellings being tiny homes or temporary housing options. 'Other' also included suggestions for subdividing lots that are currently too small to farm, creating new villages and agrihoods, or simply not adding additional housing due to road and infrastructure limitations.

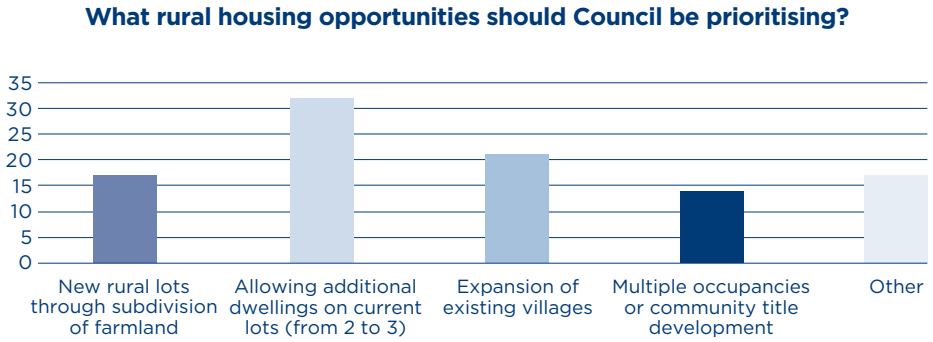


Figure 10
Survey responses on rural housing opportunities

In a separate question, 51% of respondents supported Council making it easier to set up rural land-sharing communities such as multiple occupancies or community title development. However, this was the least preferred method of the housing options presented (Figure 10). During consultation, a range of issues with existing multiple occupancies were raised, including land use conflict, servicing, bushfire risk and Council compliance.

Expanding existing villages was the second most preferred option for additional housing in rural lands (Figure 10) and when asked about it directly, there was significant support (63%) for growth of our villages (Figure 11).

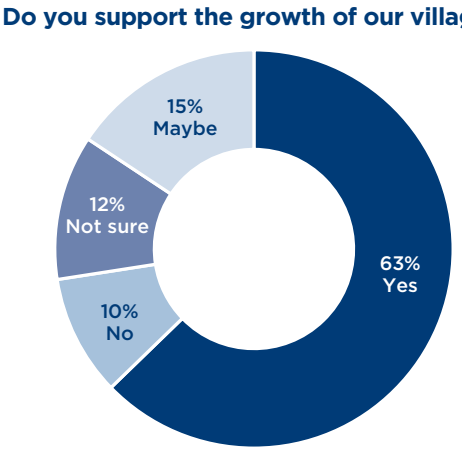


Figure 11
Survey responses on growing Lismore's villages

A separate question asked about changes to minimum lot size, which was only supported by 47% of respondents. However, many of the 'maybe' respondents to that question indicated support if it avoided prime agricultural land and was based on a merit assessment. A common recurring theme throughout the survey was respondents indicating that additional housing may be more appropriate on lots that are already too small to support agriculture. However, according to industry feedback, some horticulture can operate commercially on small lots and rural lot size is not always important, although industry critical mass and supply chain links are critical to success.

Environment

The Discussion Paper proposed the development of a biodiversity overlay to better support biodiversity protection. A mapped overlay, along with accompanying LEP provisions, could identify land with high biodiversity value and require development applications to consider the impacts of development against an avoid, minimise, offset framework.

However, the incorporation of a biodiversity overlay would need to consider the impact that it has on exempt and complying pathways established under the Exempt and Complying Development Codes State Environmental Planning Policy (Codes SEPP). One adverse impact may be that certain small scale land uses that currently do not require consent are no longer considered exempt or permitted development and therefore will require development consent.

A biodiversity overlay would also have limited effect (to uses not contained with the Codes SEPP) as it would only apply to development that requires consent. Development that does not require consent within the LEP, such as extensive agriculture and horticulture in the RU1 Primary Production zone, would not be affected by the overlay provisions.

More than half (56%) of respondents agreed that Council should implement such a layer, with 22% opposed (Figure 12).

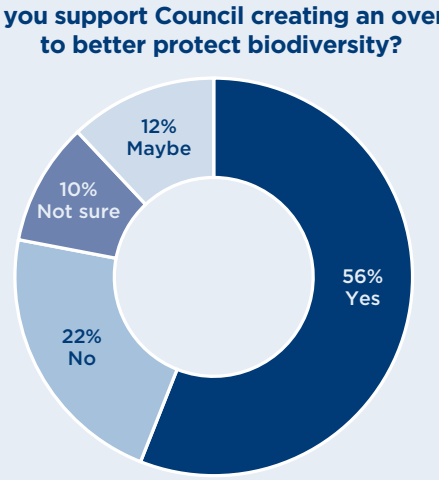


Figure 12
Survey responses to creating an overlay to better protect biodiversity

Separate to the survey, a number of written submissions suggested Council investigate additional options to better protect koala populations.

An equal number of survey respondents (41%) were in favour of and opposed to requiring a development application to be lodged for private native forestry (Figure 13). Taking into account written submissions, more were in favour than opposed. This action would allow Council some oversight of private native forestry agreements and understand infrastructure needs.

Should Council require development applications to be lodged for private native forestry?

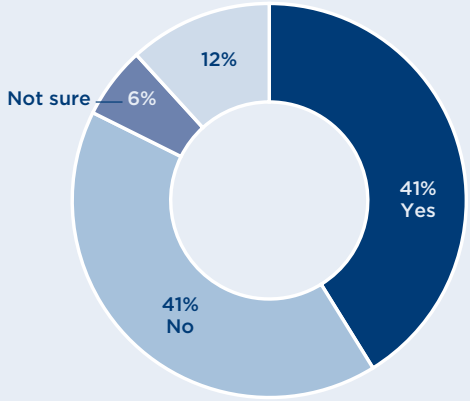


Figure 13
Survey responses on whether a development application should be required for private native forestry




What we heard
– SWOT analysis
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Strengths

The survey asked respondents to detail the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats that faced rural lands in the Lismore local government area. Survey responses were combined with written submissions and industry feedback, and were grouped into relevant themes. The topics included in each grouping are provided in Table 1.

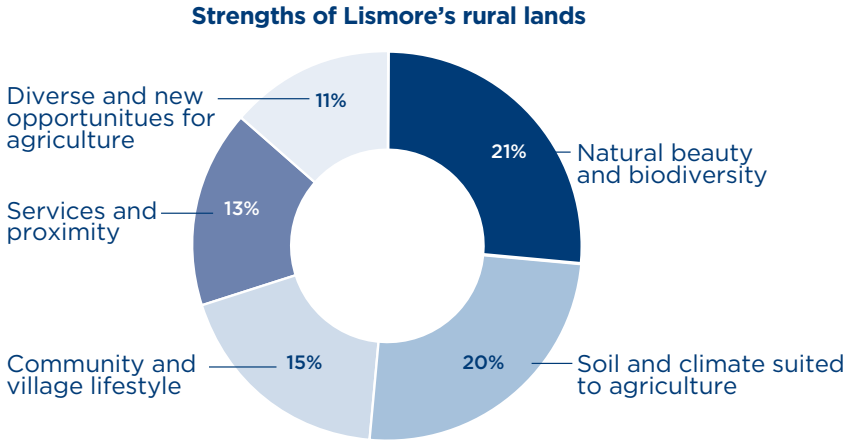


Figure 14
Grouped feedback on the strengths of Lismore's rural lands

The strengths identified for Lismore's rural lands (Figure 14) related to the region's natural beauty and biodiversity, including scenic amenity and peacefulness. Soils and climate suited to agriculture were also identified as a strength of similar importance followed by the community values and village lifestyle afforded by rural areas (Figure 14).

Challenges

The most commonly suggested challenge currently affecting Lismore's rural lands was the difficult economic environment for many agricultural commodities (Figure 15). An example mentioned a few times was the significant drop in the value of macadamia nuts compared with the cost of production. Extreme climate events and poor land management practices tied with 23% of submissions identifying these issues as current challenges for rural lands in Lismore LGA (Figure 15).

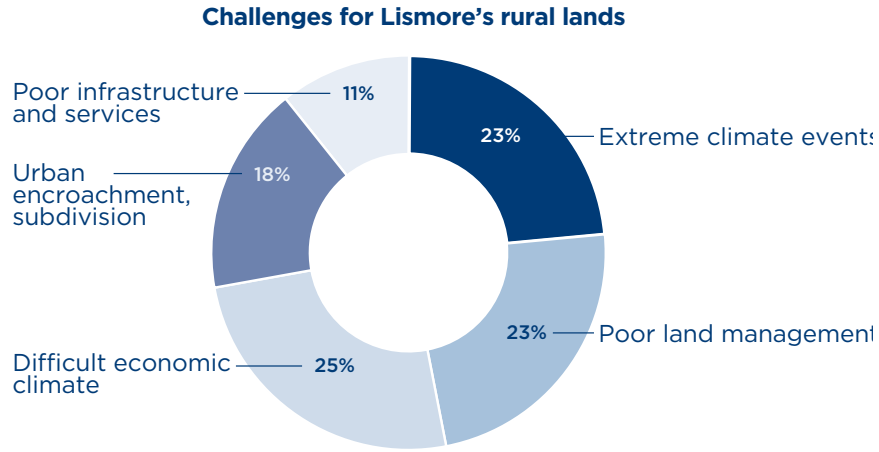


Figure 15
Grouped feedback on the strengths of Lismore's rural lands

Opportunities

Agritourism and ecotourism, regenerative agriculture and emerging agricultural industries were all seen as opportunities for Lismore's rural land use (Figure 16). In this analysis, regenerative agriculture includes sustainable agricultural practices and nature-based solutions that support and enhance agricultural production. Emerging agricultural industries includes crops such as hemp, rain-fed rice and bush foods, protected agriculture and small-lot farming and innovations such as water recycling (Table 1). Local food production with value-adding and local marketing was also seen as important for food security and for providing an avenue for agriculture industry entrants and young farmers. Housing opportunities such as providing more housing and growing villages was also identified as an opportunity for rural land use in Lismore (Figure 16).

Threats

The impacts of poor land management and subdivision and development were seen as the primary threats to rural lands in Lismore LGA (Figure 17). The impacts of poor land management was also raised as a current challenge, and includes land degradation, loss of habitat and scenic amenity, poor riparian management and poor river health (Table 1). Lack of vision and overregulation included a wide range of issues such as indecision, ignorance, and lack of commitment in protecting the environment (Table 1). Biosecurity threats included increase in weeds and new weeds, and pests such as fire ants. Climate change was also raised as a threat, consistent with the challenges of extreme climate events (Figure 17).

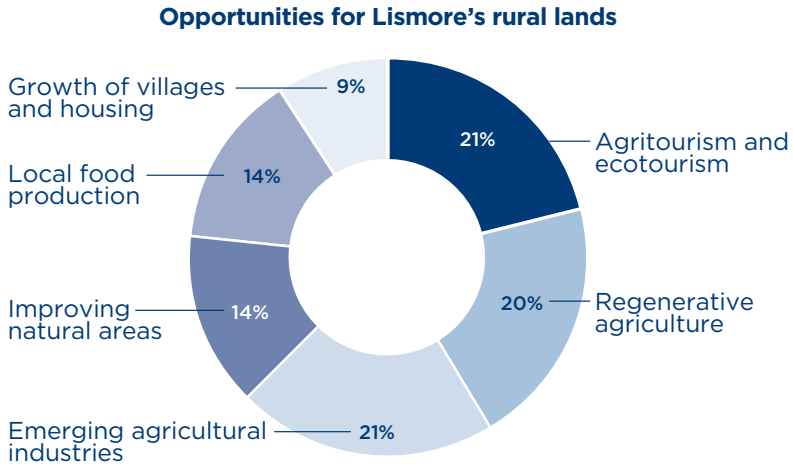


Figure 16
Grouped feedback on the opportunities for Lismore's rural lands

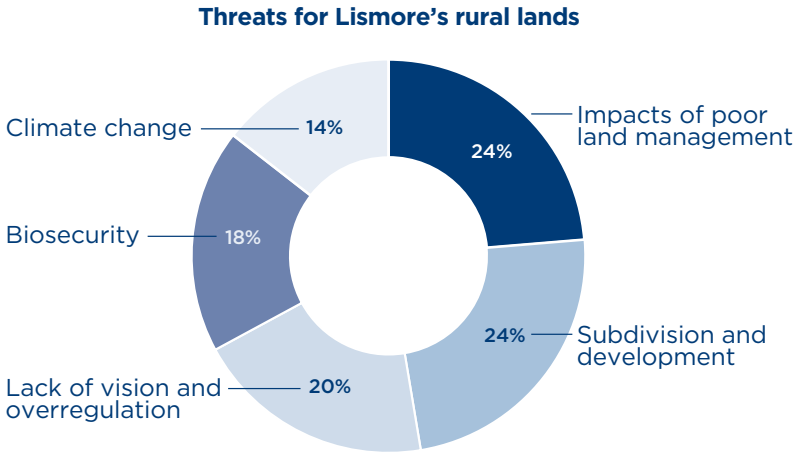


Figure 17
Grouped feedback on the threats to Lismore's rural lands

The impacts of poor land management and subdivision and development were seen as the primary threats to rural lands in Lismore LGA (Figure 17). The impacts of poor land management was also raised as a current challenge, and includes land degradation, loss of habitat and scenic amenity, poor riparian management and poor river health (Table 1). Lack of vision and overregulation included a wide range of issues such as indecision, ignorance, and lack of commitment in protecting the environment (Table 1). Biosecurity threats included increase in weeds and new weeds, and pests such as fire ants. Climate change was also raised as a threat, consistent with the challenges of extreme climate events (Figure 17).

Table 1
Additional details of what is included in each grouping and the isolated topics that did not fit neatly within a grouping.

Grouping	Includes responses
Strengths	
Natural beauty and biodiversity	Natural beauty, biodiversity, scenic amenity, peacefulness, open land, proximity to forests and beaches
Soil and climate suited to agriculture	Good quality soil suitable for a range of agricultural activities, climate suited to agriculture
Community and village lifestyle	Village and rural lifestyle, passionate community, supportive community, diverse community, culture, protecting Indigenous sites.
Services and proximity	Local services and suppliers, labour skills, local markets, proximity to SEQ markets, proximity to processing and to the tablelands and the coast, road network and access to M1
Diverse and new opportunities for agriculture	Diverse opportunities for agriculture, emerging opportunities for agriculture, local research facilities and support

Grouping	Includes responses
Challenges	
Extreme climate events	Extreme climate events, flooding, bushfire, landslips, housing on flood/landslip-prone land
Poor land management	Poor land management, weed control, riparian management, fertiliser and pesticide runoff, water quality, difficult terrain, lack of wildlife corridors and buffers
Difficult economic climate	Profitability, increasing price of land due to subdivision, landbanking, affordable housing for workers, aging workforce, attracting next generation of farmers, focus on tourism
Urban encroachment, sub-division includes	land use conflict, providing roads and services to support more rural houses, influx of non-ag residents or residents from flood areas
Poor infrastructure ad services	poor condition of roads, saleyards, and bridges, lack of rail and public transport
Other (not grouped)	Access to water, lack of cross-departmental collaboration on rural land management

Grouping	Includes responses
Opportunities	
Agritourism and ecotourism	Agritourism, ecotourism
Regenerative agriculture	Regenerative agriculture, sustainable agricultural practices, nature-based solutions, flood resilient crops
Emerging agricultural industries	Hemp, protected agriculture, bush foods, small-lot farming, rain-fed rice, biofuels, water recycling with new industries
Improving natural areas	Restore koala habitat, increase native plants and corridors, habitat restoration, biodiversity and carbon offsets
Local food production	Market gardens, farmers markets, value adding, local food security, local production and selling
Growth of villages and housing	Additional housing, affordable housing, farm rentals, grow villages
Other (not grouped)	agroforestry, sustainable forestry

Grouping	Includes responses
Threats	
Impacts of poor land management	Land degradation, poor agricultural land condition, loss of scenic amenity, loss of habitat, poor riparian management and river health.
Subdivision and development	Lot size, subdivisions, land use conflict, fragmentation of land, impacts on rates, inability to buy a local farm
Lack of vision and over-regulation	Not committing to protect the environment, indecision, ignorance, corruption, government interference
Biosecurity	Biosecurity, weeds, fire ants, pest animals
Climate change	Climate change
Other (not grouped)	Loss of Aboriginal sites, fracking, overpopulation, looking to emerging industries over current ones, bin collection



What we heard – State Government responses

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and Department of Primary Industries (DPI) provided submissions on the Rural Land Use Discussion Paper.

DPI agreed with draft objectives as well as many suggestions put forward in the Discussion Paper, including:

- Retaining productive agricultural land as RU1 and focusing the RU1 Land Use Table on agricultural activities
- Creating a biodiversity overlay, with further consideration of the needs of farmers
- Updating Development Control Plan buffers chapters to align with DPI guidelines
- Developing a DCP for rural industries
- Appointing an agricultural extension officer
- Education and awareness campaigns and partnerships

However, DPI raised concern about any changes to planning controls that enable additional housing across the rural landscape. DPI raised concerns that such changes could lead to land use conflict that could negatively impact agricultural production and supply chains and could impede agricultural producers from expanding production and reinvesting in the LGA. DPI does not support the reduction of minimum lot size in RU1, and any proposal to make such a change would require a detailed justification report.

DPHI recommended that any investigations done on rural housing form part of an update to the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) or Growth and Realignment Strategy. It recommended any move to change controls to facilitate housing be done in consultation with DPI.

Next steps

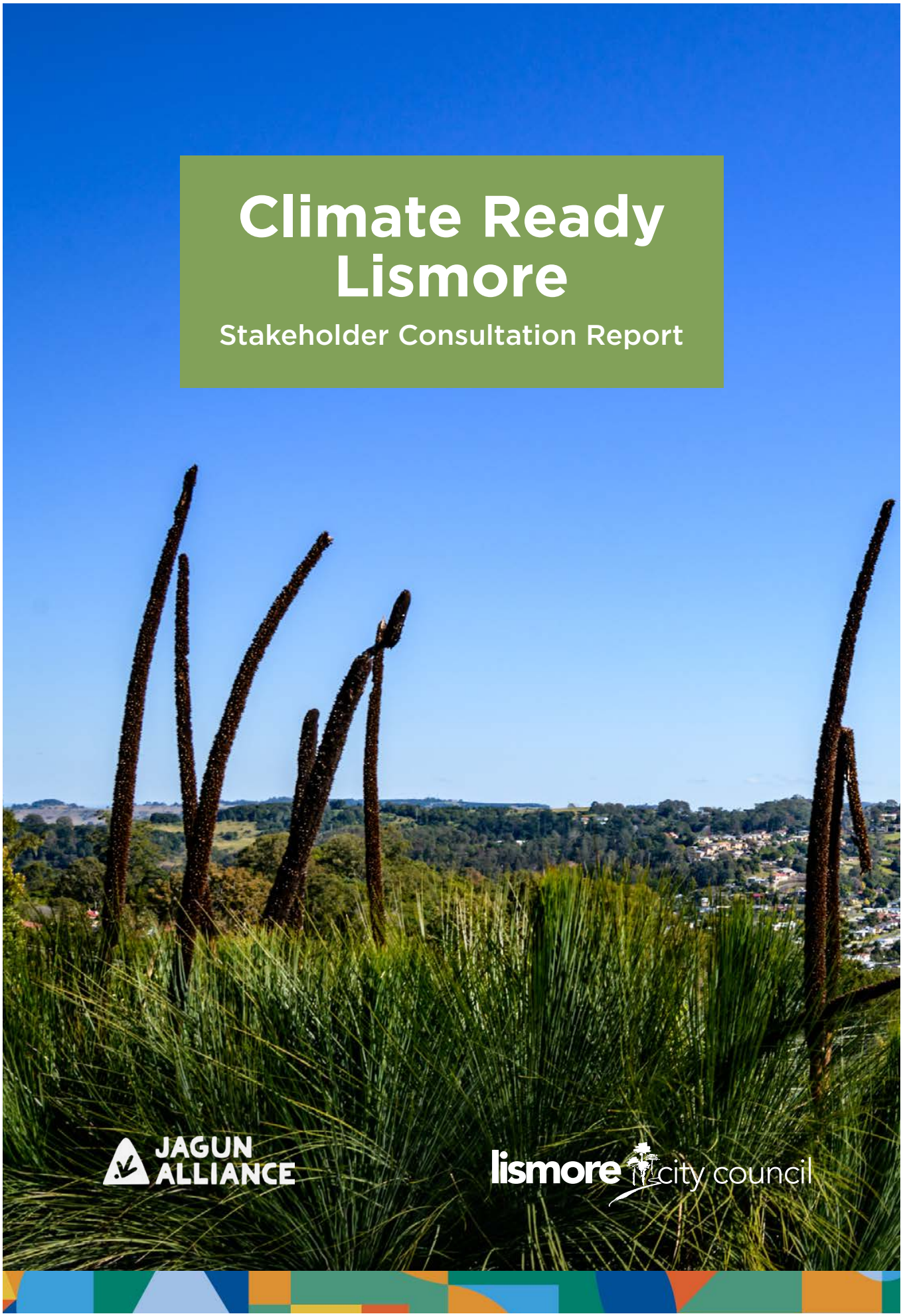
Council staff will use the feedback received to shape a draft Rural Land Use Strategy. This strategy will go on public exhibition and further feedback will be used to refine a final version. The Rural Land Use Strategy will be developed in conjunction with the LSPS and other linked strategies to ensure consistency across the strategies and with Council's Community Strategic Plan.

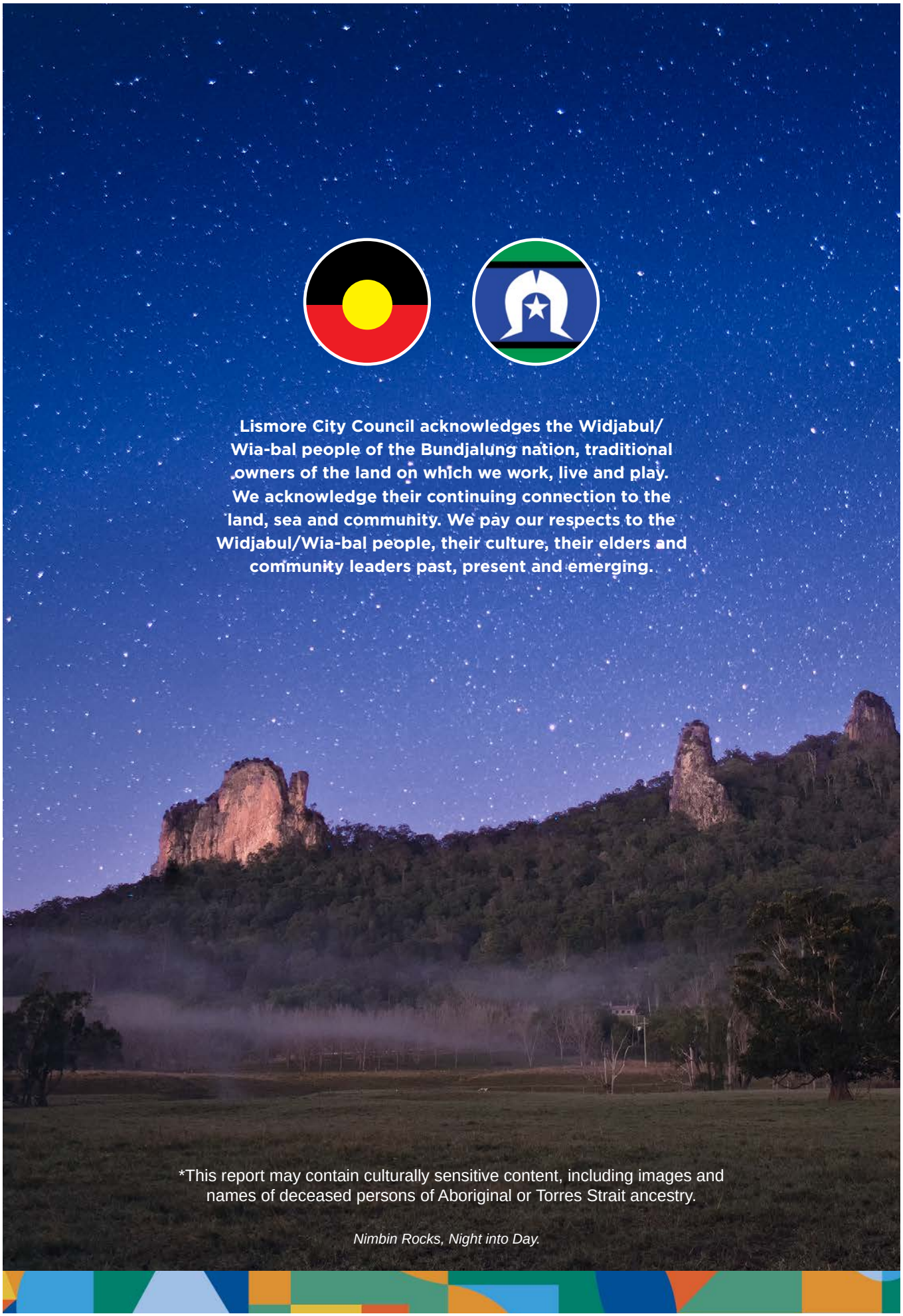
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Website: www.lismore.nsw.gov.au

Lismore City Council

Climate Ready Lismore

Stakeholder Consultation Report

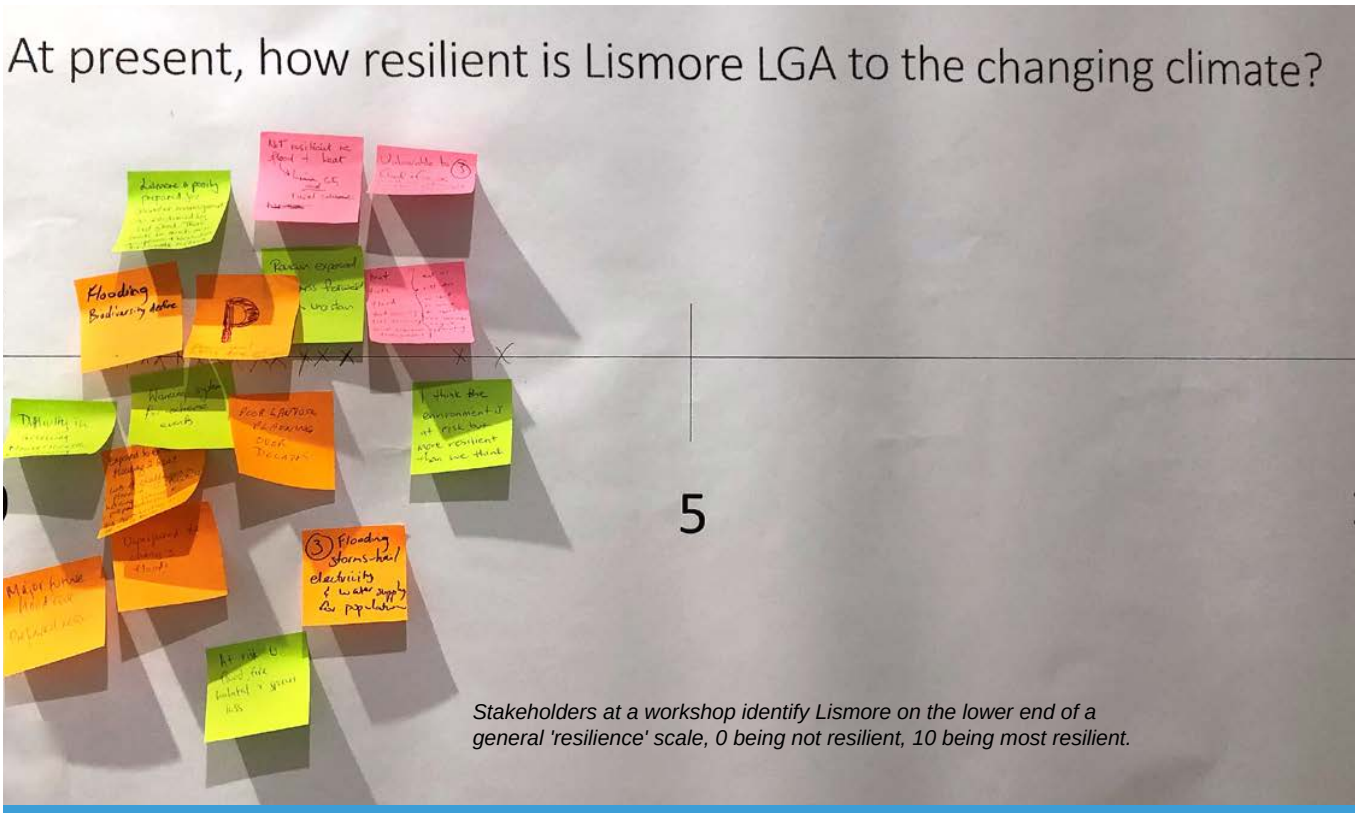




Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/ Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play. We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community. We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.

*This report may contain culturally sensitive content, including images and names of deceased persons of Aboriginal or Torres Strait ancestry.

Nimbin Rocks, Night into Day.



Stakeholders at a workshop identify Lismore on the lower end of a general 'resilience' scale, 0 being not resilient, 10 being most resilient.

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Why?

Climate change has already begun to impact us here on Widjabul Wia-bul Country. With projected changes of increased heat, fire risk and changes to rainfall patterns, we need to act now as a community to prepare ourselves and ensure we can continue to live, survive, and thrive in Lismore as a safe, inclusive and connected community. Find out more on climate change in the North Coast.

Introduction

Purpose of this report

Lismore City Council (LCC) is committed to preparing a community plan that enables individual and collective climate change adaptation. Throughout 2024, Lismore City Council and Jagun Alliance will co-design the Climate Ready Lismore Plan with the intention of integrating western and Indigenous science. Jagun Alliance is an Aboriginal owned and directed not-for-profit organisation that works to improve land management and build resilience back into Jagun (country) by developing partnerships with local First Nations communities, government organisations, private landholders and the wider community.

To understand how the community could and wants to take adaptive action, community members and subject experts were engaged in a series of conversations across the Local Government Area (LGA). Between July and November 2023 LCC and Jagun Alliance attended local events, community group meetings, schools and hosted workshops to gain a range of ideas and feedback to prepare a Climate Ready Lismore Plan.

This document encapsulates the feedback received from the community on the concerns they have for climate change impacts and the actions they think could contribute to our collective adaptation efforts.

Stakeholder organisations that provided feedback are listed in Appendix 1.

The purpose of this document is to summarise and share what we heard. This document makes no commitments, rather it provides a record of community values and provides scope for forthcoming development of the Climate Ready Lismore Plan.

If you have additional ideas, priorities or concerns you want to share, please contact the Strategic Planning team: council@lismore.nsw.gov.au

Community feedback on the draft Plan will be sought later in 2024.

Year 6 Living School students involved in 'The World's Most Sustainable City' project present their model for the future of Lismore to Lismore City Council staff (Note – these students have since presented their project at a United Nations event in Sydney!).



Acknowledgements

Thank you to every single person and group who took the time to share their thoughts, insights, wisdom and expertise with us.

Thank you to AdaptNSW for sharing climate projection data and knowledge with the community.

Thank you to Carmen Stewart from It Takes a Town for holding space for our community to come together and have constructive conversations.

To stay informed on how the Climate Ready Lismore Plan evolves, see the Climate Change webpages on the Lismore City Council website and/or subscribe to Council's Climate Change mailing list.

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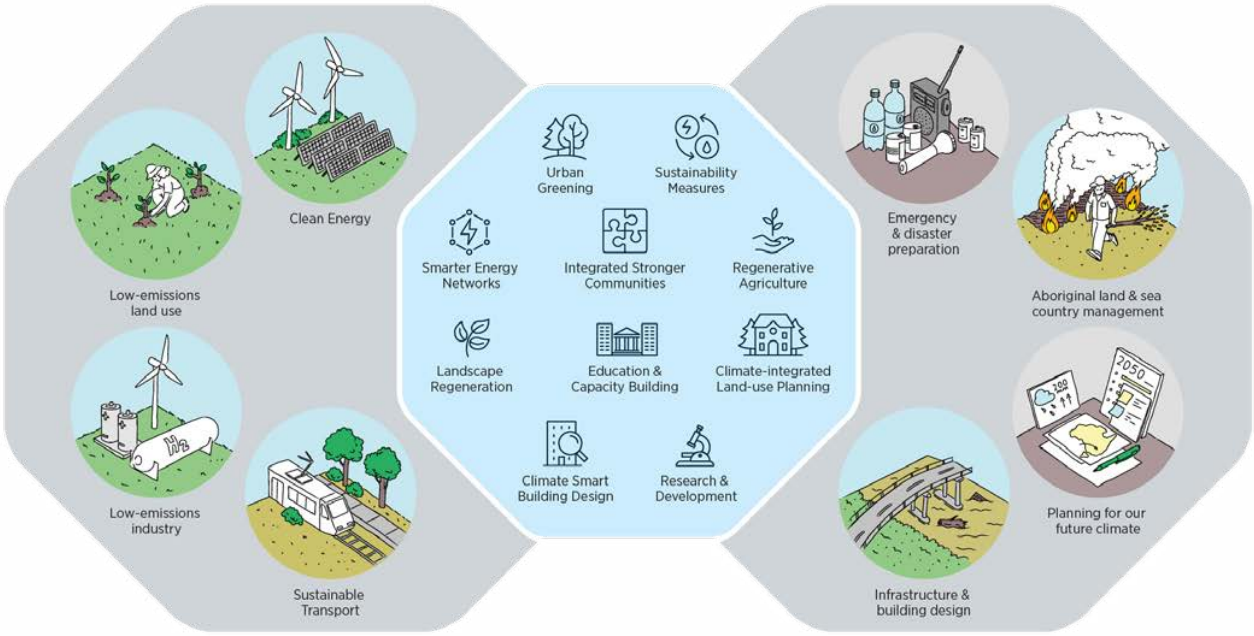


Photo reference: Adapt NSW

Climate Change Terminology

In simple terms, climate adaptation speaks to a range of actions that will help us continue to live in a world where the climate patterns have changed. This is different to climate change mitigation which categorises actions that aim to prevent the climate from changing (primarily through reducing our greenhouse gas emissions). Of course, some actions within an adaptation plan are likely to contribute to both adaptation and mitigation, which is excellent!

Definitions

Adaptation: Taking action to prepare for and adjust to the current and projected impacts of climate change.

Climate-anxiety: Distress related to worries about the effects of climate change and its impacts on the environment and human existence. It can also be referred to as eco-anxiety or pre-traumatic stress.

Just Adaptation: Adaptation that is inclusive of, and responsive to, diverse communities of place, communities of identity, and communities of interest.

Lismore: The whole Local Government Area of Lismore which includes the villages and surrounding areas. The Lismore LGA boundary can be viewed via Council's mapping software IntraMaps.

Maladaption: When an action results in conditions that are worse than those which the original strategies were trying to address. It is a process whereby people become even more likely to be negatively affected by climate change.

Mitigation: Reducing the flow of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This involves reducing greenhouse gases.

Regenerative Adaptation: Adjust to our changing climate in ways that contribute to the healing of individuals, our communities and Country.

Trinity Catholic College Geography students participating in a climate workshop



Key findings:

1. Connection – the social, cultural, emotional and mental health element of climate change and adaptation

The desire for genuine and continuing connection was the most resounding request across all consultation events. Community members want to collaborate, support, learn and heal with one another and with Country on this journey of adaptation.

The communities, and community spirit of Lismore in general, is often reported as the greatest strength and asset of the area, not only when speaking on climate change or disaster matters. The stakeholders identified the psychological/emotional burden of dealing with disaster is significant and that community spirit must be fostered and expanded to ensure genuinely successful and regenerative adaptation actions take place.



To adapt to climate change, stakeholders were clear that time and investment should be directed towards building social capital and social infrastructure, including increasing understanding of, and respect for, Indigenous knowledge and looking after mental and emotional health, individually and collectively.

Climate change and disaster events can degrade social fabrics and impact community mental health. However there is evidence that social capital-raising activities can successfully build resilience in communities and contribute to combatting climate-anxiety. Research found that communities in rural NSW perceive an increased resilience of mental health and well-being through community action including *"Community focused climate action, including inclusive and democratic resilience and adaptation planning"* [1]. Regeneratively and collectively addressing climate change can therefore not only provide physical benefits (risk reduction) and increase individual action but also positively affects emotional/psychological well-being at a collective level.

It is evident across the LGA that the Lismore community is capable, passionate and has a diversity of expertise that make them best placed to drive and lead a range of adaptation actions. The stakeholder engagement period enabled Lismore City Council to listen and learn about existing community projects as well as key challenges and barriers the community face when addressing climate change.

The forthcoming Climate Ready Lismore Plan will identify ways to extend, expand, support and value-add to these existing initiatives so that the community aren't carrying this burden alone. A key aim of the next steps will be to mobilise social, emotional and cultural healing and learning.

[1] Longman, Braddon, Verlie et al., (2023) 'Building Resilience to the mental health impacts of climate change in rural Australia', The Journal of Climate Change and Health

2. Every Action Counts

Complex challenges require a complexity of actions. The climate is changing and projected to change into the future, with impacts both directly and indirectly affecting almost all elements of our lives. To address this, stakeholders called for a myriad of intervention actions at a range of scales, addressing a range of locations, community needs and local systems - each one contributing in its own way to a collective effort that enables us to sustain ourselves into the future.

Stakeholders highlighted expectations for the Climate Ready Lismore Plan to include a diversity of actions assigned to a range of stakeholders in the community, from the individual to government. It was identified that the Climate Ready Lismore Plan could unify and coordinate these range of actions, including those that have already started in the community.

Stakeholders suggested we must be ready to introduce adaptive actions as opportunities arise and be flexible in our approaches to ensure we adapt efficiently and effectively. The process itself of creating the Climate Ready Lismore Plan should provide opportunities for inclusion and healing, and be a dynamic ongoing Plan, rather than a plan that sits on the shelf.

In addition to the negative impacts of the known projections, stakeholders identified that the adaptation process provided opportunities for positive societal changes and opportunities for new economies, learnings and industries.

Lismore City Council itself has a range of roles in which it can utilise to enable regenerative adaptation in Lismore, including:

- **Advocacy**
- **Leadership**
- **Partnership**
- **Mobiliser/ Enabler**
- **Educator/ distributor of information**
- **Supporter**
- **Funder**
- **Administrator**
- **Project delivery**





"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has"

– Margaret Mead, American anthropologist

3. We are ready to act, justly

Climate change modelling is complex and evolving, with many variables and assumptions. There is widespread and consistent concern of the impacts that climate change is already bringing across the Lismore landscapes and communities. While climate modelling continues to improve and projections become more refined, there is consensus about the general changes of increased temperatures, more heatwaves and changing rainfall patterns.

Lismore already experiences heatwaves and floods and the increasing risks of these in the future could result in serious impacts. There is adequate evidence and consistency in the climate projections to act now. We must use our strengths (community spirit) for good and collaborate for positive change.

Stakeholders accepted the use of AdaptNSW modelling as the source of climate projections for the purposes of developing the Climate Ready Lismore Plan. AdaptNSW have projected climate changes for the NSW North Coast and their work includes great detail on how climate change is affecting our environment, society and economy.

The social learning taking place about how climate change is being addressed is that justice and equity must be considered in all responses. The stakeholders highlighted that the community is ready for action now as well as the need for *just adaptation*, requiring all actions to be reviewed through a filter of social, economic, environmental and cultural justices.

Stakeholders identified that in taking and endorsing action, the Climate Ready Lismore Plan must provide a just transition to adapted living – ensuring that actions and changes provide equity to those in Lismore who are predisposed or prone to social marginalisation and does not cause *maladaptation*. This includes those without the capacity to protect themselves against climate change and disaster due to the historical and current systems of oppression and marginalisation – which have produced and continue to sustain inequality.

As recognised in the 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report *"vulnerability [to climate change] is exacerbated by inequity and marginalisation linked to e.g. gender, ethnicity, low incomes, informal settlements, disability, age, and historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism, especially for many Indigenous Peoples and local communities."*[2]

To employ a just approach, climate adaptation actions therefore must address the underlying factors that continue to marginalise people and seek to address these factors[3]. Just adaptation, focusing on equity and inclusivity with a rights-based approach, will enhance adaptation outcomes for everyone.

The four main changes for Lismore's climate are projected to be:



Increased number of hot days (over 35°) + decreased number of cold nights (below 2°)

Increased rainfall in autumn and spring

Increase in severe fire weather risk in summer and spring

Decreased rainfall in winter

[2] IPCC, 2023: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 1-34

[3] Future Earth Australia (2022). *A National Strategy for Just Adaptation*. Australian Academy of Science, Canberra, Australia.

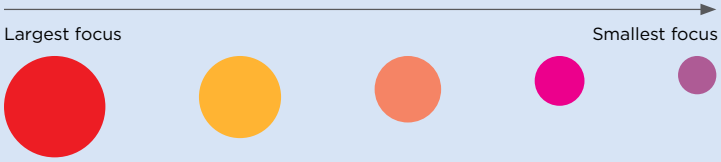
Our climate concerns and adaptation actions: a starting point

The following pages set out the concerns and the suggested actions heard from the stakeholders. These are not conclusive, rather they provide a starting point for the Climate Ready Lismore Plan.

Areas of discussion

Most stakeholder input was received via two externally facilitated half-day workshops. These workshops framed conversations around six key systems in Lismore. Figure 1 provides a high-level indication of the focus of conversations across the systems and the four climate change projections. The size of the bubble roughly represents the time and energy spent discussing that particular projection and system.

Figure 1 - Discussion Focus





Summarised concerns and ideas for adaptive actions

This section collates the concerns and ideas for adaptation (mini solutions) that were raised by the stakeholders. Each row represents a particular or grouped concern, with the relevant climate projection identified in the final column. The table collates responses heard at the workshops and has not been analysed or further developed into proposed actions.

KEY



Increased number of hot days (over 35°) + decreased number of cold nights (below 2°)



Increased rainfall in autumn and spring



Increase in severe fire weather risk in summer and spring



Decreased rainfall in winter

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
1	Increased climate anxiety at an individual and collective level. This includes damage to social infrastructure from compounding mental health impacts and relocating households and businesses.	• Improve mental health resilience, for example psychological preparedness and mental health first aid • Increase and communicate opportunities for individual and collective action to assist in empowerment and connection, to reduce climate anxiety • Include community in climate change planning • Increase trauma preparedness and provide support for re-triggering of trauma responses • Include specific programs for some communities such as youth, carers, volunteers and service providers	
2	Lack of clarity around active agencies and organisations leads to distrust and limited action amongst the community and contributed to climate anxiety	• Create a document or webpage that outlines the roles of key NSW Government agencies working in disaster and climate change sectors, including where they overlap • Provide climate related information pre-season to raise awareness and enable collaboration and communication • Create opportunities for community to be involved in climate change conversations and decisions	
3	Certain communities within the LGA are disproportionately impacted by climate change	• Set the Plan on the premise and framework of 'Just Adaptation', ensuring voices of those most affected are heard and included	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
4	Damage to physical infrastructure including land, homes, businesses, sporting and cultural buildings, roads, telecommunication networks, and assets such as sewer treatment plants and the like	• Provide resources (knowledge and funding) to make buildings, community infrastructure and neighbourhoods more climate resilient, including regionally specific guidelines and building standards based upon local rainfall and climatic data for new and retrofitting buildings and for new housing developments • Provide resources (knowledge and funding) to make buildings, community infrastructure and neighbourhoods more fire resilient • Mitigate and protect critical infrastructure; improve stormwater drainage systems and review road-building practices and materials • Housing and building innovation with passive cooling • Build smaller houses with reduced DA fees, rates and other incentives • Have a landslip safe spot on specific properties; landslip alert and financial support for mitigation and restoration • Build new developments to catch 100% of runoff and increase water tank requirements, as well as investigate distribution opportunities • Design all weather disaster-resilient sporting districts and facilities, eg GSAC is important as an indoor facility. Add more synthetic hockey, soccer and other sporting fields and pitches	
5	Disruption to food systems through loss of crops, damage to road networks and supply chains or other indirect impacts. Lost access to food and fresh food can then compound mental health impacts and increase the cost of food for the community	• Support local food growing on individual and collective levels, at small and large scales, including community gardening opportunities in flood-free locations • Consider the food system as a whole, everything from farm to table and include food access and systems thinking in disaster management plans. Support dignified and respectful food relief • Diversify and decentralise food storage and develop place-based solutions, including mobile cold rooms to prevent food spoilage and ensure isolated residents have access to fresh food • Incentivise local food production and systems, including improving accessibility and affordability of farmers markets • Consider Indigenous food sources and industries, and changes in cultural food practices • Measure LGA food security through a household food security survey • Establish and maintain networks in food systems • Provide knowledge and funding to support regenerative agriculture practices	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
6	Volunteer, emergency service and service provider and community group burnout from compounding and cascading events and from personal and professional disaster impact	• Invest in workforce planning, an integrated workforce plan could include a regional system of staggering staff and volunteers according to demand • Mandate rest • Integrate workforce planning with housing strategies • Co-locate services to foster coordination and collaboration, drawing upon national systems with local branches where possible • Implement worker action plans for mental health • Provide funding so emergency service workers can be paid and treat service providers like critical infrastructure • Foster community support networks and build relationships between villages and towns in the Northern Rivers	
7	Administrative burden on self-organising community groups from complexity around governance and grant systems	• Recognise and support self-driven and self-organising community groups • Understand their needs and challenges through communication • Provide administrative support to them including assistance accessing grants, or change the grant system to foster ease and remove competitiveness within communities • Provide brokerage for community resilience groups • Create, maintain and strengthen networks of people actively working or interested in climate change	
8	Insurance unavailability	• Lobby and advocate • Contribute to research and case-study development around new insurance products, such as the recognition of risk-reducing building retrofits that enable reduced premiums	
9	Health impacts for outdoor workers	• Work during cooler hours • Provide worker action plans for health • Be aware of indicators of heat impacts	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
10	Changes in primary production; crop suitability and viability, change in harvest window, change in soil health, impact on animal welfare reducing milk and beef production, loss of agricultural income, loss of interest and uptake in primary production as a career, change in pests and diseases and other related impacts on the agricultural industry	• Research to develop more resilient crops or varieties suited to a hotter climate and adapt growing conditions (eg use of greenhouses). Research improved and diverse pest management • Increase awareness of information and enhance resources (such as Local Land Services) available to primary producers around climate risk • Work with existing farmer networks and peak bodies to ensure communication and access to data is industry and/ or peer-led, user-centric and supports the adoption of sustainable land practices • Provide support for knowledge to diversify crops and farming approaches eg regenerative agriculture, permaculture, agri-ecology, greenhouses, Indigenous knowledge and native foods • Support regional farmers through local procurement policy that facilitates healthy local food access for communities and support regenerative farming practices • Provide an agricultural extension officer to support landowners living on productive agricultural land with farm leasing, small scale growing (market gardens etc) and regenerative agriculture transitions • Manage runoff from land under agricultural production and apply best practice and next practice on riparian zones, including fencing off and managing animal access to water • Improve soil management to increase soil permeability • Encourage business diversity (training, new biz pathways, upskilling) • Diversify pasture species to tolerate both increased and decreased rainfall conditions • Investigate AI solutions (Ag Tech) • Provide timely and tailored support (without delay/red tape) and provide place-based, community led, localised support e.g. Resilient Lismore, for food and agriculture	
11	Increased use and cost of electricity, increased potential for blackouts, increased fuel poverty and inequity of electricity/ air conditioning/ solar access and positive transition opportunity for electrification through renewable energy uptake	• Support to incentivise energy efficiency • Incentivise off-grid and decentralised energy solutions • Fund air-conditioning for those in need • Educate industry on passive cooling, housing and neighbourhood design, implement development controls to support design solutions, including light roofs • Create cool refuges, particularly in Council parks and buildings, including making Council pools free of charge during heatwaves • Provide more shade and plant more trees • Expand and purposely deliver areas around the river as a cultural precinct with walking and learning opportunities. Will provide a cool space in the evenings. • Value cultural institutions (libraires, museums, galleries etc) as vital places for community connection and escape from heat	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
12	Changes in shopping and recreational habits due to outdoor heat, impacting trade, the local economy and social capital	• Increase canopy cover in CBD and main streets, utilise species that are climate resilient and suit the area • Include recycled water filters and water-cooling elements into built environment design and retrofits • Provide seating in shaded areas • Support air conditioning uptake in CBD and main street shops, particularly areas that provide opportunities for social connection • Permit villages to increase density, allowing residents to age in place with a more diverse community and amenity • Construct parklets - consider converting specific existing buildings to green space • Change of working practices/hours to avoid middle of the day • Nature-based solutions of green towns with behaviour change activities	
13	Potential net loss of population due to people relocating or not moving into the area because of climate	• Develop and implement a series of strategic plans to create suitable housing and jobs to attract and retain population.	
14	Increased demand on electricity grid – particularly health care which may be under designed to meet projected use	• Discuss with NSW Health their projections and work with Council to identify new sites, including potential regional hubs; retain Nimbin hospital and expand services to include telehealth, stand-alone power etc • Incorporate short and long term climate and demographic projections into strategies (including Development Control Plan (DCP), strategic expansion etc)	
15	Indigenous elders may be unable to have presence on country due to heat. This disconnects elders, reduces cultural activity and health and leads to a loss of stories and loss of science. Leads to more gatherings being held indoors which is different to connecting on Country.	• Create a calendar of accessibility to enable elders to visit, connect to Country • Create indoor spaces that have an element of environment, culture and Country • Building and understanding design, sustainability, green developments, trees, regenerative solar power for air-conditioning • Expand and purposely deliver areas around the river as a cultural precinct with walking and learning opportunities, this will provide a cool space in the evenings. • Provide more collective spaces with shade for accessing cool areas and social connection	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
16	Increase in people accessing local water holes – limited knowledge about cultural significance of these sites - disconnection for elders, damage, injury	• Fund indigenous rangers • Educate landholders and the wider community • Create awareness about the significance of these sites. Build knowledge including through the installation of signage with QR codes and dual language • Improve waste management at cultural sites and waterholes	
17	Loss of climate-sensitive ecosystems, forest destruction, decreased water availability in rivers and lakes, loss of biodiversity, isolated habitat areas leading to reduced genetic resilience of fragmented species, human health impacts and death of wildlife	• Incorporate whole of landscape planning to protect endangered ecological communities • Restore riparian zones and regenerate the flood plain • Incorporate traditional land management in changed ecotypes • Plant more trees and retain existing habitat. Provide incentives to landholders to do this • Improve species selection in planting to support environmental structure • Increase connectivity and health of ecosystems (control weeds and pests) • Implement proper Indigenous cultural burning practices to reduce impact of fires on biodiversity • Employ more extension officers to provide guidance and knowledge building with landholders on landscape-scale ecological targets and the implications of poor planning • Improve access to firegrounds post fire • Increase the number of trained volunteers • Improve coordination between wildlife organisations • Construct and install more surrogate nest boxes • Understand the language of wildlife and culturally active landscape. Read behaviour of different animals, learn, listen and watch for the elements/signs from animals and nature • Work with multiple agencies and landholders to plan and fund mosaic of wildlife corridors across land tenure • Fund trials and research to test methodologies around landscape resilience. Collaborate with universities and commercial tech specialists • Lobby Australian and state governments to revalue how they fund work with private land holders – lobby to promote mutual benefits of green engineering for public benefit as well as improved production – build resilience that have mutual benefit • Understand high risk, high fauna density priority areas; understanding what makes site high risk for landslips. Is there a species that mediates the risk?	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
18	Decreased plant productivity, which in turn, affects herbivores that rely on plants for food. This can create food shortages for herbivores and the predators that depend on them. Subsequently, good conflicts between species occur which can affect the distribution and behaviour of animals	• Habitat connectivity to allow movement and migration of species • Implement land-management actions to improve soil health so that it holds more water and is more biodiverse • Council levy for the environment – could be state or federal tax • See also actions in item #17	
19	Wildfires can degrade air quality, affecting human and animal health	• Encourage more cool burns to help reduce large scale wildfires, invest in cultural knowledge about burning practices, invest in PEOPLE ON THE GROUND to implement cool cultural and ecological burn plans • Understand where fire is meant to be in the natural environment, what is good fire and what is bad fire	
20	Preventative burning seasons are getting shorter and current bureaucratic process is increasing fire risk	• Develop easier approval pathways for cool burns • Increase the input from First Nations • Reduce sole reliance on RFS and change the policy to enable cultural burning practices into the RFS planning • Improve leadership and increase knowledge sharing and education, including cultural knowledge sharing • Create insurance policies for cultural burning • Government should enable Indigenous fire and land management, but not manage it, with only Indigenous people conducting cultural burning • Build the capacity of Indigenous communities to enable the management and handover of the NPWS estate	
21	Rural or smaller communities become isolated	• Enable place-based delivery of funding for each ‘smaller’ community • Provide education about evacuation routes during fires, including local knowledge of old fire trails • Encourage housing ‘defend itself’ while supporting residents evacuate early in bushfire events	 
22	Waterways and soils become contaminated from flooding	• Employ an extension officer at Council • Encourage and implement new and different forms of land management • Apply best practice and next practice in riparian zones, including fencing off and managing animal access to water • Manage runoff from land under agricultural production • Improve soil management to increase soil permeability • Strategic planning for erosion management – permissible land uses should consider slope, and controls should require revegetation – vegetation management plans	

#	Impact/ Concern	Suggested Adaptation Actions	Applicable Projections
23	More intense rainfall events	• Slow down the flow with strategic wetland • Better integration of water management structures in urban environments • Use natural sequence farming (contouring & swales) to slow down the flow of water and keep soil onsite • Improve flood warning systems for rural areas and small villages, which in turn provide early warning systems for those downstream • Centralised management of weather and climate reporting • Incorporate the whole LGA into flood risk planning	
24	Rivers and wetlands dry up leading to lost source of drinking water, food, ceremony, traditional practices and healing. Increased stress on rural residents from the increased need and cost of water imports	• Understand cultural water lore • Increase personal responsibility for water usage • Rehydrate landscapes, nurture through culture; e.g. series of leaking dams and ponds and promote small-scale rehydration works on private land to mitigate moisture loss in soils and hold more water on properties • Restore riparian zones and increase green space (canopy cover) over water courses, and nature based cultural practices • Diversify water sources and storage, including more households with water tanks (subsidies), mobile desalination plants, recycling of greywater for potable re-use, and incentives for increased water efficiency • Increase capture of water from everything - roads, buildings, gutters, dry wells, assets	

Stakeholder workshop



Appendix 1 – Stakeholders contributing to this report

Organisations that contributed at workshops or through individual conversations include:

A Way Forward

Bushfire Risk

Byron Shire Council

Department of Primary Industries

Disaster Relief Australia

Department of Environment

Friends of the Koala

Griffith University

Healthy North Coast

It Takes a Town

Living Lab Northern Rivers

Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre

NSW Health

Plan C

Rainforest Publishing

Regional Development Australia

Resilient Lismore

Revive the Northern Rivers

Richmond Landcare

Richmond River Keeper

Southern Cross University – across multiple schools

The Casino Food Co-op

The Channon Resilience Incorporated

The Living School

The Northern Rivers Community Foundation

The Reconstruction Authority

The Red Cross

The SES

The University Centre for Rural Health

Tweed Shire Council

University of the Third Age

University of Technology Sydney

Whian Whian Landcare

Year 6 students at the Living School

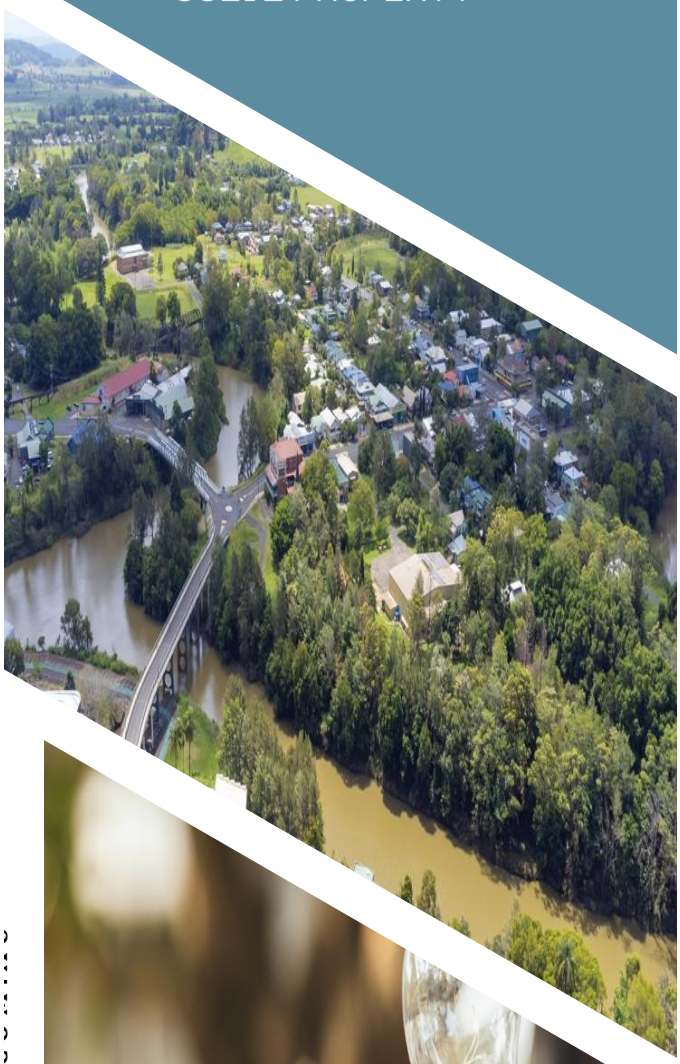
Year 7 Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) students at Lismore High

Year 10 Geography students at Trinity Catholic College

And the dedicated individuals who came to workshops in their own time



SOLVE PROPERTY





LISMORE LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT BACKGROUND REPORT

STAGE 1 – BASELINE ANALYSIS

PREPARED FOR
LISMORE CITY COUNCIL
20th JUNE 2025

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This Stage 1 Background Report provides the strategic foundation for updating the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and developing a new Economic Development Strategy (EDS) for the Lismore Local Government Area (LGA). It consolidates evidence, stakeholder priorities, and regional policy alignment to ensure Lismore's planning and economic direction are fit for purpose — and future-ready.

Together, the LSPS will drive a renewed planning narrative for Lismore that reflects the community's aspirations, the city's unique regional role, and the profound challenges and opportunities arising in the aftermath of the 2022 flood disaster.

1.2 Background

Lismore's current LSPS — Inspire Lismore 2040 — was adopted in July 2020 as the city's principal strategic land use planning document, supported by the Lismore Growth and Realignment Strategy 2022 (GARS). GARS was developed to identify land suitable for future housing, commercial, and industrial purposes — focused on enabling development in areas with minimal constraints and suitable infrastructure access. Originally intended as an addendum to the LSPS, the scale and impact of the 2022 disaster meant the GARS will now remain a standalone strategy until a comprehensive LSPS review is completed.

This report marks the first step in that strategic reset.

1.3 Project Context

In 2022, Lismore experienced the most severe flooding event in its recorded history. The physical, economic and social disruption from this disaster revealed significant vulnerabilities in the city's planning framework. These events did not simply call for a recovery — they demanded a rethinking of how Lismore grows, adapts, and positions itself in the region.

In this context, the EDS becomes the cornerstone of Council's response, acting as a catalytic tool to align land use planning, infrastructure investment, and community development within a broader framework that also includes the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and forthcoming Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

This integrated suite of plans is not just about compliance — it is about clarity, coordination, and confidence in Lismore's long-term direction.

1.4 Strategic Imperatives

The interrelationship between the CSP, LSPS, theme-based strategies and LEP is critical in guiding post-disaster recovery and long-term transformation. Several key imperatives shape this project:

Future land use must be reimagined through a lens of flood risk, infrastructure capacity, and community need.

Growth must be purposeful and targeted, providing both replacement capacity and economic stimulation.

The EDS must articulate new drivers of investment, signalling that Lismore is open for business and poised for renewal.

The LSPS must translate this vision spatially, integrating economic goals with planning principles and land zoning reform.

Where past strategies focused on enabling or protecting development, the current task is to activate Lismore's economic core, realign its physical form, and ensure all stakeholders — from residents to government to investors — can see themselves in the city's future.

1.5 Lismore's Position in the Northern Rivers Region

Lismore is not just one more centre in Northern NSW. It is that Lismore is the heart of the Northern Rivers — a diverse region more accurately understood as a mosaic than a single geography.

Lismore is the region's primary service hub, offering health care, education, government services, logistics, and administration to over 100,000 people across surrounding LGAs including Kyogle, Richmond Valley and Clarence. It is also home to Southern Cross University, the Northern NSW Local Health District headquarters, and a network of small towns and villages with strong cultural, environmental, and tourism value.

Its central location, regional institutional strength, and proximity to high-growth coastal areas such as Ballina, Byron Bay, and the Tweed Coast offer significant strategic advantages. But these assets must be more than latent potential — they must be activated through planning and economic development strategies that are bold, integrated, and grounded in local context.

1.6 Foundations for Lismore's Economic Future

The new EDS — and by extension, the LSPS — must be shaped by a clear understanding of three foundational elements:

1.6.1 Industry Sectors

Lismore must play to its regional strengths. Key sectors include:

Agriculture
Manufacturing
Energy and renewables
Tourism and creative industries
Post-secondary education
Health and social care.

These are not just employment bases — they are engines of resilience, capable of delivering multiplier effects across the local economy.

1.6.2 Workforce

People are the lifeblood of any economy. A skilled, willing, and supported workforce is essential — not just to fill roles, but to generate wealth and demand through local consumption, entrepreneurship, and service provision.

1.6.3 Community and Connectivity

From childcare to broadband, from public transport to cultural infrastructure — the quality of life assets that support a workforce are also what make a community thrive. Connectivity — physical, digital, and social — will determine whether Lismore can retain and attract the people it needs.

1.7 A City with Two Identities – and a Choice

Lismore sits at the intersection of two strategic identities:

Regional Service Hub: A credible legacy as the inland capital of the Northern Rivers — a centre of education, health, retail, governance and civic services for smaller communities across the hinterland.
Great Escape Destination: An emerging tourism and lifestyle alternative to the crowded coast — built on the vibrancy of its arts scene, its villages like Nimbin, and its unique position as a nature-connected yet affordable place to live and work.

Lismore's next chapter must weave both these roles together — and expand them through deliberate planning, investment, and messaging. The LSPS must support the infrastructure and land use requirements of both service delivery and lifestyle attraction.

1.8 Building the Case: Value Proposition and Positioning

A key outcome of this project will be the articulation of Lismore's value proposition — a clear and compelling case for why people, businesses, and institutions should choose to locate, invest, or stay here.

This includes:

High quality of life and natural amenity
Affordable and diverse housing opportunities
A resilient and values-driven community
Strategic access to transport, health, and education services
Willingness to adapt and embrace innovation.

The LSPS must embed this value proposition in spatial terms. The EDS must communicate it economically. And both must serve as invitations for the region, the state and the private sector to participate in Lismore's renewal.

1.9 Assessing the Current State

To support these objectives, this report includes:

Analysis of demographic, housing, and land use trends
Economic profiling of key sectors and employment trends
Infrastructure and servicing constraints and opportunities
Evaluation of existing programs, partnerships, and gaps
Benchmarking against comparable regional cities.

This work will also provide the diagnostic platform for identifying "big push" investment opportunities — those catalytic initiatives that can accelerate transformation and sustain momentum.

1.10 Next Steps: From Strategy to Action

This Baseline Report sets the scene — but not the limits — for what is possible. Lismore's planning and economic story going forward depends on how major strategies come together:

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP)
The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)
The Economic Development Strategy (EDS)
The Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS)
The Biodiversity Management Strategy (BMS)
The Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy (CRaAS)
The Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

When aligned, these tools can unlock recovery capital, encourage new development, attract population and investment, and support the long-term well-being of the city and its region.

1.11 Structure of this Report

This document is structured around four guiding questions:

Where are we now? A review of current conditions and trends.
Where do we want to be? Community aspirations, strategic positioning, and opportunities.
What are the gaps? Identification of barriers, risks, and systemic challenges.
How do we get there? Preliminary directions and key areas for strategic intervention.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project Description

Solve Property has been engaged by Lismore City Council to prepare its updated LSPS and a supporting EDS. While these two initiatives will be delivered as distinct but complementary projects, their alignment is essential to articulate a unified and place-based vision for the Lismore Local Government Area (LGA).

The LSPS will act as Council's principal strategic land use planning framework, expressing a long-term vision for the LGA and outlining priorities and actions to guide change and development over the next 20 years. In parallel, the Economic Development Strategy will identify the opportunities and challenges facing Lismore's economy, and outline initiatives to support employment growth, investment attraction, and a more resilient regional economy.

This work will be informed by Lismore's Community Strategic Plan – Imagine Lismore 2023–2033 – which serves as the foundation for all other Council strategies and decisions. The LSPS will draw from and support the implementation of this plan's key themes and outcomes.

2.2 What is a Local Strategic Planning Statement?

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) requires all NSW councils to prepare and maintain an LSPS. The LSPS sets out:

- A 20-year vision for land use in the local area
- Special characteristics which contribute to local identity
- Shared community values to be maintained and enhanced and
- How growth and change will be managed into the future.

The LSPS must give effect to the North Coast Regional Plan 2041 and reflect the priorities of *Imagine Lismore 2023–2033*, while also considering local opportunities, constraints, and values.

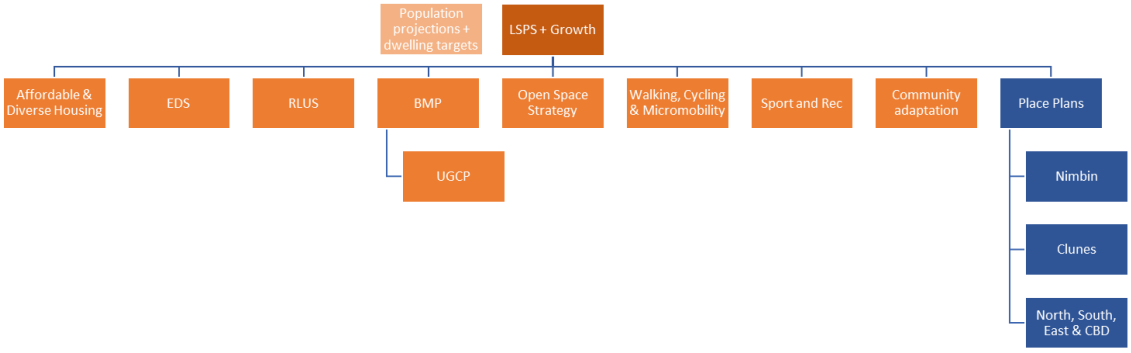
2.3 A Local Strategic Planning Statement for Lismore

Lismore City Council adopted its first LSPS in 2020. Since then, the region has experienced significant disruption, including multiple flood events, changes in population movement, and renewed focus on resilience and climate adaptation. These changes, along with the release of the North Coast Regional Plan 2041, necessitate an updated LSPS.

The LSPS is Council's highest-tier strategic planning document. It sets the ambition, defines the direction, and establishes the growth targets for the Lismore LGA. To ensure these outcomes can be

effectively achieved, the LSPS is supported by a range of complementary strategies which sit beneath it and provide the detail required for implementation.

Figure 2.1 LSPS and Sub-Strategies



Sources: Lismore City Council, Solve Property Group.

This updated LSPS will articulate a revised long-term spatial strategy for the Lismore LGA, directly informed by recent strategic work such as the *Lismore Housing Strategy Baseline Review*, Council's flood recovery work and the development of a new Resilient Lands Strategy led by the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

The LSPS will align with Council's community vision, that Lismore is the heart of the Northern Rivers, and focus on:

1. A safe and resilient city (encompassing the whole Lismore LGA — from the major urban centres of Lismore (regional city and administrative centre) and Goonellabah (primary suburban area), to the broader network of towns, villages and rural communities including Clunes, Dunoon, Nimbin, Bexhill, Modanville, Rosebank, Caniaba, Richmond Hill, Chilcotts Grass, Goolmangar, Booyong, Numulgi, Georgica, Tuncester, Rock Valley, Coffee Camp, Tullera, The Channon and Wyrallah. This focus reflects the need to strengthen resilience across diverse landscapes and settlement types.
2. Connected and inclusive communities (including Connecting with Country/Indigenous knowledge).
3. A strong and innovative economy
4. A sustainable natural and built environment

5. A vibrant and liveable centre (includes the CBD and nearby residential, mixed-use and institutional areas) and
6. A future-ready Lismore.

2.4 What is an Economic Development Strategy?

The EDS is a place-based roadmap that identifies key industry sectors, employment trends, enabling infrastructure, and investment opportunities within Lismore. It will provide a coordinated approach to:

- Supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Attracting new investment
- Building regional partnerships
- Supporting education, training and workforce development and
- Strengthening economic resilience in the face of shocks (e.g. natural disasters, global market volatility).

This strategy will be grounded in the principles of inclusive growth, climate resilience, and spatial equity, recognising Lismore's role as a regional city and service hub for the Northern Rivers.

2.5 Purpose of This Report

This Baseline Analysis Report supports Stage 1 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement process and the development of the Lismore Economic Development Strategy. It addresses the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's guidelines for Stage 1 (*Scoping of the LSPS)* and provides a data-driven foundation for economic development planning.

This report is structured to address four key strategic questions:

- **Where are we now?** (baseline analysis and context)
- **Where do we want to be?** (visioning and aspirations)
- **What are the gaps?** (challenges and opportunities)
- **How do we get there?** (preliminary directions).

3 Regional & Local Trends

3.1 Influences on the Local Economy & Community

Lismore's planning and economic future is being shaped by a range of significant global and regional forces. These include technological disruption, climate change, shifting demographic trends, changes in how and where people live and work, and growing socio-economic pressures — including the rising cost of living, housing affordability challenges, and uneven access to employment, education, and essential services. These trends are particularly relevant to Lismore given its role as a key regional service centre in the Northern Rivers, its exposure to natural hazards and its recent experience with large-scale disaster events.

Since 2020, global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing climate instability have accelerated long-term structural changes in regional economies. Remote work has become increasingly mainstream, enabling more flexible patterns of living and migration. Many individuals and families have sought to relocate away from metropolitan areas to regional communities that offer a strong sense of place, affordability, lifestyle amenity, and access to essential services — all of which Lismore provides.

At the same time, climate change has become a defining feature of strategic planning in the Northern Rivers. The 2022 flood events were among the most devastating in Australia's history and have profoundly influenced local, state and federal planning agendas. The NSW Reconstruction Authority's Resilient Lands Program, along with its broader recovery and planning work, are direct responses to this challenge. Going forward, climate resilience and adaptation will be foundational to Lismore's growth and development strategies.

The CSIRO's report *Our Future World* report outlines seven global megatrends likely to shape Australia's trajectory over the coming decades. Several of these have direct relevance for Lismore, including:

- **Adapting to a Changing Climate:** Emphasising the need for communities to proactively plan for more frequent and severe weather events.
- **Unlocking the Human Dimension:** Addressing mental health, social cohesion and community wellbeing — all of which are critical post-disaster.
- **Diving into Digital:** Harnessing digital technologies and innovation to transform traditional industries and service delivery, including health, education, and retail.
- **Redefining Work:** Embracing new work patterns, including hybrid and remote models, which have enabled professional employment in regional centres like Lismore.
- **Leaning into Leaner, Cleaner Growth:** Aligning economic growth with sustainability, circular economy principles, and carbon reduction goals.

A range of other policy and research work has identified similar themes. For example, the Federal Government's *Intergenerational Report 2023: Australia's future to 2063* highlights a set of transformative forces expected to shape the economy over the coming decades.

These include an ageing population, increased demand for care and support services, the impacts of climate change and the transition to net zero, rapid technological and digital advancements, and growing geopolitical uncertainty and fragmentation. Together, these trends will reshape the structure of the Australian economy and influence how people live, work, and connect with the world.

3.2 Strategic Context: Regional NSW

3.2.1 Positioning Regional NSW for the Next Era

Regional New South Wales is entering a transformative period, shaped by long-term demographic shifts, economic restructuring, climate adaptation and rising national and global demand for resources, experiences, and sustainable production. Once considered peripheral to the state's economic growth, regional areas are now increasingly recognised as central to NSW's goals for resilience, inclusivity, and innovation.

Population growth in regional NSW and other regional locations nationally has been fuelled by sustained migration from major capitals—particularly Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane —since the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, according to the Regional Movers Index (March 2025), capital-to-regional migration nationally remains over 20% above pre-COVID levels, with regional NSW attracting 34% of all net inflows—the largest share nationally. This shift reflects a growing demand for affordability, lifestyle, remote working flexibility, and improved access to nature, culture, and services outside urban centres.

In response to these structural dynamics, the NSW Government has developed a clear, long-term policy framework to guide regional economic transformation.

Key strategic documents—such as the *20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW* and the *NSW Trade and Investment Strategy 2035*—identify a range of interconnected economic themes, or pillars, that together define the priorities and opportunities for regional development.

These pillars offer a structured lens through which regional economies can evolve from primarily resource-based systems into value-creating, future-ready, and resilient economic ecosystems.

The following analysis presents a range of strategic pillars. Each pillar is explored using a consistent framework including:

- **Key Drivers and Opportunities:** This identifies the underlying economic, technological, policy, and demographic forces driving change, along with emerging growth opportunities specific to each theme.

- **Strategic Impact:** This explains how each pillar contributes to broader regional outcomes—such as employment growth, investment attraction, environmental resilience, and social equity—and identifies the potential economic and community benefits if these opportunities are realised.

By examining each pillar in this way, this analysis highlights how regional NSW can leverage its assets and adapt to challenges to become a more dynamic and prosperous contributor to the state's and nation's future. This analysis provides the strategic foundation upon which localised economic development strategies—such as those for Lismore and other regional centres—can be aligned.

3.2.2 Sustainable and Value-Added Agribusiness & Renewables Integration

This strategic pillar reflects the evolving role of agriculture in regional NSW. While farming remains a major employer and export contributor, the sector is transitioning from raw commodity production to high-value, vertically integrated agribusiness models. Innovations in food processing, logistics, branding, and renewable energy integration are unlocking new sources of growth.

Key drivers and opportunities include:

- Rising global demand for premium, traceable food and fibre, particularly from Asia and the Middle East.
- Acceleration of AgTech adoption including AI-supported irrigation, drone crop analysis, remote livestock monitoring.
- Stronger supply chain infrastructure supporting direct-to-market exports and cold chain logistics.
- Integration with Renewable Energy Zones (REZs), enabling lower farm input costs and increased energy resilience.
- Investment in biosecurity and climate adaptation measures to manage drought, pests, and disease risk.

Strategic impacts include the integration of advanced technology and clean energy into traditional agriculture which offers regional NSW a dual pathway: greater resilience and higher value creation. This transition should enable:

- Growth in food processing and export-led manufacturing industries.
- Lower energy costs and emissions for agricultural enterprises.
- Diversification of regional job markets in energy services, agri-logistics and value-added production.

3.2.3 Circular Economy, Resource Recovery & Critical Minerals

This pillar focuses on reducing waste, regenerating value and strengthening local supply chains. As demand grows for low-carbon materials and cleaner industrial systems, regional NSW is well-placed to become a hub for circular economy innovation and critical mineral extraction.

Key drivers and opportunities include:

- Transition from linear to circular economic models driven by landfill constraints and ESG expectations.
- Regional innovation in reprocessing construction waste, organics, plastics and textiles.
- Global demand for critical minerals (cobalt, lithium, rare earths) used in batteries, solar, and digital technologies.
- Government incentives for recycling, resource recovery and re-manufacturing hubs outside metro centres.
- Strategic infrastructure corridors supporting the movement of low-carbon materials.

Strategic impacts include building a circular and resource-efficient economy which can generate high-value jobs, reduce environmental harm and build industrial resilience.

Outcomes include:

- Establishment of regional recycling and remanufacturing industries.
- Up-skilling of regional workforces in environmental engineering and clean production.
- Enhanced economic sovereignty through localised material processing and shorter supply chains.

3.2.4 Regional Tourism and Visitor Economy Development

Tourism is one of regional NSW's most dynamic sectors, with increasing emphasis on experiential, cultural and wellness tourism. This pillar supports diversification of local economies, strengthens regional identity and sustains small business ecosystems.

Key drivers and opportunities include:

- Consumer shifts toward slow travel, nature-based escapes and regional authenticity.
- Growing interest in Aboriginal and other cultural tourism, heritage precincts and creative industry integration.
- Infrastructure improvements including new rail-trails, boutique accommodation and digital booking platforms.

- Increased domestic demand linked to tree-changer populations and post-pandemic rediscovery of local experiences.
- Alignment with NSW's goal of $25 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by 2030.

In terms of strategic impact, tourism can support economic activity across sectors—including hospitality, arts and retail—and drive investment in public space and civic pride.

Strategic benefits include:

- Job creation in flexible, place-based industries.
- Extended visitation through events, cultural programming and eco-tourism circuits.
- Reinforcement of regional branding and export potential for food, art, and cultural services.

3.2.5 Strengthened Regional Infrastructure and Digitally Connected Communities

This foundational pillar ensures regional NSW is equipped to support future growth and withstand emerging risks. Infrastructure includes transport, housing, digital networks, health, education and utilities—all critical to liveability, investment readiness and climate resilience.

Key drivers and opportunities:

- Rising pressure on health, education and housing systems due to population growth and workforce mobility.
- Urgent need to close digital blackspots and extend high-speed internet across remote and outer-regional areas.
- Strategic infrastructure gaps in flood-prone areas requiring investment in adaptation and redundancy.
- Opportunities to co-locate industrial and infrastructure upgrades (e.g., energy, logistics, water).
- NSW's Infrastructure Contributions Reform program and regional housing initiatives enabling local delivery.

In terms of strategic impact, quality infrastructure underpins every economic and social outcome. If well planned, it can:

- Improve access to services and workforce retention.
- Attract higher levels of private sector investment.
- Support disaster preparedness and recovery capacity.
- Facilitate more equitable and inclusive regional development.

3.3 Strategic Context: Northern Rivers

3.3.1 Overview and Strategic Role

The Northern Rivers region is one of the most distinctive and economically diverse parts of regional NSW. Located on the state's far north coast, the region spans seven local government areas: Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley, Tweed and Clarence Valley Council.

With its proximity to South East Queensland (SEQ), the Pacific Motorway corridor, regional airports (Ballina Byron Gateway, Lismore, Clarence Valley), and the Port of Yamba, the region plays a dual role as a coastal lifestyle destination and a service and employment hub. This strategic positioning enables strong economic relationships with both metropolitan markets and inland catchments.

The Northern Rivers' functional economy is interwoven with surrounding rural and coastal areas, extending to cross-border economic integration with Queensland. It supports education, health, logistics, retail, and administrative services for hinterland towns and remote communities, while also being a significant part of Australia's domestic tourism circuit.

3.3.2 Population Growth and Migration Dynamics

The Northern Rivers is experiencing amongst the fastest population growth rates in regional Australia driven, in part, by internal migration. Regional NSW has received around a third of all net capital-city migration inflows since 2020—more than any other state or territory. Byron, Tweed and Ballina lead the Northern Rivers in raw inflows, but Lismore and hinterland towns are also absorbing demand.

Key trends include:

- **Sea change / tree change migration:** Attracted by coastal beauty, rainforests, cultural identity and lifestyle advantages.
- **Retirees:** The region has long been favoured by older Australians, leading to a rising median age and increased demand for aged care, housing with accessibility features and health services.
- **Younger households and professionals:** Artists, creatives, health professionals and remote workers are increasingly locating, or looking to locate, in the region.
- **Post-COVID mobility:** The widespread uptake of remote work has dramatically expanded the region's appeal to professionals who would have once remained in Sydney or other major capital cities.

Several implications arise from rapid population growth and change. These include:

- While the population is growing, ageing is also accelerating. Services and workforce planning must cater to a dual challenge: expanding capacity for young families and new residents and strengthening aged care and health services.

- Education infrastructure, digital connectivity, and community assets are under growing pressure.

3.3.3 Housing Supply and Affordability Pressures

The Northern Rivers region is experiencing sustained and significant population growth, driven partly by internal migration. A combination of natural beauty, cultural vibrancy and lifestyle appeal has made the region an increasingly attractive destination for retirees, remote professionals, young families and those seeking an alternative to the rising costs and congestion of major cities. This trend has been amplified since the COVID-19 pandemic, with remote work enabling greater residential flexibility and accelerating the movement of people from Sydney, Melbourne, South East Queensland and other locations.

However, this growth has placed enormous pressure on the region's housing system. Vacancy rates across the Northern Rivers have remained critically low, consistently below 1.5%, with some coastal LGAs such as Byron Bay and Ballina tracking under 1%. Median house prices have risen sharply across the region. For example, Lismore median house prices increased from $537,799 in late 2024 to $616,000 by early 2025, representing a 32.5% year-on-year increase. Rental affordability has also declined significantly, particularly for essential workers, lower-income households, and younger residents.

This demand pressure is not limited to coastal markets. As affordability constraints intensify, more households are relocating inland, driving demand in towns such as Casino, Kyogle and parts of Clarence Valley. These areas, traditionally characterised by lower population growth and more modest housing markets, are now absorbing displacement from elsewhere in the region—placing further stress on infrastructure, service delivery and local planning systems.

The 2022 floods had a compounding effect. In Lismore and parts of Richmond Valley, thousands of dwellings were damaged or destroyed, with many declared non-rebuildable. The loss of housing stock has made it more difficult for the region to absorb population growth, while also creating complex challenges related to relocation, insurance, and the delivery of flood-resilient alternatives. In many cases, residents displaced from flood-affected areas have sought housing in already undersupplied nearby LGAs, further exacerbating regional imbalance.

The overall housing stock across the region is also poorly aligned with changing demographic needs. There is a notable shortage of one- and two-bedroom dwellings suitable for older residents, singles and couples as well as a lack of affordable rental options for key workers and people in casual or seasonal employment. The region's reliance on short-term holiday rentals—particularly in Byron and Ballina—has further reduced long-term rental supply.

In response to these pressures, there is an urgent need to accelerate the delivery of new housing, particularly in flood-resilient locations. Greater coordination is also required across local government boundaries to ensure infrastructure, zoning and land release are strategically aligned. As many workers commute across LGAs, and housing pressures are increasingly regional in nature, isolated planning responses are no longer sufficient.

Addressing these challenges will require close alignment between local councils, state government agencies and infrastructure providers. Programs such as the NSW Resilient Lands Program offer potential to unlock new, safer residential precincts, but must be supported by fast-tracked infrastructure investment and planning reform. Similarly, efforts to diversify housing types—particularly key worker and social housing—need to be embedded in regional housing strategies and funded appropriately.

Without intervention, the current trajectory risks entrenching inequality, driving workforce shortages and exacerbating regional displacement. But with targeted investment, planning coordination, and a commitment to climate-adapted design, the Northern Rivers can build a housing system that supports sustainable population growth, regional equity, and long-term resilience.

3.3.4 Labour Force and Skills

The Northern Rivers region is supported by a growing but uneven labour force that reflects the broader demographic, housing and industry dynamics of the area. While population growth has contributed to strong employment demand across multiple sectors, structural challenges remain in attracting, retaining, and training a suitably skilled local workforce.

Health care and social assistance continues to be the region's largest and most rapidly expanding employment sector, driven by an ageing population, increased demand for NDIS and aged care services, and the region's status as a retirement and lifestyle destination. Retail, accommodation and food services also account for a significant share of local jobs, underpinned by the region's status as a domestic tourism hotspot and the seasonal influx of visitors throughout the year.

The Education and training sector remains a core regional employer and skills development driver, anchored by Southern Cross University and a strong TAFE NSW presence across multiple campuses. Construction activity has grown considerably in recent years, supported by post-disaster rebuilding efforts, population-driven residential development and sustained infrastructure investment. These trends have led to consistently high demand for trades workers, machinery operators, and project management professionals across the region.

The most common occupations in the Northern Rivers reflect these industry concentrations. Professionals—particularly educators, health practitioners and public administrators—represent a significant proportion of the workforce. Technicians and trades workers, along with community and personal service workers (including aged care, disability support, and early childhood educators), also make up a large segment of regional employment.

However, chronic workforce shortages persist in several key sectors. Employers consistently report difficulties in recruiting and retaining aged care workers, early childhood educators, chefs, hospitality staff and building trades. These gaps have been compounded by broader housing affordability issues, which make it increasingly difficult for lower-income and early-career workers to live in proximity to jobs. Many skilled young people leave the region to pursue tertiary education or broader career opportunities, and few return in the absence of affordable housing or career advancement options. The pipeline of skilled local labour is further weakened by limited access to

specialist training, inconsistent industry placement pathways and a fragmented skills coordination system across the region.

While there are examples of successful place-based initiatives and partnerships between education providers and employers, these remain uneven and often underfunded. Addressing these structural challenges will require a stronger alignment between housing policy, skills development, migration attraction strategies and employment precinct planning. Without targeted interventions, labour shortages are likely to continue constraining business growth, service delivery, and regional economic performance across the Northern Rivers.

3.3.5 Economic Base and Industry Profile

The Northern Rivers economy has undergone a profound transformation over the past three decades, evolving from a resource-based industrial structure—once dominated by timber milling, sugar refining and broadacre agriculture—into a regionally diverse, service-oriented economy that reflects both lifestyle-driven population change and shifting global markets. Today, the region's economic base is led by strong employment in health care, education, retail, construction and tourism. These sectors are not only core to local economic output but also reflect the Northern Rivers' growing importance as a regional service hub, wellness destination and innovation precinct.

Health care and social assistance remains the largest employer across the Northern Rivers, accounting for over 17% of regional employment, driven by sustained population ageing, the expansion of NDIS-related services, and the regional concentration of hospitals, aged care and allied health providers.

Southern Cross University and TAFE NSW anchor the education and training sector, which has grown in parallel with professional services and care workforce demand. Retail trade also features prominently, with employment concentrated in the region's main commercial centres—such as Lismore, Ballina, Tweed Heads and Byron Bay—and supported by both resident expenditure and seasonal tourism inflows. The accommodation and food services sector has seen growth in both employment and output, reflecting the region's position as a national and international tourism destination.

Construction activity has expanded significantly since 2022, spurred by the need to replace damaged dwellings and infrastructure after the floods. This includes major investment in roads, levees, education and health facilities, and residential subdivisions in higher-ground growth areas. Across the region, construction now accounts for roughly 10% of total economic output. Local builders and trades businesses are operating at capacity and housing development pipelines are constrained more by land availability and workforce supply than by demand.

Tourism remains a major pillar of the regional economy. While Byron Bay continues to be the international gateway and branding centre, tourism is diversifying across the region. Ballina, Lismore, Brunswick Heads, Nimbin and hinterland towns have all seen increased visitation linked to cultural tourism, wellness, food experiences and nature-based attractions. The Northern Rivers Destination Management Plan identifies strong growth potential in off-peak tourism and event-

based visitation, which could support broader economic activity in arts, recreation and regional hospitality.

Agriculture continues to play a significant role in the region's economic identity, particularly in the inland LGAs. High-value commodities such as macadamias, coffee, avocados, beef and dairy are increasingly processed and branded locally for domestic and export markets. NIEIR data shows that agricultural production generated over $450 million in output across the Northern Rivers in 2021–22, with macadamia nuts alone accounting for more than one-third of total value. This shift toward value-added food manufacturing is supported by regional investment in cold storage, processing, and export logistics infrastructure, particularly in and around Casino, Lismore and Ballina.

The region is also home to a growing creative industries sector, particularly in Byron and Lismore. Artists, designers, musicians, publishers and digital content creators form an important part of the cultural economy, contributing to both local identity and national reach. This has been further strengthened by the migration of creative professionals seeking affordable, community-oriented alternatives to capital city life.

Several new and emerging industry opportunities are beginning to take hold. Renewable energy and energy storage—including community solar, battery systems, and agrivoltaics—are gaining traction across rural properties and fringe urban areas. The NSW Government's Renewable Energy Zone initiatives identify parts of the Northern Rivers as having potential for future clean energy production, if grid access and land-use constraints can be addressed. Similarly, circular economy initiatives such as waste-to-energy, construction material recycling, and organic waste recovery are being explored at both local government and enterprise scale. These projects are aligned with state strategies that promote resource efficiency, climate adaptation and regional self-reliance.

Advanced food manufacturing, including boutique dairy, artisan bakery, craft beverage production, and branded health food exports, is emerging as a point of differentiation for the region. These businesses build on the Northern Rivers' reputation for organic and regenerative agriculture and are often closely tied to tourism, local markets, and export strategies.

The future trajectory of the Northern Rivers economy will depend on how well it can balance growth in service sectors with investment in enabling infrastructure, land-use certainty, skilled labour attraction and innovation ecosystems. As flood resilience, housing demand and population pressures shape the next wave of regional transformation, the diversity of the Northern Rivers economy offers a strong platform for inclusive, place-based economic development.

3.3.6 Connectivity and Economic Integration

The Northern Rivers region is strategically located within one of the most economically active corridors in eastern Australia, positioned between South East Queensland and the Mid North Coast. Its transport and digital infrastructure links enable a high degree of integration with broader state and interstate systems, facilitating freight, workforce mobility, tourism, and business investment.

The Pacific Motorway (M1) forms the region's primary spine, providing efficient road access to Brisbane, the Gold Coast and southwards to Sydney, and remains critical for heavy vehicle logistics, agricultural exports and visitor flows. Proximity to this national freight route enhances economic

competitiveness for inland towns such as Lismore, Casino and Kyogle, connecting rural production areas with coastal ports and urban markets.

The region's airport network adds further economic value. The Ballina Byron Gateway Airport has developed into a significant regional aviation hub, offering multiple daily connections to Sydney and Melbourne and supporting business travel, medical services and tourism access. The Lismore Airport, while smaller in scale, plays an important role in general aviation, aeromedical logistics and business charters, particularly for industries serving the inland catchment. Together with the Clarence Valley Regional Airport at Grafton, these facilities contribute to a decentralised but functional aviation system across the region.

Maritime connectivity is anchored by the Port of Yamba, a small but strategic commercial port located on the Clarence River. While its cargo capacity is limited compared to major state ports, it provides direct access for niche agricultural and manufacturing exporters and plays a role in local supply chain resilience. Opportunities exist to expand its logistics footprint in alignment with export-focused industries such as food processing and niche manufacturing.

The Northern Rivers is increasingly linked not only by physical infrastructure but also by emerging digital and economic networks. Interest is growing in strengthening east coast freight and logistics integration, including improved road and rail freight corridors that would reduce congestion and support higher-volume distribution. These investments are particularly important as the region continues to expand its agricultural output and develop light industrial activity in towns such as Casino, Lismore and Alstonville.

Cross-border collaboration with South East Queensland is another emerging theme. Economic spillover from the Gold Coast and Brisbane metropolitan areas is influencing both residential settlement patterns and commercial development pressure in Tweed, Byron and Ballina with flow-on effects for the entire regional economy. As these cross-border relationships intensify, there is a clear need for coordinated regional infrastructure planning, land use management, and skills alignment between state jurisdictions.

Digital infrastructure is also becoming a major enabler of regional participation and innovation. The rollout of high-speed broadband and digital connectivity initiatives is supporting growth in remote work, creative industries, education delivery, and telehealth. Lismore, Byron and Tweed are increasingly positioned as regional nodes for digital professionals, consultants and freelancers, supported by co-working hubs, creative clusters and knowledge-based businesses. In addition, smart city infrastructure, data-driven planning tools and digital service delivery are gradually being integrated into council operations and regional precinct strategies.

Overall, the connectivity profile of the Northern Rivers is a major asset—but one that will require sustained investment and strategic coordination to realise its full economic potential. The region's economic resilience and competitiveness depend not just on individual transport or digital upgrades, but on a systems-based approach that links physical, digital and human capital across borders and industries. With growing demand for freight efficiency, workforce mobility, and digital infrastructure, the Northern Rivers is well positioned to enhance its role as a connected, productive and regionally integrated part of eastern Australia's economic corridor.

3.3.7 Post-Flood Recovery and Regional Resilience

The 2022 flood events had a catastrophic impact on the Northern Rivers, with Lismore at the epicentre of the disaster. These floods were among the most damaging in Australian history, inundating residential suburbs, commercial centres and critical infrastructure across multiple local government areas. In Lismore alone, thousands of homes and businesses were damaged or destroyed, with entire precincts rendered uninhabitable or designated as non-rebuildable. The social, economic and psychological toll has been profound, reshaping how planning, infrastructure, and housing systems are being reimagined across the region.

While substantial recovery funding has been committed by both the federal and NSW governments — including through the *Resilient Homes Program*, which encompasses home buyback schemes, as well as infrastructure investment packages — the recovery process remains uneven. Many affected households continue to face underinsurance or are navigating complex buyback and relocation processes. In areas such as North and South Lismore, significant tracts of land are now subject to long-term planning uncertainty, complicating both residential and commercial redevelopment. The Lismore CBD, once the commercial heart of the region, still contains disrupted businesses, vacant buildings and damaged civic infrastructure that have yet to be fully repaired or repurposed.

Despite these challenges, the CBD has also demonstrated a strong current of resilience. Many local businesses, community organisations and service providers returned to operate in temporary or flood-damaged premises within weeks or months of the event. This rapid reoccupation reflects a deep commitment to place and an intention by many to remain and rebuild, rather than retreat. Local recovery initiatives — including pop-up shops, shared workspaces, and business support hubs — have contributed to reactivating commercial activity and maintaining the CBD's role as a central gathering place. This determination to restore activity in the heart of the city, even amid uncertainty, is a key indicator of the community's long-term stake in Lismore's future.

Despite these challenges, the reconstruction phase has generated important activity within the regional economy. Local builders, contractors, and materials suppliers have seen a surge in demand, driven by private repairs and public sector rebuilding. However, this recovery-driven demand has also intensified existing constraints in labour availability, housing for workers, and the capacity of regional supply chains. Shortages in trades, engineers, project managers and transport logistics continue to limit the speed and scalability of the recovery.

Planning efforts in the aftermath of the floods have increasingly focused on long-term resilience and adaptation. Raising or relocating critical infrastructure—such as power, water, health, and emergency service assets—has become a priority across Lismore, Ballina and parts of Richmond Valley and Kyogle. Local councils, in partnership with the NSW Reconstruction Authority and Department of Planning, have initiated reforms to embed flood resilience into strategic land use planning, building standards, and infrastructure design. This includes supporting the development of new residential growth areas on higher ground, applying climate risk overlays and exploring nature-based solutions for drainage and flood mitigation.

There is also a growing emphasis on social and community recovery. The trauma of the 2022 floods has left long-lasting effects on community wellbeing, prompting the expansion of mental health

services, place-based support programs, and new community infrastructure proposals. Investment in public spaces, cultural institutions, and accessible housing is increasingly being viewed not just as a recovery response, but as a catalyst for rebuilding community cohesion and civic pride.

As the region moves from emergency response to strategic recovery, the floods have become a defining moment for how resilience is understood, planned and funded. The Northern Rivers is now emerging as a national case study in climate-adapted regional redevelopment—highlighting both the vulnerability of low-lying communities and the potential for innovative, community-led planning that aligns housing, infrastructure and land use with long-term environmental realities. The pathway forward requires sustained coordination across all levels of government, the private sector, and the community to ensure that recovery is not only achieved but leveraged into a more resilient and inclusive regional future.

3.3.8 Northern Rivers: Strategic Outlook – Opportunities and Risks

The Northern Rivers region stands at a critical juncture. A decade of steady population growth, amplified by lifestyle migration and the expansion of remote work, has reshaped its demographic profile and intensified demand for housing, services and infrastructure. The economy has diversified, moving beyond traditional resource sectors into care services, tourism, creative industries and value-added agriculture.

At the same time, the region faces rising structural risks: climate volatility, service system strain, and deep housing and labour market mismatches. The 2022 floods acted as both a disruption and a catalyst, exposing long-standing vulnerabilities while creating an opportunity to reset infrastructure planning, investment models and land-use strategy.

As the Northern Rivers prepares for its next chapter, targeted action is needed to unlock its full potential. Delivering resilient housing, enabling regional workforce mobility and strengthening cross-border infrastructure will be key to absorbing growth while maintaining liveability. Industry policy must support both innovation and stability—backing high-growth sectors like health, education, and renewables, while reinforcing tourism and creative enterprise through placemaking and digital connectivity.

Regional governance, land-use reform and climate adaptation will underpin the region’s ability to convert short-term pressures into long-term transformation. This strategic platform also sets the stage for the next section of this report: a focused deep dive into Lismore’s role as the institutional, economic and service heart of inland Northern Rivers.

Table 3.33.1. Summary: Northern Rivers Strategic Opportunities and Risks

Theme	Opportunities	Risks/Constraints
Population Growth	Skilled migration, regional diversity, cross-border flows with SEQ	Ageing demographic, increased demand on health and aged care services
Housing	Medium-density and resilient housing in higher-ground precincts	Housing under-supply, flood exposure, rental unaffordability
Labour Force	Growth in care, trades, education; remote worker attraction	Workforce shortages, housing access for essential workers
Industry Base	Expansion in food manufacturing, tourism, renewables, creative sectors	High seasonality, small business vulnerability, digital transition lag
Infrastructure	Airport upgrades, Pacific Highway corridor, digital economy platforms	Recovery delays, infrastructure funding gaps, fragmented governance
Environment	Flood-adapted planning, green energy innovation, circular economy	Climate risk, land-use constraints, biodiversity loss

Sources: Compiled by Solve Property Group from multiple sources including NIEIR, REDS, NSW Reconstruction Authority, and local strategy documents (2024–2025).

3.4 Strategic Context: Lismore in the Regional System

3.4.1 Overview and Strategic Role

Lismore plays a foundational role as the regional centre and heart of the Northern Rivers. It functions as a core institutional, population and service hub for a wider region encompassing Kyogle, Richmond Valley, inland Tweed, Ballina, Byron hinterland and parts of other locations including Clarence Valley and beyond.

Strategically located between coastal growth zones and inland production areas, Lismore occupies a central position within the region's urban hierarchy—distinct from the tourism-driven economies of Byron Bay and Ballina, and complementary to the agricultural and freight functions of Casino and Kyogle. It performs a role that is both anchoring and enabling—serving as the centre of gravity for essential services while supporting economic and social connectivity across the broader region.

The city's strategic importance is reinforced by its concentration of region-serving infrastructure and institutions.

Lismore hosts the Northern NSW Local Health District's flagship referral hospital, St Vincent's private hospital and one of the largest rural health training facilities (UCRH).

Lismore hosts a key campus of Southern Cross University, a major TAFE NSW training precinct, regional-grade sporting facilities, is home to the Northern Rivers Performing Arts (NORPA), and has a broad mix of state and federal agency functions (such as Department of Communities and Justice, the NSW Reconstruction Authority, Rous County Council, Australian Defence Force and more).

These institutions do not serve Lismore alone—they act as regional engines, providing employment, education, care and governance functions for a population well beyond the city's boundary.

This influence is further amplified by Lismore's position within key regional systems. The city links Kyogle and Casino to the Northern Rivers' coastal economic spine via strategic transport corridors, supporting freight, service access and daily commuting.

Its university and health campuses form the backbone of a wider education, innovation and care economy, producing workforce pipelines that stretch across the region. Creative sector networks also converge in Lismore, with shared arts, music and performance circuits connecting the city to Byron Bay, Mullumbimby and the Tweed corridor. Critically, Lismore's zoning, land release and relative affordability shape access to workforce housing across at least five LGAs, influencing the movement and retention of essential workers across health, education and care sectors.

Lismore's demographic profile reinforces its strategic role. While the city has experienced slower population growth than coastal LGAs, it plays a stabilising function—absorbing public sector employment, offering specialist services and providing diverse housing options. It supports a broad socio-economic base, including students, working families, professionals, retirees and people with complex care needs. This diversity contributes to institutional depth, economic resilience and service capacity.

Economically, Lismore's foundation is service-oriented. Key sectors include health care and social assistance, education and training, public administration, retail, construction and professional services. These industries are not only vital to the local economy but are deeply intertwined with the broader functioning of the Northern Rivers. The city also hosts a growing creative and cultural economy, a resilient agricultural hinterland and emerging potential in the circular economy and renewable energy sectors. Nonetheless, Lismore faces structural challenges—labour shortages, housing constraints, infrastructure gaps and climate exposure—all of which shape the trajectory of its transformation.

As the Northern Rivers continues to grow, diversify and decentralise, Lismore's strategic role is becoming more—not less—important. Its capacity to provide coordinated, equitable access to essential services, employment, housing, and infrastructure will determine not only its own prosperity but also that of the broader region. Future planning must embrace Lismore's regional interdependencies and institutional value, supporting its evolution as the inland anchor of one of New South Wales' most dynamic and interconnected regions.

3.4.2 First Nations Leadership and Presence

Lismore's strategic role is deeply grounded in the strength and leadership of the Widjabul Wia-bal people, whose enduring connection to Country forms part of the broader Bundjalung Nation, spanning across and beyond the Northern Rivers. This cultural and civic lineage continues to shape the city's identity, governance, and regional significance today.

Lismore is home to a growing network of First Nations–owned businesses and community-led organisations, as well as nationally recognised institutions such as the Koori Mail, proudly known as 'The Voice of Indigenous Australia'. These entities contribute not only to the city's economy, but to its role as a centre of First Nations innovation, communication, healing, and cultural resurgence.

3.4.2.1 First Nations Businesses & Organisations

There are many First Nations–owned or -led enterprises in Lismore, spanning media, health, construction, consultancy, culture and social services, These initiatives reflect both economic value

and cultural vitality, illustrating Lismore's rich tapestry of First Nations entrepreneurship and community leadership. By a local count, there are 32 indigenous-owned businesses in Lismore, representing 1% of all businesses.

3.4.2.2 Cultural & Governance

Lismore also hosts a range of organisations that reflect the breadth of First Nations leadership and governance—spanning land rights, cultural knowledge, planning, native title, community development and national policy influence:

Local Aboriginal Land Council and a Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) represent native title rights and support governance frameworks.
Lismore hosts significant national events such as the Koori Knockout, strengthening cultural networks and regional identity.
Local First Nations leaders are actively engaged in pivotal initiatives, including the NSW Treaty Commission, Net Zero Commission, Connecting with Country Framework (Northern Rivers pilot) led by Jagun Alliance, and the Integrated Knowledge Systems project via Conservation Futures.

3.4.3 Economic Identity and Employment Structure

Lismore's economy is defined by its service base and is deeply integrated into regional workforce flows. It supports key employment sectors that underpin Northern Rivers' broader socio-economic infrastructure.

Lismore's economy is distinguished by its service-oriented structure and the scale of its contribution to regional workforce capacity. It plays a unique and central role in sustaining the socio-economic fabric of the Northern Rivers, functioning not only as a local employment centre but as a critical node in the wider regional labour and industry network. The city's economic profile is defined by sectors that are foundational to regional wellbeing—health care, education, retail, and construction—all of which reflect its institutional density and population-serving role.

As of 2024, Lismore's employment landscape is led by health care and social assistance, which accounts for 25.8% of all jobs in the LGA. This is followed by retail trade (11.0%), education and training (10.9%), and construction (9.4%), each reflecting strong and sustained demand from both the resident population and a wider regional catchment. Public administration and safety (4.9%), accommodation and food services (5.1%), and professional, scientific and technical services (5.2%) provide further economic depth, while agriculture and manufacturing, together contributing approximately 10%, reflect the city's rural interface and processing functions.

Lismore's economic role cannot be understood in isolation from the broader region. Its core institutions—Lismore Base Hospital, Southern Cross University, and TAFE NSW—serve as engines of employment and training that extend well beyond the city's boundaries.

The Lismore Base Hospital functions as the principal trauma and referral centre for Northern NSW, supporting clinical services, specialist care, and a growing allied health workforce. Southern Cross

University provides tertiary education not only for local students but also for national and international cohorts, while increasingly partnering with industry to support innovation and applied research.

Lismore has a range of other organisations that reinforce its role as a health and education hub for the Northern Rivers. St Vincent's Private Hospital provides a complementary layer of specialist and elective care alongside the public system, with a strong focus on surgical services, palliative care, and allied health. Together with the University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH)—one of the largest rural health training facilities in Australia—these institutions create a nationally significant cluster for rural and regional health workforce development.

The co-location of clinical services, training infrastructure and research partnerships positions Lismore as a leader in integrated regional care. These institutions not only serve local residents, but also attract students, specialists and patients from across Northern NSW and Southern Queensland. The ongoing expansion of aged care, NDIS-related services, and community health providers further contributes to Lismore's role as a regional health economy anchor

TAFE NSW Lismore is one of the region's key vocational education providers, helping to bridge skills gaps in trades, aged care, education, and digital literacy—areas all flagged as critical growth needs in the Northern Rivers economy.

As one of Lismore's most significant employers and industrial anchors, Norco Cooperative Limited (Norco) plays a central role in the city's agribusiness and manufacturing economy.

Norco is one of Australia's oldest and most significant agricultural cooperatives, founded in 1895 and headquartered in Lismore, NSW. Owned by its 290+ farmer members across Northern NSW and Southeast Queensland, Norco operates as a vertically integrated business spanning dairy farming, milk processing, ice cream manufacturing, and rural supply retail.

In Lismore, Norco is a major employer and long-standing contributor to the regional economy. The city hosts Norco's primary milk and ice cream processing facilities—producing both branded products and contract-manufactured goods for national and international markets. Norco's operations support not only primary production in the Northern Rivers but also downstream logistics, packaging, and food manufacturing industries.

Despite being severely impacted by the 2022 floods, Norco has committed to reinvestment and long-term recovery, including plans to rebuild and modernise its ice cream facility. This positions the company as a critical player in Lismore's industrial renewal, regional food security, and future-focused value-added agri-business sector.

These institutions are not only major employers but serve a strategic role in workforce development across the region. They support career transitions, skilled migration and local pathways into professions that are essential to the sustainability of regional services.

Importantly, they provide the basis for further economic specialisation and diversification—particularly in areas such as health technology, education exports, regional innovation and workforce inclusion.

In summary, Lismore's economic structure is not defined solely by industry output or local consumption. It is defined by its strategic function: enabling the delivery of essential services across a diverse and dispersed regional population. Its institutions, labour market and infrastructure together position Lismore as an indispensable contributor to the performance, resilience, and future competitiveness of the broader Northern Rivers region.

3.4.4 Post-Flood Impacts and Regional Ripple Effects

The 2022 flood disaster marked a turning point not only for Lismore, but for the stability and resilience of the Northern Rivers as a whole. While the immediate physical damage was concentrated in Lismore's urban core—including the CBD, North Lismore and South Lismore—the economic, social and institutional disruption extended well beyond the urban centre, with many villages, such as The Channon, being significantly impacted too. The event exposed the region's dependence on Lismore's infrastructure, services and economic functions and highlighted the vulnerability of centralised systems when critical hubs are compromised.

The flooding of community and service facilities, education facilities and commercial centres disrupted regional continuity in care, training and economic coordination. Aged care services, community health clinics and disability providers were forced to suspend or relocate operations, creating gaps in service delivery for vulnerable populations across surrounding LGAs.

Early childhood centres, secondary schools, and student accommodation were severely affected, displacing hundreds of learners and placing additional pressure on neighbouring education networks. The small business ecosystem—already under pressure from shifting economic conditions—experienced large-scale losses, especially among the city's service providers, logistics operators and professional networks that support both local residents and regional clients.

The disruption to Lismore's institutional and commercial base has had cascading effects on regional employment, investment confidence, and access to essential services. Health and education service backlogs persist, particularly in specialist and community-based roles. The temporary loss—and in some cases, permanent closure—of critical facilities has intensified competition for limited infrastructure and personnel in neighbouring towns. These ripple effects have underscored the extent to which Lismore's functioning is interlinked with regional wellbeing.

Although significant funding has been committed to land buybacks, house raising, and reconstruction through state and federal recovery programs, the local economy remains in a phase of adjustment and uncertainty. The pace and nature of rebuilding have been shaped by complex factors: climate-related investment hesitancy, property insurance limitations, fragmented governance and the need to plan differently for future land use and asset resilience. Many flood-affected areas remain under planning review, limiting reinvestment and leaving key corridors of the city in limbo.

At a regional scale, the disaster has also contributed to housing system distortion. Displaced households from Lismore have added pressure to rental markets in Casino, Ballina, Kyogle and even southern Gold Coast suburbs. Workforce attraction and retention have become more difficult, particularly in critical sectors such as health, construction, hospitality and education. These effects

are compounded by labour shortages, limited housing supply and the psychological toll of prolonged recovery timelines.

The strategic challenge now facing Lismore—and by extension, the Northern Rivers—is to shift from recovery to regeneration. This will require more than asset replacement. It demands an integrated approach to urban transformation, infrastructure adaptation and institutional renewal. The city's role as the inland capital of the region must be resecured through investment in flood-resilient systems, coordinated planning and renewed civic confidence. As the region looks ahead, Lismore's future will be a litmus test for how regional Australia responds not only to natural disaster—but to the deeper challenge of building places that are fit for a changing climate, an evolving population and a dynamic regional economy.

3.4.5 Housing, Urban Form and Regional Stability

Lismore's housing system is a critical enabler of regional stability. As the principal inland service hub of the Northern Rivers, its housing capacity affects not only local residents, but also key workers, students, carers and service providers who commute from or rely on the city.

Increasingly, Lismore's challenge is not simply the quantity of homes, but the lack of diverse, well-located housing choices that meet the needs of its changing population and workforce.

The housing market remains under significant pressure. Vacancy rates in the Lismore-Ballina statistical area have remained below 1.3% since mid-2023, well under the 2.5–3% level typically considered healthy. Recent data (Cotality, May 2025) shows Lismore's median house price has continued its upward trend, reaching $627,500—a further 4.5% quarterly increase since February 2025. Meanwhile, rents across the Northern Rivers rose by over 11% over the past 12 months, with three-bedroom house rents in Lismore now averaging $545 per week (SQM Research, 2025). These increases are particularly challenging for low- and moderate-income households and essential workers.

The loss of housing stock from the 2022 floods is still being felt. More than 1,500 homes in North and South Lismore were impacted, with over 900 classified as uninhabitable or eligible for voluntary buybacks. While state-supported programs such as the Resilient Homes and Resilient Lands initiatives have improved long-term planning certainty, rebuilding activity remains uneven and constrained by insurance gaps, infrastructure readiness, and land supply constraints. As a result, pressure has shifted onto inland towns such as Casino, Kyogle and Alstonville, where demand is now outpacing available supply and driving up prices in traditionally lower-cost areas.

Across the city, the availability of housing choices is increasingly limited. Smaller-format dwellings for downsizers and singles remain in short supply, as do townhouses, key worker rentals, supported housing for vulnerable groups and purpose-built student accommodation. Housing approvals have recovered slowly since the floods, with new dwellings approved across the Lismore LGA generally lower than pre-flood trends. Land release pipelines remain thin, with most zoned land constrained by flooding, slope, or infrastructure capacity. These factors are contributing to longer development timeframes and reduced investor certainty.

The city has identified strategic growth fronts in East Lismore, Goonellabah, and peri-urban corridors as priority locations for flood-resilient residential development. These areas offer opportunities for diversified housing formats—such as duplexes, low-rise apartments, and co-living options—that can better accommodate a wider range of household types, life stages and incomes. However, unlocking these opportunities will require coordinated action across planning, infrastructure and delivery partners. In particular utilities, roads, and drainage upgrades must be aligned with zoning reform and staged land release strategies.

Strategically, Lismore's housing system plays a central role in the region's economic recovery, workforce sustainability, and service access. Employers in health, aged care, construction and education report persistent recruitment challenges due to a lack of housing options within commuting distance. As regional population growth continues, Lismore must expand both the supply and diversity of housing, ensuring strong connections to employment, transport, and essential services.

The strategic priority moving forward is to provide a greater spectrum of housing choice—ranging from higher-density infill, to supported rentals, to family homes in resilient greenfield locations. By investing in well-designed, inclusive and connected housing precincts, Lismore can reinforce its position as the institutional and workforce anchor of the inland Northern Rivers—and deliver lasting regional stability through a housing system fit for the future.

3.4.6 Labour Force and Regional Skills Integration

Lismore plays a pivotal role in shaping the Northern Rivers' labour market and training ecosystem. As a regional employment hub, the city attracts skilled professionals from surrounding LGAs—including educators, healthcare workers and public sector staff—who commute into Lismore for work across health precincts, schools and administrative centres. More than 65% of Lismore's workforce lives outside the LGA, underscoring the city's importance as a regional employment destination. This interdependence makes the strength and stability of Lismore's labour market critical to the broader functioning of the Northern Rivers economy.

The 2022 floods had a destabilising effect on this system. Hundreds of workers—particularly in health care, aged care, education and hospitality—were displaced, and many have not returned. Staff shortages became acute in the months following the disaster, as the availability of accommodation and support services declined. Workforce attrition, burnout and relocation undermined service delivery at precisely the time regional demand for care, reconstruction and mental health support was rising. Small businesses, already operating within thin margins, faced increased difficulty in retaining staff due to wage competition, housing shortages and limited flexibility in working arrangements.

In response, the city's workforce strategy is shifting toward more integrated, future-ready approaches. Lismore's tertiary and vocational institutions—Southern Cross University and TAFE NSW—play an increasingly central role in rebuilding the regional labour market. Southern Cross University's programs in education, health, and environmental sciences continue to anchor long-term workforce pipelines, while TAFE NSW has expanded course delivery in construction, aged care, early childhood education and community services. Partnerships between these institutions and

employers across the region are now essential to respond to growing labour gaps in health care, trades, and the clean energy sector.

At a regional level, there is a growing emphasis on portable skills systems, including the use of micro-credentials, stackable qualifications, and digital licensing that enable professionals to move across jurisdictions. This is particularly important for workers in sectors that cross LGA boundaries—such as community care, construction, education and the NDIS. Programs that support regional apprenticeships, job mobility and re-skilling (particularly for flood-affected or displaced workers) are emerging as critical elements of a resilient labour force strategy.

Jobs and Skills Australia has identified the Northern Rivers as one of the regions most vulnerable to labour shortages over the next five years, with aged care, allied health, early childhood education and construction trades listed among the top priority sectors. These shortages are compounded by limited rental availability and an ageing population, which constrains both workforce participation and succession.

Strategic planning in Lismore must therefore move beyond traditional workforce supply models to embrace regional integration, industry co-design and place-based training initiatives. This includes ensuring that new housing precincts are aligned with key employment hubs, that digital and transport connectivity supports commuting and telework, and that education and training providers are resourced to lead workforce transformation across sectors most vital to regional recovery and resilience.

3.4.7 Infrastructure, Recovery and Strategic Planning

Lismore's infrastructure network is entering a period of generational recalibration. The city now faces the dual imperative of managing legacy recovery works while shifting decisively toward a long-term strategic investment agenda. This agenda must be regionally aware, climate-adapted and capable of supporting future population and employment growth in both the city and its broader service catchment**.**

Current infrastructure gaps—particularly in high-ground areas identified for future development—are now a binding constraint on growth. Roads, stormwater, water and wastewater systems in certain precincts require targeted and costly upgrades before housing and employment land can be unlocked at scale.

Beyond core utilities and transport, the strategic infrastructure task now also includes enabling digital connectivity, precinct-scale resilience features, and public domain upgrades that restore confidence in Lismore's civic future. Interagency coordination between the NSW Reconstruction Authority, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI), Infrastructure NSW, and Council has made progress in aligning planning and infrastructure overlays, but delivery remains uneven and complex.

Critically, Lismore's infrastructure function is not just about servicing local land. It supports a regional institutional system—one that spans education, health, community services and regional logistics. Infrastructure decisions made today must anticipate this broader role. They must align not

only with current recovery needs, but also with emerging regional economic drivers—such as workforce mobility, inter-LGA service networks, and inland housing redistribution.

Strategic infrastructure planning is also central to investor confidence. In the post-disaster context, development interest is shaped as much by infrastructure certainty as by zoning or demand fundamentals. Lismore's ability to deliver infrastructure to key employment, housing and institutional precincts—at pace and with climate resilience embedded—will shape its long-term capacity to attract public and private investment.

Looking ahead, the opportunity for Lismore is not just to close current infrastructure gaps, but to reshape its delivery model. This includes identifying catalytic projects that unlock housing, jobs and regional service continuity, and packaging them into investable, staged delivery frameworks. It also means embedding infrastructure sequencing into statutory planning instruments to avoid further fragmentation. In this way, infrastructure becomes more than a recovery response—it becomes the enabling logic of Lismore's next chapter.

3.5 Local Government Strategies & Response – Global Lessons

3.5.1 Rebuilding with Purpose: Lessons from Cities That Rose After Disaster

Many local governments around the world facing similar challenges to Lismore — including disaster recovery, regional economic renewal and climate adaptation — have implemented bold and innovative strategies to reposition themselves as resilient, inclusive and opportunity-driven places.

Local governments across the globe are increasingly at the frontline of complex challenges—natural disasters, climate adaptation, regional inequality, and economic restructuring. In response, many have pioneered bold, place-specific strategies to rebuild stronger, enhance resilience, and reposition their economies for long-term sustainability. The experience of other flood-affected, post-industrial, and regional cities provides valuable guidance for Lismore as it charts its future following the 2022 flood crisis.

3.5.2 Emerging Themes and Strategic Innovations

These international and Australian examples demonstrate how local governments have transformed adversity into opportunity through bold leadership, community co-design, infrastructure reform and institutional innovation. While each response is context-specific, the case studies share common threads of inclusive planning, strategic investment and integrated recovery—offering valuable insights for Lismore as it moves from crisis response to long-term regional transformation.

- **Post-Disaster Urban Reinvention (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, USA):** After the 2008 floods inundated over 10 square miles of the city, Cedar Rapids developed a green infrastructure plan, transitioned to flood-safe downtown zoning and reinvested in civic and cultural assets. Public consultation and federal-local partnerships were central to building community trust and driving investment.

- **Climate-Ready Infrastructure (Room for the River, Netherlands):** Dutch municipalities moved away from defensive engineering toward adaptation—intentionally making space for rivers through land swaps, parklands and dual-purpose flood zones that also function as public amenities.
- **Placemaking & Civic Renewal (New Orleans, USA):** In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the city implemented neighbourhood-led planning, zoning for affordable housing and support for cultural and creative industries as drivers of identity, equity and urban revival.
- **Rural Innovation Hubs (Bend, OR & Boulder, CO, USA):** Small inland cities positioned themselves as lifestyle and knowledge-worker destinations by investing in co-working spaces, smart infrastructure and creative precincts to attract remote workers and "lifestyle entrepreneurs."
- **Localised Procurement & Regional Compacts (Preston, UK):** The Preston Model showed how councils, hospitals and universities can redirect procurement spend locally to stimulate SMEs, build community wealth and keep jobs within the regional economy.
- **Circular Economy & Zero-Waste Urbanism (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain):** This mid-sized city transitioned to a circular economy model with a focus on decentralised energy, zero-waste systems, local food networks, and SME innovation support.
- **Smart Repopulation (Kamiyama, Japan):** A remote rural town reversed decades of population decline by offering affordable housing, strong digital connectivity and cultural programs to attract urban creatives and remote workers.
- **Resilient Waterfront Revitalisation (Rockhampton, QLD):** In post-flood recovery, Rockhampton turned its riverfront into a civic and cultural asset using flood-tolerant public realm design, tourism infrastructure and heritage integration.
- **CleanTech & Agri-Innovation Precincts (Mildura & Gippsland, VIC):** These inland councils formed public-private partnerships around regional innovation precincts focused on clean energy, advanced horticulture, carbon farming and agribusiness clustering.
- **Integrated Housing & Civic Renewal (Christchurch, NZ):** Following the 2011 earthquake, the city restructured its planning system to enable new housing typologies, green infrastructure, civic space upgrades and spatial equity through precinct-based development.

3.5.3 Lessons for Lismore

While each place has a unique context, the most relevant lessons for Lismore reflect the need for integration, ambition and regional positioning:

- **Recovery must transition into transformation:** Cities that progressed most successfully did not merely replace damaged infrastructure—they used recovery as a launchpad to rethink urban form, institutional coordination and land use strategy.

- **Place-based identity is an economic asset:** Cultural, creative and environmental values were harnessed not just as community strengths but as economic differentiators—especially in attracting visitors, investment, and new residents.
- **Cross-sector alignment is essential:** Effective responses required synchronisation across planning, health, housing, education, environment and economic development—with local government often acting as convener.
- **Anchor institutions play a regional role:** Universities, hospitals and TAFEs were instrumental in workforce recovery, skills pipelines, and investment attraction—particularly when linked to innovation precincts or training hubs.
- **Housing and land use are pivotal:** Precinct-scale land acquisition, zoning reform and resilient housing design were key tools in delivering both short-term recovery and long-term affordability, sustainability and equity.
- **Governance flexibility and trust-building are critical:** Reforms often succeeded where community consultation was embedded early and where governance allowed iterative, community-led decisions.

For Lismore, these case studies provide not only technical inspiration, but a call to lead regionally, plan boldly, and embrace a long-term horizon in shaping a more resilient and opportunity-rich future.

4 Local Snapshot

4.1 Socioeconomic Profile

Lismore City is a diverse regional community with a population of approximately 44,334 residents (2021 Census). The LGA includes the regional centre of Lismore, several villages (such as Clunes, Nimbin, and Bexhill) and a large rural hinterland.

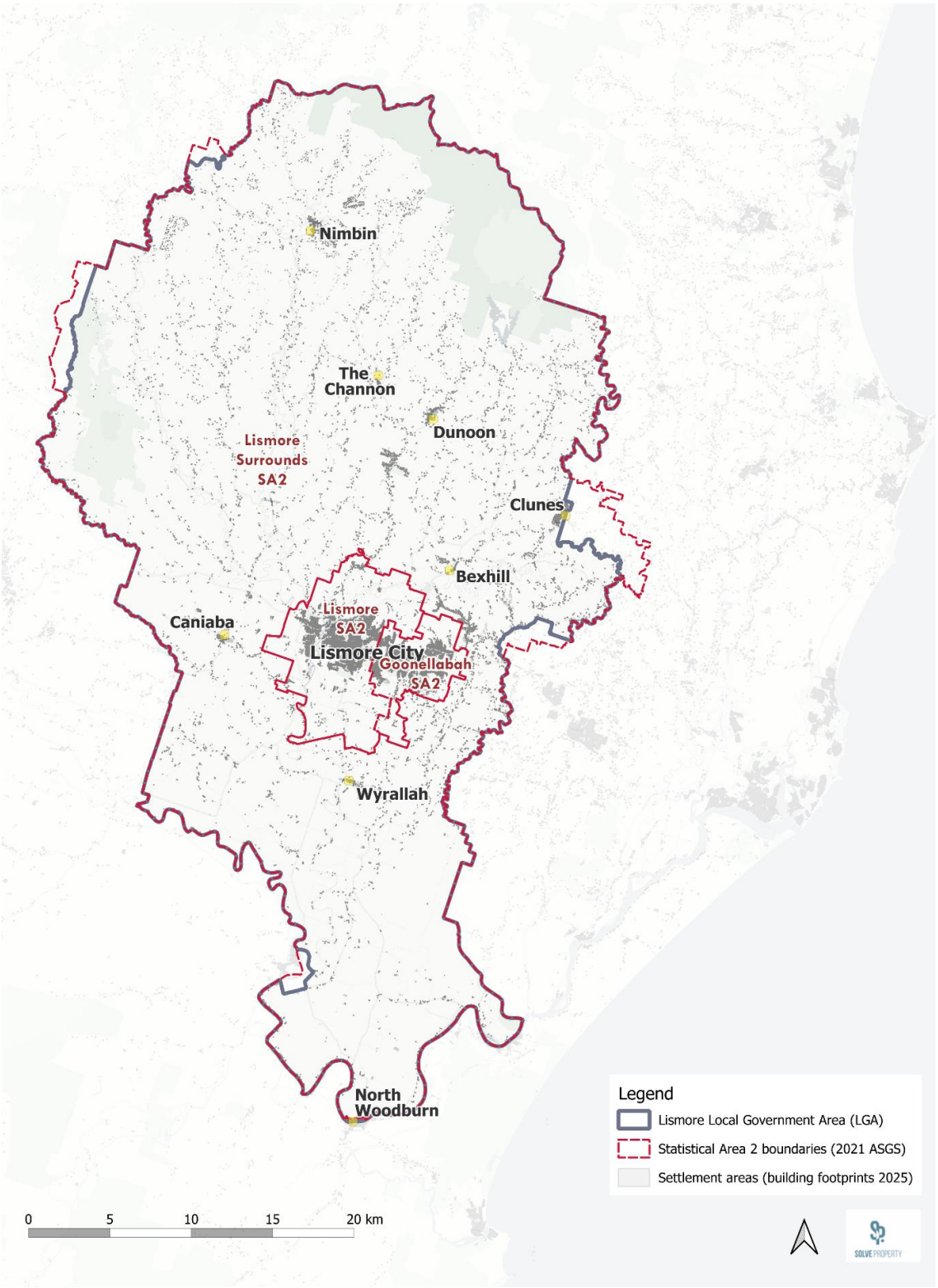
Key demographic and housing characteristics include:

- The median age in Lismore City is 43, reflecting a slightly older age profile than the NSW average (39), with rural areas tending to be older again.
- Approximately 82% of residents were born in Australia, with lower rates of overseas-born residents than urban coastal centres.
- Average household income in Lismore City is around $1,319 per week, slightly below the NSW regional average ($1,434), reflecting an older population, lower education levels and lower-income households.
- Detached housing dominates across the LGA, particularly in rural and village areas where over 84% of dwellings are free-standing homes.
- Renters make up more than a quarter of households in the LGA, with higher rates of rental in urban areas such as Lismore CBD and East Lismore.
- Lismore's average household size is 2.4 persons, reflecting a mix of families, retirees, and younger share households.

This profile highlights the need for diverse housing options, targeted services for older residents and continued efforts to strengthen economic participation across the LGA.

This section uses data by Statistical Area 2 (SA2) as defined by the ABS and the Australian Statistical Geographic Standard (ASGS) at of the most recent Census in 2021. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows Lismore's LGA boundary and the three SA2 boundaries that most closely match the LGA boundary – Lismore SA2, Goonellabah SA2, and Lismore Surrounds SA2.

Map 4.1 Lismore local government area & Statistical Area 2 boundaries



Sources: Australian Statistical Geographic Standard Edition 3, 2021; Informed Decisions 2024; Solve Property.

Table 4.1. Socio demographic profile, Census 2021

Census 2021	Lismore SA2	Goonellabah SA2	Lismore surrounds SA2	Lismore LGA
Key stats				
Census population	15,229	13,591	15,786	44,334
Average household size	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.4
Average household income (weekly)	$1,176	$1,325	$1,478	$1,319
Age distribution (% of population)				
Aged 0-19	22.59%	24.13%	22.65%	23.09%
Aged 20-34	18.88%	17.42%	11.55%	15.87%
Aged 35-54	25.02%	23.51%	26.86%	25.22%
Aged 55-64	14.18%	12.48%	18.03%	14.97%
Aged 65-74	11.10%	11.55%	14.69%	12.49%
Aged 75-84	5.60%	7.48%	4.82%	5.91%
Aged 85+	2.62%	3.43%	1.39%	2.44%
Median age	42	42	47	44
Birthplace (% of population)				
Australian born	82.2%	84.9%	78.5%	81.7%
Overseas born	17.8%	15.1%	21.5%	18.3%
Family type (% of household)				
Couple without children	17.6%	23.3%	27.5%	22.7%
Couple with children	15.8%	22.3%	24.1%	20.6%
One parent family	14.6%	13.0%	8.8%	12.2%
Lone person	31.8%	28.2%	18.9%	26.3%
Group household	5.3%	3.3%	3.4%	4.0%
Car ownership (% of population)				
0 car	4.6%	3.1%	0.9%	2.8%
1 car	29.7%	24.8%	15.8%	23.4%
2 cars	33.9%	41.5%	39.6%	38.1%
3+ cars	19.3%	24.0%	34.5%	26.0%
Dwelling structure (% of occupied private dwelling)				
Separate house	76.5%	78.1%	96.5%	83.5%
Semi-detached	11.6%	17.7%	0.7%	9.9%
Flat or apartment	8.1%	4.2%	1.4%	4.8%
Tenure type (% of occupied private dwelling)				
Own/buying home	59.8%	68.0%	81.1%	69.3%
Renting	37.4%	28.5%	14.2%	27.1%

Sources: ABS Census 2021.

4.2 Population

4.2.1 Recent Population Trends

As of June 2024, the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for Lismore City was 43,783, reflecting a slight decline of 0.27% from the previous year. This downturn is largely attributed to the significant impacts of the 2022 flood events, which led to the displacement of residents and challenges in housing and infrastructure.

Lismore City has experienced only marginal population growth over the past two decades, increasing from 42,721 in 2001 to 43,783 in 2024, an average annual growth rate of just 0.12%.

Over this 20-plus-year period to 2024, there has been some noticeable variation in the rate of growth. The Lismore City population recorded negligible growth between the early 2000s and 2010, but has remained stagnant, or even contracted, between the mid-2010s and 2024. This trend has been influenced in part by large-scale economic changes (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic), a growing

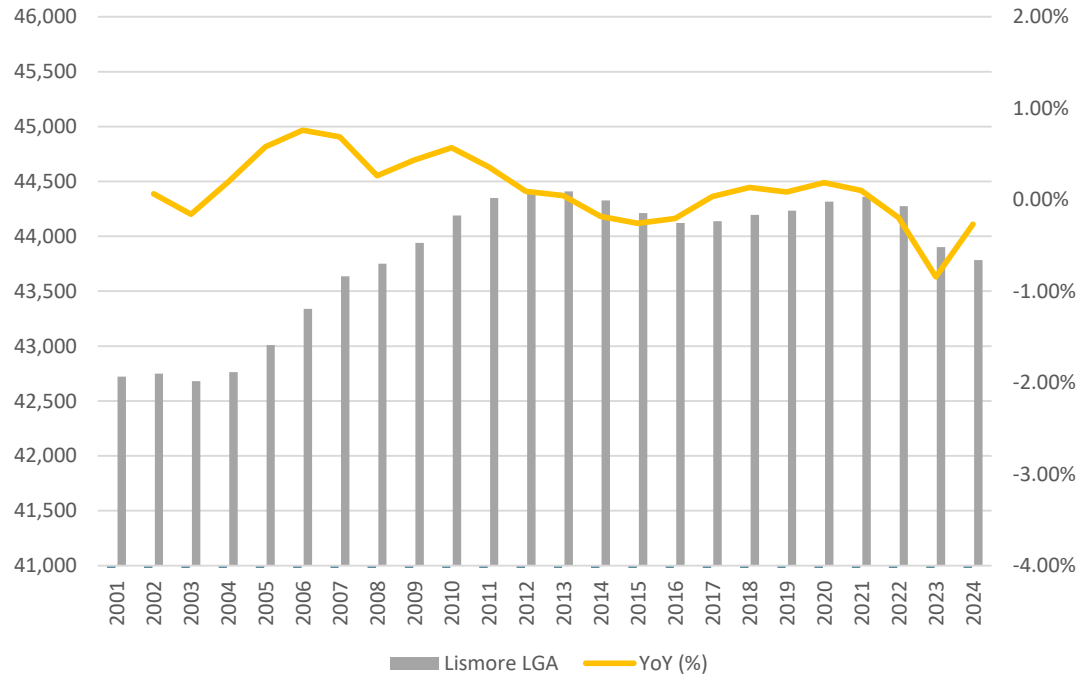
preference for coastal living with access to relatively affordable land, and a limited housing supply in Lismore.

Table 4.2. Population of Lismore & other settlement areas as at 2021 (Census)

Location	Population	
	People	%
Urban centres (65.0%)		
Lismore SA2	15,229	34.4%
Goonellabah SA2	13,591	30.7%
Other settlement areas (7.7%)		
Caniaba	438	1.0%
Richmond Hill	850	1.9%
Clunes	564	1.3%
Modanville	526	1.2%
Dunoon	513	1.2%
Nimbin	500	1.1%
Remainder of Lismore City (27.3%)		
Caniaba	12,123	27.3%
Total		
Lismore City (LGA)	44,334	100.0%

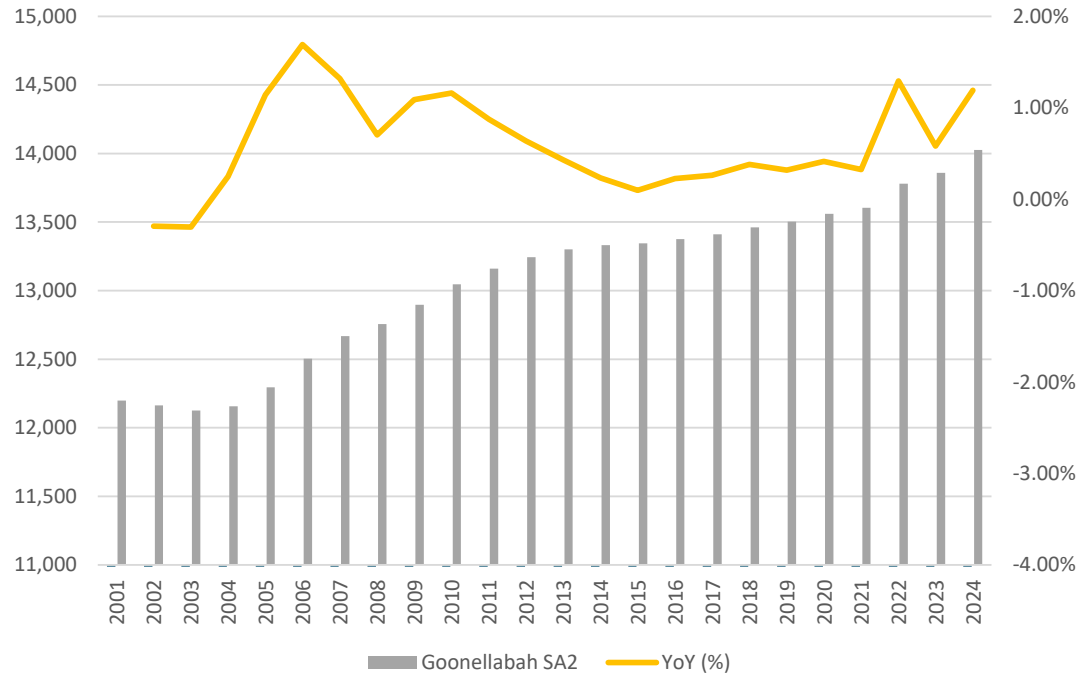
Sources: ABS 2021 Census.

Figure 4.1 Lismore LGA Historical Population, 2001-2024



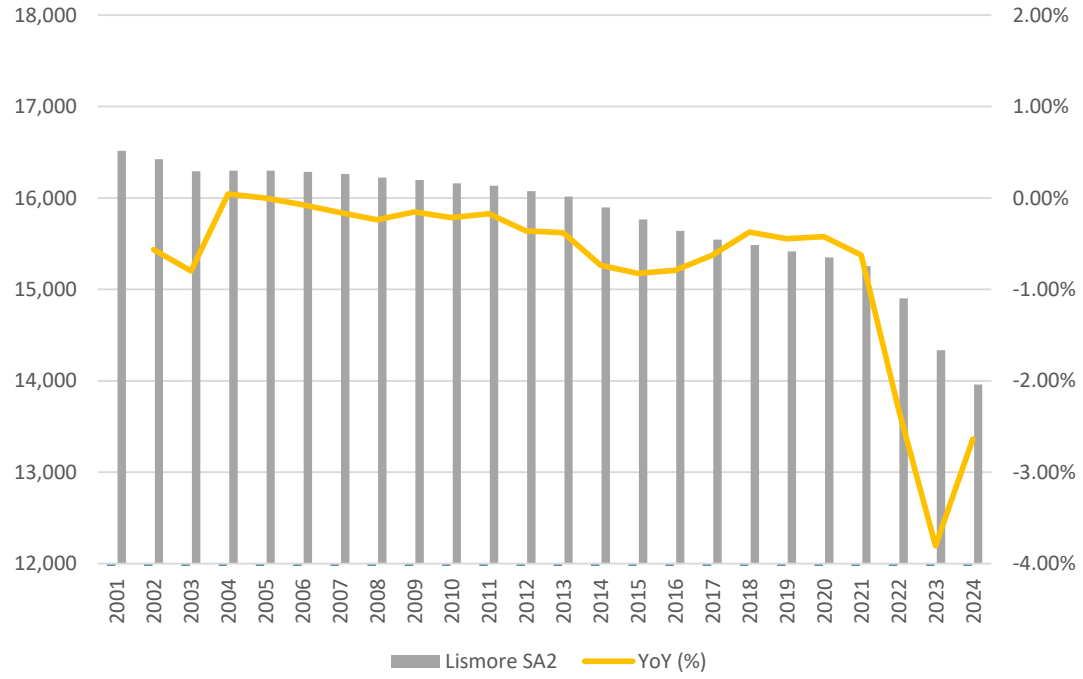
Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

Figure 4.2 Goonellabah SA2 Historical Population, 2001-2024



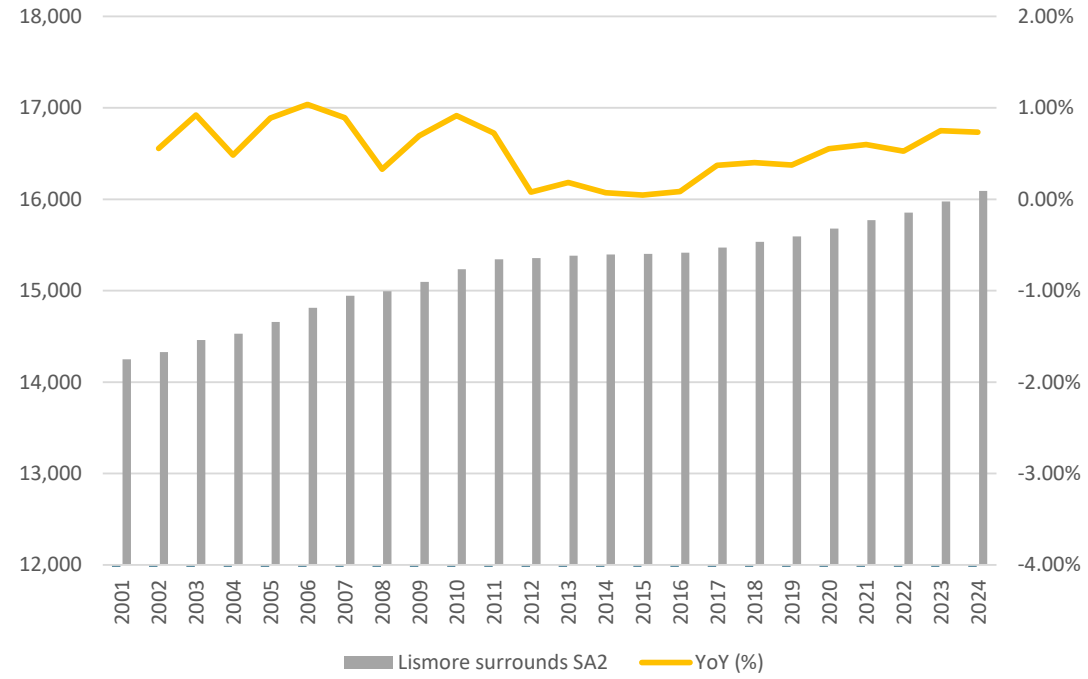
Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

Figure 4.3 Lismore SA2 Historical Population, 2001-2024



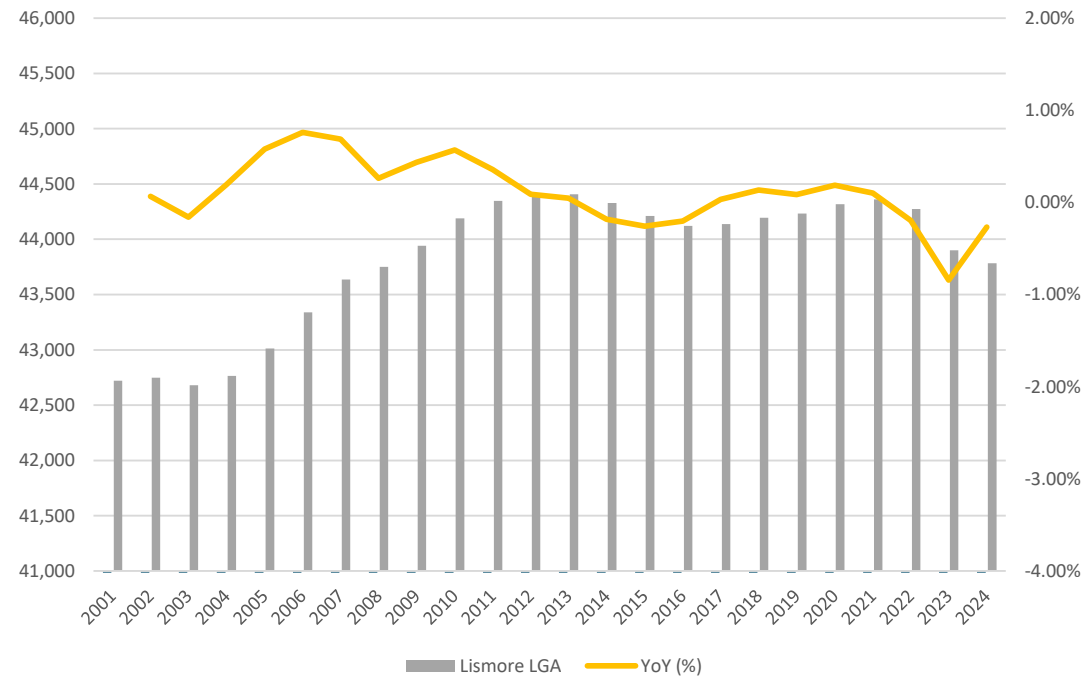
Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

Figure 4.4 Lismore surrounds SA2 Historical Population, 2001-2024



Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

Figure 4.5 Lismore City (LGA) Historical Population, 2001-2024



Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

4.2.2 Population Distribution and Growth Areas

Lismore's population is predominantly concentrated in urban areas, with approximately 63% residing in the urban centre and 37% in rural or village settings.

The Lismore SA2, which includes the Lismore city centre as well as North and South Lismore, has experienced periods of both stability and decline over the past two decades. Between 2001 and 2011, the population remained relatively steady. Since 2011, however, the area has experienced a consistent downward trend, with the population declining from around 14,200 to approximately 13,000 in 2024. This contraction is likely attributable to a combination of broader economic changes and more recent disruptions such as the 2022 flood events, which significantly impacted housing and displaced many residents.

Goonellabah SA2, situated to the east of the Lismore city centre, has historically functioned as a primary growth corridor for the LGA. The population increased steadily from just under 12,000 in 2001 to around 13,700 by 2017. While growth plateaued in the years that followed, more recent data indicates a modest recovery, with the population rising from approximately 13,200 in 2021 to 13,400 in 2024. This upward shift reflects a range of factors including renewed demand for housing in established urban areas, with Goonellabah continuing to serve as a key residential location within the Lismore urban footprint.

The Lismore surrounds SA2 comprises the rural hinterland and smaller townships and villages located outside the main urban areas. Over the past two decades, this area has maintained a stable population, increasing only marginally from approximately 14,200 in 2001 to 14,400 in 2024. While growth has been limited, the area continues to attract residents seeking a rural lifestyle within proximity to Lismore’s services and employment opportunities. Future residential development in this area will likely be influenced by infrastructure capacity, land use planning and the resilience of local communities.

4.2.3 DPHI Population Projections

The DPHI (2024) population projections 2021-41 for the Lismore City Council area and forward the weak trend observed in the growth of Lismore City over the recent past and over the period 2001-21. These projections reflect a ‘business-as-usual’ scenario for Council which contrasts with the recent growth experienced in Goonellabah and Lismore surrounds over 2001-21 and the growth projected for these areas.

The DPHI (2024) population projections estimate that Lismore City’s population will increase by approximately 2,100 people, or 4.7%, reaching a total of 46,463 by 2041 (Table 4.4.3). Proportionally, the fastest growth is expected in the 75–84 and 85+ age cohorts, which are projected to increase by a combined total of 2,889 people. In contrast, the population aged 55–74 is expected to decline by 917. This reflects a broader trend observed across inland regional Australia, where ageing populations are becoming increasingly prevalent**.**

This contrasts with the previous DPHI population projection (2022) for the Lismore City Council area which had the population declining by 3,920 from 43,420 in 2021 to 39,500 in 2041.

Table 4.4.3. DPHI (2024) Population Projections, Lismore City, 2021-41

Age cohort	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change (2021-41)	% change (2021-2041)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
0-19	10,422	10,400	10,220	10,141	10,202	-220	-2.1%	-0.1%
20-34	7,176	7,049	7,139	7,168	7,087	-89	-1.2%	-0.1%
35-54	11,189	11,189	11,371	11,631	11,631	442	4.0%	0.2%
55-64	6,608	6,094	5,896	5,752	5,887	-721	-10.9%	-0.6%
65-74	5,393	5,692	5,577	5,289	5,197	-196	-3.6%	-0.2%
75-84	2,534	3,248	3,878	4,168	4,188	1,654	65.3%	2.5%
85+	1,039	1,200	1,441	1,905	2,274	1,235	118.9%	4.0%
Total	**44,361**	**44,872**	**45,522**	**46,054**	**46,466**	**2,105**	**4.7%**	**0.2%**

Sources: DPHI NSW 2024.

DPHI has also released population projections based on SA2 areas. The following tables show the population projections in terms of Lismore SA2, Goonellabah SA2, and Lismore surrounds SA2.

Between 2021 and 2041, the population of the Lismore SA2 is expected to experience negligible growth, increasing by just 48 people to reach a total of 15,303 by 2041. Over the same period, the population across the remainder of Lismore City is projected to grow by approximately 2,066 people. In terms of age profile, the projected trend due to an aging population is evident in both, however, is more pronounced outside Lismore SA2.

Table 4.4.4. DPHI (2024) Population Projections, Lismore SA2, 2021-41

Age cohort	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change (2021-41)	% change (2021-2041)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
0-19	3,508	3,508	3,355	3,272	3,255	-253	-7.2%	-0.4%
20-34	2,936	2,655	2,638	2,605	2,543	-393	-13.4%	-0.7%
35-54	3,812	3,961	4,010	4,059	4,010	198	5.2%	0.3%
55-64	2,143	2,088	2,065	2,035	2,104	-39	-1.8%	-0.1%
65-74	1,642	1,686	1,654	1,607	1,588	-54	-3.3%	-0.2%
75-84	829	986	1,165	1,219	1,222	393	47.4%	2.0%
85+	385	382	394	497	581	196	50.9%	2.1%
Total	**15,255**	**15,266**	**15,281**	**15,294**	**15,303**	**48**	**0.3%**	**0.0%**

Sources: DPHI NSW 2024

Table 4.4.5. DPHI (2024) Population Projections, Goonellabah SA2, 2021-41

Age cohort	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change (2021-41)	% change (2021-2041)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
0-19	3,350	3,447	3,474	3,475	3,511	161	4.8%	0.2%
20-34	2,414	2,509	2,582	2,648	2,653	239	9.9%	0.5%
35-54	3,184	3,100	3,196	3,292	3,317	133	4.2%	0.2%
55-64	1,682	1,535	1,477	1,405	1,434	-248	-14.7%	-0.8%
65-74	1,536	1,636	1,612	1,532	1,510	-26	-1.7%	-0.1%
75-84	979	1,110	1,248	1,362	1,379	400	40.9%	1.7%
85+	459	531	619	766	891	432	94.1%	3.4%
Total	**13,604**	**13,868**	**14,208**	**14,480**	**14,695**	**1,091**	**8.0%**	**0.4%**

Sources: DPHI NSW 2024

Table 4.4.6. DPHI (2024) Population Projections, Lismore surrounds SA2, 2021-41

Age cohort	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Change (2021-41)	% change (2021-2041)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
0-19	3,614	3,508	3,455	3,463	3,508	-106	-2.9%	-0.1%
20-34	1,868	1,922	1,952	1,943	1,919	51	2.7%	0.1%
35-54	4,261	4,201	4,246	4,364	4,386	125	2.9%	0.1%
55-64	2,839	2,514	2,389	2,348	2,386	-453	-16.0%	-0.9%
65-74	2,260	2,407	2,350	2,181	2,125	-135	-6.0%	-0.3%
75-84	729	1,166	1,485	1,610	1,610	881	120.9%	4.0%
85+	201	288	433	650	813	612	304.5%	7.2%
Total	**15,772**	**16,006**	**16,310**	**16,559**	**16,747**	**975**	**6.2%**	**0.3%**

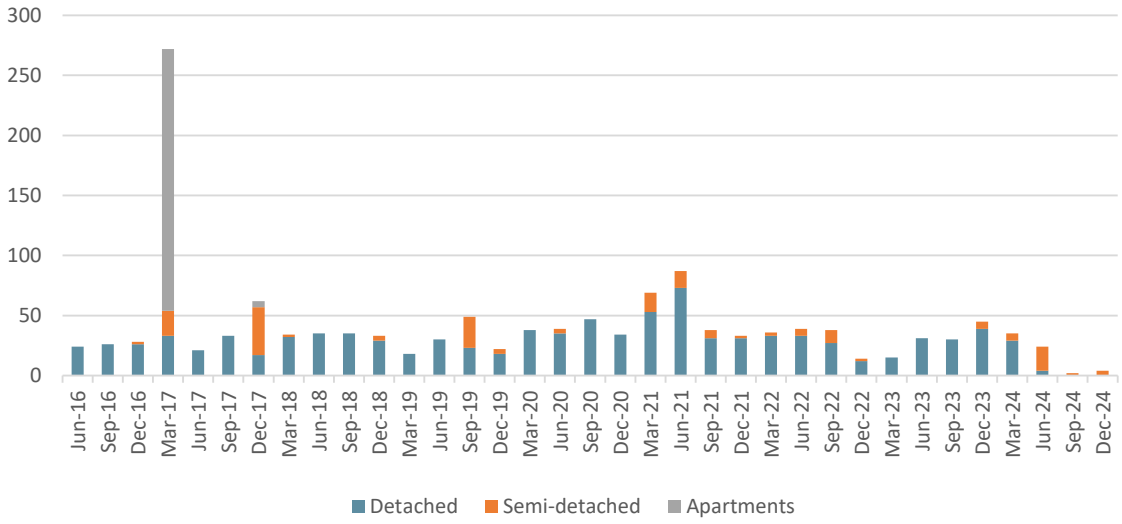
Sources: DPHI NSW 2024

The DPHI (2024) population projections for Lismore City represents an upward revision of approximately 6,000 people compared to the DPHI's previous projections. However, this upward revision still appears conservative. The projected growth of 2,100 people between 2021 and 2041 implies demand for around 1,740 additional dwellings, equivalent to just 87 dwellings per year. This is more than 50% below the historical average of 170 dwellings per annum delivered between 2016 and 2025 (Figure 4.6).

The rationale behind the conservative assumptions in the latest projections is unclear. The current estimates seem to suggest that Lismore City (and the broader Northern Rivers region) will become increasingly inaccessible to newcomers, including both residents and visitors.

According to the latest NSW DP&E projections, the outlook for current and future residents of the Lismore region is equally challenging. The implied demographic structure is not one that most local households would aspire to. Positive change will require appropriate land use planning for both housing and employment opportunities.

Figure 4.6 Building approvals, Lismore City, 2016-2025



Sources: ABS Estimated Resident Population.

4.2.4 Regional Growth Trends and Comparative Analysis

The DPHI projections adopt a notably conservative outlook for the broader Northern Rivers region. Between 2021 and 2041, the region's population is projected to increase from approximately 311,000 to 335,864 residents—an uplift of just 24,832 people or 8.0% over 20 years. This translates to a modest compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of only 0.4%.

The rationale for these subdued projections is not clearly articulated, but the underlying assumptions appear to suggest that the Northern Rivers, Lismore City included, will become progressively less accessible to new residents and visitors alike. This outlook is at odds with the region's well-documented lifestyle appeal, ongoing recovery and rebuilding efforts and recent trends of regional in-migration driven by remote work and housing affordability pressures in metropolitan areas.

Among the region's local government areas, Ballina, Byron, and Tweed are forecast to experience the strongest population growth in both absolute and percentage terms. Tweed LGA is projected to gain nearly 9,910 residents, followed by Ballina (+5,184) and Byron (+4,012), with each of these LGAs growing at a CAGR of around 0.5%. This reflects their continued appeal as coastal lifestyle destinations with strong infrastructure, amenity offerings and employment opportunities.

In contrast, Lismore City is projected to experience significantly weaker growth. Its population is expected to increase by just 2,102 people between 2021 and 2041, equating to 4.7% growth and a CAGR of only 0.2%. This places Lismore among the slowest-growing LGAs in the region and underscores the need for a more proactive, interventionist approach to local population and economic development. Attracting and retaining younger, working-age populations, fostering local job creation, and capitalising on regional lifestyle strengths will be critical to improving Lismore's long-term growth trajectory and ensuring it remains competitive within the Northern Rivers.

Table 4.4.7. DPHI (2024) Population Projections, Northern Rivers, 2021-2041

LGA	2021	2041	Change (2021-41)	Change (2021-41)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
Ballina	46,196	51,380	5,184	11.2%	0.53%
Byron	36,106	40,118	4,012	11.1%	0.53%
Clarence Valley	54,212	56,485	2,273	4.2%	0.21%
Kyogle	9,346	9,669	323	3.5%	0.17%
Lismore	44,361	46,463	2,102	4.7%	0.23%
Richmond Valley	23,595	24,624	1,029	4.4%	0.21%
Tweed	97,216	107,125	9,909	10.2%	0.49%
Northern Rivers	**311,032**	**335,864**	**24,832**	**8.0%**	**0.38%**

Sources: DPHI NSW 2024.

4.2.5 Informed Decisions Population Projections

While the DPHI population projections are based on best-practice industry methodologies, it is important to distinguish between population projections and housing targets. The DPHI has previously raised concerns that some strategies have incorrectly interpreted population or dwelling projections as actual housing targets.

Several councils in the Northern Rivers region have instead adopted projections from Informed Decisions, which utilise data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the most recent Estimated Resident Population (ERP) updates. The Informed Decisions projections incorporate 2021 Census data and are generally considered to provide more accurate, locally nuanced projections than those prepared at the state level. Notably, recent documents such as the Lismore Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy have adopted these 'more optimistic' projections as the desired population target for Lismore City.

According to Informed Decisions, Lismore City is projected to gain more than 4,736 residents between 2021 and 2041, an increase of approximately 2,600 people compared to the DPHI (2024) projections. This implies a demand for approximately 3,216 additional dwellings over that period.

The Informed Decisions projections also extend to 2046 and indicate that Lismore City is expected to gain an additional 930 residents between 2041 and 2046. This implies a demand for approximately 904 additional dwellings over that five-year period.

Overall, the Informed Decisions forecasts indicate that more than 3,200 new homes will be required between 2021 and 2041, based on implied dwelling demand. The projections assume an average increase of 165 dwellings per year in Lismore City, reaching a total of 23,839 dwellings by 2046. This figure is broadly consistent with Lismore LGA's long-term average for residential building approvals, which has typically been around 170 approvals per annum.

Table 4.4.8. Forecast .ID Population Projections, Lismore City, 2021-46

Age cohort	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	Change (2021-41)	% change (2021-2041)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
0-19	10,428	10,623	10,334	10,172	10,235	10,242	-193	-1.9%	-0.09%
20-34	7,181	6,625	6,466	6,579	6,637	6,520	-544	-7.6%	-0.39%
35-54	11,182	11,116	11,086	11,007	10,810	10,875	-372	-3.3%	-0.17%
55-64	6,609	6,284	6,031	5,990	6,058	6,342	-551	-8.3%	-0.43%
65-74	5,401	6,424	6,896	6,716	6,646	6,683	1,245	23.1%	1.04%
75-84	2,524	3,367	4,504	5,476	5,888	5,825	3,364	133.3%	4.33%
85+	1,039	1,184	1,503	2,081	2,826	3,543	1,787	172.0%	5.13%
Total	**44,364**	**45,623**	**46,820**	**48,021**	**49,100**	**50,030**	**4,736**	**10.7%**	**0.51%**

Sources: ABS Informed Decisions.

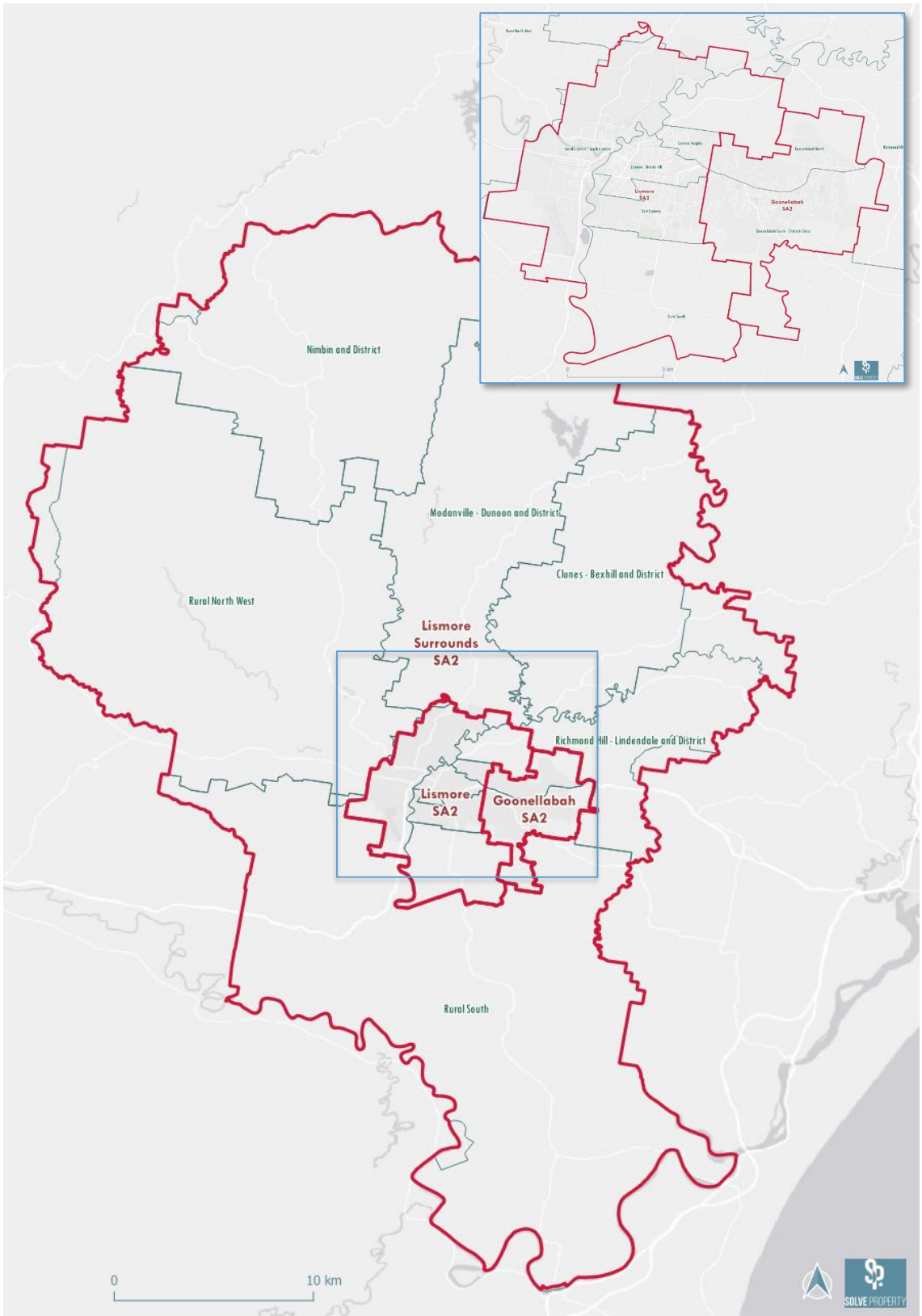
Although there is some mismatch between ABS statistical areas and the forecast areas defined by Informed Decisions (Map 4.2), the general trend indicates that the greatest growth in new dwelling

development within Lismore City is expected to occur in the urban centres (i.e. Lismore SA2 and Goonellabah SA2). The key growth areas, based on projected percentage change in dwellings between 2021 and 2046, are as follows:

- **Lismore SA2**: North Lismore – South Lismore (42.6%), East Lismore (24.8%)
- **Goonellabah SA2**: Goonellabah South – Chilcotts Grass (37.2%), Goonellabah North (26.8%)
- **Lismore Surrounds SA2**: Modanville – Dunoon (21.9%), Richmond Hill – Lindendale (32.9%), Nimbin (17.9%)

This highlights the importance of ensuring that land use planning and infrastructure investment are aligned to support growth in these key locations.

Map 4.2 Lismore – Statistical Area 2 and Informed Decisions boundaries



Sources: Australian Statistical Geographic Standard Edition 3, 2021; Informed Decisions 2024; Solve Property.

4.2.6 Lismore City Council Population - Aspirational Target

Lismore City Council is committed to pursuing aspirational growth aimed at stimulating key sectors of the local economy and, in doing so, lifting population growth onto a higher trajectory.

The Council has pointed to the example of Tamworth, which successfully transformed from a town of 27,000 people into a thriving regional city of 65,000, largely through strategic investment in industry and economic development. Achieving a similar outcome in Lismore will require a coordinated, multi-pronged approach. This includes attracting government agencies, fostering local business development and addressing current constraints in housing supply. These initiatives are essential not only to support a larger population but also to attract private sector investment and generate sustainable employment opportunities.

The Council considers a long-term aspirational population target of approximately 60,000 residents, an increase of 16,000 people above the 2021 population level. Achieving this target is expected to require the creation of approximately 6,000 to 7,000 new jobs, including around 2,500 to 3,000 within 'engine sector' sectors.

The Council also considers a more aspirational target for Council to grow its population to closer to 70,000, or by about 26,000 above its 2021 level. This target would require jobs growth of about 10,000 to 12,000 and growth in engine sector jobs of about 4,000 to 5,000. While the timeline for this growth is not fixed, it is broadly anticipated to occur over a 30 to 40-year horizon.

Table 4.4.9. Solve Property Population Projections, Lismore City, Aspirational Targets

Age cohort	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051	2056	Beyond 2056
0-19	10,220	10,404	10,745	11,431	12,261	12,629	13,084	15,485
20-34	6,347	6,573	7,526	8,069	8,595	9,046	10,318	13,159
35-54	10,972	11,084	10,706	10,874	11,380	11,604	11,100	11,510
55-64	6,286	6,656	6,950	6,975	7,049	7,788	8,180	9,412
65-74	5,995	6,382	6,934	7,550	7,778	8,551	9,287	11,697
75-84	3,086	3,215	3,485	4,110	4,805	5,062	5,422	7,416
85+	1,065	1,158	1,375	1,463	1,604	1,791	2,080	2,793
Total	**43,971**	**45,471**	**47,721**	**50,471**	**53,471**	**56,471**	**59,471**	**71,471**

Sources: DPHI NSW 2024

While the aspirational targets entail substantially higher growth population projections than the DPHI (2024) projections (and the Forecast .ID), policymakers need to be cognisant of the inherent uncertainty attached to all projections. Given the risk that not adequately planning for growth can be a footbrake on growth, there should be a bias to erring on the high side, and particularly to recognising the initiatives planned by Council to support higher than 'business-as-usual' growth.

4.2.7 Strategic Implications

The projected population growth, coupled with the need for flood-resilient infrastructure, underscores the importance of strategic planning. Key considerations include:

- Housing Development (aspirational targets): a long-term aspirational population target of approximately 60,000 to 70,000 residents, an increase of around 16,000 to 26,000 people above the 2021 population level. This would require additional 5,000 to 10,000 additional dwellings beyond 2046.
- Job creation: Achieving the long term population target of 60,000 to 70,000 residents is expected to require the creation of approximately 6,000 to 10,000 new jobs, including around 2,300 to 3,800 within engine room sectors.
- Infrastructure Planning: Enhancing infrastructure in growth areas, particularly in Goonellabah South - Chilcotts Grass, to support increased demand.
- Resilience Building: Implementing strategies to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters and support community recovery and growth.

4.2.7.1 Job Creation Requirements and Sector Opportunities

Achieving Lismore's aspirational population targets—whether to 60,000 or 70,000 residents—will require a corresponding uplift in the scale and diversity of local employment. Based on a standard population-to-employment ratio of approximately 0.4 jobs per additional resident, this equates to the creation of approximately 6,500 to 11,000 new jobs over a 30 to 40-year horizon.

These jobs are expected to emerge across a mix of traditional, strategic, and future-oriented industries. While many will be population-serving roles (in health, education, retail and construction), a significant share will need to come from "engine sectors" that drive economic value and attract external investment. In addition, a growing portion will arise from emerging and transformational industries aligned with climate action, digital technology, and sustainability transitions.

Initial modelling indicates the following breakdown:

- Short to medium term (Now to 2036) - This period focuses on immediate recovery, foundational infrastructure investment and enabling early-stage economic diversification.
- Long term (2036–2056+) - The second wave of growth is anticipated to follow from strategic investments, land release, economic repositioning and demographic momentum.

Table 4.4.. Short to Medium Term (Now to 2036)

Growth Scenario	Job Creation Target	Population-driven Sectors	Engine Sectors	Emerging Sectors
60,000 residents	~3,000 jobs	~1,650 jobs (55%)	~900 jobs (30%)	~450 jobs (15%)
70,000 residents	~5,000 jobs	~2,750 jobs (55%)	~1,500 jobs (30%)	~750 jobs (15%)

Sources: ABS, Solve Property Group.

Table 4.4.. Long Term (2036–2056+)

Growth Scenario	Job Creation Target	Population-driven Sectors	Engine Sectors	Emerging Sectors

60,000 residents	~3,500 jobs	~1,925 jobs (55%)	~1,050 jobs (30%)	~525 jobs (15%)
70,000 residents	~6,000 jobs	~3,300 jobs (55%)	~1,800 jobs (30%)	~900 jobs (15%)

Sources: ABS, Solve Property Group.

These sectors include the following:

- Population-driven sectors (approx. 55% of growth, these sectors respond directly to population growth and housing expansion. They are already under pressure in Lismore and will require workforce scaling from the outset):
    - Health care and social assistance (hospital, allied health, aged care, NDIS services)
    - Education and training (schools, SCU, TAFE, early childhood)
    - Retail, food and personal services
    - Local construction and trades supporting housing delivery.
- Engine sectors (approx. 30% of growth, in the short–medium term, investment in industrial land, logistics infrastructure and enterprise support will be critical to enabling job growth in these value-generating sectors):
    - Manufacturing (especially food processing, fabrication, regional supply chain activities)
    - Creative industries (music, visual arts, digital content, cultural production)
    - Agri-food and logistics (value-added farming, storage and transport)
    - Visitor economy and tourism (events, experiences, niche accommodation).
- Emerging/future sectors (approx. 15% of growth), The first wave of jobs in these sectors can be catalysed through demonstration projects, skills development and inclusion in precinct planning—especially in collaboration with SCU, local innovators and other organisations):
    - Clean energy and renewables (solar, bioenergy, battery storage)
    - Environmental services (ecosystem repair, circular economy, land management)
    - Digital and creative technology (remote services, creative tech, social innovation)
    - Cultural enterprise and knowledge economy jobs.

In terms of rationale and drivers, Lismore's employment strategy must respond to both immediate challenges and long-term opportunity:

- Short–medium term drivers (to 2036) include disaster recovery, housing acceleration, demand for essential services, and early momentum in creative and green sectors.
- Longer-term growth (to 2056+) will depend on successful infrastructure delivery, urban expansion, industry repositioning, and capacity to attract new residents and talent.

Without a proactive employment strategy, population growth targets will not be realised.

A constrained labour market—particularly in health, construction, and education—could limit the region's recovery and regeneration.

By contrast, planning for inclusive, future-focused job creation now will create compounding benefits—improving liveability, retention, and investment readiness across the city.

4.3 Housing

4.3.1 Dwelling Stock

As of 2021, there were approximately 18,500 dwellings in the Lismore City Council area. Detached dwellings dominate the built form, accounting for 77.5% of the total housing stock. Medium density dwellings (such as townhouses and duplexes) represent about 9.2%, with apartments making up a very small share (4.4%), mainly concentrated in the urban centres.

The urban area of Lismore has a more diverse housing mix, with higher proportions of medium density housing (13.5%) and a greater share of rental stock. By contrast, villages and rural areas are overwhelmingly made up of detached housing (92%), reflecting larger land sizes and lifestyle-oriented living.

Approximately 7.2% of dwellings across the LGA were unoccupied[1] on Census night 2021. This includes dwellings temporarily vacant due to leasing transitions, seasonal occupation (such as holiday homes or short-term rentals) and flood-impacted homes under repair or uninhabitable.

Table 4.4.10. Lismore & other centres dwelling stock, as at 2021 (Census)

Housing type	Urban centre		Other settlement areas						Other areas	Total
	Lismore SA2	Goonellabah SA2	Caniaba	Richmond Hill	Clunes	Modanville	Dunoon	Nimbin	Remainder of Lismore City	Lismore City (LGA)
Detached	4,756	4,181	125	323	203	190	165	157	4,225	14,325
Medium density	720	949	0	0	3	0	0	12	19	1,703
Apartments	511	227	0	0	0	0	0	8	70	816
Other	206	0	0	0	3	0	0	12	47	268
Total occupied	6,220	5,355	125	321	204	190	169	190	4,380	17,154
Unoccupied	502	304	0	6	18	4	7	24	456	1,321
Total	**6,722**	**5,659**	**125**	**327**	**222**	**194**	**176**	**214**	**4,836**	**18,475**

Sources: ABS 2021 Census.

Table 4.4.11. Lismore & other centres dwelling stock, as at 2011 (Census)

Housing type	Urban centre		Other settlement areas						Other areas	Total
	Lismore SA2	Goonellabah SA2	Caniaba	Richmond Hill	Clunes	Modanville	Dunoon	Nimbin	Remainder of Lismore City	Lismore City (LGA)
Detached	4,754	3,957	75	283	188	185	139	150	4,145	13,876
Medium density	433	450	0	0	0	0	0	16	8	907
Apartments	743	466	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	1,218
Other	257	12	0	3	0	0	0	12	45	329
Total occupied	6,186	4,884	76	287	188	184	139	176	4,223	16,343
Unoccupied	527	372	4	21	19	8	18	21	517	1,507
Total	**6,713**	**5,256**	**80**	**308**	**207**	**192**	**157**	**197**	**4,740**	**17,850**

Sources: ABS 2011 Census.

[1] This is defined in terms of resident households. Dwellings occupied by short-term visitors (including seasonal workers) would account for a portion of those 'unoccupied' dwellings. That is, in terms of houses actually vacant and available for rent, the supply is likely to be quite small and the rental market tight.

4.3.2 Short Term Supply of Dwelling Stock

The stock of new dwellings built in Lismore City provides an indication of the construction industry's current capacity to deliver new housing supply to the market in the short term.

Between FY2016–17 and FY2021–22, ABS data indicates that only 104 new dwellings were completed within Lismore SA2, with five dwellings demolished, resulting in a net addition of 99 dwellings. Over the same period, Goonellabah SA2 recorded the completion of 392 new dwellings, with six demolitions, resulting in a net addition of 386 dwellings.

Across the remainder of Lismore City (i.e. Lismore Surrounds SA2), 388 new dwellings were completed, with 11 demolitions, resulting in a net addition of 377 dwellings over the same period.

In total, the delivery of 862 dwellings over six years equates to only about 144 per year. That would suggest there is capacity to meet demand if the DPHI (2024) scenario for growth transpires but suggests the industry would need to be significantly expanded to accommodate building approximately 200 dwellings per annum for the Council's aspirational target.

Table 4.4.12. Gross/Net Additions and Demolitions, Lismore SA2, FY16/17 – FY21/22

FY16/17 – FY21/22	Gross Additions	Demolitions	Net Additions
Detached	64	5	59
Medium Density	40	0	40
Apartments	0	0	0
Total	**104**	**5**	**99**

Sources: ABS Building Activity.

Table 4.4.13. Gross/Net Additions and Demolitions, Lismore Surrounds SA2, FY16/17 – FY21/22

FY16/17 – FY21/22	Gross Additions	Demolitions	Net Additions
Detached	377	11	366
Medium Density	10	0	10
Apartments	1	0	1
Total	**388**	**11**	**377**

Sources: ABS Building Activity.

Table 4.4.14. Gross/Net Additions and Demolitions, Goonellabah SA2, FY16/17 – FY21/22

FY16/17 – FY21/22	Gross Additions	Demolitions	Net Additions
Detached	250	6	244
Medium Density	136	0	136
Apartments	6	0	6
Total	**392**	**6**	**386**

Sources: ABS Building Activity.

Table 4.4.15. Gross/Net Additions and Demolitions, Lismore LGA, FY16/17 – FY21/22

FY16/17 – FY21/22	Gross Additions	Demolitions	Net Additions
Detached	691	22	669
Medium Density	186	0	186
Apartments	7	0	7
Total	**884**	**22**	**862**

Sources: ABS Building Activity.

4.3.3 Dwelling Prices

The median house price in Lismore City was approximately $610,000 as at March 2025, though this varies significantly across the region. The urban centres recorded a higher median of $675,000, while villages and rural areas were more expensive on average, with median prices around $900,000.

As has been observed across regional NSW, median house prices in Lismore (suburb) have followed an upward trajectory between 2011 and 2025. Over this period, the median house price in Lismore (suburb) rose by approximately 62%, reaching $488,000 by 2025, while Goonellabah recorded stronger growth of around 93%, with a median house price of $675,000 in 2025.

Housing stock in villages and rural areas typically comprises larger land parcels and larger dwellings than stock within the urban centres, which in part explains the higher median price levels. For example, the median house price in Alstonville increased by approximately 122% between 2011 and 2025, reaching $930,000, while Dunoon experienced a rise of around 110%, reaching $721,000 in 2025.

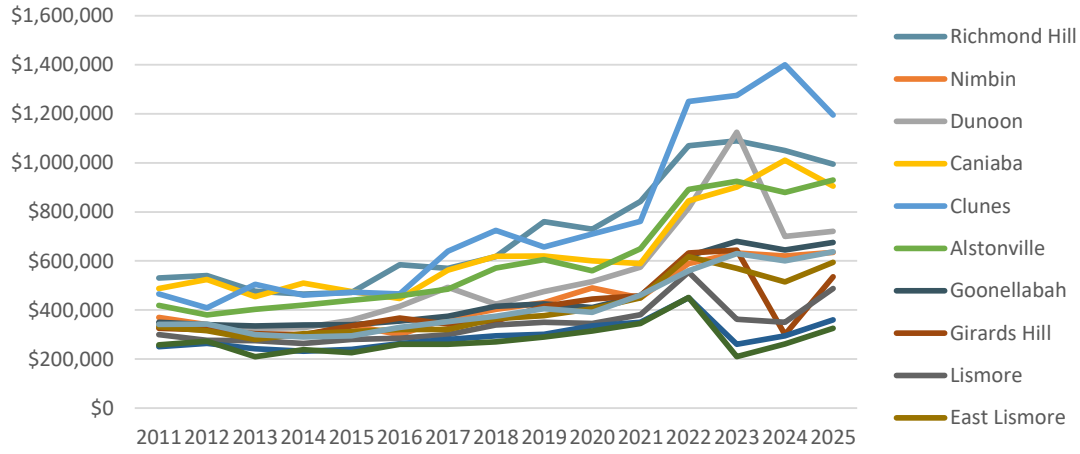
It is noted that North Lismore and South Lismore recorded more modest price growth over this period. This reflects the significant impacts of the 2022 flood events, which reduced market confidence and constrained housing demand in these areas. Moving forward, the pace of recovery in these markets will likely depend on the success of flood mitigation, infrastructure investment and broader efforts to rebuild community resilience and housing supply.

Table 4.4.16. Summary of Median House Prices, Lismore City & Selected Suburbs, 2025

2025	Lismore City	Lismore	East Lismore	North Lismore	South Lismore	Lismore Heights	Goonellabah
Median house price	$610,000	$488,000	$594,445	$360,000	$325,000	$637,500	$675,000
% change 2011-25	74.5%	62.7%	79.6%	44.0%	26.0%	86.7%	92.9%
025	**Girards Hill**	**Richmond Hill**	**Nimbin**	**Dunoon**	**Caniaba**	**Clunes**	**Alstonville**
Median house price	$535,000	$995,000	$635,000	$721,000	$905,000	$1,195,000	$930,000
% change 2011-25	64.6%	87.7%	71.6%	110.8%	85.6%	157.0%	122.1%

Sources: Pricefinder (Domain), Solve Property.

Figure 4.7 Median House Price by Selected Suburbs, 2011-2025



Sources: Pricefinder (Domain), Solve Property.

4.3.4 Rental Market and Housing Affordability

In 2025, median weekly rents range from $465 for a two-bedroom house to $690 for 4 or more bedrooms. Rental affordability remains a concern for low-income households, particularly as vacancy rates have tightened post-flood. Demand for rental properties, especially those in flood-resilient areas, has increased, adding pressure to the housing market.

Table 4.4.17. Weekly rent, Detached houses, Lismore City, 2025

House Type	First quartile	Median	Third quartile	New bonds lodged	Total bonds held
Bedsitter	-	-	-	-	-
1 bedroom	$235	$338	$359	s	94
2 bedrooms	$420	$465	$503	s	254
3 bedrooms	$530	$590	$650	93	1,099
4 or more bedrooms	$596	$690	$750	44	556
Total	$490	$570	$680	177	2,070

(s) 30 or less bonds lodged, (-) 10 ore less bonds lodged

Sources: NSW Communities and Justice.

4.3.5 Housing Demand and Growth Projections

To accommodate projected population growth to 2046, Lismore will require approximately 4,200 additional dwellings. Most of this demand is expected to be concentrated in urban release areas around Goonellabah and infill development in East and North Lismore.

This growth will need to account for housing diversity, including:

- Affordable housing for low-income and essential workers
- Smaller dwellings to support downsizing and ageing in place
- Medium-density options within walkable neighbourhoods
- Purpose-built rental accommodation to meet demand from transient, seasonal and displaced populations.

4.3.6 Constraints on Higher Density Development

The limited number of new townhouses and apartments in Lismore City suggests that increasing higher density housing is difficult in the existing planning scheme and market conditions. The analysis of new residential building approvals reveals minimal medium-density development across Lismore City, with an average of just 20 dwellings per annum over the past five years.

The redevelopment of an R3 zoned house prices sets an even higher bar, especially for an infill redevelopment equation. Tables below show a simple calculation of the relationship between site acquisition and the financial feasibility for redevelopment.

Table 4.4. Feasibility Analysis of a Three-storey Apartment development

Three Storey Apartment	20 units	20 units (20% lower construction cost)

Land area	1,200 sqm	1,200 sqm
Land acquisition cost	$900,000	$900,000
Total construction cost	$10,372,958	$8,298,367
Sales costs	$378,223	$308,044
All other costs (e.g. Professional fees)	$2,738,702	$2,211,026
Total cost	**$14,011,661**	**$11,717,436**
Developer margin	20%	20%
Total value – new apts (inc.GST)	$18,911,139	$15,402,193
Price per unit (required)	**$924,000**	**$752,000**

Source: Solve Property, Pricefinder (Domain)

*numbers are r9ounded to the nearest whole number and as a result totals may display small discrepancies

Table 4.4. Sensitivity Analysis of a Higher density development & lower cost

20% lower construction cost	Five Storey	Nine Storey
Land area	1,200 sqm	1,200 sqm
Land acquisition cost	$900,000	$900,000
Total construction cost	$13,570,021	$24,113,330
Sales costs	$488,046	$848,247
All other costs (e.g. Professional fees)	$3,612,557	$6,415,692
Total cost	**$ 18,570,623**	**$32,277,269**
Developer margin	20%	20%
Total value – new apts (inc.GST)	$24,402,292	$42,412,328
Price per unit (required)	**$715,000**	**$690,000**

Source: Solve Property, Pricefinder (Domain)

*numbers are r9ounded to the nearest whole number and as a result totals may display small discrepancies

Table 4.4. Sensitivity Analysis of a Townhouse development & lower cost

Townhouses	6 units	6 units (20% lower construction cost)
Land area	1,200 sqm	1,200 sqm
Land acquisition cost	$900,000	$900,000
Total construction cost	$3,331,020	$2,664,816
Sales costs	$128,283	$107,590
All other costs (e.g. Professional fees)	$522,776	$420,083
Total cost	**$4,882,080**	**$4,092,489**
Developer margin	20%	20%
Total value – new townhouses (inc.GST)	$6,414,152	$5,379,521
Price per unit (required)	**$983,000**	**$824,000**

Source: Solve Property, Pricefinder (Domain)

*numbers are r9ounded to the nearest whole number and as a result totals may display small discrepancies

These findings highlight the limited commercial feasibility of higher-density residential development in this location under current market conditions and planning controls. Without intervention, such as

changes to zoning, development standards, or the introduction of public-sector incentives, the market is unlikely to deliver the desired housing outcomes in Lismore.

Several challenges must be considered to support housing delivery and diversity, including:

Building height

FSR allowances

Contributions discounts

Targeted subsidies

Encourage innovative housing products (e.g. modular development)

Alternative delivery models such as Build-to-Rent (BTR).

4.3.7 Strategic Housing Challenges and Advantages

Several housing challenges are shaping Lismore's strategy:

- Limited housing diversity in many neighbourhoods
- Rising construction and insurance costs, exacerbated by flood risk
- Shortfall in public and social housing relative to need
- Need to re-plan flood-prone areas and incentivise relocation to resilient zones and
- Capacity constraints in the local development and construction industry.

Although Lismore faces significant housing challenges—including limited supply of flood-resilient dwellings, rising insurance cost, and workforce pressures—it also holds distinct competitive advantages that can be leveraged for strategic growth. These include:

- **Affordability edge**: Lismore remains substantially more affordable than coastal and major metropolitan areas, especially compared to Sydney, Melbourne and South-East Queensland.
- **Tree-change destination appeal:** Lismore has emerged as one of NSW's strongest-performing tree-change towns, posting a 28.6% annual median house price increase to March 2025. This momentum reflects sustained interest from lifestyle-seeking buyers.
- **Lifestyle migration across the east coast:** Research indicates a growing demographic that prioritises holistic living over urban proximity. For example, many residents might have a great job in Sydney or another capital city, but not the lifestyle or affordability to match. Reflecting this, and especially following the COVID-19 period, relocations are increasingly from Sydney, Melbourne, and South-East Queensland. According to the Regional Movers Index (March Quarter 2025), capital-city-to-regional migration increased by 10.5% in early 2025 and has remained 20.5% above pre-COVID quarterly levels. Notably, regional NSW

accounted for 34% of total net migration inflows, the largest share nationally (Source – Regional Australia Institute).

- **Rising investor activity:** The convergence of rental yield potential and capital growth is attracting real estate investors seeking greater returns in regional markets.

Together, these and other factors signal a strategic opportunity for Lismore to position itself as a popular yet affordable regional hub—offering wellbeing, lifestyle and long-term economic opportunity to both residents and investors.

4.4 Industry & Economic Profile

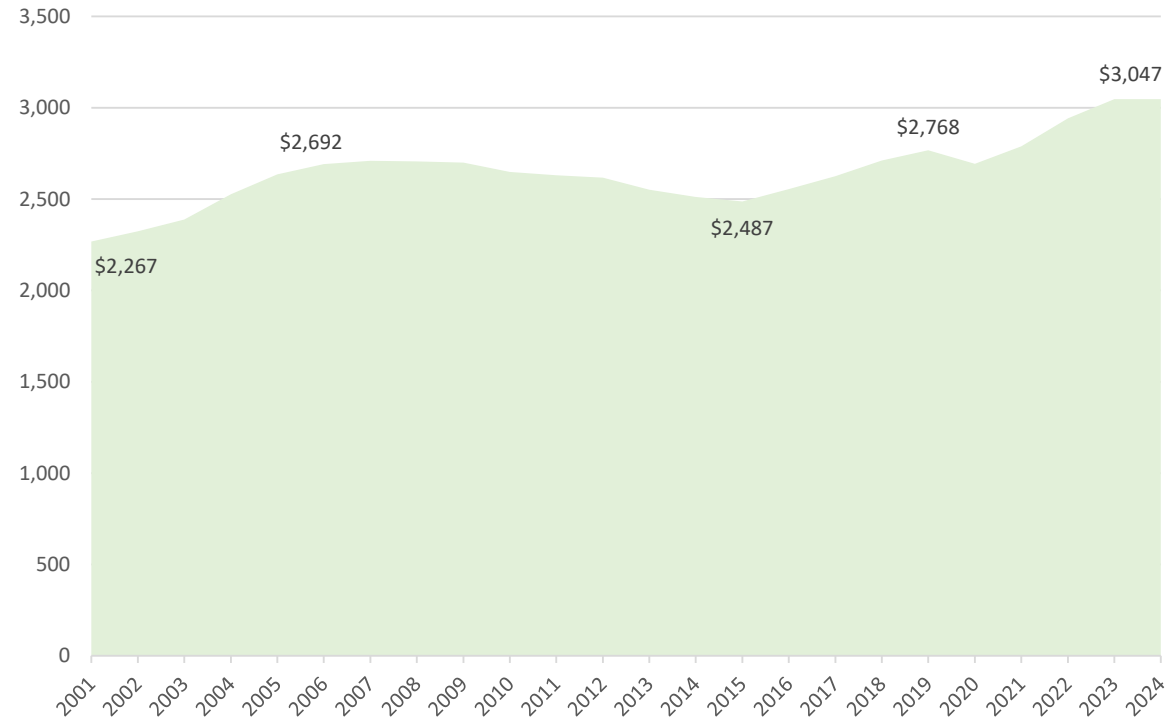
4.4.1 Gross Regional Product and Economic Output

Lismore's Gross Regional Product (GRP), which measures the economic value generated by the region's businesses and industries, was approximately $2.5 billion annually up to 2020–21. Over recent years, GRP experienced relatively minimal growth, reflecting challenges such as flood recovery pressures, structural shifts within key industries and broader economic headwinds.

From 2021 onwards, the regional economy began to show modest signs of improvement. By 2023–24, the GRP reached approximately $3.05 billion, representing an overall moderate increase from previous levels, although it notably experienced a slight year-on-year decline of about 0.4% from 2022–23. This recent fluctuation underscores ongoing vulnerabilities, particularly linked to flood-related disruptions, population movements, and wider economic conditions impacting regional Australia.

Despite these challenges, some sectors such as Health Care, Education, and Construction contributed significantly to maintaining economic output. Specifically, industry outputs expanded strongly within Health Care and Social Assistance and Education and Training, reflecting Lismore's role as a regional service hub. Conversely, industries like Retail Trade faced ongoing pressures, largely due to shifts in consumer spending patterns and digital transitions.

Figure 4.8 Gross Regional Product ($M), 2001-2024



Sources: ABS, Informed Decisions.

4.4.2 Industry & Employment

4.4.2.1 Key Industries & Employment Snapshot

Lismore is a service-based regional economy with a strong concentration of employment in health care, education, retail and public administration.

These sectors reflect Lismore's role as a major service and governance centre for the broader Northern Rivers region, supported by anchor institutions such as the Lismore Base Hospital, Southern Cross University and regional government offices.

The following data relates to all jobs located within the City of Lismore, regardless of where workers reside. It captures both historical (2011) and projected (2024) employment shares and absolute changes.

According to employment projections prepared by NIEIR (2024), the largest sectors by employment share in the City of Lismore are:

- **Health Care and Social Assistance (25.8%)** – A dominant and growing sector driven by the Northern NSW Local Health District, Lismore Base Hospital and a range of allied health, aged care and disability services. The sector has seen a significant increase in employment over the last decade, adding more than 2,200 jobs since 2011.

- **Education and Training (10.9%)** – Southern Cross University, TAFE NSW, and a wide network of public and private schools make education a key employment driver. Though its overall share has declined slightly, headcount has remained stable, reflecting steady demand for teaching and support roles.
- **Retail Trade (11.0%)** – A consistent source of employment, particularly for casual and part-time workers. The sector is concentrated in the Lismore CBD and retail centres such as Lismore Shopping Square. Retail has seen a modest decline in jobs since 2011, shaped by changing consumer behaviour and flood-related disruptions.
- **Construction (9.4%)** – One of the fastest-growing sectors, with strong demand generated by infrastructure programs, post-flood recovery, and ongoing housing development. Employment in this sector has increased by over 900 jobs since 2011, highlighting its current importance to the economy.
- **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (5.2%)** – Encompassing legal, architectural, engineering and consultancy services, this sector continues to expand in response to regional needs and digital work trends.
- **Other Services (5.1%)** – This diverse sector includes personal services, automotive repair, religious and civic organisations. It has grown steadily over the past decade and reflects Lismore's local-service orientation.
- **Manufacturing (5.1%)** – Driven by food processing, macadamia production, metal fabrication and niche producers, manufacturing has remained stable despite broader national declines. It remains a key part of Lismore's industrial identity and economic diversity.
- **Public Administration and Safety (4.9%)** – Reflecting Lismore's role as a government services hub, this sector includes state and federal departments, justice and emergency services. Employment has remained stable despite small proportional declines.
- **Accommodation and Food Services (5.1%)** – Supporting tourism, events, and the city's night-time economy, this sector has faced challenges related to flood impacts, workforce shortages, and changing visitation patterns.
- **Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (4.4%)** – A foundational sector for the rural hinterland, agriculture continues to provide local jobs and export value through beef, dairy and macadamia production, even as its relative share has decreased.

These figures reflect a mature regional economy undergoing gradual structural transition. Service sectors continue to grow, while traditional areas like agriculture and manufacturing hold steady.

Construction and professional services are emerging as engines of future growth. Notably, the strong rise in health care employment and the continued presence of education suggests that Lismore's identity as a knowledge and care city is strengthening.

Table 4.4.18 Key industry and employment profile, Lismore City, 2024

Industry	Employment share (%)	Key employers
Health Care and Social Assistance	19.6%	Northern NSW Local Health District
Retail Trade	13.1%	Lismore Shopping Square
Education and Training	12.2%	Southern Cross University
Construction	6.7%	Local builders and trades
Accommodation and Food Services	6.2%	Hospitality & tourism operators
Manufacturing	5.9%	Norco Foods, Macadamia processors, niche metal fabricators
Public Administration and Safety	5.4%	NSW Governments (local offices)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	5.2%	Primary producers and cooperatives
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4.6%	Consultancies and regional service firms
Other Services	4.1%	Automotive repair shops, personal care businesses, community organisations

Sources: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), Solve Property.

Table 4.4.19 Industry of Employment, Lismore City, 2011-2024

Industry	2011	%	2024	%	Change (2021-41)	% CAGR (2021-2041)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,164	5.2%	1,148	4.4%	-17	-0.1%
Mining	25	0.1%	80	0.3%	55	9.4%
Manufacturing	1,328	5.9%	1,323	5.1%	-6	0.0%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	219	1%	254	1%	35	1.1%
Construction	1,502	6.7%	2,431	9.4%	929	3.8%
Wholesale Trade	604	2.7%	402	1.6%	-202	-3.1%
Retail Trade	2,964	13.1%	2,842	11%	-122	-0.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,404	6.2%	1,314	5.1%	-90	-0.5%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	790	3.5%	696	2.7%	-94	-1.0%
Information Media and Telecommunications	494	2.2%	220	0.9%	-273	-6.0%
Financial and Insurance Services	501	2.2%	396	1.5%	-106	-1.8%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	271	1.2%	240	0.9%	-31	-0.9%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,046	4.6%	1,348	5.2%	303	2.0%
Administrative and Support Services	645	2.9%	856	3.3%	211	2.2%
Public Administration and Safety	1,225	5.4%	1,280	4.9%	55	0.3%
Education and Training	2,758	12.2%	2,815	10.9%	57	0.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,411	19.6%	6,687	25.8%	2,276	3.3%
Arts and Recreation Services	256	1.1%	243	0.9%	-14	-0.4%
Other Services	935	4.1%	1,314	5.1%	380	2.7%
Total	**22,542**	**100%**	**25,889**	**100%**	**3,347**	1.1%

Sources: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR).[2]

4.4.2.2 Engine Room Industries

Future planning should ensure that land use, infrastructure, and workforce strategies are aligned to support these trends. This includes providing housing and transport options for health and education

[2] The statistics are modelled by NIEIR to correct for the known undercount of jobs recorded in the Census. They estimate the total number of persons employed in an industry sector (full-time and part-time) in Lismore City regardless of where they live. They are updated annually.

workers, zoning for construction and logistics expansion and digital infrastructure for professional services growth.

Lismore's engine room industries – those that underpin the region's economic identity and export value – are distinct from the city's service-based core.

While health and education remain dominant employers, it is sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, emerging professional services and arts, culture, and tourism that bring new money into the region and provide a foundation for broader economic activity.

Agriculture, though modest in relative employment share, continues to demonstrate resilience and potential for value-added growth, particularly in macadamia production, niche livestock, and regenerative practices. The rural hinterland remains a critical asset to sustain both employment and supply chains for the city.

Manufacturing, long in decline across regional Australia, has proven relatively stable in Lismore. Anchored by food processing and specialist fabrication, this sector remains embedded in the local economy and may benefit from trends in onshoring, agritech and circular economy models.

Professional services – especially in consultancy, design, health sciences, and digital work – represent a newer generation of engine room activity, supported by improved connectivity and the city's lifestyle appeal.

With strategic investment in infrastructure, land use, and workforce development, these sectors could evolve into drivers of future economic resilience and regional distinctiveness. The identification of agriculture, manufacturing, and professional services as Lismore's engine room industries is based on a combination of economic performance, strategic potential, and alignment with the city's evolving identity. These sectors are not only embedded in Lismore's industrial and rural fabric, but also offer clear pathways to drive economic diversification, attract external investment, and support long-term resilience.

This designation is underpinned by the following factors:

> Gross Regional Product (GRP) contribution: While health and education are the largest employers, sectors like manufacturing and agriculture contribute disproportionately to GRP relative to their workforce size. These industries generate export-oriented output — such as processed food, macadamias, and specialist fabrication — which brings new income into the region.
> Growth potential: Each of these sectors shows strong potential for expansion through innovation and value-adding:
> Agriculture is evolving through regenerative practices, carbon farming, and boutique export markets.
> Manufacturing may benefit from emerging opportunities in circular economy models, food processing, and regional onshoring.
> Professional services — including digital, consultancy and technical services — are expanding due to improved connectivity and the increasing appeal of regional living.

Supply chain activation: These sectors stimulate demand in local supply chains across logistics, construction, equipment, and service industries — helping to sustain a broader economic ecosystem beyond their direct output.
Economic resilience: Engine room industries typically show greater capacity to weather economic shocks. Their diversity, export orientation, and capital intensity offer stability and renewal opportunities that complement Lismore's service-based core.
Regional identity and positioning: These sectors help define Lismore's role in the Northern Rivers as a place of enterprise, production, and innovation — reinforcing its regional economic leadership and providing a foundation for targeted investment attraction.

In parallel, arts, culture, and tourism also demonstrate meaningful potential for economic contribution and are increasingly recognised as complementary sectors. They support small business development, reinforce Lismore's distinctiveness, and play a vital role in post-disaster recovery through activation of public space, placemaking, and destination branding. While their direct GRP contribution may be more modest, these sectors are critical enablers of local vibrancy, population attraction, and the city's broader value proposition.

4.4.2.3 Local Labour Force Trends and Dynamics

As of the 2021 Census, the City of Lismore recorded an employed resident workforce of approximately 19,400 resident workers. This marked a moderate increase of 1,072 jobs compared to 2011, equating to an average annual growth rate of 0.6%.

Over the same period, the total labour force remained stable, while the working-age population declined by 6.2%, reflecting ageing and outward migration pressures.

Despite these constraints, Lismore's participation rate increased from 80.5% in 2011 to 84.9% in 2021, indicating greater engagement of available workers in the local economy. Unemployment also declined over the period, from 6.0% to 5.2%, pointing to stronger workforce integration.

This combination of higher participation and lower unemployment suggests the labour market is approaching full capacity, while also facing emerging supply constraints due to demographic and housing pressures.

Between 2011 and 2021, Lismore's employment industry experienced several noteworthy shifts:

- **Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,044 jobs)** – This sector saw the most substantial increase, rising to account for 22.3% of the total workforce. Growth was driven by hospital and aged care expansion, growing NDIS services and the broader ageing of the population.
- **Construction (+251 jobs)** – Reflecting housing demand, infrastructure upgrades and post-disaster rebuilding, construction expanded to 7.8% of the local workforce, up from 6.9% in 2011.

- **Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (+253 jobs)** – Contrary to national trends, agriculture expanded in Lismore, particularly in macadamia, beef, and dairy production, highlighting its resilience and local importance.
- **Administrative and Support Services (+164 jobs)** – Growth in labour hire, cleaning, and maintenance reflected increased demand from health, education, and public service sectors.

Other sectors experienced contraction:

- **Retail Trade (–253 jobs)** – The sector's share declined from 13.9% to 11.9%, reflecting online shopping trends, regional retail competition and flood-related business disruption.
- **Manufacturing (–251 jobs)** – Modest decline reflects broader national deindustrialisation and challenges in attracting younger skilled workers, although niche production remains locally significant.
- **Information Media and Telecommunications (–170 jobs)** – Digital disruption and media consolidation have sharply reduced employment, in line with national trends.
- **Wholesale Trade (–167 jobs)** – The sector contracted due to regional supply chain consolidation, cost pressures and changes in inventory management practices.

While some industries declined, others remained stable or grew modestly:

- **Education and Training (+117 jobs)** – Driven by growth at Southern Cross University, school enrolments, and early childhood education demand, this sector remained a key pillar of employment, although its share slightly declined.
- **Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+99 jobs)** – Reflecting the rise in consultancy, design, engineering and legal services, supported by remote work trends and digital transformation.
- **Other Services (+113 jobs)** – Personal services, repair trades, and religious/community organisations expanded steadily, highlighting the continued relevance of local, service-oriented microbusinesses.

Overall, these patterns suggest an increasingly service-oriented workforce, with health, education, construction, and professional services showing the strongest growth potential.

Meanwhile, traditional sectors like retail, manufacturing, and media continue to face structural and competitive headwinds.

Table 4.4.20 Resident Workers by Industry, Lismore City, 2011-2021

Industry	2011	%	2021	%	Change (2011-21)	% CAGR (2011-2021)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	989	5.4%	1,242	6.4%	253	2.3%
Mining	69	0.4%	75	0.4%	6	0.8%
Manufacturing	1,314	7.2%	1,063	5.5%	-251	-2.1%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	139	0.8%	191	1.0%	52	3.2%
Construction	1,264	6.9%	1,515	7.8%	251	1.8%
Wholesale Trade	521	2.8%	354	1.8%	-167	-3.8%
Retail Trade	2,553	13.9%	2,300	11.9%	-253	-1.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,271	6.9%	1,290	6.7%	19	0.1%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	604	3.3%	551	2.8%	-53	-0.9%
Information Media and Telecommunications	330	1.8%	160	0.8%	-170	-7.0%
Financial and Insurance Services	368	2.0%	316	1.6%	-52	-1.5%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	242	1.3%	192	1.0%	-50	-2.3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	853	4.7%	952	4.9%	99	1.1%
Administrative and Support Services	519	2.8%	683	3.5%	164	2.8%
Public Administration and Safety	953	5.2%	919	4.7%	-34	-0.4%
Education and Training	2,098	11.5%	2,215	11.4%	117	0.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,280	17.9%	4,324	22.3%	1,044	2.8%
Arts and Recreation Services	241	1.3%	225	1.2%	-16	-0.7%
Other Services	711	3.9%	824	4.2%	113	1.5%
Total	**18,319**	**100%**	**19,391**	**100%**	**1,072**	**0.6%**

Sources: ABS Census 2011 & 2021.

Table 4.4.21 Labour Force Summary, Lismore City, 2011 and 2021

Industry	2011	2021
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0%	5.2%
Unemployed	1,404	1,215
Total labour force	**23,580**	**23,308**
Working population (15-64)	29,291	27,463
Participation rate (%)	80.5%	84.9%

Sources: ABS ERP, ABS Census 2011 & 2016.

4.4.2.4 Industry Analysis

Detailed analysis was conducted for each industry while also examining land Use and other recent trends. Potential (tentative), key directions, strategic considerations and opportunities were also considered.

4.4.2.4.1 Agriculture

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Agriculture remains a foundational, though shifting, pillar of Lismore's economic landscape. While it currently employs approximately 6% of the local workforce (about 1,350 people), the sector contributes a disproportionately high share of land use and export value relative to its headcount. With a 2020–21 gross value of production estimated at $106 million, agriculture accounted for roughly 12% of the Northern Rivers' total output.

Macadamia nut production dominates the local sector—both in value and land transformation—followed by beef cattle, dairy, and horticultural crops including avocados and coffee. These activities support not only farm-based employment but also local food manufacturing, logistics, and supply services.

The sector is also undergoing a visible evolution. Increasing land conversion to tree crops—particularly macadamia—has reduced pasture availability while boosting long-term land value. Regenerative practices such as rotational grazing, intercropping, and composting are gaining traction as producers respond to extreme weather patterns, input cost volatility, and market expectations for sustainability.

Agriculture in Lismore is well-placed to support both economic and environmental resilience, particularly if supported by smart infrastructure, circular economy innovation and planning frameworks that balance productivity, sustainability and rural character.

Food Security

In addition to its economic contribution, agriculture plays a critical role in advancing food security and social resilience across the Lismore LGA and the wider Northern Rivers. There is growing local and national recognition that secure, sustainable, and regionally produced food systems are essential to public health, environmental stewardship, and disaster preparedness.

The social value of local food production has become a priority concern for many stakeholders — including health providers, regenerative farming advocates, and innovation networks — who see food security as not only a sustainability issue but also a foundation of community wellbeing and equity. The 2022 floods further amplified this urgency, highlighting the vulnerability of long supply chains and the importance of strengthening local food networks.

Lismore's existing and emerging agricultural communities — including organisations such as Young Farmers Connect, Farming Together, Regen Ag Alliance, Farmers for Climate Action, and researchers linked with UTS, Sustain: The Australian Food Network, and the Northern NSW Local Health District — are advancing conversations around localised food systems, regenerative production models, and innovative agri-food economies. These efforts reflect a growing intersection between economic development, land use planning, public health, and climate resilience.

Strengthening Lismore's food-producing capacity, protecting agricultural land, and enabling local food enterprises can deliver co-benefits across health, education, employment, and environmental systems — particularly when supported through cross-sector collaboration and place-based planning.

Land Use and Emerging Trends

Lismore's rural fringe and hinterland are experiencing a marked shift from mixed grazing to high-value horticulture. This transition is especially prominent in Goonellabah, Bexhill, and Nimbin, where macadamia and avocado plantations are replacing traditional pasture. These shifts have significant

implications for land management, infrastructure demand (especially water and road access), and environmental risk.

There is also growing interest in carbon farming and biodiversity credit markets, with several landholders exploring opportunities to monetise soil carbon and native revegetation. Job listings in 2025 reflect moderate demand across general farm labour, agronomy, organic production, and Aboriginal-led land care programs.

Key Directions and Strategic Considerations

The agricultural sector is both exposed and adaptive—capable of delivering high-value outcomes when supported by enabling infrastructure, workforce pipelines, and planning clarity. Several strategic themes emerge for consideration:

Emerging Opportunities

- Promote development of local value-adding infrastructure, particularly for macadamia and dairy processing.
- Support growth in agri-tourism through farm-stay accommodation, orchard tours, and experiential food trails.
- Leverage Southern Cross University's research capability to trial agri-tech and soil improvement techniques.
- Align land use planning with circular economy opportunities such as bioenergy, composting and low-waste production.
- Encourage participation in emerging environmental markets (carbon, biodiversity credits) as a secondary income stream.

Sectoral Challenges

- Flood vulnerability in low-lying agricultural zones, with repeated infrastructure losses in 2017 and 2022.
- Access to insurance and finance, particularly for small-scale or transitioning landholders.
- Labour and skills shortages, especially during planting and harvest seasons.
- Logistics and freight constraints due to narrow rural road networks and cold chain limitations.

Indicative Planning Considerations

- Use rural and environmental zoning tools to safeguard productive agricultural land and enable compatible secondary uses (e.g. tourism, education).
- Plan for agricultural precincts that cluster production, processing and marketing infrastructure.
- Ensure rural road and transport upgrades are coordinated with agribusiness precinct growth and freight demands.
- Embed climate adaptation, fire and flood planning into rural land use frameworks and infrastructure investment criteria.
- Collaborate with regional food networks and branding bodies to develop a “Grown in Lismore” identity for local products.

4.4.2.4.2 Health Care & Social Assistance

Health Care and Social Assistance is Lismore’s largest and most economically critical industry. It serves as the backbone of the city’s identity as a regional service hub, providing vital care services, stable employment, and ongoing investment.

Anchored by the Lismore Base Hospital and the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD), the sector supports a network of primary care, aged care, community health, and education providers. It also plays a central role in attracting and retaining residents and delivering a wide range of services across the broader Northern Rivers region.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector contributes significantly to the Lismore economy, both in terms of output and jobs. It also has a multiplier effect, supporting activity in education, construction, transport, retail and real estate.

- Contributes approximately $775 million in economic output (2023–24), the highest of any industry in Lismore LGA.
- Employs 4,936 FTE workers, or between 18.2% and 21.4% of the local workforce.
- Anchored by Lismore Base Hospital, the region’s major referral and emergency care hospital.
- NNSWLHD headquarters in Lismore services ~300,000 people and administers over 50 sites region-wide.
- Supported by a wide range of private providers, NDIS services, aged care homes, and Aboriginal Medical Services.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Lismore's health and social care industry has grown substantially in recent years, shaped by demand growth, infrastructure investment, and evolving workforce patterns.

- GP numbers increased by around 19% (123 GPs) from 2013–2020, exceeding the NSW average at 1.4 GPs per 1,000 residents.
- Nurses and midwives grew by around 22% from 2013–2021, with a ratio of 28.5 per 1,000 residents.
- Allied health roles expanded by around 47% across the region between 2013–2020.
- Health worker ageing: Over 30% are aged 55+, with many expected to retire within the decade.
- Post-flood and pandemic stressors have impacted workforce stability.
- Surge in digital health delivery, particularly telehealth.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- $80 million Stage 3A hospital upgrade delivered new ED, renal, pathology, and maternity.
- $313 million Stage 3B/3C under construction with new towers, helipad, clinics and mental health services.
- Additional investments include day surgeries, imaging centres, NDIS and mental health clinics.
- Flood resilience planning for health infrastructure now embedded in design and siting processes.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

To support the future sustainability and adaptability of Lismore's health sector, a range of potential directions may be explored.

These should be refined through further consultation, land use alignment, and infrastructure coordination as part of the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Consider identifying zones to accommodate future health-adjacent uses such as allied health facilities, staff housing, and training centres.
- Explore the potential for a dedicated health education and research precinct linking SCU, TAFE, and Lismore Base Hospital.

- Investigate strategies to attract and retain health professionals, including affordable housing and local amenity improvements.
- Examine opportunities for co-location of services including aged care, mental health, and Aboriginal health in accessible centres.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Monitor workforce shortages across key health professions.
- Address flood vulnerability in lower-lying health infrastructure.
- Plan for service capacity to match future population health demand.
- Maintain aged and community care facility standards as needs evolve.
- Council has limited control.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Embed flood resilience and adaptability in zoning and planning for health precincts.
- Enable future clinical and training facility growth through land use and height controls.
- Collaborate with health agencies on forecasting service models and infrastructure needs.
- Plan for access, transport, and universal mobility across health zones.

4.4.2.4.3 Education & Training

Education and Training is one of Lismore's largest employment sector, closely tied to its identity as a regional hub for knowledge, research and workforce development.

The sector includes a mix of tertiary institutions, public and private schools, vocational education, and adult training programs. It supports not only local economic activity but also regional population stability, youth retention and professional upskilling across the Northern Rivers.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Education and Training is one of the city's core industries. The sector generates an estimated $435–450 million in economic output annually. Major institutions include Southern Cross University, which serves thousands of students each year, and TAFE NSW campuses delivering trades, community services, and digital skills training.

- Southern Cross University is a leading regional higher education provider with specialised programs in education, health, environmental science and creative arts.
- TAFE NSW provides vocational training and apprenticeships, including key pathways in construction, aged care, and emerging sectors such as agri-tech.
- Lismore hosts more than 30 primary and secondary schools across the LGA, including Catholic, Independent and State-run institutions.
- The sector supports significant secondary employment in retail, accommodation, transport, and food services linked to student and staff activity.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Recent trends reflect the evolution of Lismore's education sector in response to demographic, technological and environmental challenges.

- Southern Cross University has expanded remote and hybrid course delivery, broadening regional access and reducing dependency on on-campus infrastructure.
- Enrolments in early childhood, health care and digital literacy courses have increased since 2020, aligning with workforce trends.
- Flood impacts in 2022 temporarily displaced several school sites and disrupted student access and staff mobility.
- Local employment in education has shown stable or moderate growth, driven by increasing demand in allied health, STEM and aged care fields.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Southern Cross University continues to invest in research hubs and student accommodation upgrades.
- Several local schools have undergone refurbishment or expansion to accommodate growth in enrolments and upgraded facilities.
- The TAFE Connected Learning Centre has enhanced access to virtual learning and blended delivery models.
- Access and mobility upgrades remain a priority post-flood, especially for schools and training centres located near creeks and flood-prone zones.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

A range of planning and investment directions could support the growth and sustainability of the education sector in Lismore. These preliminary ideas are subject to further consultation and analysis.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Explore planning support for a dedicated education and innovation precinct linking Southern Cross University, TAFE and nearby commercial zones.
- Encourage student housing and mixed-use developments near education nodes.
- Support flexible use of school and TAFE campuses for community learning, evening classes, and disaster recovery training.
- Partner with SCU and TAFE to align course delivery with local labour market gaps (e.g. aged care, construction, digital services).

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Ongoing staffing shortages in early childhood, VET and special education.
- Flood exposure at some campuses requires longer-term mitigation planning.
- Limited public transport connectivity for students travelling from outer rural villages.
- Access to affordable housing for students and early-career educators.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Consider zoning and land use strategies to enable campus expansion, especially near the Southern Cross University precinct.
- Facilitate partnerships between education providers and employers through co-location and precinct planning.
- Prioritise walkability, transit access and flood-safe pathways around schools and training centres.
- Recognise the value of education infrastructure as critical community assets in resilience planning.

4.4.2.4.4 Retail Trade

Retail Trade is a significant employer in Lismore LGA, playing a vital role in both the city's economic base and its community life. Retailing in Lismore includes a mix of national chains, independent stores and essential services, serving not only the local population but also surrounding rural and village communities.

This industry supports a high volume of part-time and casual employment and is concentrated within key commercial centres such as the Lismore CBD, Lismore Shopping Square, and village main streets like Nimbin and Goonellabah.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Retail Trade accounts for approximately 10.9% of total local employment. It contributes significantly to consumer services, job creation and town centre activation. While not the highest contributor to Gross Regional Product (GRP), it remains one of the most visible and locally embedded sectors.

- Primary employment hubs include Lismore Shopping Square, CBD arcades and laneways, and standalone retail in South and East Lismore.
- Sub-sectors include food and grocery retail, clothing and fashion, household goods, hardware, pharmacy and specialty items.
- A high proportion of workers in retail are aged under 25, and the sector provides important entry-level and re-entry employment for students, carers and part-time workers.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

- Retail in Lismore has experienced significant disruption and change over the past five years.
- The February 2022 floods devastated large areas of the Lismore CBD, displacing dozens of businesses and reducing foot traffic for months.
- Online shopping trends and the growth of e-commerce have contributed to declining in-store retail activity.
- Retail jobs declined by approximately 121 positions between 2016 and 2021, reflecting structural shifts and business closures.
- There is increasing polarisation between national chain stores, which are rebounding more quickly, and local independents, which remain vulnerable to cashflow, insurance and staffing pressures.
- Major supermarkets and shopping centres recovered earlier due to insurance and corporate backing; many small CBD operators have relocated, closed or are seeking support to reopen.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Council is involved in a range of recovery and revitalisation initiatives, including business support, placemaking, infrastructure upgrades, and event programming across its commercial centres.

- One such initiative is the Lismore Business Activation Plan 2024–2026, which provides a practical framework to guide activation efforts and promotional campaigns throughout the LGA's key business precincts — including the Lismore CBD, South Lismore, North Lismore, East Lismore, and Goonellabah.
- The Plan focuses on short- to medium-term actions designed to:
    - Reinvigorate local centres through community events and creative placemaking
    - Improve the public realm and streetscape amenity
    - Support small businesses with micro-grants, local marketing, and advice
    - Restore public confidence in the viability and vibrancy of Lismore's business areas
    - Together, these actions support both economic recovery and the city's longer-term goals for resilient, people-friendly business districts.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

A range of options may be considered to support the recovery and transformation of the retail sector. These preliminary directions may inform local planning, infrastructure, and economic development policy.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Reinforce the Lismore CBD as the primary mixed-use precinct within the LGA that integrates retail, hospitality, offices, and cultural activities.
- Promote digital capacity-building for small retailers, including e-commerce, delivery systems, and digital marketing.
- Support pop-up retail and flexible leasing models to fill vacant shopfronts and encourage innovation.
- Facilitate more resilient retail design with adaptive re-use, modular fit-outs, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

While many of these challenges are most visible in the Lismore CBD, village centres such as Nimbin and Goonellabah also experience structural and service-related constraints that impact their long-term viability and business confidence. These challenges included seasonal visitation, limited digital infrastructure and workforce access. However, these centres also benefit from a strong cultural identity and loyal visitor base — attributes that present unique opportunities for targeted place-based activation and support strategies.

- High vacancy rates in the CBD
- Rising insurance costs and reduced consumer footfall post-disaster.

- Skills shortages, casualisation, and high staff turnover.
- Increased pressure from e-commerce and regional competitors (e.g., Ballina, Byron).

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Consider incentives for new retail activity in flood-resilient and underutilised areas.
- Integrate retail planning into broader place-making, tourism, and night-time economy strategies.
- Encourage street-level activation and hybrid retail models in mixed-use buildings.
- Continue to monitor foot traffic, leasing trends, and business sentiment as indicators of precinct recovery.

4.4.2.4.5 Public Administration & Safety

Public Administration and Safety is a core sector in Lismore's regional economy, reflecting the city's role as a major administrative centre for state, federal and local government services. The sector includes law enforcement, emergency services, regulatory bodies, justice and corrections, as well as Council functions. It is central to community wellbeing, disaster response, and governance delivery across the Northern Rivers region.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Public Administration and Safety is a major employer, providing stable, full-time employment and anchoring institutional presence within the LGA.

The sector includes police, ambulance, fire, corrections, public works, emergency services and administrative roles at all levels of government.

- Major employers include NSW Police, Fire and Rescue NSW, Ambulance NSW, State Emergency Service (SES), Department of Communities and Justice and Lismore City Council and the NSW Reconstruction Authority.
- Employment hubs are concentrated in the Lismore CBD, Goonellabah Government Precinct, and local justice and emergency facilities.
- The sector contributes to business continuity, community safety, and disaster preparedness across Lismore and the broader Northern Rivers catchment.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

In recent years, the sector has expanded its footprint and operational responsibilities, particularly in response to natural disasters and regional growth pressures.

- Public administration jobs remained stable or grew modestly between 2016 and 2021, with increases linked to regional decentralisation policies.
- The 2022 flood recovery effort significantly increased emergency services activity and administrative coordination.
- The growing complexity of disaster response, housing need, and inter-agency service delivery has required workforce expansion in planning, coordination, compliance, and logistics.
- Some agencies have adopted hybrid work models, balancing office space usage with flexible and remote administrative work arrangements.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- The Goonellabah Government Precinct includes a cluster of local, state and federal agency offices, reducing pressure on CBD space.
- Emergency services facilities (SES, Fire, Police) have been upgraded post-flood to improve resilience and staging capacity.
- Community resilience centres and new disaster response coordination infrastructure are being planned or upgraded.
- Lismore City Council continues to lead major urban recovery, community engagement, and planning functions in collaboration with state agencies and the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Public administration is a foundational sector that supports both community governance and operational response systems. The following potential actions may guide future planning and workforce integration:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Strengthen regional government precincts through land use zoning, precinct planning and integrated service design.
- Enhance digital infrastructure and cybersecurity readiness to support hybrid government service delivery.
- Expand capacity for community resilience and disaster preparedness infrastructure.

- Facilitate training and inter-agency collaboration around climate, housing, compliance and recovery roles.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Managing growing demand for services post-disaster while maintaining core regulatory and planning functions.
- Aging infrastructure in administrative and justice buildings.
- Recruitment challenges in emergency services and planning roles, particularly in specialist disciplines.
- The need for streamlined collaboration between local, state and federal bodies.
- Land ownership and funding

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Ensure adequate land supply for government services and civic use in flood-free zones.
- Designate public service hubs with capacity for flexible occupancy, public access and emergency response use.
- Support public realm improvements that reinforce the civic identity and functional clarity of government buildings.
- Align urban planning with emergency management needs including staging areas, logistics, and staff housing.

4.4.2.4.6 Construction

The Construction industry plays a vital role in Lismore's economic and physical development. It supports new housing, infrastructure delivery, repairs and disaster recovery across the LGA. This sector includes residential building, civil engineering, specialised trades and repair services. It also supports local supply chains in materials, transport, real estate and logistics.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Construction accounts for approximately 7.5% of local employment, with growth spurred by rebuilding programs following the 2022 floods. The sector also supports apprenticeships, private contracting, and commercial development.

- Key sub-sectors include residential housing, civil infrastructure, trades (e.g. plumbing, electrical, concreting) and post-disaster repair services.
- Employers range from sole traders and local firms to regional contractors and public sector delivery partners.
- Demand is concentrated in urban and peri-urban growth areas such as Goonellabah, North Lismore, and East Lismore.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Construction in Lismore has expanded significantly in the aftermath of natural disasters, particularly the 2022 floods.

- Local builders, contractors, and tradespeople have been in high demand for insurance repairs, retrofitting and housing reactivation.
- Skilled labour shortages and supply chain delays have constrained the speed of rebuilding.
- Apprenticeship and skills programs have ramped up through TAFE and industry-led initiatives.
- The pipeline of new development includes medium-density housing, infrastructure upgrades and civic buildings.
- Council-led capital works and state-funded infrastructure have supported employment and sector continuity.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Lismore City Council capital works and roads recovery programs have increased construction demand across civil infrastructure.
- Regional funding streams (e.g. NRF, Resilient Homes) are injecting project finance into the sector.
- The private sector has seen increased approvals for dual occupancy, infill development, and secondary dwellings.
- Builders face elevated costs for materials, insurance, and compliance as construction standards rise post-flood.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Construction is essential to both economic recovery and future growth. The following considerations may inform planning and workforce strategies:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Promote flood-resilient design and construction standards in planning and approvals.
- Encourage local building capacity through procurement, prequalification and regional contractor engagement.
- Support expansion of construction-related education and apprenticeships through TAFE and private providers.
- Enable modular, mobile and prefabricated housing models to accelerate delivery.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- High construction costs due to insurance, materials and subcontractor shortages.
- Delays in approvals, DA processing and coordination of essential services.
- A reliance on a small local workforce for large-scale recovery and development efforts.
- Pressure on rental housing and workforce accommodation due to labour influx.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Identify and service land for staged housing and infrastructure rollouts.
- Embed construction sequencing into recovery and precinct planning.
- Coordinate with state agencies to ensure building code alignment and infrastructure synchronisation.
- Incentivise sustainable construction practices through overlays and certification pathways.

4.4.2.4.7 Accommodation & Food Services

Accommodation and Food Services is a key contributor to Lismore's visitor economy and regional lifestyle offering. The sector includes cafes, restaurants, hotels, motels, pubs, clubs and short-term accommodation providers, many of which are small businesses. It is a major source of employment, especially for young people and casual workers, and closely linked to the tourism, events, and creative industries.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector accounts for approximately 6.9% of local employment and supports Lismore's broader role as a destination for festivals, nature-based tourism, and regional services. It includes:

- Restaurants, cafes, and catering services concentrated in the CBD and village main streets (e.g., Nimbin).
- Licensed venues such as pubs, clubs and breweries providing social infrastructure and employment.
- Short-term and long-stay accommodation, including hotels, motels, Airbnb properties and holiday parks.
- Event-linked and seasonal work tied to cultural programs, sports tourism and major festivals.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Accommodation and Food Services in Lismore has been significantly affected by recent economic and environmental events.

- The 2022 floods temporarily closed or displaced dozens of food outlets and accommodation providers.
- COVID-19 and natural disasters accelerated job turnover and staffing shortages, with casual workers moving into other sectors.
- Tourism visitation declined immediately post-flood, though village and hinterland destinations like Nimbin rebounded more quickly.
- National staff shortages in hospitality have impacted service hours and venue capacity.
- The recovery has been uneven, with larger venues recovering faster due to insurance, while smaller independents face cash flow and rent pressures.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Visitor economy recovery is supported by Destination North Coast and local tourism strategies.
- Accommodation reinvestment has been identified as a regional priority, with gaps in mid-scale and boutique hotel supply.
- Council and state-funded place-making strategies are investing in CBD and cultural precinct upgrades to support visitor activation.
- Events infrastructure remains limited in scale, but the Lismore Showground and various sports facilities are key multi-use sites.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

To rebuild and expand this sector, several potential actions may be explored in the context of tourism, place-making, and employment strategy:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Attract reinvestment in flood-resilient, high-quality accommodation (e.g., boutique hotels, eco lodges, motels).
- Encourage food tourism, paddock-to-plate experiences and village dining as part of regional marketing.
- Activate night-time economy strategies linking restaurants, arts, and entertainment (see further detail in the discussion below).
- Expand hospitality training programs and incentives to stabilise workforce participation.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Limited hotel capacity and accommodation diversity, particularly for group travel and conference markets.
- High turnover and labour shortages in food service roles.
- Insurance and finance barriers for venue refurbishment.
- Inconsistent visitor demand due to weather, flood recovery, and regional competition.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Integrate accommodation and food precinct planning into LSPS and tourism strategies.
- Prioritise precincts for future activation through zoning, infrastructure and branding – special entertainment zones.
- Encourage dual-use of hospitality venues for community events, arts and cultural activation.
- Align hospitality investment with broader tourism trails, festivals and cultural programs.

Night-time Economy

Lismore's night-time economy (NTE) currently operates below its full potential. While the city hosts a modest range of evening activities—such as restaurants, pubs, live music, and arts venues—the scale and vibrancy of the NTE remain limited. This reflects the impact of recent flood events, demographic shifts and structural challenges facing small business, hospitality, and cultural providers. As a result, after-hours activity in the CBD is often sporadic, concentrated around specific events or venues, and lacks the consistency and diversity seen in more activated regional centres.

Nevertheless, the foundations for a thriving night-time economy exist. Lismore has key cultural infrastructure—such as NORPA, Lismore Regional Gallery, and the CBD creative precinct—alongside a base of food and beverage operators and an engaged arts community. With targeted investment, coordinated planning, and stakeholder support, the city could evolve its night-time economy into a dynamic economic and social asset.

Key opportunities for revitalisation include:

- Encouraging extended trading hours and outdoor dining through regulatory flexibility and small grants.
- Introducing regular evening events such as night markets, twilight concerts and food festivals to create consistent foot traffic.
- Enhancing public safety and accessibility with improved lighting, wayfinding and transport options after dark.
- Supporting cross-sector collaboration between hospitality, arts, education and youth services to diversify night-time offerings.
- Trialling a Night-time Economy Coordinator role to champion precinct-based activation and business participation.

A stronger NTE would not only provide employment—particularly for young people and creative workers—but also enhance Lismore's appeal as a visitor destination and regional centre. Improved after-hours vibrancy can support broader economic resilience, attract residents and investment, and position the city as a cultural hub for the Northern Rivers.

Embedding night-time economy planning into the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Economic Development Strategy (EDS) would ensure it is integrated into broader place-making, tourism and infrastructure priorities. While current activity levels are modest, a revitalised and coordinated approach can transform Lismore's after-dark landscape into one of its defining strengths.

4.4.2.4.8 Professional, Scientific & Technical Services

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (PSTS) is a diverse and growing sector in Lismore's economy. It includes a broad range of knowledge-intensive occupations such as legal services, accounting, engineering, architecture, consultancy, design and digital services. This sector supports the broader regional economy by providing essential services to businesses, government, institutions, and individuals.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

PSTS employs approximately 5.1% of Lismore's workforce and has shown steady growth in line with national shifts toward services and remote work.

- The sector includes sole traders, small firms and regionally based branches of larger companies.
- High-value occupations such as consulting, ICT, law and architecture have increased due to local demand and remote service delivery.
- Lismore's role as a service hub and university town supports continued demand for technical expertise and business services.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

The PSTS sector in Lismore has evolved significantly in recent years, shaped by the digital economy and structural workforce shifts.

- Growth in remote work has allowed professionals to base themselves in Lismore while servicing clients nationally.
- Creative industries and freelance professionals contribute to local economic diversity.
- Professional service providers played key roles in flood response and recovery, including planners, engineers and legal advisors.
- The Southern Cross University precinct supports graduate pathways in environmental science, accounting, and digital media.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Access to fast internet and reliable telecommunications remains essential for the sector's future.
- Coworking spaces, shared offices, and consultancy hubs are emerging in the CBD and surrounding commercial zones.
- Business support services and professional networks are active through the Chamber of Commerce and creative collectives.
- Council's investment in creative industries and innovation supports cross-over with design, marketing, and consultancy work.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The following strategic directions may guide planning support for the ongoing growth and diversification of this knowledge-based sector:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Enable flexible commercial spaces and mixed-use developments that support consultancy and home-based businesses.
- Foster digital economy growth through broadband upgrades and support for online platforms.
- Promote professional clusters through coworking and innovation hubs.
- Connect PSTS businesses with education, climate resilience, and regional development initiatives.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Limited scale of local market and reliance on regional or metro clients.
- Office space constraints in a post-flood CBD and rising leasing costs.
- Professional isolation and limited access to peer networks or specialist training.
- Uncertain digital infrastructure in rural fringes.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Support planning controls that accommodate flexible and home-based work.
- Facilitate professional clusters in accessible, serviced locations near education and government facilities.
- Prioritise broadband blackspot reduction and digital equity initiatives.
- Integrate PSTS into broader industry development, climate action and regional economic strategies.

4.4.2.4.9 Manufacturing

Manufacturing plays a foundational yet evolving role in Lismore's regional economy. It includes food and beverage production, metal fabrication, machinery, wood products and artisan or niche manufacturing. While smaller than other sectors by employment, it supports economic diversification, value-adding and local supply chain resilience, particularly in agriculture and construction.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Manufacturing accounts for a modest but important share of the local workforce and contributes to the city's economic resilience and industrial base.

- Sub-sectors include timber and cabinetmaking, metal works, printing, packaging and regional food production.
- Key employers include small factories, local artisan producers and food processors, especially those linked to the rural economy.
- Some activities are in industrial estates in South Lismore and Goonellabah.
- Manufacturing output supports construction, agribusiness and wholesale trade.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

- The manufacturing sector has seen gradual decline nationally, but targeted specialisations remain viable in Lismore.
- Post-flood recovery led to equipment demand, temporary upticks in building materials and repair-related production.
- Skills in welding, machining, and food technology remain in demand locally.
- Businesses report challenges in recruitment and retention of technical trades.
- There is emerging interest in clean-tech, prefabricated housing components, and value-added food manufacturing.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Industrial zones such as South Lismore offer serviced sites but face flood exposure.
- Goonellabah industrial estate is a key growth node with better flood resilience.
- Transport infrastructure and freight access influence competitiveness.
- Energy reliability, wastewater capacity, and zoning flexibility are ongoing planning issues.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The following considerations may help shape future planning and support for a sustainable, locally focused manufacturing sector:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Support value-adding for agriculture (e.g., macadamia, dairy, meat processing).
- Promote clean-tech, modular housing and circular economy manufacturing.
- Develop precinct strategies for flood-resilient industrial land at Goonellabah.

- Facilitate workforce development through TAFE and industry placement partnerships.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Flood exposure in South Lismore and fragmented land supply.
- Difficulty attracting skilled trades and technical staff.
- Energy and infrastructure costs for small-scale producers.
- Limited brand identity or regional export strategy.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Identify flood-resilient and service-ready industrial precincts.
- Enable land use flexibility to support hybrid production-retail models.
- Plan infrastructure upgrades (e.g., power, water, transport access) in tandem with employment growth zones.
- Integrate local manufacturing into broader agribusiness and innovation strategies.

4.4.2.4.10 Transport, Postal & Warehousing

Transport, Postal and Warehousing is a critical enabling sector that supports all major industries in Lismore. It plays a central role in the movement of people, goods, agricultural produce, construction materials and retail supplies. Although a relatively modest direct employer, its infrastructure and efficiency underpin the performance of health, retail, agriculture, tourism and e-commerce.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector represents a smaller share of direct employment but has high strategic and logistical significance for the broader economy.

- Key sub-sectors include road freight, postal delivery, warehousing, public transport, courier services and storage.
- Local operators range from family-run logistics businesses to national carriers with depots in Lismore.
- Key infrastructure includes the Bruxner Highway, local arterial roads, Lismore Regional Airport and distribution depots.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

The sector has evolved to meet the rising demand in freight, logistics and online commerce while responding to regional connectivity needs.

- The 2022 floods heavily impacted freight routes, depots, and airport operations, disrupting regional supply chains.
- E-commerce growth has driven courier and last-mile delivery volumes, boosting demand for drivers and logistics workers.
- Recruitment in heavy vehicle driving and logistics coordination remains constrained by licensing and workforce availability.
- Public transport is limited, with some services disrupted or underutilised outside the urban core.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Lismore Regional Airport provides passenger and charter freight capacity, though flood exposure remains a concern.
- Freight movement depends on road access, especially to/from the Pacific and Bruxner highways.
- Recent upgrades to flood-affected road corridors aim to restore network reliability.
- Council and regional strategies aim to strengthen last-mile freight logistics and intermodal connectivity.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The transport and logistics system is essential to economic recovery and industry performance. Planning for this sector may include:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Expand resilient logistics precincts near major road corridors and industrial zones.
- Invest in intermodal capacity and airport freight potential for regional exports.
- Support training in freight, logistics, warehousing and vehicle operations.
- Leverage digital platforms for efficient local distribution and fleet tracking.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Flood vulnerability of key transport assets including the airport and arterial roads.

- Rising transport and fuel costs affecting distribution economics.
- Limited warehousing stock and zoned land for new logistics facilities.
- Gaps in workforce supply for licensed heavy vehicle drivers.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Zone and service new industrial land near freight corridors and flood-resilient nodes.
- Embed transport resilience into infrastructure planning and major project delivery.
- Promote modal integration and secure land for future logistics and freight expansion.
- Align transport and warehousing planning with regional agribusiness and e-commerce strategies.

4.4.2.4.11 Arts & Recreation Services

Arts and Recreation Services contributes to Lismore's cultural identity, liveability and creative economy. It encompasses performing and visual arts, museums, heritage, festivals and organised sport and fitness. Though small in terms of direct employment, this sector punches above its weight in terms of economic activation, wellbeing, tourism and youth engagement.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

The sector represents a niche but high-impact element of the local economy.

- Includes galleries, performing arts venues, music, creative collectives, museums and festivals.
- Recreation covers gyms, fitness centres, sporting clubs and outdoor activity hubs.
- Venues such as NORPA at the City Hall, Lismore Regional Gallery and local sports fields are core infrastructure.
- Annual festivals and markets attract local and regional visitation, contributing to the tourism and night-time economy.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Arts and recreation have seen strong community participation, supported by recovery funding and local talent.

- The 2022 floods damaged major venues, including City Hall, affecting event delivery and programming.
- Creative and recreation workers often operate as sole traders, freelancers or part-time staff.
- Events, live performance, and visual arts remain core income sources, despite fluctuating funding and insurance costs.
- Increasing crossover with tourism, wellness, and youth engagement programs is reshaping sector partnerships.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Repair and reopening of Lismore City Hall is a high priority for community and creative sector recovery.
- Future home for NORPA is a high priority.
- Lismore Regional Gallery continues to operate and host community exhibitions and partnerships.
- Sports facilities and community halls are important for both recreation and disaster response roles.
- Investment in cultural trails, event infrastructure, and open space contributes to the broader visitor economy.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The arts and recreation sector is central to placemaking, economic diversity and community recovery.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Re-establish and promote Lismore as a creative hub through festivals, touring shows and artist residencies.
- Expand investment in event infrastructure, creative industries incubators and performance spaces.
- Align cultural programming with tourism, youth development and wellness strategies.
- Strengthen Indigenous cultural heritage and storytelling through arts and interpretation.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Infrastructure loss and disruption following natural disasters.
- High reliance on project-based funding and casual work.
- Limited accessible venues for all-ages events, training, and rehearsals.
- Insurance and compliance hurdles for festivals and pop-up activations.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Embed cultural infrastructure in centre and precinct planning.
- Zone for flexible performance, gallery, and rehearsal uses in mixed-use precincts.
- Include arts and recreation assets in resilience and emergency planning.
- Ensure active transport and mobility access to cultural and sporting facilities.

4.4.2.4.12 Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services

The Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services sector provides essential infrastructure that supports every other industry and household in Lismore. It includes electricity supply and transmission, sewerage, water treatment, gas distribution and waste collection and processing. Although small in terms of workforce, its strategic importance is high, especially for urban growth, public health and climate resilience.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector represents a small proportion of direct employment but is vital for supporting land use planning, public health, disaster recovery, and business operations.

- Core services are delivered by local, regional, and state utilities.
- Includes council-owned infrastructure, regional waste contractors and energy providers.
- Waste transfer stations and water treatment facilities are located across urban and rural precincts.
- Growth in rooftop solar, battery storage and renewables is influencing infrastructure demand and network planning.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Infrastructure services in Lismore have been under increasing pressure due to disaster recovery needs and growth in decentralised technologies.

- The 2022 floods affected sewer, water and waste operations, requiring rapid restoration and investment in resilience.
- Council continues to deliver capital upgrades to water and sewer systems under recovery and renewal programs.
- The energy workforce is shifting toward renewables, maintenance, and grid modernisation.
- Waste and recycling are being reshaped by circular economy goals and regional processing infrastructure.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Lismore's sewer and water systems are being progressively upgraded with resilience and capacity objectives.
- The local material recovery facility and waste transfer station service Lismore and adjoining LGAs.
- Flood vulnerability remains a key challenge for water, sewer and depot infrastructure.
- Smart meter rollouts and renewable-ready grids are future priorities for electricity services.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Utility infrastructure underpins community wellbeing and economic recovery. The following areas may warrant consideration in strategic planning:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Plan for precinct-based energy and water systems to support decentralised and renewable infrastructure.
- Upgrade flood-vulnerable utility assets and integrate redundancy into critical networks.
- Promote sustainable waste practices through circular economy planning, education and procurement.
- Partner with energy providers to explore microgrid, battery and solar investments.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Infrastructure aging and vulnerability to flood and storm events.
- High cost of network upgrades and asset renewal.
- Workforce capacity in trades, asset planning and system engineering.

- Regulatory and procurement constraints in transitioning to renewables.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Include energy, water and waste infrastructure in growth area structure planning.
- Reserve land and servicing corridors for future upgrades.
- Embed climate adaptation in infrastructure design and funding.
- Align infrastructure delivery schedules with land release and development staging.
- Include high level strategic infra planning detail within the LSPS/growth strategy.

4.4.2.4.13 Financial & Insurance Services

Financial and Insurance Services includes banking, credit unions, superannuation, financial planning, insurance brokering and underwriting. This sector provides foundational support to households, businesses, and regional investment, offering access to capital, risk management and financial advice. While not a large employer locally, it is critical to enabling economic growth, post-disaster recovery and consumer confidence.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

The sector represents a modest share of employment in Lismore but exerts significant influence on economic resilience, business continuity and home ownership.

- Lismore hosts bank branches, credit unions, mortgage brokers and insurance offices primarily located in the CBD and commercial corridors.
- Key services include personal banking, business lending, property and vehicle finance, insurance underwriting and financial advice.
- Superannuation management and financial planning are growing subsectors, particularly for older and rural populations.
- The sector is also closely linked to real estate, construction, agribusiness and recovery finance.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Local trends reflect both national restructuring and regional recovery needs.

- Flood events in 2022 placed extreme pressure on local insurance providers, assessors and brokers.

- Many residents and businesses experienced claim delays, premium hikes, or underinsurance challenges.
- Digital transformation and consolidation have led to some branch closures or workforce reductions.
- There is increasing demand for financial counselling, small business support and climate risk advisory services.
- Emerging fintech and online platforms are beginning to offer localised remote services.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Financial service offices are concentrated in the CBD and at Lismore Shopping Square.
- Insurance and advisory services often operate from multi-use or upper-level commercial tenancies.
- Co-location with legal, real estate and planning services supports client retention and service bundling.
- Business support hubs and financial education programs are increasingly being integrated with local economic development initiatives.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The financial sector's role in recovery, affordability and regional investment should be supported through enabling planning policy and partnerships.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Expand access to financial advice and literacy services through co-located hubs or digital platforms.
- Support resilient insurance models and access to reinsurance in high-risk areas.
- Promote small business finance partnerships to aid local recovery and growth.
- Encourage fintech and mobile banking options to fill service gaps.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Loss of physical branches and decline in face-to-face services.
- Rising insurance premiums and reduced affordability post-disaster.
- Low financial resilience among vulnerable and flood-affected populations.

- Limited regional representation in capital allocation and risk assessment.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Enable flexible commercial space use for hybrid financial service delivery.
- Integrate financial services into mixed-use, precinct-based planning.
- Support insurance reform and advocacy through policy alignment.
- Include financial vulnerability in recovery planning and land-use decisions.

4.4.2.4.14 Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services

Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services includes residential and commercial property management, leasing, real estate sales, valuation and short-term equipment hire. This sector plays a key role in housing access, land transactions, local investment and market signalling. It also contributes to business operations through equipment and fleet rentals.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

The sector is modest in workforce size but influential in planning, development and investment decisions.

- Includes real estate agents, property managers, valuers, conveyancers and short-term equipment leasing providers.
- Real estate agencies are located throughout the CBD, Goonellabah and key village centres.
- Activity spans residential and commercial leasing, property sales and real estate marketing.
- Demand for rental housing has surged post-disaster, raising pressure on vacancy and affordability.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Real estate and rental services in Lismore are heavily shaped by disaster recovery and housing market volatility.

- Rental vacancies declined significantly post-2022 flood as residents sought temporary housing.
- Property prices and rental rates fluctuated with demand, insurance costs and rebuild timelines.

- Real estate professionals are facing increased compliance, licensing and property disclosure obligations.
- New models of housing, including co-living and short-term accommodation, are emerging in the post-COVID and post-flood context.
- Equipment hire providers saw increased demand during flood recovery and infrastructure works.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Real estate services rely on active town centres and digital platforms for service delivery.
- Most activity occurs in leased commercial shopfronts or flexible office formats.
- Leasing and rental practices are linked to housing availability, building approvals, and property turnover.
- Data platforms and agency networks play an increasing role in housing market transparency and pricing signals.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

As housing and land use challenges intensify, the role of the real estate sector grows in both social and economic planning. The following may be considered:

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Improve rental housing stability through support for tenancy management, social housing partnerships and property renewal.
- Expand access to affordable and flexible leasing for key workers and displaced residents.
- Promote digital innovation in property marketing and access to regional housing data.
- Align housing investment priorities with zoning and recovery precincts.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Rental stress, rising prices, and low vacancy rates post-flood.
- Property damage and insurance gaps affecting housing stock recovery.
- Compliance complexity and risk for agents and managers.
- Mismatch between housing demand and available property types or locations.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Align LEP zoning and precinct planning with rental housing needs.
- Encourage adaptive re-use and mixed-use models to expand housing options.
- Integrate real estate sector data into population and housing forecasting.
- Provide incentives for long-term rental property renewal and resilience upgrades.

4.4.2.4.15 Wholesale Trade

Wholesale Trade connects regional producers and manufacturers with markets, supporting the flow of goods to retail, industrial, hospitality and agricultural clients. This sector includes businesses engaged in the bulk distribution of groceries, hardware, automotive parts, construction supplies and machinery. It plays a critical enabling role in Lismore's economy, particularly for industries like agriculture, construction, retail and food services.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

While relatively small in employment terms, Wholesale Trade supports a broad range of sectors through warehousing, sales, distribution and procurement services.

- Key operators include food service wholesalers, building materials suppliers, machinery distributors and equipment agents.
- Activity is concentrated in South Lismore and Goonellabah industrial zones.
- The sector benefits from proximity to transport corridors and access to regional markets.
- Wholesale supports economic resilience by diversifying Lismore's economic base beyond frontline retail.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

The wholesale sector has experienced moderate change in recent years, shaped by disaster recovery and shifts in supply chain practices.

- Flood impacts in 2022 disrupted warehouses, inventory, and transport access, leading to stock loss and insurance claims.
- Demand for building supplies surged post-disaster, boosting some subsectors temporarily.
- Online procurement and digital ordering platforms are reshaping distribution models.

- Labour shortages in warehousing and logistics are affecting service efficiency and delivery times.
- Some businesses are diversifying into hybrid retail and B2B sales to maintain viability.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- South Lismore's industrial areas host multiple large-format warehousing and supply businesses.
- Goonellabah offers higher-elevation land for future distribution and logistics growth.
- Infrastructure challenges include freight access, road quality, and flood mitigation.
- Warehouse availability and zoning constraints are emerging issues for expansion.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Wholesale Trade acts as a behind-the-scenes enabler of economic activity across Lismore. The following considerations may support sector growth and resilience.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Strengthen supply chain resilience through zoning, freight access, and warehousing investment.
- Support digital transition in inventory management, logistics, and sales platforms.
- Promote co-location of wholesale and logistics near industrial growth precincts.
- Enable cross-sector collaboration with retail, agriculture, and construction suppliers.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Flood exposure of key industrial zones and warehouse stock.
- Skills shortages in warehousing, transport, and operations roles.
- Fuel and freight costs impacting margins and pricing stability.
- Fragmented land supply for expansion and consolidation.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Plan for future warehousing demand in flood-resilient, serviced locations.

- Embed logistics and access corridors in industrial zone planning.
- Enable mixed B2B and B2C models in planning instruments.
- Include wholesale trade in regional freight and logistics strategies.

4.4.2.4.16 Administrative & Support Services

Administrative and Support Services includes a wide array of back-office, contract, and support functions that service larger organisations. This includes employment services, call centres, travel agencies, building and grounds maintenance, and office administration. The sector provides essential auxiliary functions across retail, health, education, and local government.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector supports approximately 2–3% of employment in Lismore, largely through small businesses and outsourcing.

- Sub-sectors include cleaning, security, labour hire, payroll and clerical services and facilities maintenance.
- Public sector and institutional clients are key drivers of demand.
- Flexible business models are common, with high casual and contract-based employment.
- Many services operate from home-based businesses or modest commercial spaces.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

This sector has been shaped by cost pressures, casualisation and recovery-related demand.

- Post-flood conditions drove demand for cleaning, security and labour hire across the city.
- Employment services and temporary staffing agencies supported displaced workers and rebuilding needs.
- Increased outsourcing by schools, health providers and councils has strengthened demand for support roles.
- Hybrid work models and admin digitisation are reshaping workforce structure and service delivery.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Most services are decentralised and operate from small, distributed premises or remotely.

- Digital capability is crucial for administration, scheduling, payroll and compliance management.
- Community and coworking hubs offer shared space for support service businesses.
- Skills training and labour hire coordination can be strengthened via local partnerships and placement programs.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

While often behind-the-scenes, Administrative and Support Services are fundamental to sector functionality and recovery.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Build administrative and operational capability across industries through shared service models.
- Promote workforce placement and labour hire to meet recovery and service delivery gaps.
- Develop flexible work hubs with digital capacity and shared admin resources.
- Strengthen local procurement from small admin and facilities firms.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Precarious employment models and low award wages.
- Limited access to business support and scale-up funding.
- Insurance and liability costs for security and property services.
- Fragmentation across many small and home-based providers.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Include small service providers in employment and innovation precincts.
- Provide space and support for admin-intensive microbusinesses and hybrid work.
- Leverage administrative service capacity to support future recovery and community operations.
- Ensure digital infrastructure supports scalable remote administration.

4.4.2.4.17 Information Media & Telecommunications

Information Media and Telecommunications includes newspaper publishing, radio broadcasting, IT support, data services, and telecommunications infrastructure. Although small in employment share, this sector plays a growing role in connectivity, public information, digital inclusion and creative industry support across the Lismore region.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector accounts for a very small proportion of employment in Lismore, but its functions are critical for local media, communications, and digital infrastructure.

- Local radio stations, newspapers and community broadcasters remain important for regional news and emergency messaging.
- Telecommunications companies provide mobile, NBN and satellite services to residential and commercial users.
- IT support services, digital content providers, and web developers serve local business and creative clients.
- Public Wi-Fi, fibre access, and mobile coverage influence economic participation and education outcomes.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Recent years have seen accelerated digital uptake but persistent infrastructure and access gaps.

- Local print media has contracted, while online news platforms and community radio have remained active.
- Flood events heightened reliance on emergency communications and mobile networks.
- Home-based digital and IT service providers increased during the pandemic and post-disaster periods.
- Demand for skilled IT technicians, cybersecurity advisors, and network engineers is growing regionally.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- NBN rollout is largely complete, but speed and reliability vary by location.
- Mobile coverage in rural and hinterland areas remains inconsistent.
- Local government supports digital inclusion through library programs and community Wi-Fi.

- Telecommunications are central to economic development, telehealth, education, and disaster response.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Connectivity and media capacity are enablers of regional growth, innovation, and wellbeing. Planning and investment may consider a range of opportunities.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Expand digital infrastructure planning to ensure resilient broadband and mobile access.
- Promote digital skills, cybersecurity awareness and inclusion through training partnerships.
- Support local media, creative production and digital entrepreneurship.
- Position digital communications as part of resilience and emergency systems.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Mobile blackspots, slow speeds, and lack of competition in some areas.
- Media viability and declining advertising revenue for local outlets.
- Shortage of qualified IT and digital tech workers in regional areas.
- Disparities in digital literacy and home internet access.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Integrate telecommunications planning into LEP and regional infrastructure strategies.
- Support flexible and hybrid workspaces with embedded digital services.
- Coordinate with telcos to map, monitor, and address coverage gaps.
- Prioritise digital readiness in employment, education, and disaster planning frameworks.

4.4.2.4.18 Education & Training (Private)

This profile considers private education providers and specialised training institutions beyond the mainstream school, TAFE, and university sectors. It includes language schools, registered training organisations (RTOs), professional development services, and adult education centres. These services play a flexible role in skills development, upskilling, youth engagement and second-chance education.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

Private and non-traditional education contributes modestly to employment but significantly to workforce participation and social inclusion.

- RTOs provide sector-specific training in hospitality, business, aged care, construction, and beauty.
- Adult education and community college programs reach learners not engaged in mainstream education.
- Education providers often work in partnership with employment and welfare services.
- Services are delivered through commercial sites, community centres and online platforms.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

Recent trends show an increasing role for micro-credentials, job readiness programs and adult re-skilling.

- Post-flood recovery and rebuild have driven demand for training in trades, aged care and support services.
- COVID-19 spurred a shift to blended and remote delivery models, expanding reach but also exposing digital divides.
- Short-term and industry-aligned courses have become more important for job placement and transitions.
- Workforce for these providers is highly casualised, with trainers often employed part-time across multiple RTOs.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Providers use flexible, low-overhead spaces including community halls, small commercial tenancies and mobile classrooms.
- Internet access and digital literacy are essential for learners and educators.
- Partnerships with employment and business networks support program alignment and placement.
- Education support services are often co-located with community services or housing providers.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

Private and alternative education has a key role in upskilling, workforce reintegration and social support.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Strengthen the role of adult education and re-skilling in post-disaster economic development.
- Align course offerings with local industry demand, especially in care, construction, hospitality, and business services.
- Expand access to digital learning and hybrid delivery through planning and digital equity.
- Support flexible learning spaces in centres and precincts.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Reliance on short-term contracts, casual labour and grant-based funding.
- Competition for learners from larger TAFE and university providers.
- Uneven access to technology, transport and wrap-around support.
- Limited long-term infrastructure or permanent training campuses.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Zone for multi-use and adaptable spaces for training delivery.
- Encourage co-location of education and support services.
- Consider training needs in precinct and recovery planning.
- Support strategic partnerships between RTOs, Council and employers.

4.4.2.4.19 Other Services

The 'Other Services' industry category includes a variety of personal and community services not classified elsewhere. This encompasses personal care (e.g. hairdressing and beauty), automotive repair, household equipment repair, religious institutions and interest-based associations. Though diverse and modest in size, these services play a visible and community-facing role in daily life, especially in neighbourhood and village centres.

Industry Profile and Economic Value

This sector typically accounts for 2–3% of local employment and consists largely of small businesses and sole traders.

- Sub-sectors include hairdressing, tattooing, beauty services, appliance repairs, auto mechanics, funeral services and religious organisations.
- Businesses are widely distributed across town centres, village high streets and home-based operations.
- Some services are closely tied to culture, wellbeing and social cohesion within the community.

Recent Trends and Workforce Dynamics

This sector has remained stable, though many businesses are vulnerable to economic shocks and consumer spending shifts.

- Personal services faced closures and restrictions during COVID-19 and the 2022 floods, with slow recovery in some sub-sectors.
- Labour shortages, especially in qualified trades and licenced practitioners, affect continuity and customer service.
- Demand for repair services has grown in alignment with cost-of-living pressures and sustainability preferences.
- Churches and not-for-profits play an increasing role in community care and informal support services.

Infrastructure and Capacity Building

- Many services operate from street-level tenancies, small commercial hubs or converted residential sites.
- Public and shared-use facilities (e.g., community centres, halls) support interest groups, religious gatherings and small service delivery.
- Digital presence and booking platforms are increasingly used, though some businesses still rely on walk-in trade.
- Basic infrastructure such as signage, lighting, and accessibility remains important for viability and visibility.

Potential Directions and Strategic Considerations

The diversity and hyper-local nature of this sector means its needs are closely tied to community sentiment and precinct function.

Emerging Opportunities and Priorities:

- Support micro-enterprise and home-based business through flexible zoning and compliance guidance.
- Promote local repair services and circular economy alignment.
- Strengthen personal services as part of neighbourhood and village centre revitalisation.
- Engage faith and community organisations in resilience and social service networks.

Sectoral Challenges and Constraints:

- Rising operating costs and lease pressure for small tenancies.
- Skills availability in specialised trades and regulated service types.
- Limited access to finance and digital marketing tools.
- Planning complexity for services operating across mixed-use or residential locations.

Indicative Planning Considerations:

- Enable permissive land use for home-based and micro-scale services.
- Include personal and repair services in activation and main street programs.
- Facilitate low-cost, low-barrier spaces for part-time or informal services.
- Integrate the role of faith and cultural institutions in broader social infrastructure planning.

4.5 Projected Industry & Employment Growth

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) utilises employment projections developed by its Transport Performance and Analytics (TPA) division to inform future employment trends across metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW.

Under the current TPA projections (Table xx), Lismore LGA is expected to experience relatively weak employment growth between 2021 and 2046, with an estimated net increase of just 1,577 jobs—equating to an average annual growth rate of only 0.2%, assuming no structural shifts in the local economy. This projected growth is heavily concentrated in a small number of sectors, most notably Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,016 jobs) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+401 jobs), with modest increases in Education and Training (+102) and Accommodation and Food

Services (+158). Limited growth is forecast across the remainder of the economy which, if realised, suggests minimal demand for new employment land.

The TPA projections appear to take a conservative view of the region's future, particularly given Lismore City's ongoing flood recovery, investment in infrastructure, and economic repositioning. Notably, the absence of projected growth in sectors such as Construction and Manufacturing is inconsistent with post-flood rebuilding activity and broader regional development momentum.

Furthermore, when compared with other LGAs across the Northern Rivers, Lismore's projected employment growth is subdued. Between 2021 and 2046, Tweed LGA is forecast to add approximately 4,441 jobs, followed by Clarence Valley (+3,542), Ballina (+2,165), and Byron (+1,863). These LGAs are expected to grow at compound annual rates between 0.4% and 0.7%, highlighting their relatively stronger economic trajectories.

In contrast, Lismore City is also projected to experience significantly weaker population growth, with an increase of just 2,102 residents between 2021 and 2041 (4.7% total growth, or a CAGR of 0.2%). This places Lismore among the slowest-growing LGAs in the region and reinforces the need for a proactive, interventionist approach to population and economic development. The rationale for these subdued projections is not clearly explained, yet the underlying assumptions appear to imply that Lismore—and the broader Northern Rivers region—will become progressively less accessible to new residents and visitors. This outlook is difficult to reconcile with the region's lifestyle appeal, recent inward migration trends, and opportunities created by flexible work and housing market shifts.

Table 4.4.22 TPA Employment Projections, Lismore City, 2021 & 2046

Industry	2021	%	2046	%	Change (2021-46)	% CAGR (2021-2046)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1,348	5.2%	1,406	5.1%	58	0.2%
Mining	35	0.1%	34	0.1%	-1	-0.1%
Manufacturing	1,326	5.1%	1,267	4.6%	-59	-0.2%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	226	0.9%	214	0.8%	-12	-0.2%
Construction	1,975	7.6%	1,959	7.1%	-16	0.0%
Wholesale Trade	450	1.7%	448	1.6%	-2	0.0%
Retail Trade	3,246	12.6%	3,046	11.1%	-200	-0.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	1,681	6.5%	1,840	6.7%	158	0.4%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	821	3.2%	782	2.9%	-39	-0.2%
Information Media and Telecommunications	211	0.8%	234	0.9%	24	0.4%
Financial and Insurance Services	392	1.5%	504	1.8%	112	1.0%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	238	0.9%	264	1.0%	26	0.4%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,337	5.2%	1,737	6.3%	401	1.1%
Administrative and Support Services	837	3.2%	834	3.0%	-4	0.0%
Public Administration and Safety	1,343	5.2%	1,293	4.7%	-50	-0.2%
Education and Training	2,793	10.8%	2,895	10.6%	102	0.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,101	23.6%	7,117	26.0%	1,016	0.6%
Arts and Recreation Services	311	1.2%	375	1.4%	63	0.7%
Other Services	1,161	4.5%	1,159	4.2%	-2	0.0%
Total	**25,832**	**100%**	**27,171**	**100%**	**1,577**	**0.2%**

Sources: Transport for NSW.

Table 4.4.23 TPA Employment Projections, Northern Rivers, 2021 & 2046

LGA	2021	2046	Change (2021-46)	Change (2021-46)	% CAGR (2021-2046)
Ballina	20,781	22,947	2,165	10.42%	0.40%
Byron	18,598	20,461	1,863	10.02%	0.38%
Clarence Valley	20,085	23,626	3,542	17.63%	0.65%
Kyogle	3,497	3,617	120	3.43%	0.14%
Lismore	25,832	27,409	1,577	6.10%	0.24%
Richmond Valley	8,636	8,943	306	3.55%	0.14%
Tweed	38,946	43,387	4,441	11.40%	0.43%
Northern Rivers	**136,375**	**150,390**	**14,014**	**10.28%**	**0.39%**

Sources: Transport for NSW.

Based on the current aspirational population target, Lismore City is expected to reach approximately 53,500 residents by 2046, an increase of around 9,500 people compared to the 2021 population. Accommodating this growth would require the creation of approximately 4,700 additional jobs by 2046. Given the risk that insufficient planning may constrain future growth, there should be a deliberate bias towards planning for the higher end of population and employment projections.

While the health care sector is expected to remain a key driver of employment under current projections, Lismore must also look to diversify and strengthen its economic base. Strategic investment in core industries such as agriculture, manufacturing (particularly food processing), and professional and technical services will be essential. Growth in these sectors is likely to support expansion across related industries such as freight and logistics, and potentially in renewable energy, creating broader demand for employment land and contributing to a more balanced and resilient local economy.

Key local growth opportunities include:

- Agribusiness expansion, particularly in macadamia and horticulture ventures within Lismore's hinterland
- Ongoing flood recovery and infrastructure works, supporting construction and logistics
- Heightened demand in health and aged care, driven by demographic trends and
- Evolving opportunities in renewables, food processing, and professional services.

4.6 Strategic Employment Drivers

Looking ahead, Lismore's economic opportunities are expected to evolve through:

- Expansion of health and aged care services
- Growth in disaster recovery, sustainability, and resilience planning
- Diversification in agri-business and food production

- Renewed investment in education, training and research
- Continued emergence of the creative and digital sectors and
- Potential growth in renewable energy and circular economy industries.

4.7 Employment Challenges

The local economy faces several structural and emerging challenges:

- Employment land fragmentation and under-utilisation
- Skills shortages in health, trades and professional services
- Risk of youth outmigration due to limited career pathways
- Business disruption from flood damage and recovery delays and
- A need to better integrate economic and spatial planning to support jobs closer to where people live.

5 Strategic Policy & Planning Context

5.1 Council's Strategic Policy and Planning Framework

Lismore City Council operates within a framework of integrated planning and reporting as required under the NSW Local Government Act 1993. The Local Strategic Planning Statement and Economic Development Strategy are closely aligned with the priorities identified in:

- **Reimagine Lismore 2025-2035** – Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), outlining community priorities across environment, economy, infrastructure, governance and social wellbeing.
- **Delivery Program & Operational Plan** – Translating the CSP into medium- and short-term actions, including flood recovery, infrastructure investment and economic activation projects.
- **Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP) and associated Development Control Plans (DCPs)** – Statutory tools that regulate land use and development.
- **Lismore Growth and Realignment Strategy (2022)** – Identifies opportunities to transition flood-prone urban areas and support future housing growth in higher, more resilient locations. Together with it's addendum, will be superceded by the LSPS.
- **Lismore Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024 (Innovate Lismore 2024)** – Innovate Lismore 2024 presents a forward-looking economic agenda focused on resilience, innovation, and place-based advantage. It identifies six opportunity areas to drive investment, employment and regional renewal.
- **Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy 2023** – In 2023 Lismore adopted its Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy to increase the supply of affordable, medium-density, and well-located housing. The strategy sets clear 10-year targets and outlines Council's role in enabling housing through advocacy, planning, and partnerships.

Together, these Council and NSW Government policy documents form the strategic foundation for Lismore's planning and economic direction. They guide action across land use, infrastructure, housing, resilience, and regional development. The following sections provide a concise overview of each document, highlighting their relevance to Lismore's future growth, recovery, and regional role.

5.1.1 North Coast Regional Plan 2041

The NSW Government's *North Coast Regional Plan 2041* establishes the long-term planning vision for the broader region, with Lismore identified as a key regional city. The plan sets a strategic population target of 800,000 for the North Coast by 2041 and focuses on:

- Housing supply and diversity

- Strong, connected communities
- Resilient infrastructure and landscapes
- Thriving industry and innovation
- Climate change adaptation

Lismore's LSPS gives local effect to this regional vision, particularly in the context of land use transitions post-flood and the need for coordinated regional recovery and growth.

5.1.2 NSW Reconstruction Authority – Resilient Lands Strategy

Following the 2022 flood events, the NSW Government established the Reconstruction Authority (RA) to lead planning and delivery of disaster recovery and future resilience. Lismore is a priority area for the RA's Resilient Lands Program, which is tasked with:

- Identifying new flood-safe growth areas;
- Enabling land acquisition and infrastructure coordination;
- Supporting housing and economic transition out of high-risk zones;
- Coordinating with Council on planning pathways and community engagement.

This work is central to the updated LSPS and has informed land use priorities, infrastructure sequencing, and housing strategy development.

5.1.3 Lismore Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024 (Innovate Lismore 2024

The Lismore Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024, titled Innovate Lismore 2024, sets out a strategic framework to position Lismore as a vibrant, innovative and resilient regional hub. Building on the city's established strengths in health, education, agriculture and creative industries, the strategy outlines six opportunity areas: agri-economy, River City lifestyle, tourism, professional services, village economies, and innovation precincts.

These opportunity areas reflect both sectoral and spatial levers for growth. The strategy emphasises the importance of workforce development, infrastructure investment, and local entrepreneurship in creating a more competitive and inclusive economy. It advocates for coordinated action across Council, education providers, industry and the community to attract business, support job creation, and enhance liveability. While designed pre-2022 floods, the strategy's priorities around diversification, local resilience and investment readiness remain highly relevant, informing the economic dimensions of Lismore's recovery and long-term planning frameworks.

5.1.4 Reimagine Lismore: A Plan for the Future (2025–2035)

Reimagine Lismore is Council's long-term community vision and integrated strategic plan, guiding local priorities between 2025 and 2035. Developed through extensive engagement with over 1,700 community members, the plan articulates shared goals for recovery, resilience, and regeneration following the significant social, environmental and economic disruption experienced in recent years.

The plan is structured around five overarching themes:

Place – Building infrastructure for growth, planning for inclusive communities, enhancing access and mobility, and creating well-designed neighbourhoods that meet the needs of residents across the LGA.
Environment – Strengthening climate and flood resilience, protecting biodiversity, improving waste systems, and embedding sustainability into decision-making.
Community – Supporting health, safety, wellbeing, education and lifelong learning; fostering inclusive cultural expression and building social cohesion across urban and rural areas.
Prosperity – Stimulating a diverse economy through support for business, investment attraction, tourism, innovation and job creation—particularly in creative industries, care, construction and sustainability.
Leadership – Embedding transparent governance, strong financial stewardship, First Nations partnership, and meaningful community engagement into Council's operations.

Importantly, the plan:

Reaffirms Lismore's role as the central service and governance hub of the Northern Rivers
Prioritises infrastructure delivery, strategic planning reform, and proactive land use management
Establishes measurable community outcomes and key performance indicators
Aligns Council's activities with broader recovery frameworks, state and federal policy, and long-term planning instruments including the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Community Engagement Strategy.

Through Reimagine Lismore, Council commits to restoring trust, enabling investment, and delivering equitable access to services and opportunities across the region. The plan recognises that inclusive leadership, partnership with community, and targeted investment are essential to shaping a future that is sustainable, vibrant and fair.

5.1.5 Lismore Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy (2023)

In March 2023, Lismore replaced its 2012 Housing Strategy with the Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy. The main aim of this strategy is to provide a roadmap for Council to encourage more affordable and medium-density housing in the urban areas of Lismore. The strategy emphasises the need to align the location of new housing with jobs, infrastructure, and services. To achieve this, the strategy outlines three strategic principles—advocacy, facilitation, and partnerships—and sets out a suite of specific actions to be implemented over the next decade.

By 2033, the strategy aims to ensure that 40% of all new housing is medium-density or diverse in form, and that 15% is affordable to very low to moderate-income households. It responds directly to critical local housing challenges, including very low rental vacancy rates, rising housing stress, limited social housing supply, and a shortage of adaptable housing types. The strategy supports targeted solutions such as infill development, co-living models, dual occupancies, and partnerships with Aboriginal housing providers—while also committing Council to enabling land release, infrastructure delivery, and more inclusive planning controls.

5.2 Other Relevant Policies and Strategies

Other important influences on Lismore's planning and economic strategy include:

- **Future Transport Strategy 2056** and regional transport plans
- **Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy**
- **NSW Housing Strategy 2041**
- **Far North Coast Bushfire Management Plan**
- **Lismore Floodplain Risk Management Plan**

Each of these policies and strategies provides important context for Lismore's strategic planning and economic direction, with further detail outlined in the subsections below.

5.2.1 Future Transport Strategy 2056 (NSW Government)

The Future Transport Strategy 2056 is the NSW Government's 40-year vision for an integrated transport network that supports growth, regional connectivity, and environmental sustainability. Within the Northern Rivers, the strategy identifies Lismore as a regional city of strategic importance, forming part of the broader regional freight and passenger transport spine. Key implications for Lismore include:

- Strengthening east-west connections between inland towns (Casino, Kyogle) and coastal centres (Ballina, Byron).
- Supporting multi-modal transport infrastructure to enhance accessibility for freight, workers, and students.
- Prioritising resilience in transport planning, particularly along corridors exposed to flood and bushfire risks.

This strategy reinforces the need to align Lismore's land use and employment zones with improved road, public transport, and digital connectivity infrastructure.

5.2.2 Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)

The Northern Rivers REDS (2018–2022) provides a region-wide economic strategy tailored to the strengths, challenges, and opportunities of the Northern Rivers. It identifies Lismore as a regional employment and institutional hub, and one of the key drivers of workforce development, health and education delivery, and small business growth. Strategic directions relevant to Lismore include:

- Leveraging regional university and vocational education systems for workforce retention.
- Strengthening agriculture, food manufacturing, and tourism value chains.
- Supporting innovation ecosystems—especially in creative industries, circular economy, and renewable energy.
- Promoting inter-LGA collaboration to support place-based infrastructure and investment readiness.

The REDS framework continues to inform regional recovery planning and investment prioritisation, particularly as economic diversification and post-disaster resilience become critical.

5.2.3 ProspER Northern Rivers Regional Economic & Environment Plan

Announced in February 2025, ProspER is designed to support the Northern Rivers' post-disaster resurgence by promoting sustainable, inclusive economic growth alongside environmental stewardship. Key highlights include:

A $250,000 NSW Government initiative led by Business NSW Northern Rivers to engage local communities—including First Nations and youth—in shaping the region's recovery strategy. Focus areas such as eco-tourism, creative industries, health innovation, sustainable agriculture, value-add manufacturing and renewable energy.
The plan aims to identify regional risks and opportunities, streamline investment, strengthen regional branding, and create capacity-building frameworks to attract and retain new industries.

5.2.4 NSW Housing Strategy 2041

The NSW Housing Strategy 2041 outlines the state's long-term vision for a diverse, resilient, and well-located housing system. For regional centres like Lismore, the strategy focuses on:

- Enabling housing choice across different life stages and income levels.
- Supporting regional growth with land supply pipelines and infrastructure alignment.
- Encouraging medium-density and affordable housing in proximity to services.
- Promoting flood-resilient and climate-ready housing design standards.

In Lismore, this strategy intersects with flood recovery through the Resilient Lands Program, and has guided strategic land release, zoning reform, and local housing needs assessments.

5.2.5 Far North Coast Bushfire Management Plan

This plan, developed under the NSW Bush Fire Coordinating Committee, outlines bushfire risk mitigation across LGAs including Lismore, Richmond Valley, and Ballina. Key elements include:

- Identification of bushfire-prone land and high-risk interface areas.
- Prescribed burning, vegetation management, and fuel reduction strategies.
- Emergency response coordination between state agencies and local councils.
- Resilient planning principles to inform future zoning and subdivision design.

Although Lismore's central risk is flood, bushfire risk in the peri-urban fringe and western rural hinterland influences land use planning and disaster preparedness.

5.2.6 Lismore Floodplain Risk Management Plan

The Lismore Floodplain Risk Management Plan provides critical technical and policy guidance for reducing future flood impacts and enabling more resilient city development. Core objectives include:

- Detailed flood mapping and hydraulic modelling to inform zoning and infrastructure upgrades.
- Investigation of road bypass options to reduce CBD congestion and support future freight and evacuation capacity.
- Planning overlays and development guidelines to shift growth to flood-resilient zones.

Collectively, these documents are central to the development of Lismore's LSPS, providing critical technical and strategic guidance that informs the sequencing of infrastructure delivery and land use planning in the wake of the 2022 floods. They also underscore the importance of integrated and adaptive approaches to land use, economic development, and infrastructure planning in the context of an increasingly dynamic and hazard-prone environment.

6 Spatial Context & Land Use Analysis

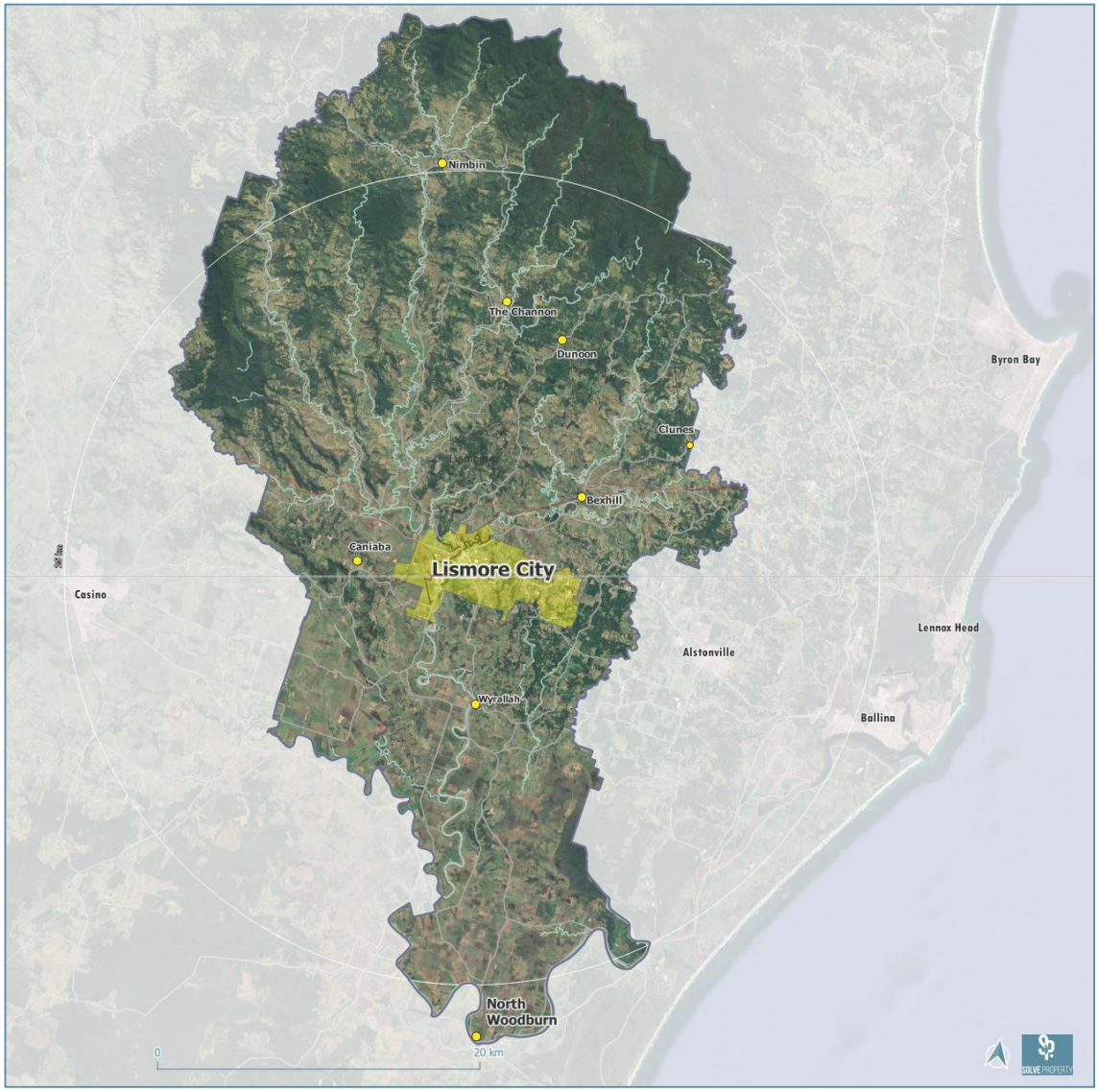
6.1 Overview of Spatial Analysis

The Lismore Local Government Area spans approximately 1,290 square kilometres and is characterised by a dual settlement pattern: a compact regional city core and a dispersed network of villages and rural communities. The topography, ecological values, and flood risk have historically influenced development patterns and will continue to shape future growth areas.

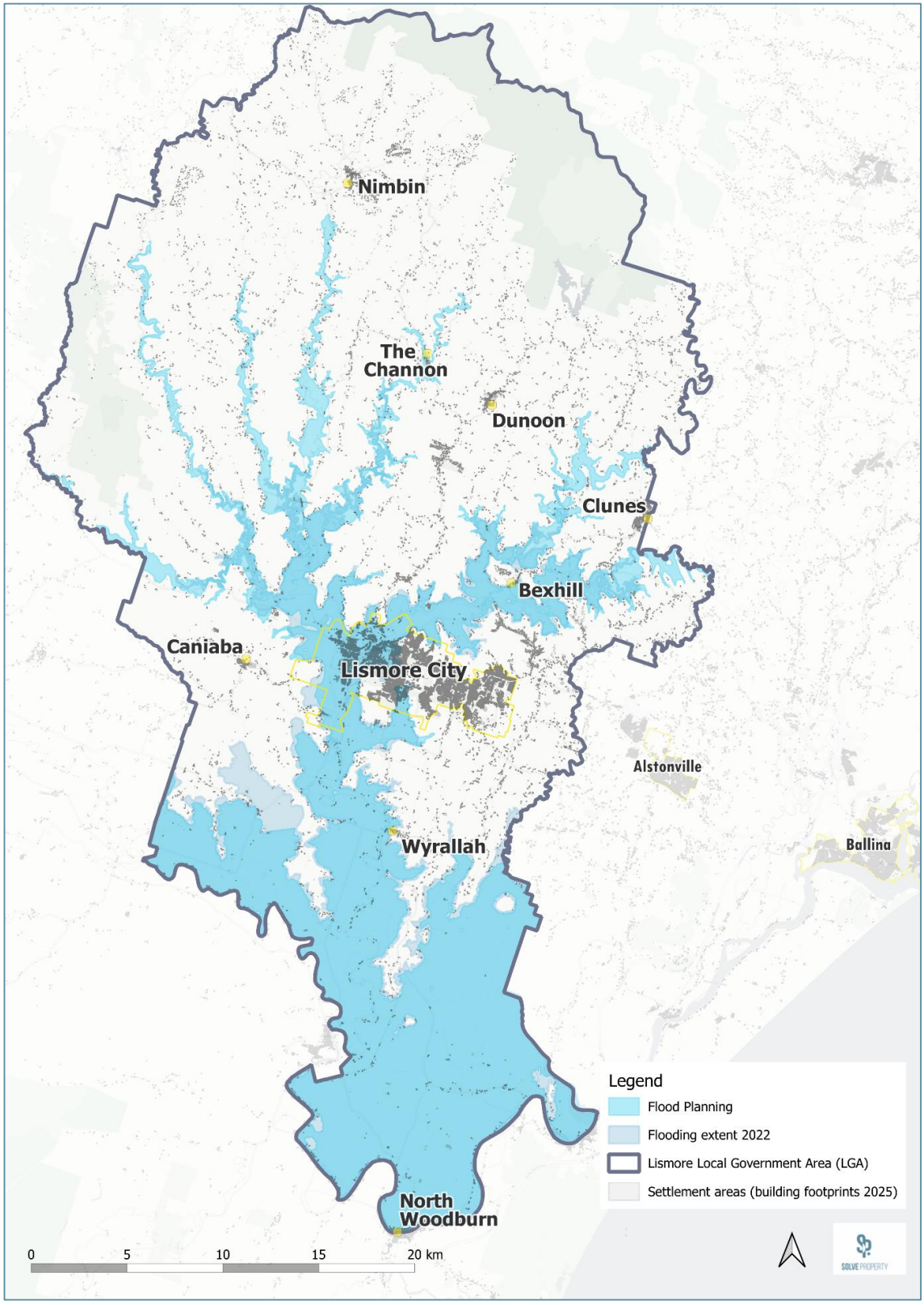
This section provides a high-level overview of current land use zoning, infrastructure capacity, and spatial constraints, drawing on Lismore's Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP), flood planning data, and the Resilient Lands Strategy.

Land Use Category	Area (ha)	% of Lismore LGA
Rural Lands	112,440.9	87.3%
Village and Lifestyle	1,481.5	1.2%
Parks, Environment & Conservation (incl. NSW Estate)	10,042.0	7.8%
Waterways	2,109.2	1.6%
Residential Lands	2,039.8	1.6%
Employment Lands	443.6	0.3%
Infrastructure	267.0	0.2%
Total – Lismore LGA	**128,824.2**	**100.0%**

Map 6.1 Lismore local government area and urban settlements



Map 6.2 Extent of Flood Planning and 2022 Flood Levels



Source: Lismore City Council Flood Planning (2025) and Flood Extent 2022; Solve Property.

6.2 LGA Spatial Profile

Lismore City comprises a hierarchy of settlements:

- **Lismore Urban Area** – includes Lismore CBD, Goonellabah, East Lismore, Lismore Heights and Chilcotts Grass (Map 6.3).
- **Villages** – including Clunes, Nimbin, Bexhill, Dunoon, Caniaba, The Channon and Wyrallah (see Map 6.1 and Map 6.2).
- **Rural Lands** – Extensive rural and environmental lands supporting agriculture, biodiversity and natural landscapes (see **Error! Reference source not found.**).
- Flooding events can have a substantial impact in Lismore including in the Urban Centre and the southern half of the LGA (Map 6.2).

6.3 Land Use Zoning

Current land use zoning under the Lismore LEP 2012 is shown in Table 3.33.1Table 6.1. The predominance of rural and environmental zones presents both a constraint and opportunity — limiting expansion in some areas while highlighting the importance of environmental protection and sustainable agriculture.

Table 6.1 Land use zoning – broad land-use categories (LEP 2012)

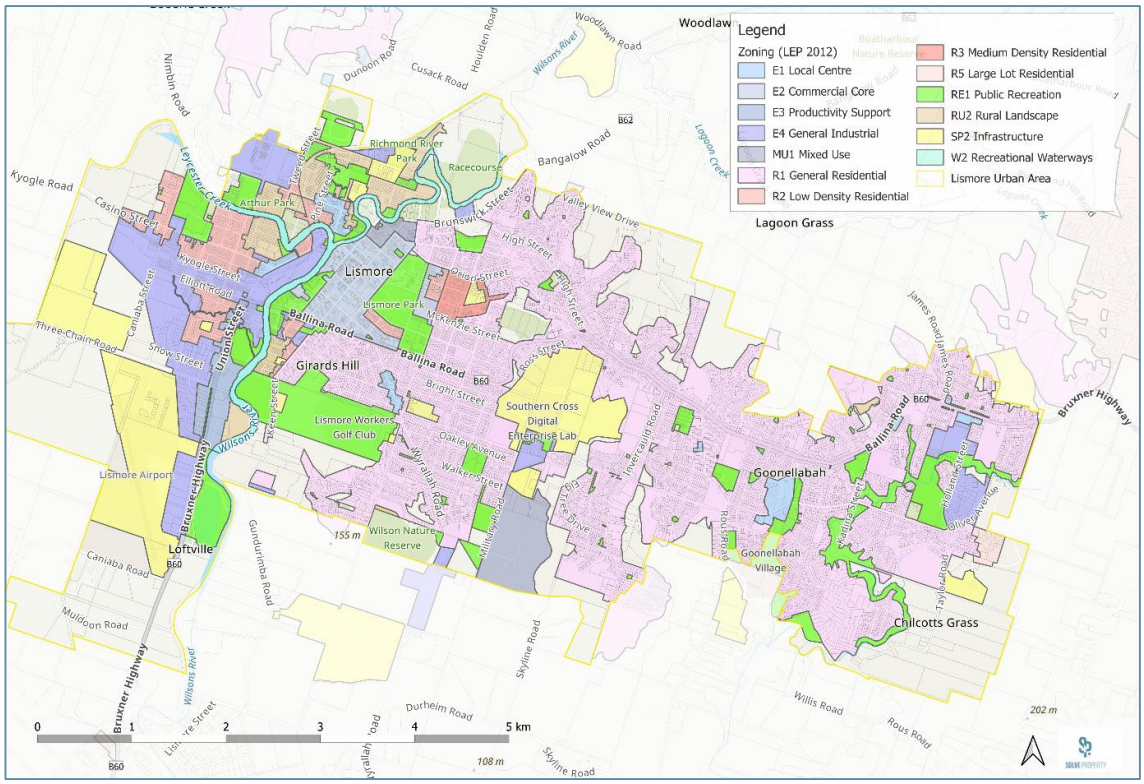
Zone type	Approximate area (ha)	Key localities
Residential	920	Goonellabah, Lismore Heights, East Lismore
Business	185	Lismore CBD, Goonellabah Village
Industrial	230	South Lismore, East Lismore Industrial Area
Rural	32,000	Clunes, Nimbin, Bexhill, Tuntable Falls
Special Purpose	110	Airport, Hospital, Southern Cross University
Environmental	9,400	Riparian zones, National Parks, koala habitat corridors

6.3.1 Lismore Urban Centre Zoning

The following maps (overleaf) show the Lismore Urban Centre and selected land zones from LEP 2012. The area west of Wilsons River is predominantly E4 General Industrial and SP2 Infrastructure (including Lismore Airport), along with some areas of R2 Low Density Residential and RU2 Rural Landscape along Leycester Creek.

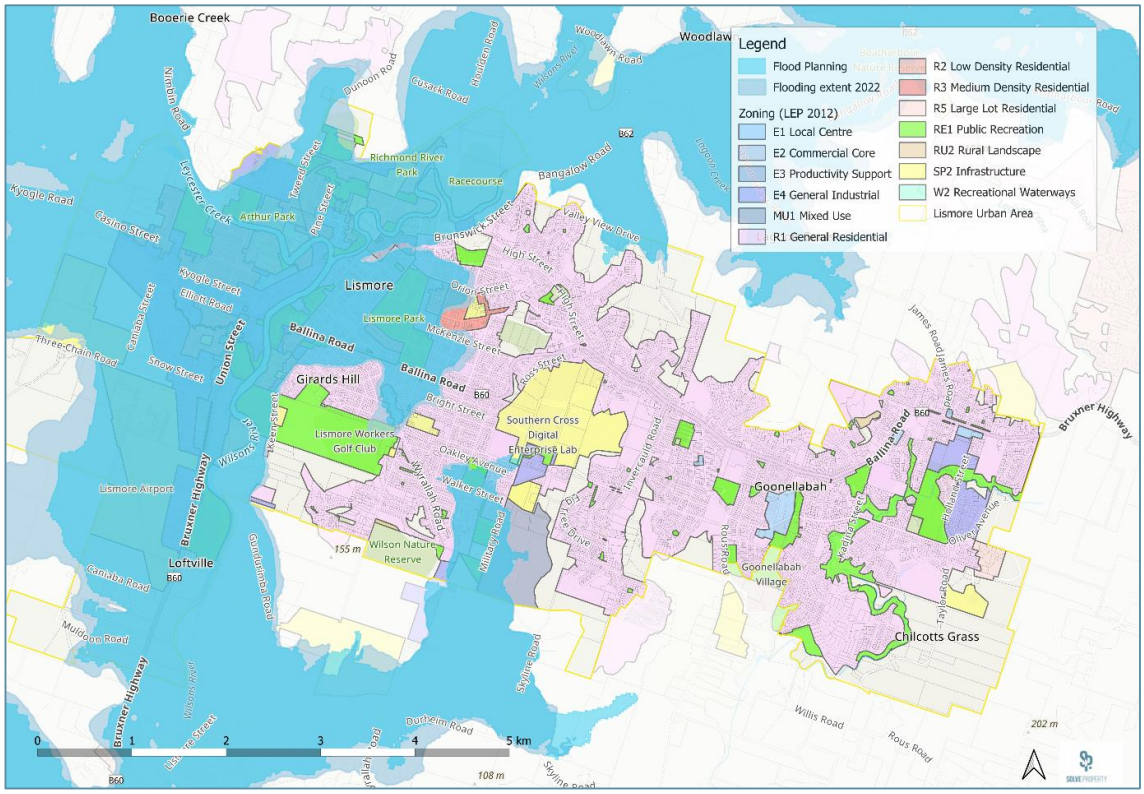
Lismore's CBD and main commercial area is immediately east of Wilsons River and most of the residential area is then further west to the suburbs of Goonellabah and Chilcotts Grass.

Map 6.3 Lismore Urban Centre Zoning (selected zones)



Source: Lismore City Council LEP 2012; Solve Property.

Map 6.4 Lismore Urban Centre Zoning (selected zones) with Flood Planning Areas

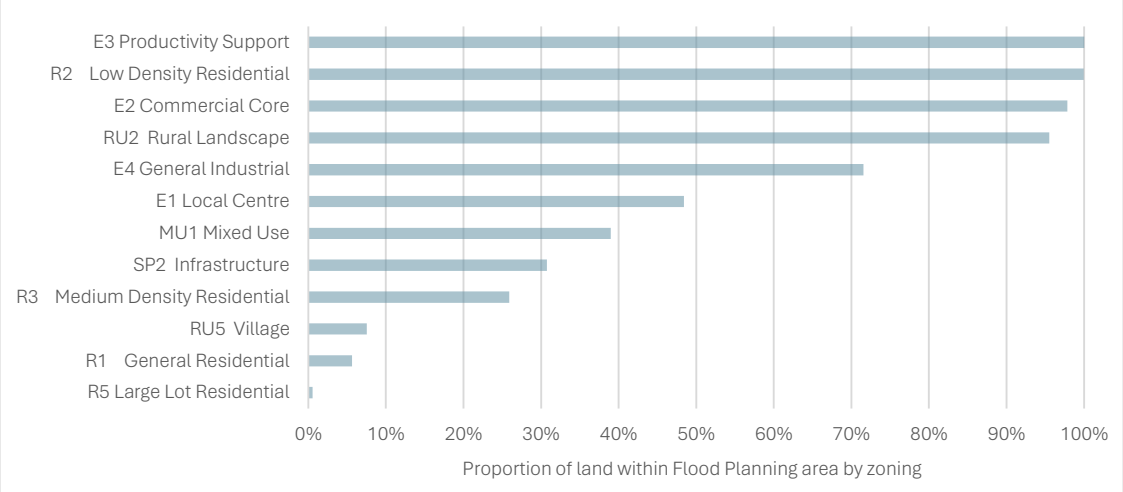


Source: Lismore City Council LEP 2012; Solve Property.

Map 6.4 shows the extensive flood planning area affecting the western portion of the Lismore Urban Centre. This shows that the flood impacts are greatest in the commercial and industrial areas, as well as in many of the residential areas in the west and northwest parts of the Lismore Urban Centre.

Error! Reference source not found. shows the proportion of land by zoning (for selected zones only) that are within the 'flood planning' area for the whole of the Lismore LGA. These areas indicate for example that 98 per cent of the E2 Commercial Core and 72 per cent of the E4 General Industrial zone are within the spatial area designated as 'flood planning'[3]. Note that the figure shows selected zones with substantial built form assets (residential, commercial, industrial and infrastructure zones).

Figure 6.1 Proportion of zoned land affected by flood planning (selected zones only)



Source: Solve Property.

6.4 Infrastructure and Services

Infrastructure capacity varies significantly across the LGA:

- **Water and Sewer** – Serviced areas are concentrated in Lismore and Goonellabah. Rural villages largely rely on tanks and on-site wastewater.
- **Roads and Transport** – Key regional links include the Bruxner Highway and Bangalow Road. Flood immunity of many routes is a key issue.
- **Digital Connectivity** – NBN coverage is widespread in urban zones with fixed line services available across Lismore City and Bexhill but remains patchy in some rural areas which are partially covered by satellite services. No fixed line mobile NBN service is available in Lismore.
- **Electricity and Energy** – Grid constraints exist in some parts of the hinterland, which may affect future infill and renewable energy projects.

[3] GIS file: "Flood Planning.shp", 12 May 2025, Lismore City Council

Strategic infrastructure planning will be critical to support future growth areas, especially in identified resilient land zones east of Lismore.

6.4.1 Water and Sewer Infrastructure

6.4.1.1 Water Infrastructure

Reticulated water services are available in several areas, including, the Lismore Urban Centre, Nimbin, The Channon, Dunoon, Modanville, Clunes, Caniaba, and North Woodburn.

6.4.1.2 Sewer Infrastructure

The Lismore Urban Centre, Caniaba, Nimbin, and North Woodburn have reticulated sewerage services with central treatment facilities. Other village settlements and remote area rely on rely on tanks and on-site wastewater treatment facilities.

Sewer extensions are planned to service growth areas particularly around Goonellabah and Chilcotts Grass.

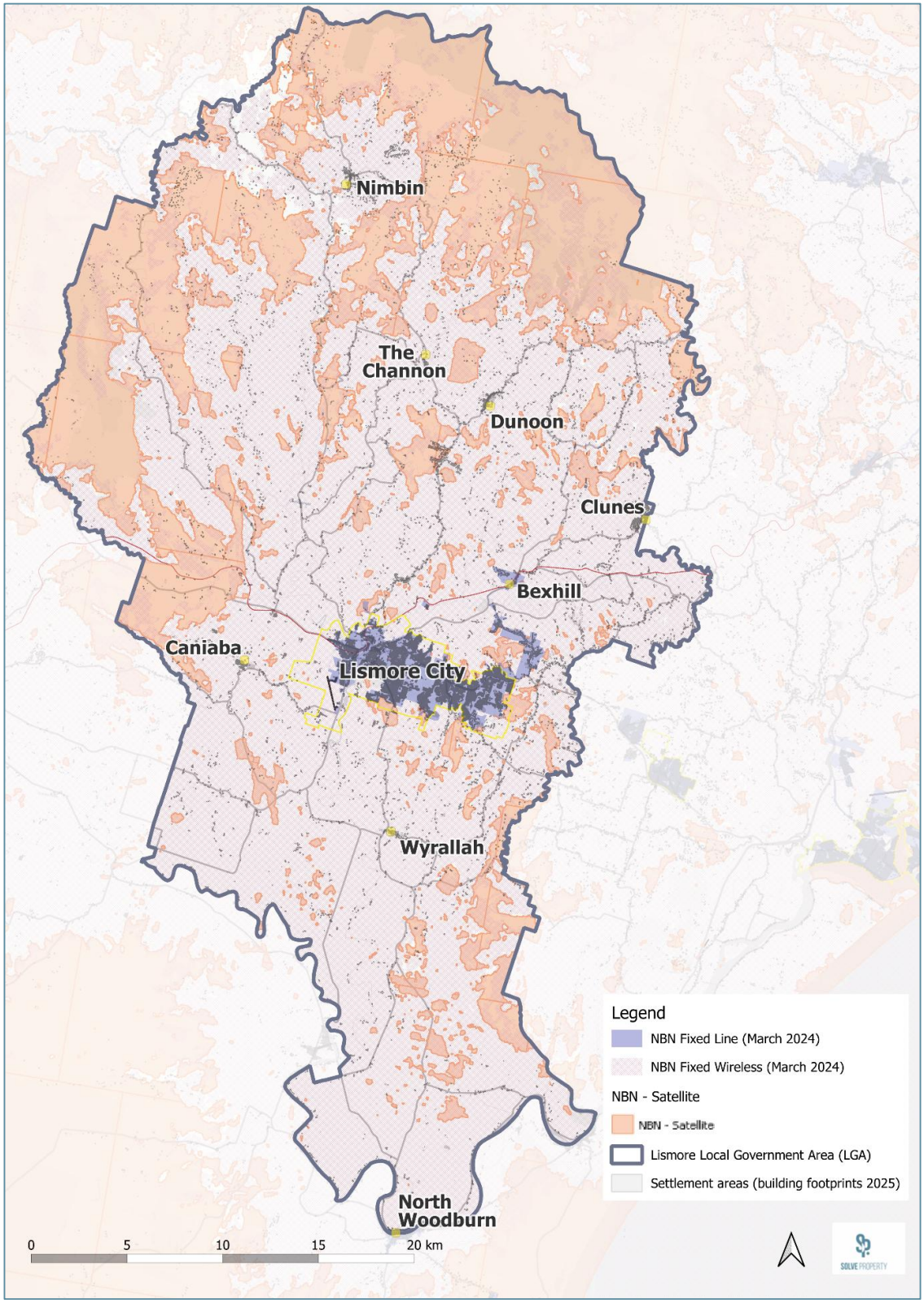
6.4.2 Digital Connectivity

Broadband internet connectivity is provided by the National Broadband Network (NBN) across the Lismore LGA (with a few isolated exceptions north-west of Nimbin). **Error! Reference source not found.**shows the three key technologies used across the area:

1. **NBN fixed line** services are available across the Lismore Urban Area, along the Richmond Hill Road corridor, Bexhill and North Woodburn.
2. **NBN fixed wireless** is available across all the southern half of the Lismore LGA and most of the northern areas. Nimbin, Clunes, The Channon, Dunoon, Wyrallah, and Caniaba all rely on fixed wireless services as their only available broadband technology.
3. **NBN satellite** is the most patchy of the broadband services available. It is the is the only service available in the north-west and north-east parts of the LGA.

Mobile coverage is good and some blackspot programs have helped to fill in some of the gaps in the network between The Channon and Nimbin. None of the three mobile carriers – Telstra. Optus and TPG – have full coverage across the LGA, however, the networks are quite complementary in their coverage to ensure that most of the areas have access to at least one of the three networks.

Map 6.5 NBN Fixed Line, Fixed Wireless and Satellite Services in Lismore



Source: NBN.

6.5 Spatial Planning Implications

- Future residential growth will be focused in **elevated and serviced areas**, particularly Goonellabah South, Chilcotts Grass and Clunes.
- A managed retreat strategy is being considered for **high-risk flood zones** in North and South Lismore.
- Employment lands require **reinvestment and reconfiguration**, with a focus on renewal in South Lismore and intensification in East Lismore's industrial precinct.
- Better **integration of environmental overlays** into strategic planning is needed to support nature-positive development.

Within the Lismore Urban Area, most of the future growth is planned for areas east of the Wilsons River, particularly in and around Goonellabah, where land is more elevated and infrastructure can be extended efficiently. Infill in suitable areas also provides additional development potential.

6.5.1 Future Residential Development Areas

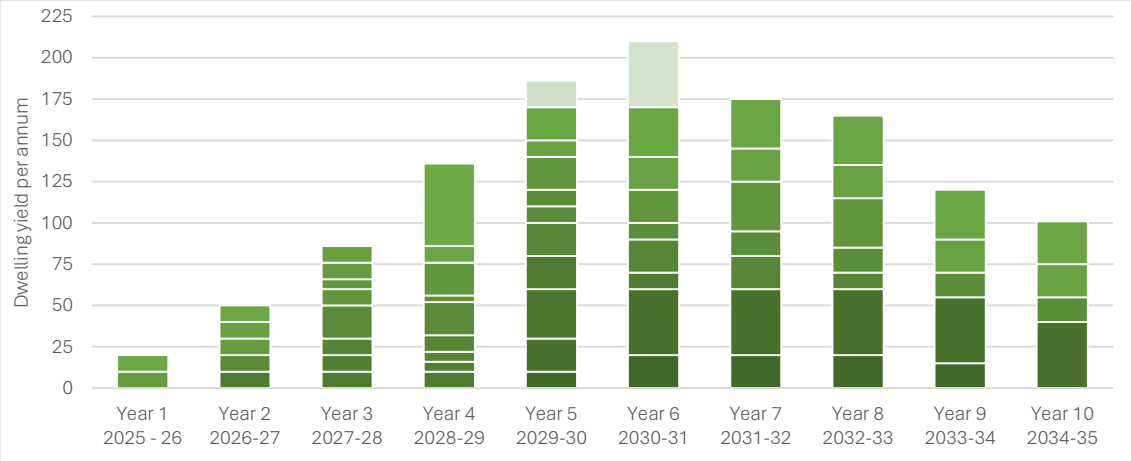
The Lismore City Council has identified potential future residential areas to accommodate growth in the Growth and Realignment Strategy 2022 (GRS) and its addendum.

The areas identified include numerous infill and greenfield sites in the Lismore Urban Centre and peri-urban areas. The GRS needs to be amalgamated into the LSPS with any new areas identified. The GRS only land that needed to be rezoned, not land that was already zoned for residential but still not delivered (ie North Lismore Plateau).

Figure 6.12 Figure 6.12 Projected dwelling yield from greenfield sites in Lismore shows the estimated dwelling potential from these sites given their approval status and infrastructure availability. Beyond 2034-35 (the ten-year forecast horizon) another 3,676 dwelling may be developed within the identified areas. This timing takes into account the upgrades in infrastructure capacity and the extension of reticulated services (water, sewer and drainage).

Note that in addition to the greenfield areas, there is also a component of infill development in Lismore and Goonellabah to add to the dwelling stock.

Figure 6.12 Projected dwelling yield from greenfield sites in Lismore



Source: Lismore City Council; Solve Property.

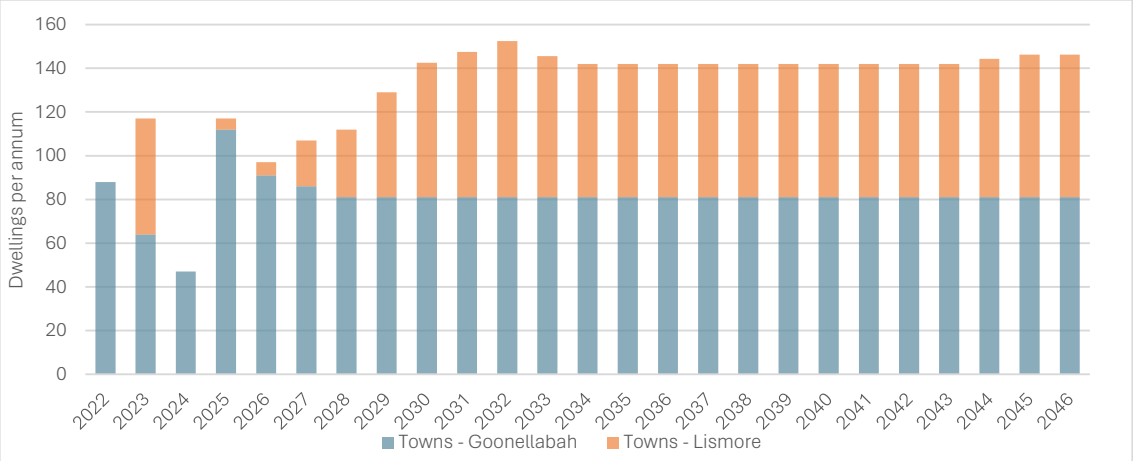
Table 6.2 Projected Dwelling Yield from New Land Development Areas - Lismore

Timing (dwelling completion)	Undeveloped dwellings	Total dwelling yield
1 - 5 Years	**442**	**979**
Under Construction	320	857
DA Approved	122	122
5 - 10 Years	**2,171**	**2,171**
DA Approved	605	605
DA Under Assessment	792	792
Land Zoned	466	466
Planning Proposal Lodged	400	400
10+ Years	**2,220**	**2,020**
Land Zoned	1,010	1,010
Land Not Zoned	1,210	1,010
Total	**4,925**	**5,262**

Source: Lismore City Council, Lismore Residential Land Supply, Target & Tracking 2025.

The dwelling and population projections prepared by Informed Decisions (ForecastID) in 2024 for the Lismore LGA show a similar pattern of relatively low rates of new dwelling development in recent years, ramping up to around 140 dwellings per annum from 2030 through to 2046 (see Figure 6.3). Note that these figures include dwellings from both greenfield and infill development, therefore they are generally higher than the figures from just greenfield areas as shown in Figure 6.12.

Figure 6.3 Long Term Dwelling Development Forecast



Source: Informed Decisions (ForecastID), 2024.

These long-term forecasts also indicate that the currently identified residential land areas have more than sufficient dwelling yield to accommodate the projected growth to 2046. In fact, by 2046, Goonellabah is projected to still have capacity for another 1,050 dwellings and Lismore capacity for 65 dwellings.

6.5.2 Future Employment Land Areas

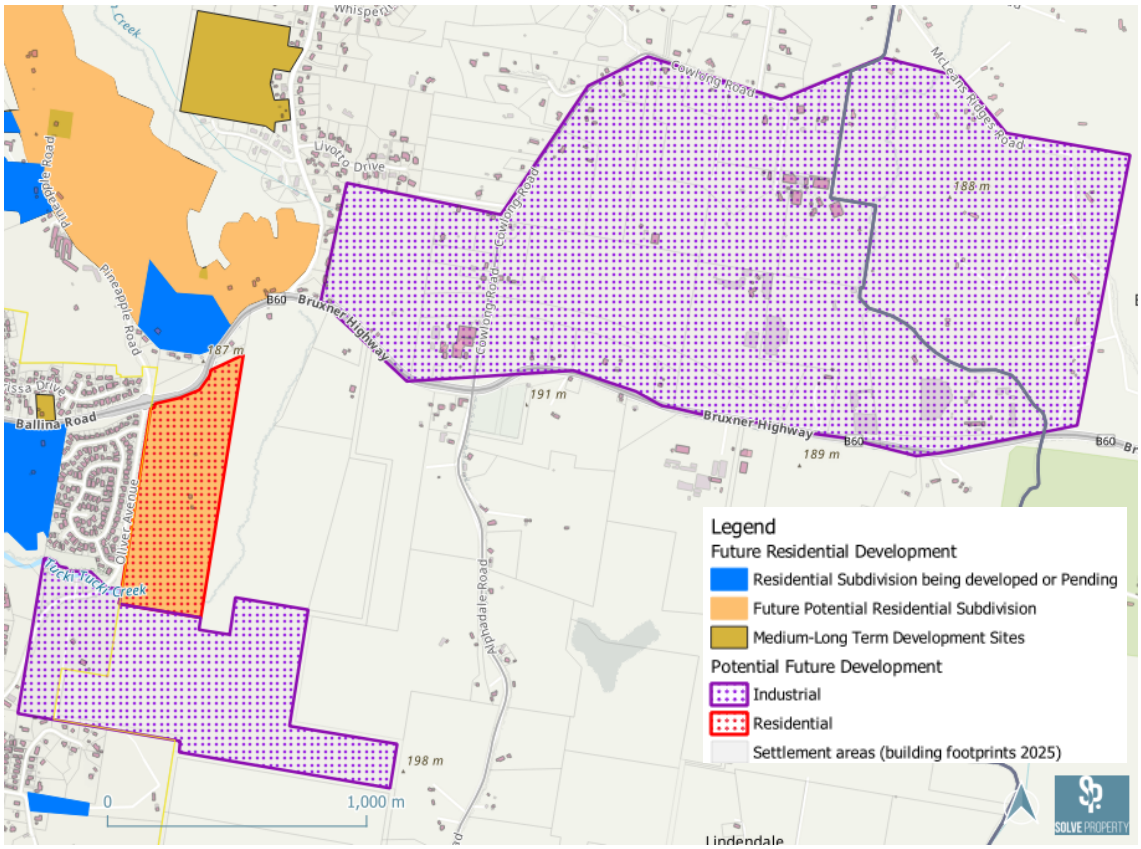
The Lismore Growth & Realignment Strategy 2022 (GRS) and the GRS Addendum 2022 identify potential future employment land.

6.5.2.1 Industrial

Several new industrial areas are also planned. The proposed realignment of the Bruxner Highway to improve safety may create an opportunity for additional industrial land. This creates the potential for around 300 hectares of industrial land to the north and south of the realigned highway and extends into the Ballina Shire Council (large area in Map 6.6).

A smaller site of around 50 hectares is being investigated for mixed-used industrial development will allow the Goonellabah Industrial Area to expand (smaller area marked 'industrial' in Map 6.6).

Map 6.6 Potential Industrial and Investigation Land from Bruxner Highway Realignment



Source: Lismore City Council; Solve Property.

6.5.2.2 Commercial/Retail

Additional commercial land is also planned, although there is only one site identified for potential development – 803 Ballina Road, Goonellabah to allow for the expansion of the Eastpoint Shopping Centre.

7 Visioning & Key Directions Workshop

7.1 Plan Genesis and Context

Revising the LSPS is not simply about refurbishing a flood-affected area in northern New South Wales. It is about creating a new trajectory for Lismore by addressing its historical decline and presenting a renewed story of success.

The plan presents a narrative that supports growth, investment, and innovation, while responding to long-standing challenges in housing, employment, sustainability, and resilience. While rooted in post-flood recovery, the plan recognises that real progress requires fresh, collaborative thinking from all levels of government, agencies, and the private sector.

The plan recognises that a great deal of work has already been done within and around Lismore to help brand itself as a principal centre for growth within northern NSW. Much of this work is being systematically reviewed because of the 2022 floods. But nevertheless, the range of analysis undertaken by the Lismore local government, regional industry groups, the reconstruction authority, and the more recent contemporary studies undertaken by Lismore council. Review of the community plan and numerous other studies is considerable and a solid base for going forward. \

The vision respects Lismore's heritage while driving forward a sustainable and inclusive future. Moreover, by addressing Lismore's challenges, the plan offers broader benefits to northern NSW, particularly in the context of a national housing crisis. The plan seeks to identify opportunities for greater collaboration between all levels of government, industry and the community to help realise Lismore's potential, elevate the role of the centre and establish a foundation for a stronger and more diversified sub-region.

Three years after the floods, many still feel the recovery effort has been hampered by administrative complexity, limited expertise, and rigid processes. Existing funding remains narrowly tied to basic recovery rather than broader regeneration.

7.2 Plan Goals

The primary goal is to make Lismore an aspirational success story. Although the plan was catalysed by the 2022 floods, it is also a strategic response to the regional decline and imbalance that has been unfolding over the past 40yrs.

Objectives include:

- Supporting long-term economic growth and diversification
- Expanding employment opportunities
- Increasing regional housing supply

- Preserving and enhancing environmental qualities and
- Provide Lismore with climate resilience.

Lismore's new Strategic Planning Framework (the LSPS and its supporting theme-based strategies) will serve as a mandate for the consolidation of Lismore as a regionally significant rural centre in New South Wales. The plan will define the prosperity, liveability and sustainability needs that will go with such a vision. Catalyst actions or turbocharges to accelerate and accommodate managed growth will play a significant role in helping to bring the vision to fruition. Turbochargers will be identified to bring forward the potential that Lismore has to stimulate further growth both within the centre and the sub region. The reconstruction conversation already taking place following the floods is a catalyst opportunity.

7.3 Key Questions to Guide the Vision

Several important questions must guide the planning process:

1. Can we develop a vision that not only guides recovery but reverses Lismore's decline as a service centre in northern NSW?
2. Can flood repair funds also be leveraged to deliver infrastructure that supports future growth, in addition rather than just replacing what was lost?
3. Can Lismore reclaim its status as a premium inland regional centre at a time when the coastal fringe continues as the focus?
4. Will a Lismore led strategic framework gain the necessary government support to deliver real outcomes, and opportunity for its "Futures plan" to materialise. Or will slow fragmented governance friction continue overshadowing the opportunity for a new decisive plan to be crafted?

7.4 Vision for a New Lismore

The vision outlined in this plan is bold, both aspirational and ambitious, but it is practical and pragmatic in the future it seeks to achieve. It sends a clear message that Lismore is open for business. The plan articulates the pathways the city intends to follow and sets the foundation for a new planning conversation that reflects both community aspirations and contemporary challenges.

DRAFT VISION: To be finalised following the testing phase.

"Lismore is the vibrant hub of northeast NSW where past meets future, entrepreneurship flourishes, diversity and the environment are celebrated, and innovation and new ideas are embraced. Lismore is a draw card West from the Pacific Highway, presenting an invitation for visitors, business, and new residents to experience its authenticity, charm, amenities, leading edge services, and special environmental backdrop".

The vision outlined in this plan is bold, aspirational and ambitious, while being practical and pragmatic about the future it seeks to achieve. It sends a clear message that Lismore is open for business.

The plan articulates the pathways the city intends to follow and sets the foundation for a new planning conversation that reflects both community aspirations and contemporary challenges.

It shifts mindsets from decline to success. The recovery has been a catalyst to craft opportunity and new investment platforms. It acknowledges the historical role Lismore has played and places it back on the map to be acknowledged as a prosperous, competitive regional centre.

7.5 Plan Objectives

The Vision sets the context and need for a plan that addresses the following objectives:

- Economic diversification
- Infrastructure renewal
- Community enhancement
- Environmental sustainability
- Climate change resilience
- Sustainable Growth.

It will present the policies and actions required to turn vision into reality and places emphasis on rebuilding Lismore in a different way.

Local leaders are eager to collaborate and try something new. However, they need support from state agencies to build the capacity necessary to implement the vision. In contrast to the current planning approach, this plan aims to place Lismore in a state of "investment readiness”.

To succeed, the plan must challenge outdated planning paradigms and re-centre the needs of the Lismore community. It must remove barriers to implementation and instead provide the tools, resources, and support to realise the community’s aspirations.

7.6 An Aspirational Plan for a New Story

The success of this plan depends on building strong partnerships between government, industry, and the community. The plan must clearly communicate opportunities and define the roles of those who can help achieve transformative results.

The existing planning framework in NSW has limitations. It is focused on regulation and control rather than enabling innovation. It was not designed to support visionary planning or respond to urgent regional needs. Maintaining this approach will not deliver what Lismore requires.

The plan must provide a clear pathway to modernise planning controls, update regulatory frameworks, and support innovation. Now is the time to shift from outdated methods and adopt an enabling, forward-thinking model.

Lismore's community needs this story. It needs confidence, direction, and tangible opportunities. Those in positions of power must commit to creating real pathways for success.

The integration of promised recovery infrastructure, alongside targeted investment programs, can provide the spark for innovation. This will not only address Lismore's needs but also serve as a model for recovery and growth throughout northern NSW.

7.7 Key Themes and Focus Areas to Support the Vision

Each of these themes will be expanded with discussion focused on the aspects to be addressed and act as a translation and interpretation between the vision statement and steps that will be taken.

1. Infrastructure and Services
2. Housing Choice and Supply
3. Economic Diversification: Business, Employment and Innovation
4. Social Cohesion and Community Well-being
5. Lifestyle
6. Environmental Protection and Restoration
7. Reputation and Liveability.

7.8 Workshop Outcomes

As part of Stage 1, Solve facilitated a visioning and strategy session with Lismore City Councillors and Executive Leadership. The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Reflect on the impacts of recent flood events and other structural challenges facing Lismore.
- Reaffirm Council's strategic vision and core priorities for the future.
- Identify preliminary planning directions across land use, housing, economy, infrastructure, and resilience including population growth.

Key themes emerging from the session included:

- **Rebuilding with Purpose**: A commitment to reposition Lismore not just through recovery, but with a long-term resilience and renewal lens.

- **Targeted Growth**: Clear appetite to enable growth in flood-resilient areas, particularly Goonellabah and Caniaba.
- **Economic Revitalisation**: Priority to support small business recovery, creative industries, and invest in sustainable economic sectors.
- **Housing Diversity**: Support for medium density housing options and mixed-use areas to address housing stress and attract key workers and younger residents.
- **Infrastructure Resilience**: Strong desire to prioritise future infrastructure investment based on flood immunity and future population servicing.
- **Equity and Inclusion**: Ongoing commitment to ensure planning outcomes are inclusive, with particular focus on First Nations, youth and vulnerable populations.

This input has informed the development of preliminary Key Directions in Section 9.

8 Stakeholder Engagement

8.1 Strategic Stakeholder Input

Solve conducted targeted engagement with a cross-section of key regional stakeholders to inform the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy. These included:

- Traditional Custodians
- NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Northern Rivers Joint Organisation
- Major institution including Southern Cross University, Northern NSW Local Health District (see Appendix for full list)
- Infrastructure providers: Essential Energy, Transport for NSW
- Local business chambers, cooperatives, and peak industry groups
- Affordable housing providers and social services

Emerging insights from these discussions include:

- **Resilience is Economic**: The need to position resilience-building and flood-safe land use as core enablers of economic recovery and growth.
- **Place Matters**: A strong sense that planning must retain and support Lismore's cultural identity, heritage assets and creative economy.
- **Unlocking Land Supply**: Clear need to accelerate planning and servicing for new housing precincts east of the river.
- **Enable the Next Economy**: Stakeholders identified clean energy, health and social care, agri-innovation, and digital industries as areas for strategic investment.
- **Coordination Gaps**: A shared view that stronger alignment across all levels of government and local organisations is essential to unlock funding and delivery capability.

These insights support the development of Lismore-specific strategic directions in the final stages of the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy.

8.2 Summary of Key Insights from Stakeholder Consultation

8.2.1 Housing Choice

Housing was the most consistently raised issue, with strong concern over limited supply, particularly for flood-resilient and diverse housing types.

Stakeholders emphasised the need for more elevated dwellings and medium-density options in well-serviced and less flood-prone areas.

Housing diversity was viewed as essential to retaining essential workers, supporting the ageing population, and meeting the needs of younger people, families and First Nations residents.

There was support for alternative housing models, including cooperative housing, community land trusts, affordable rental programs, and partnerships with Aboriginal housing providers.

The lack of housing options was also seen as a major constraint on economic recovery, workforce attraction, and social cohesion.

8.2.2 Infrastructure and Flood Resilience

Stakeholders viewed infrastructure as a foundational enabler for all other priorities.

Critical issues raised included stormwater management, flood protection, transport access, and ageing or under-capacity assets.

Several stakeholders noted the need to integrate infrastructure planning with land use and economic strategies—particularly in flood-affected areas.

Suggestions included investment in green and blue infrastructure (e.g. natural drainage corridors, wetlands, tree canopy), improved connectivity, and bundling of infrastructure upgrades with housing development.

There was strong support for infrastructure that is not only resilient but also place-based and climate-adaptive.

8.2.3 Local Economy and Jobs

Stakeholders expressed cautious optimism about repositioning Lismore's economy through creative industries, health and care sectors, digital and green enterprise, and food system innovation.

While the potential for economic diversification was acknowledged, many noted the absence of a coherent strategy or investment delivery pathway.

Land use constraints, digital connectivity gaps, and a lack of flexible work, production, and innovation spaces were repeatedly raised as barriers.

Workforce shortages—particularly in health, aged care, construction, and education—were seen as urgent and structural.

Stakeholders called for investment attraction efforts, small business support, and stronger branding and positioning of Lismore as a hub for values-aligned regional enterprise.

8.2.4 Cultural Identity and Activation

Lismore's cultural identity was seen as a competitive strength and a vital part of the region's recovery and future.

Many stakeholders expressed concern that cultural infrastructure and leadership are under-recognised in mainstream planning or investment decisions.
here was support for more events, street activation, creative programming, and storytelling that reflects Lismore's unique character.
Culture was seen not only as a social asset but also as an economic driver, with opportunities in cultural tourism, education, and creative enterprise.

8.2.5 Education, Health and Human Services

Lismore's institutional core—SCU, TAFE, Lismore Base Hospital, and St Vincent's—was acknowledged as regionally significant.
However, stakeholders highlighted declining enrolments, staff shortages, and misalignment between training pathways and workforce needs.
Key challenges identified include youth disengagement, under-resourcing in aged care and mental health, and difficulty accessing wraparound services in the recovery period.
There was interest in co-located service models, interagency collaboration, and flexible delivery—particularly in early childhood, community health, and outreach-based care.

8.2.6 Planning, Governance and Leadership

A recurring theme was the need for stronger coordination across all levels of government. Stakeholders noted frustration with fragmented planning, inconsistent communication, and overlapping roles—particularly post-disaster.
There was a desire for clear long-term direction from Council and the State, with action that moves beyond vision-setting to actual delivery.
Many called for improved transparency, timely decision-making, and deeper community co-design—especially in recovery, infrastructure, and land use planning.
Council capacity was raised as an issue—several participants felt more resources or capability were needed to execute the scale of transformation required.

9 SWOT & Gap Analysis

9.1 Key Findings of this Report

This Baseline Analysis highlights the complex, interrelated challenges and opportunities facing the Lismore LGA. While Lismore has long served as a regional hub for the Northern Rivers, its capacity to grow, adapt and thrive is now being tested in new ways due to:

- Compounding natural disasters and climate risk
- Legacy land use decisions and fragmented infrastructure
- Shifting demographic and economic trends and
- New policy and funding mechanisms for resilience and housing.

9.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Regional service centre for health, education, government.	Extensive flood-prone land within urban footprint, including most of the employment lands.
Strong identity, heritage, and cultural diversity.	Ageing infrastructure and limited public transport.
Diverse economy with education, agriculture, and tourism.	Low housing diversity, rental stress, and supply constraints.
Committed community and active local organisations.	Skills shortages and youth outmigration.
Proximity to coastal and hinterland destinations.	High disaster recovery burden and insurance pressures.

Opportunities	Threats
• Growth and investment in flood-resilient areas (e.g. Goonellabah, Clunes corridor).	• Further flood or bushfire events disrupting recovery.
• Expansion of health, aged care, education and creative sectors.	• Insurance retreat or infrastructure underfunding.
• Resilient Lands Strategy implementation and land release.	• Failure to transition vulnerable housing stock.
• Regional collaboration on infrastructure, jobs and sustainability.	• Economic leakage to surrounding centres (e.g. Ballina, Byron).
• Green economy: circular economy, renewables, eco-tourism.	• Planning delays or fragmented governance.

10 Preliminary Key Directions

10.1 Setting the Scene

The following draft key directions have been developed in response to the baseline analysis, strategic policy context, and early consultation with Council and stakeholders. They will be refined during the next phase of the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy.

10.2 Draft Key Directions - recommendations

Direction 1: Enable a resilient and future-ready settlement pattern

- Transition vulnerable areas out of high flood risk zones through adaptive planning and land acquisition.
- Focus new housing and infrastructure in elevated, flood-resilient areas (e.g. Goonellabah South, Chilcotts Grass, Clunes).
- Apply a landscape-led planning approach that integrates land capability, hazard, and environmental overlays.
- Centre hierarchy
- Rural

Direction 2: Diversify and strengthen the Lismore economy

- Leverage Lismore's regional city status to attract health, education and government investment.
- Support growth in emerging industries including green economy, creative industries, and food production.
- Expand employment land opportunities east of the river with supporting infrastructure.

Direction 3: Deliver diverse housing choices

- Support medium-density housing in accessible, serviced areas.
- Incentivise delivery of affordable and social housing through partnerships.
- Prioritise housing delivery aligned with flood, infrastructure, and employment planning.

Direction 4: Reinvest in infrastructure and public domain

- Upgrade/provide essential infrastructure to support growth precincts.
- Improve public transport, active travel, and digital connectivity.
- Revitalise Lismore's CBD and village centres through place-based strategies.

- Social infra and sport?

Direction 5: Embed Indigenous knowledge, resilience and sustainability across planning

- Align growth with climate adaptation and nature-positive development.
- Strengthen planning responses to heat, water, fire and biodiversity risks.
- Promote circular economy principles in land use and business strategy.

Direction 6: Partner with community and regional stakeholders

- Strengthen collaboration with the NSW Reconstruction Authority and delivery agencies.
- Engage Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal organisations in spatial planning.
- Build regional alignment on infrastructure, housing, jobs and climate resilience.
- Connected communities

11 Next Steps

This Background Report represents the completion of Stage 1 of the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy process for Lismore City Council.

The next steps involve moving into Stage 2: Testing and Refinement, which will include:

1. Detailed Spatial and Economic Scenario Testing

- Refine growth scenarios for housing, employment and land use.

2. Drafting of the Lismore LSPS and Economic Development Strategy

- Integrate feedback from engagement and technical testing into draft strategies.
- Prepare clear planning priorities and implementation actions aligned with the North Coast Regional Plan 2041 and Resilient Lands Strategy.
- Develop metrics and monitoring frameworks to track progress.
- Take a final draft to the Councillors, seeking a resolution to proceed to public exhibition

3. Public Exhibition and Finalisation

- Release the Draft LSPS and Economic Development Strategy for formal public exhibition.
- Review submissions and update final documents for adoption by Council and submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

12 Conclusion

Lismore's Local Strategic Planning Statement and Economic Development Strategy will guide the city's recovery and future growth. They will help ensure that housing, infrastructure, jobs and services are delivered in the right places, in the right way – building a stronger, safer and more connected Lismore for future generations.

13 Appendices

Appendix A: Feasibility Assessment Key Assumptions

Field	detail
Residential level	3
FSR (assumed)	1.8:1
Site area	1,200 sqm (source: Solve Property)
Building Site Coverage	60%
Total GFA	2,175 sqm
Apartment size (assumed)	2 bedrooms, 85 sqm per unit (NSA) (source: Solve Property)
Quality (construction)	Basic quality, $3,500 per unit[1] (source: Solve Property)
Finance cost	8.5% (source: Solve Property)
Common area in building	20% (source: Solve Property)
Professional fees/consultant costs	10% of building costs (source: Solve Property)
Elevator cost per building	$250,000 (source: Solve Property)
Service connection & external works	4% of building costs (source: Solve Property)
Carpark	One carpark per unit (source: Solve Property)
Basement carpark construction cost	$60,000 per carpark (source: Solve Property)
Section 7.11 charges	$4,400 per unit (source: Lismore City)
Developer margin	20% (source: Solve Property)
Sales commission	2.0% of total revenue (source: Solve Property)
Marketing expenses	0.75% of total revenue (source: Solve Property)
Land acquisition cost	$900,000 (Source: Solve Property & Pricefinder Domain)
Building cost contingency	10% (source: Solve Property)
Land is not flood affected & is considered to be gentle sloping	
Low rise dwelling should meet the provisions of Low Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide	
Apartments should meet the provisions of the Apartment Design Guide	

Appendix B: Feasibility Assessment, 3 Storey Apartment

Assumptions	3 Storey
2 bedroom apartment size	85 sqm
No. of floors	3
Efficiency	80%
Finance interest rate	8.5%
Calculations	
Potential floor space per floor	725 sqm
Estimate of total floor space	2,175 sqm
Total 2 bedroom apartments	20
Land and Construction Costs	
Acquisition Cost	$900,000
Total Construction and Contingency	$10,372,958
Sales costs	$378,223
All other costs (Professional fees, Marketing etc.)	$2,738,702
Total Cost	**$14,389,883**
Apartment price (estimate)	
Developer margin	20%
Required total revenue to break even	$18,911,139
Required apartment price (per unit)	**$924,000**

Appendix C: Feasibility Assessment, 5 Storey Apartment

Assumptions	5 Storey
2 bedroom apartment size	85 sqm

No. of floors	5
Efficiency	80%
Finance interest rate	8.5%
Calculations	
Potential floor space per floor	1,200 sqm
Estimate of total floor space	3,625 sqm
Total 2 bedroom apartments	34
Land and Construction Costs	
Acquisition Cost	$900,000
Total Construction and Contingency	$16,962,526
Sales costs	$ 602,970
All other costs (Professional fees, Marketing etc.)	$4,467,843
Total Cost	**$ 22,941,005**
Apartment price (estimate)	
Developer margin	20%
Required total revenue to break even	$30,148,509
Required apartment price (per unit)	**$884,000**

Appendix D: Sensitivity Assessment, 20% lower construction cost & testing 9 storey development

Assumptions	3 Storey	5 Storey	9 Storey
2 bedroom apartment size	85 sqm	85 sqm	85 sqm
No. of floors	3	5	9
Efficiency	80%	80%	80%

Finance interest rate	8.5%	8.5%	8.5%
Calculations			
Potential floor space per floor	725 sqm	725 sqm	725 sqm
Estimate of total floor space	2,175 sqm	3,625 sqm	6,525 sqm
Total 2 bedroom apartments (#)	20	34	61
Land and Construction Costs			
Acquisition Cost	$900,000	$900,000	$900,000
Total Construction and Contingency	$8,298,367	$13,570,021	$24,113,330
Sales costs	$308,044	$488,046	$848,247
All other costs (Professional fees, Marketing)	$2,203,319	$3,612,557	$6,415,692
Total Cost	**$11,717,436**	**$18,570,623**	**$32,277,269**
Apartment price (estimate)			
Developer margin	20%	20%	20%
Required total revenue to break even	$15,402,193	$24,402,292	$42,412,328
Required apartment price (per unit)	**$752,000**	**$715,000**	**$690,000**

Appendix DE: Sensitivity Assessment, Townhouse & testing 20% lower construction cost

Assumptions	Townhouse	80% Construction Cost
Townhouse size	125 sqm	125 sqm
Building Site Coverage	80%	80%
Efficiency	85%	85%
Finance interest rate	8.5%	8.5%
Calculations		

Site area	1,200 sqm	1,200 sqm
Estimate of total floor space	960 sqm	960 sqm
Total townhouses (#)	6	6
Land and Construction Costs		
Acquisition Cost	$900,000	$900,000
Total Construction and Contingency	$3,331,020	$2,664,816
Sales costs	$ 128,283	$87,149
All other costs (Professional fees, Marketing etc.)	$522,776	$412,417
Total Cost	**$4,882,080**	**$4,092,489**
Townhouse price (estimate)		
Developer margin	20%	20%
Required total revenue to break even	$6,414,152	$5,379,521
Required townhouse price (per unit)	**$983,000**	**$824,000**



Rural Land Social Economic Impact Assessment and Options

Lismore City Council

7 November 2025

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TerraRossa
IMPACT ADVISORS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY- RURAL LAND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND OPTIONS

This work represents the consolidation of more than 100 data sources, strategies, and community inputs into a single, evidence-based platform that moves the RLUS from planning to delivery. It reflects Counci's direction to focus on community economic development, village-centred renewal, and practical activation pathways that connect land use reform to tangible economic and social outcomes.

Purpose and Scope

The Assessment delivers on the three commitments defined in our engagement:

- To establish a comprehensive baseline profile of Lismore's rural communities and economies, grounded in both data and lived experience.
- To integrate and align Council's strategic planning instruments ensuring the RLUS functions as the delivery mechanism that binds them together.
- To prepare the foundation for implementation: identifying the most viable and fundable pathways for rural diversification, infrastructure investment, and zoning reform.

Delivered through Terra Rossa's OASIS™ Delivery Methodology, the report translates complexity into clarity, linking community aspirations, land capability, and investment readiness into a single framework.

What the Document Contains

The report provides:

- A comprehensive synthesis of all relevant planning, economic, and environmental strategies.
- A socio-economic profile of Lismore's rural localities, highlighting structural challenges and emerging opportunities.
- A planning framework and zoning review comparing Lismore's current provisions with those of peer Northern Rivers councils.
- A community and industry engagement summary, capturing key themes and tensions across stakeholders.
- A baseline dataset and analysis to inform zoning, infrastructure prioritisation, and future funding cases.
- A set of preliminary directions to future work.

Key Findings

The assessment reaffirms that Lismore's rural sector remains a cornerstone of the regional economy but is under growing pressure from land fragmentation, infrastructure gaps, and succession risks.

At the same time, the work identifies a strong appetite for diversification and innovation. Rural communities are seeking practical mechanisms to evolve through small-lot production, regenerative agriculture, agri-tourism, and creative industries. Villages, in particular, are positioned as the natural anchors of this transition: centres of community identity, service access, and new economic activity.

The findings also highlight:

- The need to realign zoning frameworks with actual land use conditions.
- Opportunities to link water, road, and digital infrastructure investment to land use reform.
- A growing case for small-lot rural production and mixed-use models that attract new entrants and enable intergenerational land transition.

Next Steps

In line with Council's guidance, Council will need tol:

- Develop village-specific development plans that capture each area's distinct role and opportunity.
- Define priority projects and reform packages aligned to the LSPS and Economic Development Strategy.
- Advance cost-benefit and investment-readiness assessments to position Council for external funding and delivery partnerships.

This Final Deliverable establishes the evidence, alignment, and narrative foundation required for Council to confidently move into implementation. It reflects the collaborative approach and shared ambition we've developed throughout this process to create a resilient, prosperous, and connected rural Lismore.

We thank you for your leadership and partnership throughout this phase and look forward to working with you and your team as we transition into the development of the implementation and investment roadmap.

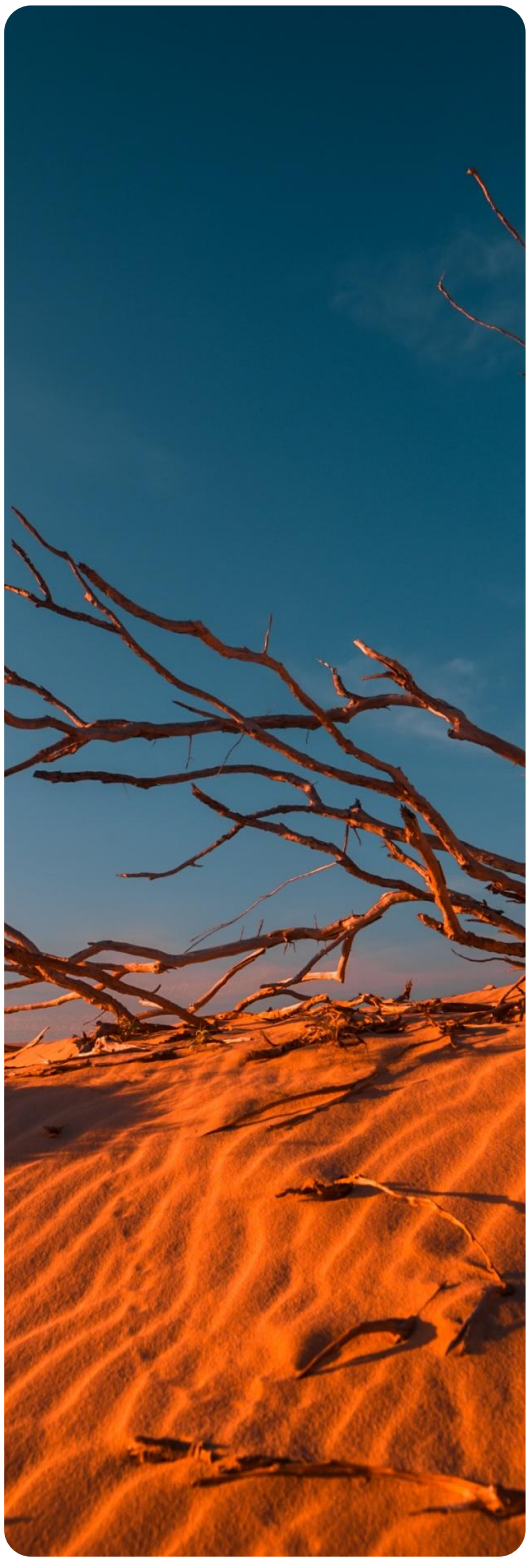
PART 1 COMPREHENSIVE DESKTOP REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS

1. LISMORE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE | SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

At Terra Rossa Impact Advisors, we focus on removing barriers that inhibit local potential while fostering the conditions needed for long-term prosperity. Our goal is to help unlock latent economic value and deliver enduring outcomes that intersect community wellbeing, sustainable land use, and regional resilience.

This section has been prepared as Deliverable 1 under the Rural Land Use Strategy engagement with Lismore City Council. It provides a structured review and consolidation of the data, strategies, and engagement materials developed to date, in line with the agreed scope of work. Specifically, it seeks to:

- Consolidate and validate all relevant strategic documents, datasets, modelling, and consultation outputs generated by Council, state agencies, and community stakeholders.
- Build a unified evidence base that supports the next stage of rural land use planning and activation, drawing on policy, economic, environmental, and place-based insights.
- Translate community ambition and land-based opportunity into delivery pathways, identifying practical options for land use reform, economic development, infrastructure, and investment.
- Enable confidence and alignment in Council's advocacy, funding applications, and partnerships by establishing shared assumptions and clearly defined rural priorities.
- Lay the foundation for implementation, ensuring that the Rural Land Use Strategy is technically robust, community-



This review draws on over 100 Council and stakeholder- supplied documents, consolidated to build a unified, evidence-informed foundation for the next stage of rural land use planning. These documents span:

- Strategic planning instruments (e.g. LSPS, LEP materials, DCP overlays)
- Technical reports (e.g. Climate Ready Strategy, Biodiversity Management Strategy)
- Economic and social research (e.g. Economic Development Strategy, Scorecard Results)
- Consultation outputs (e.g. Listening Post summaries, community and industry roundtable notes)
- Industry submissions and feedback (e.g. Norco, Cane and Berry industry notes)
- Engagement presentations and working notes
- Spatial and infrastructure mapping
- Planning reform options and LEP change proposals

The following 20 anchor documents were most influential in shaping this review:

- Inspire Lismore 2040 – Local Strategic Planning Statement Rural Land Use Discussion Paper
- Economic Development Strategy (2019–2024) Climate Ready Lismore Strategy
- Biodiversity Management Strategy (2015–2025)
- Destination Management Plan (Lismore, Nimbin and Villages) Events Strategy 2024–2028
- Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy
- Draft Consultation Report and Listening Post Feedback RLUS Discussion Paper Survey Responses Report
- Community Scorecard Presentation and Summary Draft RLUS Working Document and Scope
- Stakeholder Feedback Excel Log
- RU2 Zoning Mapping Review and Draft Strategy
- NSW Farmers and Norco Engagement Summaries Cane and Berry Industry Feedback Reports
- Jagun Alliance Connecting with Country Framework Draft LEP and DCP Reform Proposals
- Change and Growth Strategic Working Paper
- "What We Heard" Climate Ready Feedback Report

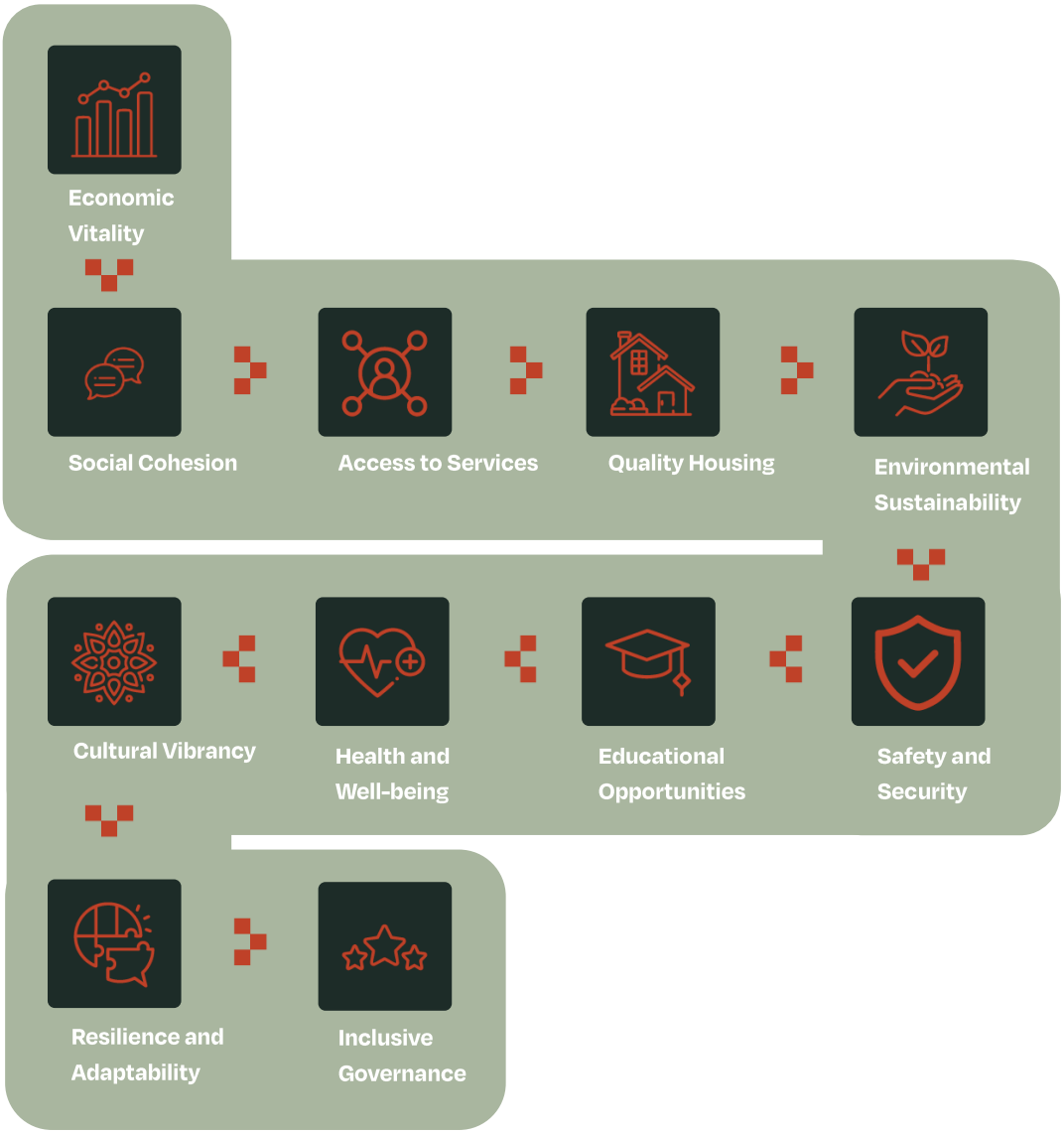
2. TERRAROSSA IMPACT ADVISORS: THE PROMISE OF THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Terra Rossa Impact Advisors is an Australia-based, impact- led advisory and investment firm dedicated to unlocking innovation, equity, and opportunity. We believe that thriving communities are the foundation of national prosperity and human flourishing—and that well-targeted investments, co-designed with those they serve, can transform places and lives.

> *We believe in the promise of empowered people and thriving communities.*

We work across all levels of government, the private sector, and community organisations to shape and deliver initiatives that achieve measurable and lasting impact. Our unique value lies in bridging the gap between vision and execution, combining strategic insight with delivery discipline.

Our Thriving Communities Model evaluates markets based on 11 factors including



TerraRossa IMPACT ADVISORS

The TerraRossa Thriving Communities Model (TCM) is an exclusive framework for evaluating and developing a community's capacity for meeting the needs and furthering the interests of its people, businesses and institutions. We leverage the framework as a means for evaluating and unlocking the latent value that each community uniquely possesses, providing a platform for exploring the strengths and opportunities that yield long-term social and economic vitality.

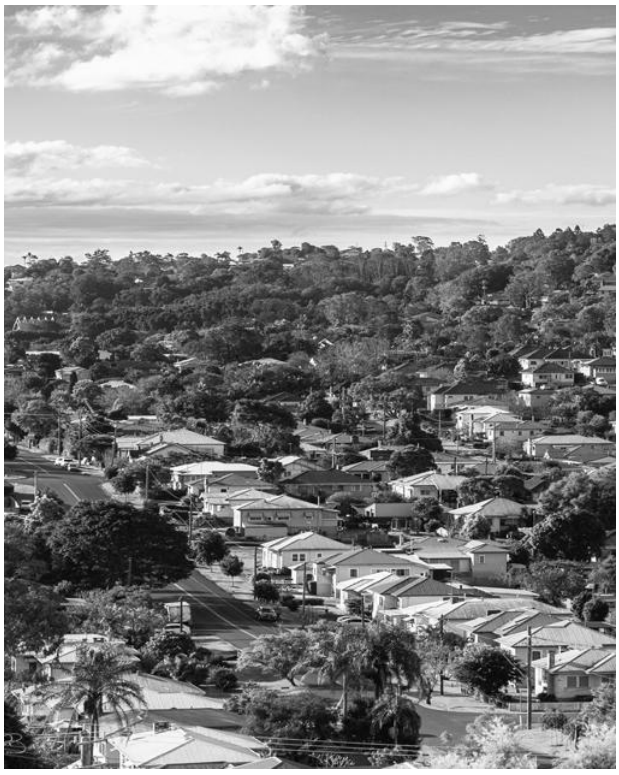
The model incorporates 11 key factors, integrating quantitative and qualitative indicators to provide an understanding of the market conditions that define a community's current state. These indicators also play an important role in our economic modeling efforts, serving as an empirical foundation for evaluating alternative scenarios for achieving targeted strategic outcomes.

By embedding the TCM within the RLUS process, Council can shift from reactive planning to proactive place-shaping - building long-term resilience, unlocking latent value, and empowering rural communities to thrive.

The OASIS™ Delivery Methodology and The Lismore City Council Project

Terra Rossa will apply its proprietary OASIS™ Delivery Methodology alongside our Thriving Communities Model (TCM) to support Lismore City Council in advancing a practical, scalable, and community-informed Rural Land Use Strategy.

Our OASIS™ methodology is designed to turn complexity into clarity and ensure that strategy translates into action. It integrates data-driven planning, community engagement, systems thinking, and success mapping—helping local governments navigate change and deliver place-based outcomes with confidence. In Lismore, this approach is tailored to deliver more than a planning document. It will provide a blueprint for rural renewal—underpinned by clear priorities, investment-ready pathways, and meaningful opportunities for community empowerment.



3. INTRODUCTION

The Lismore Local Government Area (LGA) is defined by a rural landscape of exceptional depth - economically, culturally, and ecologically. It is home to a proud history of farming innovation, Aboriginal cultural heritage, and place- based identity that has shaped community life across generations. This region supports diverse agricultural systems, from dairy and cane to horticulture and regenerative practices, underpinned by strong local values of self-reliance, sustainability, and stewardship.

Yet despite this legacy and potential, Lismore's rural communities now find themselves navigating a growing range of challenges. These include rising climate volatility, unresolved land use conflict, ageing and inadequate infrastructure, land fragmentation, intergenerational succession pressure, and planning bottlenecks. In particular, the devastating 2022 floods which not only caused widespread physical and economic damage, but also exposed systemic weaknesses in service delivery coordination, infrastructure resilience, and land use decision-making. Recovery efforts are still ongoing, and many communities remain under acute pressure - socially, financially, and logistically.

Compounding these challenges is the evolving role of rural land in the broader regional economy. Lismore is no longer solely a centre of production. It is a place of lifestyle migration, environmental rehabilitation, agritourism expansion, and cultural reconnection. This creates both opportunity and tension, as the competing demands of housing, conservation, farming, industry, and community wellbeing intersect, often without a unifying framework for decision-making. Landholders, investors, and institutions must navigate a regulatory environment that is increasingly complex and, in some cases, misaligned with the lived experience of rural populations.

Recognising these pressures, Lismore City Council has taken proactive steps to build a coordinated response. The Local Strategic Planning Statement (Inspire Lismore 2040) set a future-focused direction for growth, resilience, and connected communities.

Complementary initiatives, including the Climate Ready Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy, and a series of technical planning reviews have begun to clarify the strategic levers available.

These are supported by deep local engagement, including:

- Over a dozen targeted roundtables with rural industries and key sectors (e.g. cane, dairy, berries, hemp, and horticulture).
- Extensive community feedback collected through the Rural Land Use Discussion Paper consultation process.
- Structured listening post sessions and the 2024 Community Scorecard survey, offering qualitative and quantitative snapshots of community priorities and planning frustrations.
- Spatial and economic modelling to identify where land capability, infrastructure deficits, and planning rules interact with economic potential and community resilience.

The integration of these efforts is particularly evident in Council's evolving commitment to reform. This includes draft RU2 rezoning considerations, work on agricultural extension models, collaboration with Jagun Alliance on Connecting with Country frameworks, and preliminary exploration of innovative land sharing mechanisms to address affordability and succession.

However, Council has also acknowledged that despite this substantial body of work, fragmentation remains. Strategies often operate in silos, and while there are clear ambition and effort, there is not yet a single, unified platform that links these strands into a delivery-ready roadmap. That is the gap this report seeks to fill.

In June 2025, Terra Rossa Impact Advisors was appointed to bring clarity, cohesion, and delivery focus to Council's rural land use efforts. Our role is to consolidate and validate the available data and strategic materials; to apply the Thriving Communities Model to benchmark localities, assess systemic strengths and vulnerabilities, identify cross-cutting opportunities; and to provide Council with a clear, actionable platform that enables funding, planning reform, investment attraction, and partnership building.

This section, Phase 1 under the agreed scope, presents a comprehensive review of the available evidence and positions Lismore's rural communities for the next stage of policy and project development. Grounded in more than 100 documents, strategies, datasets, and consultation outputs. It will be leveraged to secure funding, drive decisions, and unlock real value for the people and places that define rural Lismore.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE: LISMORE'S RURAL REGION

Lismore's rural economy is a critical driver of regional identity, employment, and economic diversity. It is shaped by a rich agricultural tradition, an emerging creative and tourism sector, and a growing desire among residents and landholders to pursue regenerative and place-based economic models. However, the region faces significant socio-economic challenges including intergenerational disadvantages, housing pressure, declining infrastructure access, and climate-related economic disruption that must be addressed to enable a thriving rural future.

This section synthesises economic and social indicators drawn from Council strategy documents, community engagement, and available regional datasets, and identifies implications for future land use planning and investment strategy.

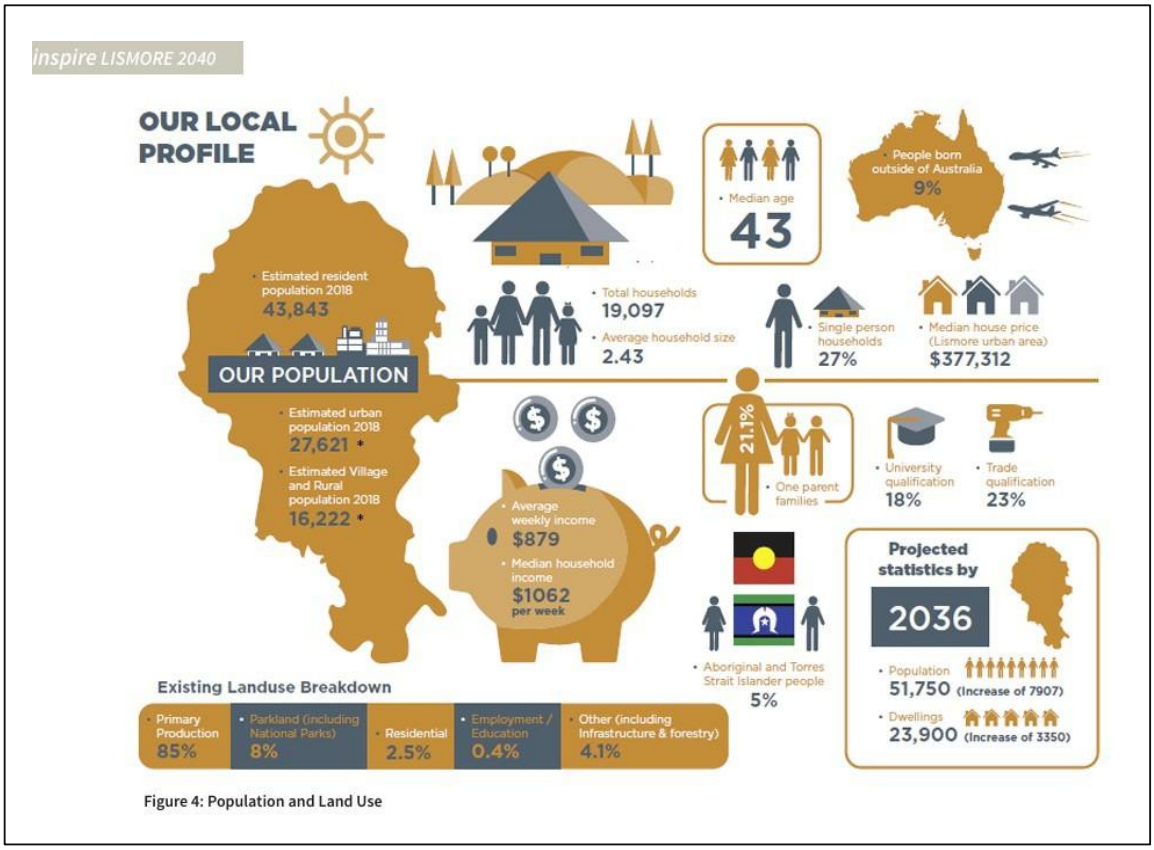
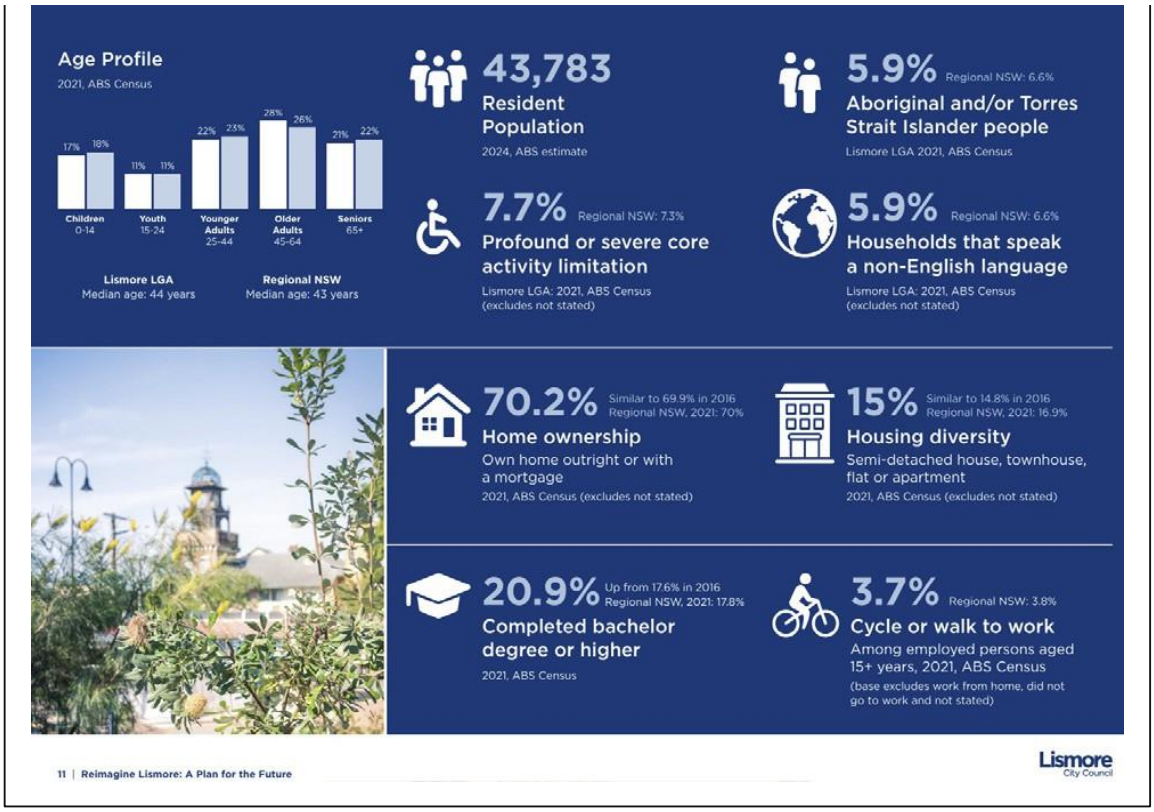


Figure 4: Population and Land Use



Rural Economy: Current State and Sector Profile

Agriculture remains the foundation of Lismore's rural economy. While primary production has been resilient in parts, many sectors are under pressure, navigating succession risks, climate change, market volatility, and land use competition.

Key agricultural sectors include:

- Dairy (Norco and associated producers): Despite being a major regional employer and processor, the dairy sector faces rising costs, workforce shortages, and ageing infrastructure. Industry roundtables highlighted concerns about planning constraints that make it harder to invest in on-farm infrastructure or housing for workers.
- Horticulture (macadamias, blueberries, avocados, and small-scale vegetables): A fast-growing sector with strong export potential. Berries are expanding in the northern zones, but producers report issues with access to local capacity for processing, storage and logistics that can limit growth potential.
- Cane and mixed cropping: A southern LGA staple, now challenged by reduced funding for flood management, and limited capacity for regional processing capacity.
- Emerging industries: The hemp sector and regenerative farming community have expressed an appetite for innovation in the market. However, current zoning and regulatory settings are perceived to limit diversified or mixed-use farming models.

> *"We want to farm differently, more regeneratively, with community outcomes. But the rules assume you're either traditional ag or not farming at all." - Farmer feedback*

Despite its strengths, agriculture is increasingly fragmented due to subdivision and lifestyle demand, with several submissions noting that planning settings do not adequately enable mixed-use or evolving farm enterprises.

Other Sectors and Economic Drivers

Tourism and creative industries: Lismore's natural assets, cultural identity, and alternative lifestyle appeal continue to attract visitors and new residents. However, much of this activity is underdeveloped or constrained by infrastructure gaps.

- Health and education: Lismore's broader economic base includes strong institutional presence in health and education, which supports village and peri- urban demand but is less connected to rural land use opportunities.
- Disaster recovery and resilience funding: A significant short-term economic stimulus is flowing into the region, creating both opportunities and risks for equitable rural development.

Economic Challenges and Transition Pressures

The region's rural economy is undergoing structural change, with several interrelated pressures:

CHALLENGE	IMPLICATION FOR RURAL LAND USE
Land use fragmentation	Reduced economies of scale; harder to maintain viable agriculture or invest in new ventures
Farm succession and ageing demographics	Over 54% of rural landholders are aged 60+. Entry barriers for new farmers and innovators remain high. Need for models that attract young farmers, enable transition, and lower entry barriers
Infrastructure inequality	Poor rural roads, limited water access, and inadequate digital connectivity hinder productivity.
Climate vulnerability	Reduced yields, land degradation, and flood damage raise input costs and insurance barriers
Workforce constraints	Difficulty attracting and retaining skilled workers in agriculture and services
Policy and regulatory complexity	Planning system seen as a barrier to innovation or enterprise development

Socio-Economic Conditions

Demographic Trends

- Population: Approximately 43,000 (ABS 2021), with over one-third residing in rural or village settings.
- Ageing trend: The median age in rural precincts
- exceeds 50, compared to 41 for urban Lismore. Over 25% of rural landholders are aged 65 or older.
- Outmigration of young adults: Declining employment pathways and housing costs are driving young families out of rural areas or into city centres.
- Villages under pressure: Settlements like Nimbin, Clunes, and The Channon report low housing turnover, ageing infrastructure, and declining service access.

Social Vulnerability and Access

- Access to services (health, transport, digital) is unequal across rural precincts, limiting social participation and economic mobility.
- Post-disaster impacts continue to weigh heavily on mental health, housing stability, and social cohesion in rural communities.
- Cost-of-living pressures, combined with housing shortages, are pushing some low-income residents into substandard or overcrowded rural housing.

"Some days it feels like we've been forgotten out here. The land's still good, but we're tired." - Listening Post Feedback, Jiggi resident.

Opportunities for Inclusive Economic Development

Despite these challenges, the region is well-positioned to pursue new economic directions:

- Regenerative land use: Opportunities to lead in climate-smart agriculture, nature-based solutions, native plants and corridors, koala habitat and habitat restoration.
- Village-based economic activation: Reinvesting in village centres can support microenterprise, local food systems, and social infrastructure.
- Agricultural innovation: Including hemp, agroecology, circular economy models, and cooperative processing.
- Creative and cultural economy: Strong latent potential in arts, eco-tourism, First Nations enterprise, and knowledge economy.
- Skills and training alignment: Tailored place-based workforce strategies can unlock rural employment and youth pathways.

Strategic Implications for RLUS

- Economic viability must underpin land use strategy: Retain and enable productive farmland while supporting mixed-use and enterprise evolution.
- Place-based planning is essential: Each rural precinct has distinct economic identities. One-size-fits-all zoning or infrastructure models are no longer fit for purpose.
- Infrastructure investments must match economic function: Water, roads, digital, and workforce housing are critical enablers—not afterthoughts.
- Social equity is foundational to resilience: Economic growth must be inclusive, ensuring that housing, health, and transport access are part of rural development.
- Planning must support innovation: The LEP and DCP should enable next-generation farming, circular economy initiatives, and intergenerational land transition.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY PHASE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND SYSTEMIC NEED

Lismore City Council has demonstrated proactive, forward-looking leadership in setting the strategic foundations for rural renewal. Over the past five years, Council has responded to complex and evolving rural challenges through a suite of integrated planning instruments, cross-sector partnerships, and community-led initiatives. These efforts reflect an institutional understanding that rural land use is more than a planning issue—it is an enabler of long-term economic resilience, community wellbeing, environmental stewardship, and disaster recovery.

This section consolidates the key strategies, frameworks, and planning mechanisms that underpin the development of the Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS). It affirms the RLUS's alignment with Council's broader goals and its role as a critical tool for spatial prioritisation, land capability assessment, and investment mobilisation.



Local Strategic Planning and Growth Management

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPandR)

The RLUS is nested within Council's IPandR framework, specifically contributing to Delivery Program and Operational Plan goals related to liveability, economic development, and resilience. The strategy is intended to move from aspirational goals to actionable delivery through targeted zoning amendments, precinct-level infrastructure planning, and investment prioritisation.

Inspire Lismore 2040 – Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)

The LSPS articulates Council's overarching strategic vision for land use. This essential document describes a 20-year planning direction across four key themes: a productive place, a sustainable place, a healthy and connected place, and a resilient place. Rural lands are identified as vital to food security, climate resilience, cultural heritage, and biodiversity conservation. The LSPS also highlights the vital importance of sustainable rural settlement patterns and maintaining landscape character, positioning the RLUS as a core implementation tool for rural planning objectives.

** LSPS is being redone and will be the pinnacle of all other strategic planning 'sub-strategies*

Growth and Realignment Strategy (2022)
Developed following the 2022 flood disaster, this strategy seeks to rebalance growth across the LGA by identifying locations that are more resilient, viable, and suited to sustainable development. Rural lands are seen as part of a new spatial logic—away from high-risk flood zones and toward areas of land capability and future infrastructure potential. The RLUS is expected to build on this by providing finer-grained, parcel-level guidance on land suitability, economic function, and zoning opportunity.

Economic Development and Rural Industry Focus

Economic Development Strategy (2019–2024)
This strategy provides the economic rationale for supporting rural landholders, small business, creative enterprises, and emerging industries. It acknowledges the centrality of land access, workforce attraction, and infrastructure to enabling rural participation in the economy. The RLUS is tasked with removing systemic barriers—such as rigid zoning and inadequate enabling infrastructure—that currently constrain rural innovation and land-based enterprises.

Destination Management Plan and Events Strategy
These tourism strategies identify rural and village destinations as key economic assets. They position agritourism, cultural events, and nature-based experiences as high-potential growth areas—requiring appropriate land use designations, flexible approvals, and rural infrastructure. The RLUS will enable these opportunities through clearer spatial planning and permissibility settings.

Targeted Industry Engagement (2023–2024)
Council has undertaken intensive consultation with rural industry stakeholders—particularly in the dairy, berry, cane, and horticulture sectors. Across roundtables and submissions, common themes have emerged: cost of establishment especially with increasing land prices, roads, land-use conflict driven by more houses in rural areas where new residents don't understand farming operations. These insights are central to the RLUS evidence base and reform logic.

Housing and Infrastructure Alignment

Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy (2024)
Rural and village housing affordability has emerged as a critical issue, particularly for essential workers, younger families, and older residents seeking to age in place. The strategy calls for flexible rural housing models, including secondary dwellings, cooperative landholding arrangements, and the reactivation of underused village land. The RLUS is expected to identify where such development is most viable, considering servicing capability, social need, and planning compatibility.

"Infrastructure is not just a cost—it's the gateway to economic participation and community renewal."
Infrastructure Mapping Working Paper, LCC

Infrastructure Readiness and LEP Review
Council has commenced targeted infrastructure assessments to understand alignment between existing zoning, network capacity, and realistic growth demand. The RLUS is expected to overlay this infrastructure intelligence with land capability and industry function, creating a logic-driven map of where investment and rezoning should occur.

Environmental Resilience and Climate Action

Climate Ready Lismore (Draft)
This draft strategy provides an initial perspective for adapting land use, infrastructure, and ecosystems to climate change. Rural lands are seen as both vulnerable to hazard and instrumental to the climate solution. The RLUS will operationalise recommendations from this document—particularly around land use buffering, regenerative practice support, and floodplain reallocation.

Biodiversity Management Strategy (2015–2025)
As rural development intersects with high conservation value land and habitat corridors, the RLUS must balance productivity with ecological integrity. This strategy guides vegetation management, ecosystem protection, and overlay designation—elements that will be incorporated into rural zoning and precinct structure planning.

Post-Disaster Recovery and Resilience Initiatives
The RLUS builds on the significant work of Council and the community in responding to the 2022 flood disaster. In addition to physical reconstruction, recovery efforts have focused on improving land use decision-making and avoiding redevelopment in areas of known vulnerability. The RLUS presents a long-term mechanism for embedding this resilience lens into zoning, land capability assessments, and infrastructure planning.

In Progress and Underway

Rural Zoning and LEP Reform
Council is progressing several planning reform initiatives, including potential amendments to the RU2 zone and improved permissibility for secondary dwellings, small-scale enterprise, and rural tourism. The RLUS will provide strategic and evidentiary justification to underpin these reforms.

Industry-Specific Dialogue
Engagement with Norco, the NSW Farmers Federation, and other industry bodies continues to inform Council's understanding of land and workforce needs. This intelligence will shape zoning boundaries, planning controls, and infrastructure prioritisation within the RLUS.

Cross-Government Alignment
The RLUS aligns with regional strategies from Northern Rivers Joint Organisation, NSW DPI, and Planning NSW. Coordination with state agencies is crucial to ensure that rural transformation is supported by regulatory clarity and funding investment.

Together, these strategies form a robust architecture of planning intent, policy action, and community engagement. However, the current environment lacks a single mechanism to integrate these insights into a coherent, spatially defined roadmap for rural renewal. The RLUS addresses this gap.
Through the RLUS, Council now could:

- Translate ambition into action, backed by evidence and zoning reform.
- Aligning local vision with state investment priorities.
- Restore confidence among rural landholders, communities, and industries.
- Embed resilience, inclusion, and innovation at the heart of rural planning.

The RLUS will be more than a plan - it will be a delivery tool for the next generation of rural prosperity in Lismore.

6. PLANNING FRAMEWORK: LISMORE'S RURAL REGION

The development of a future-ready Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS) must be embedded in a robust, coherent, and locally responsive planning framework. Effective rural land use planning cannot rely on static instruments alone. It requires active integration of community ambition, economic function, environmental risk, and infrastructure capability.

This section synthesises the current statutory and strategic planning environment governing rural land in Lismore, identifies key structural and implementation challenges, and proposes opportunities to align land use planning with the region's evolving identity and aspirations.

Statutory Planning Framework

Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Zoning

This provides the statutory foundation for land use and development control in the LGA. It includes a range of rural and environmental zones designed to balance agricultural productivity, environmental conservation, and residential interface management. Key zones include:

- RU1 Primary Production – The predominant rural zone, supporting agriculture, extensive farming, and associated activities. However, it lacks flexibility for new and emerging rural land uses and mixed enterprise models.
- RU2 Rural Landscape – Applied more selectively and under consideration for expansion, this zone allows for more diverse land use but currently lacks clear application guidelines.
- R5 Large Lot Residential – Intended to accommodate low-density housing in peri-urban areas but has led to increased subdivision demand without coordinated infrastructure planning.
- C3/C4 Environmental Management/Conservation Zones – Important for habitat protection and biodiversity corridors, but often poorly integrated with economic or cultural land use objectives.

Though not specifically addressed in the LEP, RU4 Rural Small Holdings zoning can prove beneficial to efforts to limit unreasonable increases in demand for public services and facilities, while minimising conflict between land uses within and between adjoining zones.

Note: peri-urban areas are often where:

- Urban growth meets productive farmland,
- Infrastructure and services (like water, sewer, roads) are only partially available, and
- Land-use conflict can arise between rural activities (farming, machinery, livestock) and new housing or lifestyle uses.

For Lismore and similar councils, "peri-urban corridors" usually describe areas **just outside the existing urban** footprint (like Caniaba or Wyrallah), where planning needs to balance:

- Future housing or employment demand,
- Protection of rural character and agricultural land, and
- Efficient extension of infrastructure.

Key challenges identified through the review include:

- Fragmented and inconsistent zoning boundaries often lack clear spatial or economic logic.
- Outdated land capability mapping, misaligned with contemporary environmental pressures, climate risks, and infrastructure constraints.
- Inflexible land use tables in the LEP, inhibiting innovation in agriculture, agri-tourism, regenerative enterprise, or adaptive re-use.

- Subdivision pressure, particularly in lifestyle locations, creating cumulative planning and servicing impacts.
- Limited interface management between agricultural and residential uses, generating policy uncertainty and community conflict.

"Our planning framework hasn't kept pace with the changes on the ground, whether it's climate, market or people's needs."

Council has initiated technical work and spatial reviews to support a future LEP Amendment Package. These include:

- A mapping and rezoning review of RU2 suitability and precinct boundaries.
- Flood-prone land overlays and planning constraints post- 2022 disaster events.
- Village boundary and subdivision policy updates.
- Engagement with DPI and Planning NSW to ensure alignment with regional planning provisions.

These reforms form the statutory foundation upon which the RLUS will be built.



Strategic Land Use Planning Instruments

Inspire Lismore 2040 (LSPS)*

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets a vision for Lismore as a resilient, connected, and productive regional centre, with rural land forming a key pillar of that vision. The LSPS:

- Recognises rural lands as vital to cultural identity, economic diversity, and environmental stewardship.
- Commitment to protect agricultural land and promoting sustainable rural development.
- Calls for a standalone RLUS to guide future policy, infrastructure, and investment decisions.

**See also the NSW LSPS – Agricultural Planning Advice for Councils*

Northern Rivers Regional Plan 2041

The Regional Plan, prepared by the NSW Government, sets broader directions for housing, economic development, and environmental management. Relevant objectives include:

- Protecting and activating agricultural land.
- Supporting Indigenous land management and local food systems.
- Facilitating regional connectivity and growth in resilient settlements.

The RLUS must clearly align with the Regional Plan to strengthen future funding and implementation pathways.

Place-Based Planning and Precinct Differentiation

Lismore's rural areas are not homogenous—they form a mosaic of precincts with distinct environmental conditions, community dynamics, and economic profiles. Precinct-level planning is critical to ensure tailored, equitable, and realistic land use decisions.

Key precinct types include:

- High-value agricultural corridors (e.g. Wyrallah, Tuncester): Require preservation of land capability, generational transfer models, and irrigation and transport upgrades.
- Lifestyle and peri-urban zones (e.g. Clunes, Rosebank, Bexhill): Face intense subdivision pressure; need clarity on settlement hierarchy, interface management, and infrastructure capacity.
- Culturally significant and regenerative landscapes (e.g. Terania Creek, Jiggi): Opportunities for integrated conservation, cultural renewal, and low-impact economic activation.
- Flood-affected and constrained lands (e.g. North Lismore, Leycester Creek catchment): Demand clear risk-based planning and manage retreat scenarios where appropriate.
- Village nodes and rural centres (e.g. Nimbin, Dunoon, Modanville): Require servicing assessments and intensification frameworks to support future growth, housing, and rural enterprise.

Infrastructure, Servicing, and Land Use Enablers

Strategic alignment between land use and infrastructure is essential to realising rural land potential.

Current constraints include:

- Uneven access, at the village level, to reticulated water, sewer, and digital infrastructure, especially in villages and growing rural nodes.
- Transport and road quality gaps, impacting freight, safety, and service access.
- Lack of coordination between zoning potential and infrastructure investment, limiting development readiness in otherwise suitable areas.

Opportunities exist for:

- Apply an infrastructure-led planning approach to village and rural growth areas.
- Identify and map infrastructure readiness tiers, guiding where housing or industry should be supported.
- Use of precinct infrastructure profiles to prioritise investment sequencing and enable place-based development staging.

Strategic Gaps and Reform Opportunities

Through this review, several gaps have emerged in the current planning system:

- A need to expand on the current land capability and agricultural land hierarchy framework to guide zoning decisions.
- Inflexibility in LEP land uses for emerging enterprises and regenerative farming models.
- Weak integration of cultural, climate, and socio-economic indicators into planning assessments.
- Inconsistent treatment of extractive agriculture, which generates significant community concern and confusion.
- Opportunity to clarify policy positions and decision-making criteria for rural lifestyle housing.
- Council's limited powers and controls to ensure RU1 is used for productive farming.

The RLUS can address these gaps by recommending:

- Updated land capability mapping and overlays.
- New or revised local planning provisions (e.g. DCP or LEP clause amendments).
- A precinct-based rural land framework tailored to place function and potential.

- A clear policy position on subdivision, rural housing, and village intensification.
- Defined thresholds for infrastructure alignment and development staging.

By aligning strategic land use policy with local ambition, economic need, and infrastructure capacity, the RLUS can provide Council with a powerful implementation tool. It will convert planning from reactive regulation into proactive place-shaping, supporting Lismore's long-term resilience and prosperity.

7. RLUS DATA: RURAL LAND USE BY THE NUMBERS

Council has developed a current-state perspective on land use, economic output, employment,

Zone type by number and percentage

Percentage of LGA that is rural land: 87%

- RU1 - 110,804.31 ha (85.863%)
- RU2 - 89.6095 ha (0.069%)
- RU3 - 1,099.42 ha (0.852%)
- RU5 - 397.079 ha (0.308%)

Percentage of LGA that is conservation zones: 0.4% (this doesn't include deferred matter areas)

- C2 - 260.334 ha (0.202%)
- C3 - 257.075 ha (0.199%)

Lot size by number and percentage

- <5ha (3013 lots, 44%)
- ≥5ha and <20ha (1848 lots, 27%)
- ≥20ha and < 40ha (959 lots, 14%)
- ≥40ha and < 80 ha (741 lots, 11%)
- ≥ 80ha (246 lots, 4%)

There are 6807 RU1 lots in total. The average lot size is 21.2 hectares. In terms of number of lots, 85% of RU1 lots are already below the minimum lot size of 40ha.

Lot size by comparison

In comparison to the entire Northern Rivers region, Lismore has more lots below 40 hectares (85% versus 78%). The biggest difference is in the number of RU1 lots under 5 hectares (44% versus 30%).

Lot size by area

- <5ha (4,356ha)
- ≥5ha and <20ha (20,666ha)
- ≥20ha and < 40ha (28,508ha)
- ≥40ha and < 80 ha (38,368ha)

In terms of area, 50% of RU1 land across the Lismore LGA is below the minimum lot size. This means that more rural land than not is below the minimum lot size.

Economic output

Top industries by commodity (2020/21) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, 2020/21. Cat. No. 7503.0):

- Macadamias $36m (33.9%) Cattle slaughter $17.8m (16.8%) Nurseries $12m (11.3%)
- Milk $17.3m (16.3%)
- Other fruit $7.1m (6.7%) Sugar cane $7.1m (6.6%)
    - Northern Rivers have an average orchard size of approximately 15 hectares.
    - Lismore supplies 34.8% of the State's mangoes
    - Lismore supplies 21.4% of the State's 'other' orchard fruit
    - Farmers in Lismore supply 9.6% of the State's sugar cane

Agriculture has major value in the LGA, with output worth $347m in 2021/22, being the fifth most valuable industry sector. Value added was worth $126m. Output grew by $87m between 2016/17 and 2021/22. Value added grew by $14.8m between 2016/17 and 2021/22. In 2020, the Lismore LGA had the second-greatest value in agricultural production in the Northern Rivers sub-region, after the Clarence Valley (which has an area eight times larger than Lismore).

LGA	AGRICULTURAL VALUE	LGA KM2	VALUE/KM2
Lismore	$106.2m	1290	$82,326
Ballina Shire	$102.3m	485	$210,928
Byron Shire	$33.3m	567	$58,730
Tweed Shire	$97.3m	1321	$73,656
Kyogle	$91.1m	3589	$25,383
Richmond Valley	$71.0m	3051	$23,271
Clarence Valley	$119.5m	10441	$11,445

Employment

Agriculture, forestry and fishing employ 1,012 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers. This is Lismore's sixth largest employer, after health care and social assistance, education and training, retail, construction, and public administration and safety.

There are more full-time equivalent positions in agriculture than in manufacturing (1008), accommodation and food services (951), professional services (932) and administrative services (528).

6.1% of Lismore's employed people aged 15 and above have jobs in agriculture, forestry and fishing. This is higher than for regional NSW (5.1%) and NSW more broadly (2%). However, employment has decreased substantially in the last 20 years. In 2001/02, there were 1,501 FTE jobs in agriculture, forestry and fishing, so the industry has lost almost a third of the workforce in 20 years.

8. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

The future of rural land use in Lismore must be rooted in the lived experiences, place-based knowledge, and aspirations of its rural communities. Throughout 2022–2024, Lismore City Council led one of the most comprehensive rural engagement programs in regional NSW, demonstrating a deep commitment to community-

Overview of Engagement Approach

Between 2022 and 2024, Lismore City Council undertook multiple rounds of engagement across a range of place-based and land use planning topics in regional NSW. The process captured feedback from hundreds of residents, businesses, and stakeholders through:

- Listening Posts and Village Pop-Ups (e.g. Nimbin, The Channon, Clunes): gathering on-the-ground feedback on rural housing, infrastructure, village futures, and land use conflicts.
- The Community Scorecard Survey (2024): a broad-based survey of community sentiment, with over 900 responses including rural residents and primary producers.
- Rural Land Use Discussion Paper and Online Survey: provided a structured forum for community members and organisations to comment on key land use issues and opportunities.
- Industry Roundtables and Interviews: targeted engagement with sectors including dairy, cane, berries, hemp, and tourism.
- First Nations Engagement: dialogue with the Ngulingah Local Aboriginal Land Council and other cultural leaders to inform strategy development.
- Formal Submissions: received from peak bodies (e.g. NSW Farmers Federation, Norco), landholders, and local businesses responding to strategic documents and LEP proposals.

Engagement findings revealed a strong and consistent set of community priorities, concerns, and aspirations. These insights should shape not only the policy direction of the RLUS, but its tone, delivery model, and spatial targeting.

Preserve Rural Identity and Landscape Values

- Rural residents expressed a strong connection to land, lifestyle, and community—concerned about the erosion of rural character through ad hoc subdivision, incompatible development, and zoning changes.
- There was clear support for preserving productive farmland, native vegetation, and scenic landscapes.
- Cultural heritage, both Indigenous and settler, is considered fundamental to rural identity and future planning.

Respond to Climate and Natural Disaster Vulnerabilities

- The 2022 floods remain a deeply formative experience, and climate adaptation is now a community expectation.
- Residents called for land use planning that integrates risk avoidance, regenerative practice, and long-term resilience.
- There is support for innovation in climate-smart land uses and agroecology if backed by clear policy support.

Enable Housing Affordability and Rural Liveability

- Housing affordability is a shared concern. Residents highlighted the pressures facing renters, young families, and older residents seeking age in place.
- Many supported infill or renewal in existing villages— provided it is accompanied by infrastructure investment and safeguards to retain local character.

- Views on rural lifestyle lots were mixed: some saw them as incompatible with farming, others as essential to meeting housing demand.
- Increase Clarity and Fairness in Planning
- Residents expressed frustration with perceived extractive industries, zoning anomalies, and subdivision policies.
- Stakeholders want clearer, more accessible planning rules and better communication about what different land use designations mean for them.

Strengthening Community Voice and Local-Led Solutions

- Residents consistently called for more community-led development models, including cooperative housing, community farming, and place-based precinct planning.
- There is appetite for Council to act as a partner and facilitator, not just a regulator, especially in relation to land activation, infrastructure, and rural resilience.

Industry and Stakeholder Perspectives

Engagement with rural industries and regional organisations revealed complementary and, at times, distinct perspectives from those of the general community.

Primary Producers and Agricultural Stakeholders

- Industry stakeholders emphasised the need for land use planning that supports investment certainty, infrastructure servicing, and succession pathways.
- Many industries, especially dairy and horticulture, stressed the importance of protecting productive land from fragmentation or rezoning.
- Input costs, labour shortages, and village-level access to water infrastructure were key issues raised across all primary industries.

Emerging and Diversifying Sectors

- Hemp growers, regenerative farmers, and agri-tourism operators are seeking more flexible and enabling land use controls.
- These stakeholders are often constrained by outdated zoning, lack of clarity around permissible uses, and limited infrastructure.

First Nations Partners

- First Nations representatives, particularly Jagun Alliance, have called for deeper integration of Country-based planning frameworks.
- They seek greater involvement in decision-making, cultural site protection, and opportunities for land stewardship, enterprise, and education tied to Country.

Tourism, Environmental, and Creative Sectors

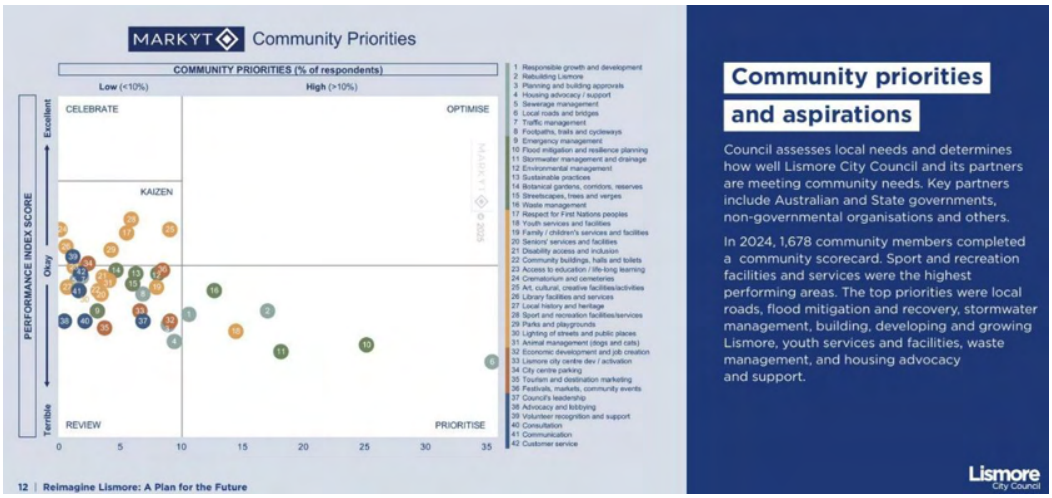
- Stakeholders from these sectors support place-based planning that protects natural assets, fosters creative enterprise, and enables sustainable rural experiences.
- There is shared concern that land use rules are not currently structured to unlock ecology-based economic opportunities.

Convergence and Divergence Across Stakeholders

While there is broad alignment across stakeholder groups in their desire for land use clarity, resilience, and rural vitality, points of tension remain—particularly around:

- Rural Subdivision: Community and industry concerns differ on where and how subdivision should occur, with lifestyle development seen as both a risk and a solution depending on context.
- Land Use Flexibility: Emerging industries seek more flexibility, while traditional sectors prioritise land protection and regulatory consistency.
- Delivery Expectations: Industry often seeks fast, enabling reform; community groups prioritise transparency, engagement, and place-led approaches.

These insights will be critical to developing a strategy that is inclusive, implementable, and future-ready.



Engagement Synthesis Table: Converging and Diverging Priorities

THEME	COMMUNITY SENTIMENT	INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE	SHARED PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR RLUS
Land Protection and Use	Strong support for preserving farmland and rural character; concern over overdevelopment	Prioritise land security for agriculture and productivity; concern about incompatible uses	Protecting rural land from inappropriate development	Define clear zoning rules and overlays that reflect land capability, character, and sector needs
Subdivision and Lifestyle Development	Mixed views: some see it as a threat, others as access to a more affordable living option	Generally cautious; risks to agricultural continuity and property prices	Concern over fragmentation, but recognition of housing need	Establish clear subdivision policies that differentiate between lifestyle, productive, and village contexts
Climate Resilience and Disaster Recovery	Strong desire for flood- safe, climate-ready rural development	Support for water security, land repair, and risk-mitigation infrastructure	Climate change is a shared risk that requires	Embed hazard mapping, adaptation strategies, and regenerative land use

THEME	COMMUNITY SENTIMENT	INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE	SHARED PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR RLUS
			coordinated response	principles across all rural zones
Housing and Village Futures	Desire for more diverse, affordable options, particularly in villages	Support for worker accommodation but wary of the costs associated with increased infrastructure burden	Affordable housing and liveability linked to infrastructure investment	Prioritise place-based village renewal strategies with integrated housing, infrastructure, and economic development
Regulatory Clarity and Trust	Perception of inconsistent decisions, particularly around mining, LEP, and zoning	Frustration with uncertainty and delays in planning approvals	Demand for transparent, fair, and responsive planning system	Improve communication of planning decisions; consider simplified development pathways for key industries
Cultural Landscape and Country	Broad support for Indigenous cultural integration and regenerative practices	Growing awareness, interest in stewardship models	Agreement on need to better protect cultural and ecological values	Embed Connecting with Country principles and partner with First Nations groups in long-term land use governance
Rural Economic Development	Community interest in local enterprise and food security	Sector focus on growth, infrastructure, and investment certainty	Enabling rural innovation and enterprise	Align land use planning with economic development tools; identify catalytic zones and policy levers to unlock investment
Governance and Delivery	Want stronger community voice and participation in rural planning	Seek faster, more enabling decision-making and clear project pipelines	RLUS must be action-oriented and deliver tangible outcomes	Establish a cross-sector implementation group and clear pathways from strategy to project execution

9. JURISDICTION ZONING: NORTHERN RIVERS LGA

This jurisdictional comparison examines permissible land uses in rural zones across Northern Rivers Joint Organisation councils. The intent of the comparison is to understand how each jurisdiction applies the RU1, RU2 and RU4 zones. For the purposes of this report these zones are considered 'rural zones'. RU3 Forestry and RU5 Village are not considered within this definition.

This comparison can be used to inform discussions when introducing new uses into rural zones. It is important, however, to consider the wider context where the zones are used in the relevant LGA's and how they fit into their strategic offering of rural zones, not just whether land use is included in a zone or not. Analysis of geographic characteristics and applicable development controls (such as minimum lot sizes etc.) should also be considered.

Quick Facts

- Every jurisdiction uses the RU1 zone.
- 4/7 councils use the RU2 zone (this includes Lismore who use it in a way that is contrary to its purpose)
- Richmond Valley only uses one rural zone: RU1
- Kyogle is the only LGA to use the RU4 zone (but does not use RU2)
- Lismore, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Richmond Valley are the only LGA's to use RU5 zones.

Discussion of how other jurisdictions use the RU1 zone, and other rural zones, are provided in the following sections *(Note: Analysis is current as at: 07 July 2025)*

Analysis of RU1 implementation against Lismore

Summary of zone objectives in other LGA's

Ballina and Byron Shire Councils have almost identical rural land objectives, which show shared vision for balancing agricultural productivity, environmental stewardship, and small-scale tourism. Both councils prioritize ecosystem restoration and minimizing infrastructure demands, suggesting a strong emphasis on maintaining ecological integrity and preserving the region's visual appeal for residents and visitors.

By contrast, Clarence Valley Council introduces stricter development control measures such as preventing dispersed rural settlement and adapting to environmental hazards. These additions highlight Clarence's concern with managing rural sprawl and protecting community safety in environmentally sensitive areas.

Similarly, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, and Tweed councils showcase a distinctive push toward promoting diverse agricultural enterprises, which reflects their efforts to support economic resilience in primary industry. Tweed stands out by explicitly defending prime agricultural land from competing land use pressures, illustrating a more protective stance toward high-value farming zones.

In summary, while all councils uphold sustainable production and landscape preservation, their secondary objectives reflect differing local priorities. Coastal councils like Ballina and Byron lean into tourism and environmental enhancement, whereas inland councils such as Kyogle, Richmond Valley, and Tweed emphasize agricultural diversity and land protection. Clarence's objectives suggest a hybrid approach, blending production with planning control and hazard mitigation. These differences underline how each council customizes its strategic vision to suit local geography, economy, and community values.

COUNCIL	ENVIORNMENTAL PROTECTION	TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY	SETTLEMENT CONTROL	INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND	SCENIC / AMENITY FOCUS	HAZARDS / PRESSURES
Ballina	strong emphasis	•	x	x		through restoration	x
Byron	strong emphasis	•	x	x		through restoration	x
Clarence	via hazard avoidance	x	•	prevent sprawl		x	env. hazards
Kyogle	emphasized	x	•	x	x	scenic amenity	x
Richmond Valley	x	x	•	x		x	x
Tweed	x	x	•	x	x	x	econ. pressures

Uses Allowed Without Consent

Number of permitted uses (without consent) allowed in each LGA:

- Tweed – 4 uses
- Byron – 4 uses
- Ballina – 5 uses
- Kyogle – 5 uses
- Richmond Valley – 5 uses
- Lismore City Council – 6 uses
- Clarence Valley – 10 uses

Land uses listed as permitted without consent in Lismore, but not in other jurisdictions:

- Forestry – absent from Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, or Tweed.
- Home occupations (sex services) – absent from Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, and Tweed.

Land uses listed as permitted without consent in other jurisdictions, but not in Lismore:

- Home-based child-care – permitted in Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, and Clarence Valley.
- Home businesses and home industries – exclusive to Clarence Valley.
- Horticulture – included in Richmond Valley and Clarence Valley*.
- Viticulture – included in Richmond Valley and Clarence Valley*.

*In Lismore this definition falls under intensive plant agriculture which is permitted without consent.

Common land uses across Lismore and other jurisdictions

- Environmental protection works – permitted in all jurisdictions except Richmond Valley.
- Extensive agriculture – included in all jurisdictions. *
- Home occupations – included in all jurisdictions. *
- Intensive plant agriculture – permitted in Lismore, Ballina, Kyogle, and Tweed.

*Required as per the standard instrument

Uses Allowed with Consent

- Land uses allowed in Lismore but not in other jurisdictions:
- Boat launching ramps – absent in Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, and Tweed.
- Building identification signs – only listed in Lismore and Kyogle.
- Business identification signs – appears in Lismore, Byron, and Kyogle.
- Camping grounds – absent in Ballina and Tweed.
- Caravan parks – not included in Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, and Tweed.
- Eco-tourist facilities – missing from Ballina, Byron, and Tweed.

- Garden centres – only listed in Lismore.
- Home-based childcare – absent in Tweed. Permitted without consent in Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, and Clarence Valley.
- Kiosks – only listed in Lismore, Richmond Valley.
- Landscaping material supplies – missing in Ballina, Clarence Valley, and Tweed.
- Mooring pens – only listed in Lismore and Ballina.
- Recreation facilities (outdoor) – absent in Byron, Clarence Valley, and Tweed.

Land uses allowed in other jurisdictions but not in Lismore:

- Industrial retail outlets – included in Byron and Tweed.
- Markets – found in Ballina.
- Moorings – permitted in Ballina and Richmond Valley.
- Neighbourhood shops – allowed in Clarence Valley.
- Places of public worship – listed in Byron, Kyogle, and Richmond Valley.
- Secondary dwellings – found in Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, and Richmond Valley.
- Service stations – unique to Richmond Valley.
- Sewerage systems – unique in Ballina.
- Signage – listed in Ballina, Clarence Valley, and Richmond Valley.
- Timber yards – exclusive to Kyogle.
- Veterinary hospitals – included in Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, and Richmond Valley.
- Water supply systems – found in Ballina, Kyogle, and Richmond Valley.
- Water storage facilities – listed in Tweed.

Total uses allowed for per LGA

- Lismore City Council – 39 land uses
- Ballina – 38 land uses
- Byron – 37 land uses
- Clarence Valley – 37 land uses
- Kyogle – 42 land uses
- Richmond Valley – 46 land uses
- Tweed – 34 land uses

Analysis of RU2 implementation against Lismore

Summary of zone objectives in other LGA's

Ballina and Byron Shire Councils share a strong emphasis on preserving rural character and enabling tourism, but they diverge in their environmental priorities. Ballina leans into ecological restoration and infrastructure efficiency, aiming to balance development with environmental integrity. Byron, meanwhile, places a premium on scenic protection and tourism tied to conservation, reflecting its identity as a destination with high visual and ecological value.

Clarence Valley Council takes a more regulatory stance, introducing objectives to prevent dispersed rural settlement and mitigate environmental hazards. This suggests a strategic focus on managing growth and safeguarding community resilience. Clarence also supports less intensive agriculture, indicating a broader spectrum of rural land uses that may accommodate smaller or alternative farming models.

Tweed Shire Council's objectives highlight a clear push toward tourism diversification, especially agri- and eco-tourism. However, it lacks explicit goals around environmental protection or infrastructure demand, which may imply a more flexible or market-driven approach to rural development. Tweed's strategy seems

geared toward leveraging its natural assets for economic growth, particularly through tourism linked to rural industries.

Each council's objectives reflect its unique geographic, economic, and cultural context—whether it's Byron's scenic allure, Clarence's planning discipline, Ballina's ecological balance, or Tweed's tourism-forward vision.

COUNCIL	ENVIORNMENTAL PROTECTION	TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY	SETTLEMENT CONTROL	INFRASTRUCTURE DEMAND	SCENIC / AMENITY FOCUS	HAZARDS / PRESSURES
Ballina	small scale tourism	habitat waterways	x	x	minimize demand	restoration focus	x
Byron	tourism linked to conservation	scenic protection	x	x	x	scenic landscapes	x
Clarence	x	hazard avoidance	less intensive ag.	prevent sprawl	minimise demand	x	
Tweed	agri/eco-tourism	x	x	x	x	x	x

Uses Allowed Without Consent

Unique to Each Jurisdiction

- Lismore City Council: Allows Forestry and Home occupations (sex services), which Byron and Ballina do not.
- Ballina: Allows Home-based childcare, which Lismore does not, and does not permit Forestry or Home occupations (sex services).
- Byron: Has the most restricted list, omitting Forestry, Home occupations (sex services), and Intensive plant agriculture.
- Clarence Valley: Allows Home businesses, Home industries, Horticulture, and Viticulture, making it the most inclusive jurisdiction.
- Tweed: Permits Environmental facilities—a category not listed in the other jurisdictions.

Overlapping Categories:

- All jurisdictions allow Environmental protection works and Extensive agriculture.
- Home occupations are universally permitted.
- Intensive plant agriculture is allowed in Lismore, Ballina, and Tweed, but not Byron or Clarence Valley.
- Home-based childcare appears in Ballina, Byron, and Clarence Valley.

Uses Allowed with Consent

Land Uses Present in Lismore but absent in other jurisdictions:

- Building identification signs
- Business identification signs
- Light industries (absent in other jurisdictions but present in Lismore)
- Mooring pens (not listed in other regions)

Land Uses Present in Other Jurisdictions but Absent in Lismore:

- Artisan food and drink industries (Byron)
- Car parks (Ballina)
- Caravan parks (Ballina, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Centre-based childcare facilities (Byron, Clarence Valley)
- Charter and tourism boating facilities (Ballina)
- Correctional centres (Ballina, Clarence Valley)

- Crematoria (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Depots (Ballina, Byron, Tweed)
- Dual occupancies (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Educational establishments (Tweed)
- Extractive industries (Ballina, Byron, Tweed)
- Function centres (Clarence Valley)
- Funeral homes (Byron, Tweed)
- Group homes (Tweed)
- Health consulting rooms (Byron, Clarence Valley)
- Home industries (Ballina, Byron, Tweed)
- Industrial retail outlets (Byron, Tweed)
- Industrial training facilities (Byron, Tweed)
- Livestock processing industries (Byron)
- Liquid fuel depots (Ballina)
- Marinas (Ballina)
- Markets (Ballina, Tweed)
- Moorings (Ballina)
- Mortuaries (Ballina)
- Neighbourhood shops (Byron, Clarence Valley)
- Open cut mining (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Passenger transport facilities (Ballina)
- Places of public worship (Byron, Tweed)
- Public administration buildings (Ballina)
- Recreation facilities (major) (Ballina, Tweed)
- Recreation facilities (indoor) (Byron)
- Respite day care centres (Byron, Clarence Valley)
- Rural supplies (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Rural workers' dwellings (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Secondary dwellings (Byron, Clarence Valley)
- Sewerage systems (Ballina)
- Signage (Ballina, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Stock and sale yards (Byron)
- Storage premises (Ballina, Byron)
- Timber yards (Tweed)
- Tourist and visitor accommodation (Ballina, Byron)
- Transport depots (Byron, Tweed)
- Truck depots (Byron, Tweed)
- Veterinary hospitals (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Tweed)
- Warehouse or distribution centres (Byron)
- Water supply systems (Ballina, Tweed)
- Wharf or boating facilities (Ballina, Tweed)

Land Use Summary by Jurisdiction

Ballina

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To maintain the rural, cultural and landscape character of the locality. *
- To enable development that is compatible with the rural and environmental nature of the land. *
- To ensure that there are no unreasonable or uneconomic demands for the provision of public infrastructure.

* Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

RU2 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- 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. • To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within the zone and land uses within adjoining zones. *
- To enable small-scale tourist-orientated development that is compatible with the rural nature of the land. *
- To encourage development that involves restoration or enhancement (or both) of the natural environment if consistent with the production and landscape character of the land*.
- To enable development that does not adversely impact on the natural environment, including habitat and waterways*.
- To ensure that there are not unreasonable or uneconomic demands (or both) for the provision of public infrastructure*.

* Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

Additional permitted uses in RU2

RU2 allows more uses with consent compared to RU1. Notably, agriculture, camping grounds, caravan parks, charter and tourism boating facilities, community facilities, correctional centres, crematoria, depots, kiosks, liquid fuel depots, marinas, mortuaries, passenger transport facilities, public administration buildings, recreation facilities (major), restaurants or cafes, storage premises, vehicle repair stations, veterinary hospitals, and wharf or boating facilities are all permitted with consent in RU2 but do not appear in RU1.

Additional prohibited uses in RU2

RU2 specifically prohibits some uses that are not mentioned in RU1. Function centres, self-storage units, and advertising structures are explicitly listed as prohibited in RU2 but are absent from RU1.

Overlap but differences in classification

Some uses are marked differently across zones:

- Forestry and extractive industries are permitted with consent in both zones.
- Agritourism appears in RU1 but not in RU2.
- Turf farming is permitted with consent in both zones.
- Tourist and visitor accommodation is permitted with consent in both zones.
- Hotel or motel accommodation, serviced apartments, and backpackers' accommodation: These uses are prohibited in both zones, showing consistency across both classifications.

Byron Shire

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To encourage consolidation of lots for the purposes of primary industry production. *
- To enable the provision of tourist accommodation, facilities and other small-scale rural tourism uses associated with primary production and environmental conservation consistent with the rural character of the locality. *
- To protect significant scenic landscapes and to minimise impacts on the scenic quality of the locality.

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

RU2 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- 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.
- To enable the provision of tourist accommodation, facilities and other small-scale rural tourism uses associated with primary production and environmental conservation consistent with the rural character of the locality. *
- To protect significant scenic landscapes and to minimise impacts on the scenic quality of the locality. *

* Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

Differences in permitted uses

RU2 allows more types of development with consent compared to RU1. Additional uses permitted in RU2 include:

- Agricultural produce industries
- Artisan food and drink industries
- Cemeteries
- Centre-based childcare facilities

- Crematoria
- Depots
- Eco-tourist facilities
- Funeral homes
- Garden centres
- Health consulting rooms
- Hostels
- Information and education facilities
- Livestock processing industries
- Neighbourhood shops
- Recreation facilities (indoors and outdoors)
- Respite day care centres
- Stock and sale yards
- Storage premises
- Transport depots
- Truck depots
- Warehouse or distribution centres

General observations

- RU2 has broader permitted land uses, including commercial, retail, and industrial activities, making it a more flexible zone.
- RU1 is more focused on primary production and environmental protection, allowing fewer development types.

Clarence Valley

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To prevent dispersed rural settlement*.
- To ensure that development does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities*.
- To ensure development is not adversely impacted by environmental hazards*.

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

RU2 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- 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.
- To provide land for less intensive agricultural production*.

- To prevent dispersed rural settlement*.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within the zone and with adjoining zones*.
- To ensure that development does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities*.
- To ensure development is not adversely impacted by environmental hazards*.

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

Differences in permitted without consent uses

RU1 permits Environmental protection works, Extensive agriculture, Forestry, Home occupations, Intensive plant agriculture, Horticulture, and Viticulture without consent, while RU2 permits the same set of uses with the addition of Home- based childcare, Home businesses, Home industries, and Home occupations (sex services).

RU2 has a broader scope of non-consent uses, particularly including more home-based activities.

Differences in permitted with consent uses

RU1 allows these uses with consent, but RU2 does not include them:

- Cemeteries
- Correctional centres
- Health consulting rooms
- Landscaping material supplies
- Respite day care centres

RU2 allows these uses with consent, but RU1 does not include them:

- Camping grounds
- Caravan parks
- Centre-based childcare facilities
- Function centres
- Rural supplies

General observations

- RU1 Primary Production leans towards industrial, production- based, and agricultural uses, focusing on farming, extractive industries, and related facilities.
- RU2 Rural Landscape includes more community-oriented and tourism-related developments, such as Caravan parks, Centre-based childcare facilities, and Function centres.
- Both zones do not explicitly list prohibited uses, meaning any development not specified as permitted is automatically prohibited.

Kyogle

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.

- To ensure that the productive capacity of agricultural land is appropriately recognised and managed*.
- To enable a range of other uses to occur on rural land providing such uses do not conflict with existing or potential agriculture and do not detract from the scenic amenity and character of the rural environment*.
- To enable development that does not adversely impact on the natural environment, including habitat and waterways*.

* Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots

- 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.

Differences in permitted uses

RU1 allows these uses with consent, but RU4 does not include them:

- Airstrips
- Camping grounds
- Caravan parks
- Charter and tourism boating facilities
- Extractive industries
- Helipads
- Industrial training facilities
- Information and education facilities
- Open cut mining
- Places of public worship
- Rural industries
- Rural supplies
- Rural workers' dwellings
- Timber yards

RU4 allows these uses with consent, but RU1 does not include them

- Agricultural produce industries
- Backpackers' accommodation
- Dairies (pasture-based)
- Entertainment facilities
- Neighbourhood shops
- Viticulture

Differences in permitted without consent uses

RU4 adds Intensive plant agriculture to the list of permitted without consent uses, whereas RU1 does not.

General observations

- RU1 Primary Production permits more industrial, infrastructure-related uses (e.g., mining, extractive industries, timber yards, rural supplies) that are generally seen in larger- scale farming or land management.
- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots is more focused on smaller-scale farming and tourism-related land uses, including Backpackers' accommodation, Neighbourhood shops, and Viticulture.
- The prohibited category is empty in both zones, meaning any development not listed under "permitted without consent" or "permitted with consent" is automatically prohibited.

Richmond Valley

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To ensure that development does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities. *

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

As Richmond Valley only uses one rural zone, the zone acts as a catch all for all types of rural uses and select rural businesses.

Tweed

RU1 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To protect prime agricultural land from the economic pressure of competing land uses. *

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument

RU2 Primary Production (objectives in LEP)

- 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.

- To provide for a range of tourist and visitor accommodation- based land uses, including agri-tourism, eco-tourism and any other like tourism that is linked to environmental, agricultural or rural industry use of the land. *

*Denotes objectives outside of the standard instrument Differences in permitted uses

RU1 allows these uses with consent, but RU2 does not include them:

- Air transport facilities
- Correctional centres
- Hospitals
- Passenger transport facilities
- Service stations

RU2 allows these uses with consent, but RU1 does not include them

- Transport depots
- Truck depots
- Wharf or boating facilities

Differences in permitted without consent uses

- RU1 permits Horticulture and Viticulture without consent, but RU2 does not.
- RU2 allows Environmental facilities without consent, while RU1 requires consent for them.

General observations

- RU1 Primary Production has a stronger focus on agriculture, production, and industry-related uses, including intensive farming and mining.
- RU2 Rural Landscape is more tourism and transport-friendly, allowing wharf and boating facilities, transport depots, and truck depots, which are absent in RU1.
- Both zones do not list any prohibited uses explicitly, meaning any development not listed as permitted is automatically prohibited.

10. KEY STRATEGIC INSIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RLUS

Drawing on the extensive review of strategic documents, community engagement, and regional data, this section identifies the key strategic insights that will shape the design and implementation of the RLUS. These insights are aligned with Lismore City Council's core priorities—community resilience, environmental stewardship, economic development, and cultural identity—and provide a roadmap for delivering on the RLUS's intended purpose.

Cross-Cutting Strategic Insights

Rural viability and resilience require a systems approach.

Land use, infrastructure, economic development, and community services must be planned in tandem—not in silos—to overcome fragmentation and deliver meaningful outcomes.

Infrastructure is the biggest enabler—and constraint.

Without targeted upgrades to transport, digital, and servicing infrastructure, many rural areas remain constrained from growth or recovery. Infrastructure-readiness must be a key input into future land use decisions.

Climate change is a universal disruptor.

Climate risk impacts agricultural productivity, insurance viability, and community safety. RLUS policies must integrate adaptation strategies and support climate-smart land use.

Villages are critical engines for renewal.

Targeted investment in villages—combining housing, economic, cultural, and social infrastructure—can create vibrant rural nodes that anchor population and service access.

Planning reform must be place-based, not one-size-fits-all.

Rural precincts differ significantly in function, need, and opportunity. Planning controls must reflect this diversity.

Opportunity Domains for RLUS

Based on the synthesis of data, engagement, and strategy, the following opportunity areas are proposed:

Regenerative Agriculture and Environmental Stewardship

Support land use models that integrate biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and low-impact farming. Strengthen overlays and incentives aligned with Climate Ready Lismore.

Village and Rural Node Activation

Enable affordable housing, economic activation, and social infrastructure in priority village precincts, supported by infrastructure-readiness mapping.

Precinct-Based Planning and Subdivision Clarity

Develop a spatial framework that guides appropriate subdivision, growth, and infrastructure staging, tailored to local character and capacity.

First Nations Partnership and Country-Based Planning

Embed Connecting with Country principles into rural policy, zoning, and investment. Co-design land use pathways with Traditional Owners.

Rural Economic Diversification and Innovation

Identify catalytic zones for creative industries, agri- tourism, and circular economy models.

Gaps in the Current System

This review identified several gaps requiring attention:

- Absence of a formal land capability and agricultural land hierarchy
- Fragmentation in LEP zones and outdated environmental overlays
- Limited integration of cultural, climate, and socio- economic criteria in planning assessments
- No clear policy on rural lifestyle housing or village intensification
- Disconnect between zoning, infrastructure, and economic function.

Strategic Alignment with Council Priorities

Each insight aligns to Lismore City Council's core planning and community pillars:

- Resilience and Risk Reduction – Climate-ready land use and infrastructure decision-making
- Housing and Affordability – Activation of village and key worker housing models
- Economic Development and Innovation – Land use reform aligned with diversified industry pathways.
- Community Wellbeing and Participation – Empowering community-led and culturally informed planning
- Environmental Stewardship – Strengthening overlays and supporting regenerative practice.

11. BASELINE INFORMATION REVIEW CONCLUSION: COMMUNITY STABILITY AND ACTIVATION

The future success of Lismore's Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS) depends not only on planning reforms but on the strength, adaptability, and leadership capacity of its rural communities. The next part of our engagement is the development of a structured, community- informed understanding of the current state of rural Lismore—grounded in local insight, spatial data, and economic modelling—to guide implementation and secure early wins.

To develop a structured, verifiable, and community-informed understanding of the current state of Lismore's rural areas—rooted in data, lived experience, and strategic insight—to inform investment, planning, and reform.

PART 2 COMMUNITY-LED NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT BY RURAL LOCALITY

12. LISMORE LGA PROFILE FOR RURAL LAND USE STRATEGY

Executive Summary

The Lismore LGA has a population of 44,323, representing 0.55% of NSW's total population. Located in the Northern Rivers region, the community serves as a critical service hub while facing unique challenges and opportunities that have significant implications for land use planning and rural development strategies.

The community faces demographic, economic, and environmental challenges, including population decline (-0.8% growth rate), below-average incomes, elevated crime rates, and extreme exposure to natural disasters, particularly flooding. However, Lismore maintains important strengths as a regional centre for healthcare, education, and agricultural services, with a notably higher Indigenous population (5.9%) that brings cultural richness and specific service requirements.

This comprehensive profile examines key indicators across demographics, economy, health, housing, social wellbeing, and environmental factors to provide strategic insights for community development and rural land use planning. The analysis reveals critical factors that must inform future land use strategies, including disaster resilience, agricultural productivity, demographic transitions, and economic diversification needs.

Demographics and Population Characteristics

Population Structure and Demographic Transition

Lismore's population of 44,323 comprises 49.1% males and 50.9% females, closely mirroring state and national gender distributions. However, the community faces significant demographic challenges with a -0.8% growth rate, contrasting sharply with NSW's 1.3% and Australia's 1.7% growth rates. This population decline represents a critical factor for rural land use planning, as it suggests reduced pressure for urban expansion but potential underutilization of existing infrastructure and services.

The community exhibits an aging demographic profile, with a median age of 44 years compared to NSW (39 years) and Australia (38 years). This aging trend is evident across multiple age cohorts, with Lismore showing proportionally fewer young adults (20-34 years: 10.6%) compared to NSW (14.2%) and Australia (14.5%), while having higher proportions of older residents, particularly in the 55+ age brackets (24.9% vs NSW 21.4% and Australia 20.8%).

This demographic transition has profound implications for rural land use strategy. An aging population may lead to:

- Increased demand for age-appropriate housing and services in rural areas
- Potential succession planning challenges for agricultural enterprises
- Reduced labor availability for intensive agricultural activities
- Changed lifestyle preferences favoring low-maintenance rural residential options
- Increased healthcare service demands in rural areas

Cultural Diversity and Indigenous Considerations

Lismore demonstrates a notably higher Indigenous population, with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples comprising 5.9% of the population, significantly above NSW (3.4%) and national (3.2%) averages. This represents 2,600 individuals and highlights the community's important role as a regional centre for Indigenous populations in northern NSW.

For rural land use planning, this significant Indigenous presence requires consideration of:

- Cultural heritage protection and management protocols

- Traditional land management practices and knowledge integration
- Culturally appropriate rural residential development models
- Protection of sacred sites and culturally significant landscapes
- Opportunities for Indigenous-led agricultural and tourism enterprises
- Native title and land rights considerations in planning decisions

Household Formation and Rural Residential Demand

Family composition data reveal 40.8% couple families without children, 35.9% couple families with children, and 21.6% single-parent families. The high proportion of childless couples, combined with an aging population, suggests potential demand for rural residential properties that offer lifestyle benefits without requiring proximity to schools and child-focused services.

The average household size of 2.4 people (compared to NSW 2.6 and Australia 2.5) indicates smaller household formations that may influence rural residential lot sizing and infrastructure requirements. This trend toward smaller households supports demand for rural residential development that offers privacy and space while maintaining manageable property sizes.

Economic Profile and Rural Economic Base

Leading Industries Analysis

Lismore's economy demonstrates a service-oriented structure with significant concentration in care and education sectors but retains important connections to its rural economic base. Analysis of the top ten industries reveals distinct patterns across Gross Regional Product contribution, economic output, and employment generation that directly impact rural land use planning.

Top 10 Industries by Economic Output (GRP Contribution)

Based on industry output data totaling $5.04 billion, Lismore's economy is led by:

1. Health Care and Social Assistance - $774.8M (15.4% of total output)
2. Construction - $542.6M (10.8% of total output)
3. Manufacturing - $534.4M (10.6% of total output)
4. Education and Training - $429.4M (8.5% of total output)
5. Retail Trade - $358.7M (7.1% of total output)
6. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - $320.7M (6.4% of total output)
7. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing - $275.6M (5.5% of total output)
8. Administrative and Support Services - $248.2M (4.9% of total output)
9. Public Administration and Safety - $229.9M (4.6% of total output)
10. Accommodation and Food Services - $205.8M (4.1% of total output)

Agricultural Sector Significance

While Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing ranks seventh by total output ($275.6M), its economic significance extends beyond direct contribution. The sector demonstrates the strongest specialisation compared to state and national averages (Location Quotient: 2.47 vs NSW, 2.03 vs Australia), indicating Lismore's role as an agricultural service centre with competitive advantages in primary production.

The agricultural sector employs 1,219 people (6.1% of total employment) compared to NSW (0.9%) and Australia (1.4%), demonstrating its continued importance as an employer. Agricultural productivity of $95,615 per worker, while below the NSW average of $208,792, reflects the intensive nature of Northern Rivers agriculture, including dairy, beef, horticulture, and emerging crops.

Employment Distribution and Rural Connections

The top 10 employment sectors reveal both urban service concentration and rural economic linkages:

1. Health Care and Social Assistance - 4,294 jobs (21.4%)
2. Retail Trade - 2,285 jobs (11.4%)
3. Education and Training - 2,206 jobs (11.0%)
4. Construction - 1,503 jobs (7.5%)
5. Accommodation and Food Services - 1,280 jobs (6.4%)
6. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing - 1,219 jobs (6.1%)
7. Manufacturing - 1,060 jobs (5.3%)
8. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services - 945 jobs (4.7%)
9. Public Administration and Safety - 918 jobs (4.6%)
10. Other Services - 813 jobs (4.1%)

Economic Diversification and Value-Adding Opportunities

The economic structure reveals opportunities for rural land use strategy to support economic diversification. Manufacturing's strong output ($534.4M) but relatively low employment (1,060 jobs) suggests capital-intensive operations that could include agricultural processing and value-adding activities. The sector's productivity of $106,849 per worker indicates potential for expansion in rural areas where land costs are lower and agricultural inputs are readily available.

Professional services employment (4.7%) significantly trails NSW (11.3%) and national (9.4%) averages, suggesting potential for rural-based consulting, technology, and professional services that leverage improved digital connectivity. This represents an opportunity for rural land use strategy to accommodate home-based businesses and rural commercial activities.

Income Distribution and Rural Affordability

Economic indicators reveal significant income challenges that influence rural land use patterns. Personal median weekly income of $685 falls well below NSW ($813) and Australia ($805), representing income gaps of approximately 16% and 15% respectively. Family income of $1,719 similarly trails NSW ($2,185) and Australia ($2,120), while household income of $1,319 compares unfavorably to NSW ($1,829) and Australia ($1,746).

The income distribution shows 30.8% of workers in the lowest income quartile ($0-$636 weekly) and only 14% in the highest income bracket ($1,620+ weekly). This income profile suggests:

- Strong demand for affordable rural residential options
- Potential constraints on rural property maintenance and improvement
- Opportunities for affordable rural housing strategies
- Need for rural employment generation to support local economies
- Importance of agricultural enterprises that provide local employment

Housing Markets and Rural Residential Patterns

Housing Market Dynamics

Lismore's housing market demonstrates characteristics that significantly influence rural land use demand and development patterns. The mean dwelling price of $575,000 represents substantial value compared to NSW ($1,245,900) and Australia ($1,025,000), creating relative affordability that drives demand for rural residential development as an accessible alternative to urban housing markets.

Despite lower absolute prices, housing affordability challenges persist due to income disparities. The price-to-income ratio of 9.14 slightly outperforms NSW (9.5) but exceeds both the national average (8.0) and generally accepted affordability thresholds. This suggests that while rural land may offer more affordable development opportunities, broader housing affordability challenges will continue to influence rural residential demand.

Housing Structure and Rural Character

Housing structure reflects the regional character and rural lifestyle preferences, with 83.5% separate houses compared to NSW (65.6%) and Australia (72.3%). This overwhelming preference for detached housing supports rural residential development demand, as residents clearly prefer housing types that offer space, privacy, and lifestyle benefits associated with rural living.

Medium and high-density housing comprises only 15.6% compared to NSW's 34.4% and Australia's 26.8%, indicating limited acceptance of higher-density development and reinforcing the preference for low-density, rural residential-style living. This has implications for rural land use strategy in managing urban sprawl while meeting community housing preferences.

Rental Market and Rural Housing Options

Rental stress affects 41.3% of renters paying over 30% of income in rent, compared to 35.5% in NSW and 32.2% nationally. While median rent of $310 weekly is lower than NSW ($420) and Australia ($375), the combination with lower local incomes creates affordability pressures. This rental stress may drive demand for rural residential options that offer:

- More affordable housing through land subdivision and development
- Opportunities for rental property investment in rural areas
- Alternative housing models including rural worker accommodation
- Home ownership opportunities through rural residential development

Homeownership and Rural Investment

Homeownership patterns show 37.6% owning outright and 31.7% purchasing, with 27.1% renting. The high rate of outright ownership suggests an established population with equity that could be leveraged for rural property investment or rural residential development. This demographic may drive demand for rural lifestyle properties, hobby farms, and rural retirement options.

Health Infrastructure and Service Planning

Healthcare Access and Rural Service Delivery

Healthcare access presents challenges that influence rural land use strategy, particularly regarding the location and accessibility of rural residential development. With 0.6 GPs per 1,000 people, Lismore falls below NSW (1.1) and Australian (1.1) ratios, indicating primary care shortages that become more acute with distance from the urban centre.

Hospital bed availability shows concerning disparities, with 1.6 beds per 1,000 people for total capacity compared to NSW (6.9) and Australia (3.9). While public bed ratios are more comparable, the overall healthcare infrastructure limitations suggest rural land use strategy should consider:

- Proximity to healthcare services in rural residential zoning
- Transport accessibility for aging rural populations
- Opportunities for telehealth infrastructure in rural areas
- Location of rural residential development relative to emergency services

Health Outcomes and Rural Living

Health condition prevalence shows patterns relevant to rural land use planning. Mental health conditions affect 12.4% of residents compared to NSW (8.0%) and Australia (8.8%), indicating higher psychological distress that may be partly addressed through rural lifestyle opportunities. Rural residential development can offer mental health benefits through:

- Connection to nature and outdoor recreation
- Reduced urban stress and lifestyle factors
- Opportunities for agricultural therapy and productive activities
- Community connection in rural settings

However, elevated rates of conditions like arthritis (10.1% vs NSW 8.4%, Australia 8.5%) and asthma (9.9% vs NSW 7.8%, Australia 8.1%) suggest need for rural land use planning that considers healthcare accessibility and environmental health factors.

Environmental Factors and Natural Disaster Resilience

Climate Risk and Land Use Planning

Lismore faces extreme natural disaster exposure that fundamentally shapes rural land use strategy requirements. The community's very high flood risk (5/5), high tropical cyclone risk (4/5), and medium bushfire risk (3/5) create complex challenges for rural development and agricultural land use.

Flood Risk Management

The very high flood risk rating reflects Lismore's location in the Richmond River catchment and history of major flooding events. For rural land use strategy, flood risk considerations include:

- Flood-prone land identification and development controls
- Rural residential development location and design requirements
- Agricultural land use optimization in flood-affected areas
- Infrastructure resilience and evacuation planning
- Integration of flood mitigation measures in rural development
- Buffer zone requirements along waterways and flood plains

Recent flooding events have demonstrated the vulnerability of rural properties and the need for comprehensive flood risk management in land use planning. Rural land use strategy must balance development opportunities with flood resilience requirements.

Agricultural Land Protection and Climate Adaptation

Climate risks also threaten agricultural productivity and require land use strategy responses including:

- Protection of prime agricultural land from inappropriate development
- Climate-resilient agricultural practices and crop selection
- Water security planning for agricultural enterprises
- Drought preparedness and rural water infrastructure
- Integration of climate adaptation measures in agricultural zoning

Bushfire Risk and Rural Development

Medium bushfire risk (3/5) requires a strategy for rural land use to address:

- Asset protection zones and bushfire management
- Rural residential development location and design standards
- Vegetation management requirements
- Emergency access and evacuation planning

- Integration with rural fire service planning

Environmental Quality and Rural Amenity

Air quality scores (17/25 for good days) indicate environmental challenges that may affect rural residential amenities. Water quality rated as "moderate" compared to NSW's "good" rating suggests water management issues that impact both agricultural productivity and rural residential development potential.

Environmental quality factors influence rural land use strategy through:

- Water treatment and quality improvement requirements
- Air quality monitoring and improvement measures
- Environmental health considerations in development planning
- Integration of environmental enhancement measures in rural zones

Social Challenges and Community Safety

Crime and Rural Security

Public safety presents critical challenges that influence rural land use patterns and development viability. Crime rates of 522 per 1,000 people dramatically exceed NSW (79) and Australia (81), creating one of the highest crime rates in regional Australia. Violent crime rates of 61 per 1,000 far surpass state (12) and national (11) levels, with residents facing a 1 in 16 chance of violent crime victimization.

For rural land use strategy, these crime statistics create complex considerations:

- Rural residential isolation may increase vulnerability
- Need for community safety measures in rural development
- Police service accessibility and response times
- Community watch and security planning requirements
- Integration of safety considerations in rural zoning and development standards

Property crime rates of 137 per 1,000 (compared to NSW 24 and Australia 38) suggest particular risks for rural properties that may be more isolated and difficult to secure. This influences rural development patterns and may drive demand for gated communities or security-focused rural residential development.

Social Disadvantage and Rural Opportunities

The SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage score of 933 falls below the national average of 1,000, indicating relative disadvantage. This social disadvantage creates both challenges and opportunities for rural land use strategy:

Challenges:

- Limited financial capacity for rural property development and maintenance
- Reduced market demand for premium rural residential products
- Infrastructure and service provision challenges in disadvantaged areas
- Need for affordable rural housing and development options

Opportunities:

- Rural development as economic stimulus and employment generation
- Rural industries and enterprises as pathways out of disadvantage
- Rural lifestyle benefits for disadvantaged populations
- Community development opportunities through rural land use initiatives

Digital Connectivity and Modern Rural Development

Digital Infrastructure Requirements

The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) score of 69.8 for regional areas trails metropolitan areas (74.8) and the national average (73.2), indicating digital connectivity challenges that impact rural development potential.

Poor digital connectivity constrains:

- Home-based business opportunities in rural areas
- Remote work and professional services development
- Agricultural technology adoption and precision farming
- Rural residential appeal for modern lifestyle expectations
- Access to online services and digital participation

Rural land use strategy must address digital infrastructure through:

- NBN and mobile coverage requirements in rural zoning
- Digital infrastructure provision in rural residential development
- Support for agricultural technology and precision farming
- Integration of smart technology in rural development planning
- Collaboration with telecommunications providers for rural coverage improvement

Telecommunications and Rural Business Development

Digital connectivity limitations affect rural economic development opportunities. Professional services employment (4.7%) significantly trails state and national averages, partly due to connectivity constraints.

Improved digital infrastructure could support:

- Rural-based professional and consulting services
- Agricultural technology and precision farming enterprises
- Rural tourism and hospitality businesses
- Remote work opportunities reducing urban migration pressure
- Online retail and service delivery from rural locations

Rural Land Use Strategy Implications

Agricultural Land Management and Protection

Lismore's agricultural sector, while contributing $275.6M to the local economy and employing 1,219 people, faces multiple pressures that require strategic land use responses:

Land Use Pressures:

- Urban expansion pressure on productive agricultural land
- Rural residential development competing with agricultural uses
- Infrastructure development affecting agricultural connectivity
- Climate change impacts on agricultural viability
- Generational change and agricultural succession issues

Strategic Responses Required:

- Prime agricultural land identification and protection mechanisms
- Right-to-farm protections for agricultural enterprises
- Buffer zones between agricultural and residential uses
- Agricultural zoning that supports contemporary farming practices

- Value-adding and agribusiness development opportunities
- Integration of sustainable agricultural practices

Rural Residential Development Strategy

Demographic and economic analysis indicates continued demand for rural residential development, driven by:

- Urban housing affordability pressures creating rural alternatives
- Aging population seeking lifestyle and amenity benefits
- Preference for detached housing and private open space
- Relative affordability of rural land compared to urban alternatives
- Lifestyle preferences for rural living and semi-rural environments

Strategic Considerations:

- Appropriate location and scale of rural residential development
- Integration with existing rural communities and infrastructure
- Environmental and bushfire risk management requirements
- Agricultural land protection and conflict minimization
- Infrastructure provision and service delivery models
- Community facility and service accessibility planning

Infrastructure and Service Planning

Rural land use strategy must address infrastructure and service challenges identified in the community profile:

- **Critical Infrastructure Needs:**
  - Digital connectivity improvement for rural areas
  - Transport infrastructure supporting rural accessibility
  - Water security and quality improvement for rural development
  - Waste management services for rural communities
  - Emergency services coverage and response capability
  - Healthcare service accessibility and delivery models

- **Service Delivery Considerations:**
  - Cost-effective service delivery to dispersed rural populations
  - Innovative service delivery models leveraging technology
  - Community facility provision in rural areas
  - Integration with regional service planning
  - Sustainability and environmental management requirements

Economic Development Integration

Rural land use strategy should leverage economic development opportunities identified in the analysis:

- **Value-Adding Opportunities:**
  - Agricultural processing and manufacturing development
  - Rural tourism and hospitality enterprises
  - Professional services and consulting businesses
  - Renewable energy and environmental services
  - Creative industries and artisan production
  - Rural retail and service businesses

- **Employment Generation:**
  - Rural industrial zoning for appropriate enterprises
  - Home-based business provisions in rural residential areas
  - Agricultural enterprise diversification support
  - Rural commercial development opportunities
  - Integration with regional economic development strategies

Climate Resilience and Adaptation

Natural disaster exposure requires rural land use strategy to prioritise resilience:

- **Flood Management:**
  - Flood-prone land mapping and development controls
  - Rural development design standards for flood resilience
  - Agricultural land use optimisation in flood-affected areas
  - Infrastructure protection and flood mitigation integration
  - Emergency management and evacuation planning

- **Climate Adaptation:**
  - Agricultural land use adaptation to changing climate conditions
  - Rural development location and design for climate resilience
  - Water security planning and drought preparedness
  - Renewable energy integration in rural areas
  - Environmental conservation and enhancement measures

Community Development and Social Outcomes

Rural land use strategy should address social challenges and opportunities:

- **Community Safety:**
  - Rural development design for natural surveillance and security
  - Community safety infrastructure and service planning
  - Integration with crime prevention and community safety initiatives
  - Rural residential development that supports community connection

- **Social Inclusion:**
  - Affordable rural housing and development options
  - Indigenous cultural heritage protection and integration
  - Accessible rural development for aging populations
  - Community facility provision and social infrastructure planning
  - Support for disadvantaged populations through rural opportunities

Developing Local Processing Capacity

The region possesses exceptional natural advantages, but its agricultural potential is constrained by limited local processing infrastructure. Without proximate facilities for value-adding, growers face higher transportation costs, reduced product quality, and diminished bargaining power in distant markets. Local processing, cold storage, and packaging facilities would enable producers to capture more value, reduce post-harvest losses, and respond rapidly to market opportunities.

Processing infrastructure serves as an economic multiplier, attracting complementary businesses including equipment suppliers, logistics providers, and agricultural services. This clustering effect generates diverse employment from seasonal workers to skilled professionals, addressing Lismore's current challenges of workforce decline and above-average unemployment. Local facilities also enable smaller farming operations to achieve economies of scale, supporting agricultural diversity while preventing the land fragmentation that threatens long-term productivity and the critical mass needed to ensure a healthy agricultural supply chain.

Local processing infrastructure enables regions to extract maximum value from agricultural production by transforming single crops into multiple end products for diverse markets. This integrated approach, exemplified by sugar processing facilities that produce both food-grade products and biofuels, allows producers to optimise returns by directing different grades and portions of their harvest toward the highest-value applications. Such diversification not only increases overall returns per hectare but also provides critical market flexibility and risk management. When one product market softens, alternative revenue streams maintain stability. Additionally, integrated processing facilities can capture value from agricultural byproducts and waste streams, creating circular economy opportunities that improve both economic and environmental sustainability. By establishing versatile processing capacity, Lismore can position itself to respond dynamically to shifting consumer preferences, capitalise on emerging high-value applications, and ensure that every element of the harvest contributes to regional prosperity.

Enhancing local processing and logistics capacity positions Lismore to capitalise on growing demand for premium Australian products, driving expansion in macadamias and blueberries. Local infrastructure provides greater control over quality, branding, and market positioning, enabling competition on product differentiation rather than commodity pricing. It also allows rapid adaptation to emerging opportunities in organic and specialty markets. As climate variability and supply chain disruptions increase, regions with integrated production-to-market infrastructure will demonstrate greater resilience, attracting private investment and securing long-term competitive advantage.

A comprehensive feasibility study is essential to validate the economic viability and optimal configuration of expanded processing infrastructure for Lismore's agricultural sector. While the region's production capacity and market potential are evident, critical questions remain regarding infrastructure scale, required capital investment, operational costs, facility siting, technology selection, and projected returns across different agricultural commodities.

Conclusion and Strategic Recommendations

This comprehensive community profile reveals Lismore as a regional centre facing significant challenges while maintaining important strengths and opportunities. The analysis provides critical insights for rural land use strategy development that must balance multiple competing demands and constraints.

Key Strategic Priorities:

1. Balanced Development Approach: Rural land use strategy must balance rural residential development demand with agricultural land protection, ensuring sustainable growth that maintains the region's productive capacity while meeting community housing and lifestyle needs.
2. Resilience Focus: Climate risks and natural disaster exposure require rural land use planning that prioritises resilience, incorporating flood management, bushfire protection, and climate adaptation measures as fundamental planning principles.
3. Infrastructure Investment: Digital connectivity, transport accessibility, and service delivery infrastructure are critical enablers for successful rural development and agricultural modernisation.

4. Economic Integration: Rural land use strategy should actively support economic development opportunities, including agricultural value-adding, rural tourism, professional services, and innovative rural enterprises.
5. Community Safety and Social Inclusion: Addressing crime concerns and social disadvantage through thoughtful rural development that creates safe, connected communities with appropriate infrastructure and services.

The community profile demonstrates that Lismore's rural land use strategy must be sophisticated and multi-faceted, addressing complex interactions between demographic change, economic development, environmental constraints, and social needs. Success will require integrated planning that leverages the region's strengths while systematically addressing its challenges through strategic land use decisions and targeted infrastructure investment.

Future rural land use planning should prioritise sustainability, resilience, and community benefit while recognising the important role rural areas play in regional economic development, environmental management, and quality of life enhancement for the broader Lismore community.

13. CLUSTER ONE PROFILE: NIMBIN AND SURROUNDS

Executive Summary

The Nimbin and Surrounds Cluster (Cluster One) encompass the rural area surrounding Nimbin with a population of 1607 residents, representing one of Australia's most recognisable alternative lifestyle communities. The demographic data shows a balanced gender distribution (51.4% male, 48.6% female) and median age of 50 reflecting the area's diverse population that includes agricultural families, alternative lifestyle residents, and households attracted by rural amenity and distinctive community character.

The cluster occupies elevated hinterland areas north of Lismore with scenic rural landscapes and established transport connections that support both agricultural activities and cultural tourism. The area's evolution from traditional rural settlement to alternative lifestyle focus has created distinctive land use patterns integrating agricultural production, rural residential development, and significant cultural tourism infrastructure.

Nimbin's transformation began "in the 1970s with the Aquarius Festival and subsequent settlement by alternative lifestyle seekers", creating lasting community institutions and economic activities that continue to define community character while generating substantial tourism revenue.

Geographic Context and Cultural Landscape

Settlement Pattern and Community Character

Nimbin township serves as the cluster's commercial and cultural centre, maintaining historic rural township character while accommodating cultural tourism infrastructure and alternative lifestyle commercial activities. The township's compact scale and heritage architecture provide settings for cultural activities while serving traditional rural functions, including commercial services and community facilities.

Surrounding rural areas include diverse settlement patterns ranging from traditional agricultural homesteads to alternative lifestyle communities demonstrating innovative approaches to rural living, including cooperative land ownership, sustainable technology adoption, and integrated community development.

Rural residential development reflects "both conventional rural residential patterns and alternative approaches including smaller lot sizes with shared facilities, cooperative ownership arrangements, and sustainable development practices."

Cultural Tourism Infrastructure and Economic Impact

The cluster's cultural reputation attracts significant domestic and international tourism, generating substantial economic activity. The desktop review identifies tourism as creating "substantial economic activity, including accommodation, food services, retail, cultural events, and recreational activities that provide employment and business opportunities."

Cultural tourism infrastructure includes accommodation facilities, retail outlets serving visitors, cultural attractions, and event venues that highlight the area's alternative culture while providing employment opportunities and economic development for residents.

Tourism development creates both economic opportunities and challenges around managing visitor impacts, maintaining authentic cultural character, and ensuring tourism benefits local communities while preserving cultural values and community amenity.

Current Land Profile

- Suburb: Nimbin
- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 15km
- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 75km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 73km
- Area hectares: 7,288 ha
- Zoning by hectare:
    - RU1: 6,970 ha
    - RU5: 106 ha
    - R5: 212 ha
- Significant Farmland ~1135 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: ~130 ha

Demographic Profile and Community Dynamics

Population Composition and Cultural Identity

With a poluation of greater than 1600 residents, this cluster maintains sufficient community size to support diverse institutions and economic activities while enabling close social connections characteristic of alternative lifestyle communities. The balanced gender distribution diverse economic opportunities and social structures beyond male-dominated rural industries.

The demographic profile reflects both original alternative lifestyle migration from previous decades and ongoing attraction to households seeking alternative lifestyle opportunities, cultural expression, and rural amenity benefits that create community diversity and renewal opportunities.

Community cultural identity emphasises environmental sustainability, social cooperation, and cultural expression that influence community decision-making and development priorities while creating strong support for innovative approaches to rural planning and development.

Economic Activities and Alternative Enterprise

The cluster has developed distinctive approaches to rural economic development, integrating cultural activities, tourism services, alternative agriculture, and creative industries within unique rural economic systems. A considerable proportion of cluster residents participate in cultural and creative industries, including visual arts, performing arts, music, crafts, and cultural event production.

Tourism-related employment represents a significant component, including accommodation providers, food services, retail outlets, tour operators, and event organisers serving substantial visitor populations attracted by cultural reputation and activities.

Alternative agriculture emphasises sustainable production methods, direct marketing, and integration with cultural and educational activities that provide enhanced returns while demonstrating sustainable practices and supporting local food systems.

Economic Baseline

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 1 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	1,607	44,334

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 1 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Gender Male	% of population	51%	49%
Gender Female	% of population	49%	51%
Median Age	Yrs	50	44
Families	Number of families	315	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.70	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.50	0.60
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.00	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	798	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	691	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	627	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	64	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	280	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	133	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	541	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	553	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	274	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	719	21,135
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	1.70	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	11%	15%
GDP – *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 1.2X for Cluster 1. Cluster 1's multiplier is lower due to observed moderate labour participation, strong local enterprise culture, diverse occupational mix, and below-average household income uplift baseline economics.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	50	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	79,672	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	31,086	67,939

Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential land to be rezoned	130 ha (~321acres)
Increased residential population profile	482 people (assumes population concentration of 1.5 persons per acre)
Increased number of jobs	~226 jobs created (assumed 47% of residents are new residents to the LGA and cluster and would enter the local workforce or work from home)
Increased number of families	~120 families
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	Agriculture, tourism, science research, health and education
Reduction in unemployment	Unemployment reduces by ~5% in the cluster
Estimated locality GDP increase	~$15 million to ~$24 million per annum (assumes GDP per capita is within Cluster and LGA GDP profile per above)

Agricultural Profile and Alternative Systems

Sustainable Agriculture and Production Innovation

Agricultural activities demonstrate innovative approaches integrating environmental sustainability, cultural values, and economic viability through diverse systems serving as models for sustainable rural development. This cluster is home to significant organic and biodynamic agricultural operations that demonstrate sustainable production methods."

Organic agricultural systems achieve premium pricing while providing environmental benefits, including soil health improvement and biodiversity conservation, which align with community environmental values and demonstrate sustainable production approaches.

Permaculture design principles are widely applied, creating integrated agricultural systems combining food production, environmental management, and educational activities within sustainable land use approaches that optimise productivity while providing environmental services.

Community-Supported Agriculture and Local Food Systems

Community-supported agriculture models connect local production with local consumption through direct marketing and community distribution that supports local food security while providing viable markets for small-scale producers.

Local food systems include farmers markets, community gardens, food cooperatives, and direct sales arrangements that provide fresh, locally produced food while supporting agricultural operators and reducing transportation requirements.

Small-scale diversified production provides flexibility and risk management while integrating with tourism, education, and direct marketing. This enables adaptation to market conditions while maintaining productive land use and agricultural skills.

Land Management and Environmental Integration

Land management approaches integrate agricultural production with environmental conservation through innovative approaches demonstrating sustainable rural land use models. Many landholders practice regenerative land management approaches that focus on soil health improvement, native vegetation restoration, and integrated environmental management.

Environmental restoration includes native vegetation establishment, habitat restoration, and water quality protection that provide landscape-scale conservation outcomes while integrating with agricultural and residential land uses.

Water management emphasises conservation and recycling, demonstrating water stewardship while meeting agricultural and residential requirements during drought periods and seasonal variation.

Cultural Tourism and Economic Development

Tourism Infrastructure and Cultural Economy

As previously stated, cultural tourism represents a major economic driver for the Cluster, requiring sophisticated approaches to infrastructure development and visitor management that balance economic benefits with community wellbeing and the preservation of cultural authenticity.

The cluster provides diverse accommodation options, including conventional rural accommodation, alternative lifestyle accommodation experiences, and camping facilities serving different visitor segments while providing employment and business opportunities.

Cultural attractions include both permanent facilities and regular events that showcase the area's cultural heritage and ongoing cultural activities while providing visitor experiences and local employment opportunities.

Visitor Management and Community Integration

Tourism development requires balancing visitor access with the preservation of community character and infrastructure capacity, while ensuring that tourism benefits local communities rather than displacing residents or compromising community amenity.

Commercial development should integrate with community character and cultural values while providing viable business opportunities and contributing to community economic sustainability, environmental protection, and employment diversity.

It is worth noting that tourism development and visitation can affect community amenity through increased traffic, noise, crowding, and commercial development, requiring management strategies that maintain community character while enabling appropriate development.

Environmental Management and Innovation

Sustainable Technology and Community Leadership

The Nimbin and Surrounds Cluster has become a focus for sustainable technology adoption, including renewable energy, water conservation, waste management, and sustainable building approaches that demonstrate environmental innovation while reducing environmental impacts.

Sustainable technology adoption provides demonstration opportunities while providing practical environmental benefits and cost savings for residents and businesses.

Community Environmental Cooperation

Environmental management involves community cooperation and volunteer participation, building community environmental capacity while achieving environmental outcomes through collective action and shared resources.

Community conservation activities include revegetation projects, habitat restoration, and environmental education, engaging community members while achieving environmental outcomes that benefit both local environmental quality and regional objectives.

Waste management emphasises waste reduction, recycling, and resource recovery through community programs, reducing environmental impacts while providing cost savings and educational opportunities that build environmental awareness.

Strategic Rural Land Use Planning Implications

Cultural Heritage Protection and Tourism Balance

The unique cultural significance of this Cluster creates both opportunities and responsibilities for rural land use planning that must balance cultural heritage preservation with contemporary development needs while respecting and supporting community cultural values.

Planning approaches should recognise and protect significant cultural heritage while enabling appropriate development that supports community sustainability and cultural evolution.

Tourism development should support community cultural vitality and economic sustainability while managing visitor impacts and ensuring development reflects authentic community culture rather than artificial commercial representations.

Alternative Economic Development Integration

The cluster's innovative approaches to rural economic development provide models for alternative development that could inform planning for other rural communities seeking sustainable development alternatives.

Rural Land Use Strategy for this cluster must support cooperative enterprises and community-based economic development, enable innovative economic models while ensuring business viability and regulatory compliance.

Cultural and creative industry development requires appropriate zoning, infrastructure provision, and business development support that enables cultural enterprises to maintain community character and provide economic opportunities.

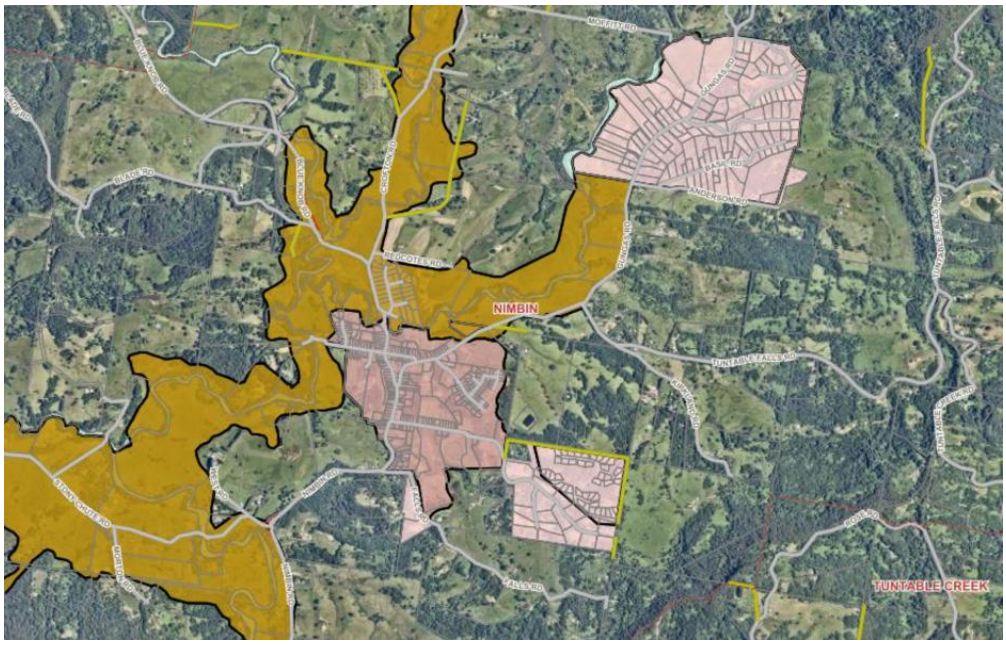
Infrastructure Innovation and Community Self-Reliance

The cluster's alternative approaches to infrastructure and service provision provide opportunities for innovative rural service delivery models, informing approaches for other rural communities facing similar challenges.

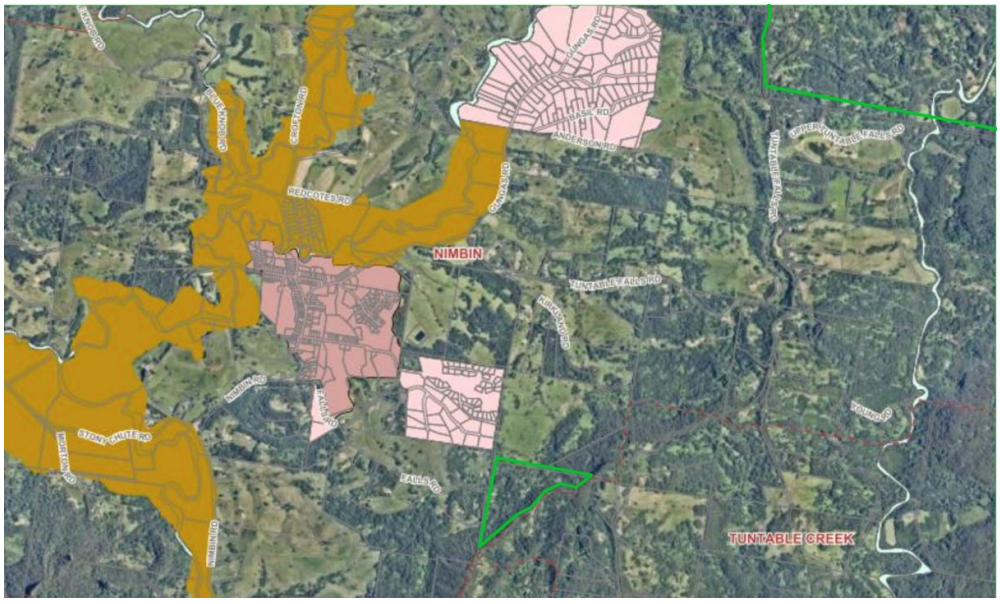
Planning should support alternative infrastructure technologies, including renewable energy, water recycling, and sustainable building approaches, enabling innovation while ensuring safety and environmental protection.

Community-based service delivery should be supported through community facilities, volunteer services, and cooperative service provision that build community capacity while providing essential services through community participation and resource sharing.

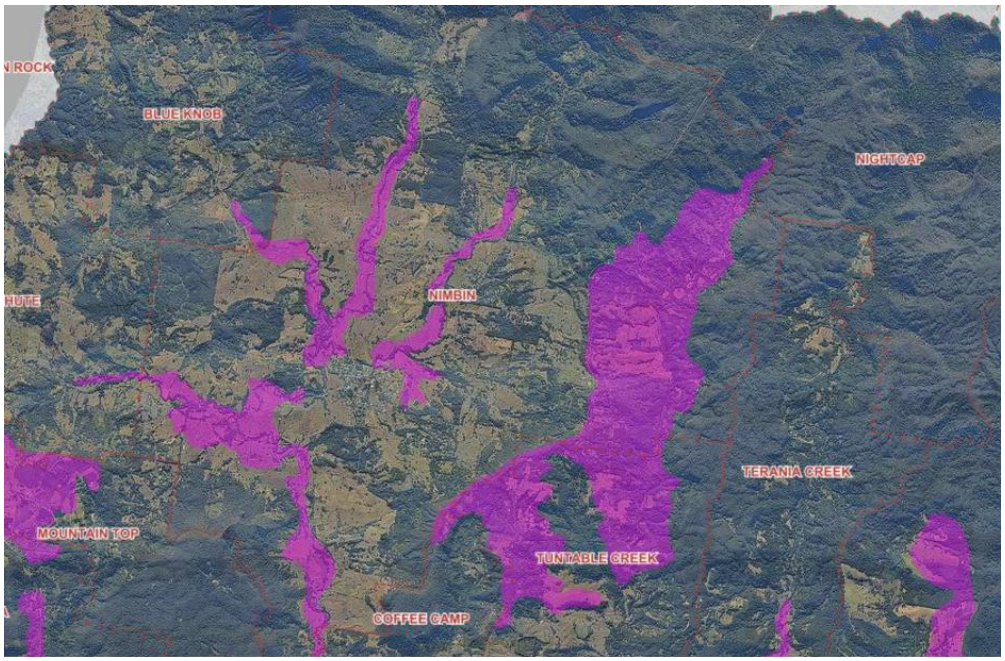
Cluster One Mapping and Commentary



Cluster One Zoning: R5, RU5 and River Land



Cluster One: Land Sharing



Cluster One: Significant Farmland (~1135 ha)



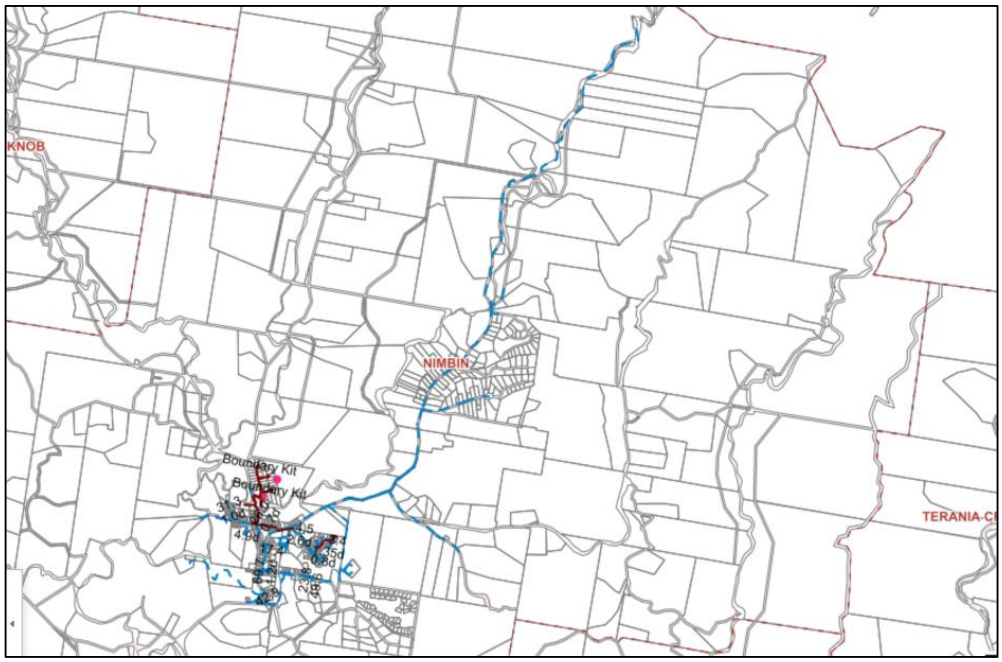
Cluster One: Potential Opportunity for Rezoning (~130 ha)



Cluster One: Flood Planning



Cluster One: Priority Habitats and Corridors



Cluster One: Water, Sewer, and Stormwater

Cluster One enjoys several benefits that extend beyond the cultural distinctiveness of the area. Nimbin has limited exposure to flooding and benefits from developed public infrastructure. The cluster is predominantly zoned for RU1 Primary Production, with RU5 Village and a few R5 Large Lot Residential supporting the population centre.

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The distinctive cultural and environmental character of Cluster One requires tailored planning responses:

- Cultural Heritage Protection: Safeguard both Indigenous heritage and countercultural assets through zoning, design guidelines, and community involvement.
- Alternative Economic Development: Enable small-scale enterprises, home-based businesses, and cooperative models through flexible zoning and regulatory innovation.
- Infrastructure Innovation: Support renewable energy, sustainable water systems, and community-based service delivery as legitimate alternatives to conventional infrastructure.
- Tourism Balance: Develop visitor management strategies that align with community values and environmental limits.
- Community Renewal: Address demographic challenges by enabling affordable and alternative housing, attracting younger residents, and supporting intergenerational knowledge transfer.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Demographic Renewal – Develop affordable, cooperative, and sustainable housing to attract younger households; create employment pathways in agriculture, tourism, and creative industries.
2. Cultural and Heritage Integration – Recognise and protect both Indigenous cultural values and alternative lifestyle heritage; embed community voices in planning and tourism.
3. Economic Diversification – Support sustainable agriculture, artisan production, wellness and creative industries, and professional services leveraging local expertise.
4. Infrastructure and Digital Connectivity – Invest in rural broadband and digital inclusion; support climate-resilient transport and community-based utilities.

5. Environmental Leadership – Expand sustainability demonstration projects, regenerative agriculture, and disaster preparedness initiatives.
6. Regional Partnerships – Strengthen links with Lismore and Northern Rivers regional planning to secure service integration, research collaboration, and funding support.

Implementation Framework

- Community Participation: Planning and implementation must be community-driven, using consensus-based approaches and respecting cultural traditions.
- Regulatory Innovation: Flexible zoning and building regulations that accommodate sustainable and alternative practices.
- Regional Coordination: Alignment with Lismore LGA and Northern Rivers strategies to ensure resource allocation and infrastructure investment.
- Monitoring and Adaptation: Use indicators of cultural vitality, sustainability outcomes, and economic diversity to guide adaptive planning.
- Knowledge Sharing: Document and disseminate lessons from Cluster One as models for sustainable rural development elsewhere in Australia.

14. CLUSTER TWO PROFILE: CLUNES AND ELTHAM

Executive Summary

Cluster Two encompasses three rural communities—Clunes, Eltham, and Bexhill—with a combined population of 1,424 residents. The demographic data shows a slight female majority (50.9% female, 49.1% male), reflecting mixed agricultural and rural residential development within accessible rural settings.

Clunes, serves as the gateway to the Lismore LGA's rural villages. With its strategic location between Lismore and Byron Bay, Clunes is placed within the growth corridor shaped by the rapid expansion of Byron Shire. Byron Shire has experienced sustained population growth and escalating housing demand, driven by lifestyle migration, tourism-related economic activity, and its national profile as a cultural and coastal destination.

Clunes is positioned to absorb a portion of the economic and demographic spillover from Byron's growth. Increased commuter patterns, service demand, and small business opportunities may emerge as Byron workers and families relocate inland in pursuit of lower home prices and improved quality of life. While this creates opportunities for local business development, it also risks altering Clunes's social fabric, intensifying infrastructure demand, and pressuring traditional rural land use patterns.

Byron's limited land availability and high property prices create displacement effects, with prospective residents and investors increasingly seeking more affordable alternatives in surrounding communities. This dynamic intensifies rural residential development pressure, as Clunes offers less expensive, flood-free land, and proximity to both Lismore's services and Byron's coastal economy.

Given these pressures, it is important to acknowledge that Clunes is home to significant horticulture and biodiversity activity. Quality soils, topography, and geography all work to its benefit. Clunes can benefit from population and economic growth, while protecting its proven capacity for agricultural production and biodiversity.

Critically, Clunes is at a pivotal juncture in its planning. Master planning for the community is currently being undertaken by Council (expected to be completed late 2025), which includes consideration of further urban expansion.

Eltham and Bexhill are characterised by extensive cropping and grazing activity, with limited horticulture in both. Flooding is an issue, focusing land use on appropriate agricultural activity, with development focused on existing settlements with favourable topographic and geographic features.

Given the strategic value of the rail trail for this Cluster, Eltham and Bexhill provide a unique opportunity for targeted development in support of tourism. taking advantage of the area's natural features and assets.

Geographic Context and Byron Growth Pressure

Community Distribution and Settlement Character

Clunes, with 564 residents and balanced demographics (50.1% male, 49.7% female), serves as the cluster's primary settlement and rural service centre. The community supports traditional village functions while experiencing increasing development interest from Byron-connected households seeking affordable rural lifestyle options.

Eltham with 322 residents, (46.4% male, 53.6% female) and Bexhill with 528 residents (49.7% male, 50.3% female) exhibit typical characteristics associated with rural lifestyles and land use consistent with the Cluster's geography and topology.

Byron Spillover Impacts

Byron Shire's sustained population growth, driven by lifestyle migration and tourism economic activity, has created displacement effects extending beyond shire boundaries. Limited Byron land availability and escalating property prices push residents and investors toward Cluster Two's affordable, flood-free elevated land with accessibility to both Lismore services and Byron's coastal economy.

This spillover dynamic intensifies rural residential development pressure while creating economic opportunities through increased demand for local services and small business development. However, rapid property value increases may price out local families, while development pressure could overwhelm infrastructure designed for smaller rural populations.

Current Land Profile

- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 18.1km
- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 27.5km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 50km
- Area hectares: 4,984ha
- Zoning by hectare:
    - RU1: 4,822 ha
    - RU5: 101 ha
    - R5: 45 ha
- Significant Farmland: ~4,470 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: ~190 ha

Economic Characteristics

Economic Participation and Byron Connections

The cluster's demographic profile reflects diverse employment, including traditional rural occupations, local services, and increasing numbers of Byron-connected households maintaining economic links to coastal employment while benefiting from inland housing costs.

Commuter patterns to Byron Bay create both opportunities for local business development and infrastructure challenges from increased transport demands on rural road networks designed for traditional rural traffic volumes.

Agricultural Production and Tourism

Given the rural/agricultural nature of Eltham and Bexhill, it is unlikely that the potential growth of Clunes will have a significant impact on these communities in the near term. However, there will be an opportunity for these communities to benefit from the opportunities that the Rail Trail and other tourism activities provide.

Economic Baseline

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 2 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	1,767	44,334

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 2 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Gender Male	% of population	50%	49%
Gender Female	% of population	50%	51%
Median Age	Yrs	44	44
Families	Number of families	504	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.77	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.72	0.60
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.64	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	1,833	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	688	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	613	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	75	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	439	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	139	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	940	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	383	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	121	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	1,037	21,135
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	2.26	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	16%	15%
GDP – *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 1.9X for Cluster 2. Cluster 2's multiplier is higher due to observed strong bachelor-qualified workforce, robust remote-work capability, and high household incomes increase productivity potential.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	178	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	289,759	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	100,522	67,939

Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential Land to Be Rezoned	190 ha (~469 acres)
Increased population profile	704 people (assumes population concentration of 1.5 persons per acre)
Increased number of jobs	~331 jobs created (assumes 47% of residents are new residents to the LGA and cluster and would enter the local workforce or work from home)
Increased number of families	~175 families
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	Agriculture, construction, tourism, science research, health and education
Reduction in unemployment	Unemployment reduces by ~3% in the cluster
Estimated locality GDP increase	~$25.2 million to ~$36.3 million per annum (assumes GDP per capita is within Cluster and LGA GDP profile per above)

Agricultural Profile and Mixed Land Use

Agricultural Activities and Rural Residential Integration

Agricultural activities include beef cattle grazing, small-scale horticulture, and hobby farming integrated with rural residential development. These agricultural systems emphasise sustainable, small-scale, and environmentally integrated production systems adapted to mixed rural character.

Rural residential properties maintain small-scale agricultural activities that contribute to rural character while providing lifestyle benefits for residents, including those relocating from Byron Shire seeking rural amenities at more affordable costs.

Land Use Transitions Under Development Pressure

Byron spillover effects accelerate land use transitions from agricultural to rural residential development, requiring careful management to preserve productive agricultural areas while accommodating legitimate housing demand and maintaining rural landscape character.

Development pressure concentrates on elevated areas with landscape amenity and flood immunity, creating natural zones for rural residential development while enabling agricultural activities to continue in suitable valley areas.

Housing and Infrastructure Challenges

Housing Demand and Affordability Pressures

Byron spillover creates intense housing demand that drives property values beyond traditional rural market levels, affecting both local families seeking housing and essential workers required for community services and agricultural operations.

Development patterns must balance increased housing demand with rural character preservation, infrastructure capacity, and community affordability while managing the pace of change to enable successful community integration.

Infrastructure Requirements and Capacity

Increased development intensity from Byron connections requires infrastructure upgrades, including transport networks handling commuter traffic, digital connectivity supporting remote work arrangements, and water/wastewater systems designed for higher development density.

The small community scale creates challenges in funding infrastructure upgrades, while the pace of Byron-driven demand may outstrip traditional rural infrastructure planning and investment cycles.

Economic Development and Community Sustainability

Byron Economic Integration Opportunities

Economic development opportunities include rural services, tourism accommodation, and small businesses serving both local residents and Byron-connected households. Increased disposable income from Byron spillover households can support local businesses while creating employment opportunities.

However, economic development must balance external opportunities with community needs, ensuring residents benefit from growth while maintaining rural business character and community accessibility.

Community Character and Integration Challenges

Managing Byron spillover requires strategies that welcome new residents while preserving established community character and ensuring successful integration into rural community structures and values.

Community sustainability depends on balancing growth benefits with character preservation, infrastructure adequacy, and social cohesion across diverse household types with varying rural lifestyle expectations and economic connections.

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The Byron Shire spillover effects and small community scale of Cluster Two require targeted planning responses:

- Byron Growth Management: Manage development spillover from Byron Shire through strategic location guidance, infrastructure capacity planning, and community character protection that accommodates legitimate growth while preserving rural settlement patterns.
- Small Community Service Delivery: Optimise service provision across two small communities through shared facilities, regional cooperation, and innovative delivery models that manage increased demand from external growth pressure within limited rural budgets.
- Affordable Housing Protection: Maintain housing accessibility for local families and essential workers facing property value increases from Byron spillover through community housing, shared equity arrangements, and development contribution strategies.
- Infrastructure Capacity Building: Upgrade digital connectivity for remote work, transport networks for commuter traffic, and community services to handle increased development intensity while maintaining rural character and service quality.
- Rural-Urban Interface Management: Balance rural lifestyle benefits with increased urban connectivity demands from Byron-connected residents while ensuring development serves both existing and new community members.

Cluster Two Mapping and Commentary



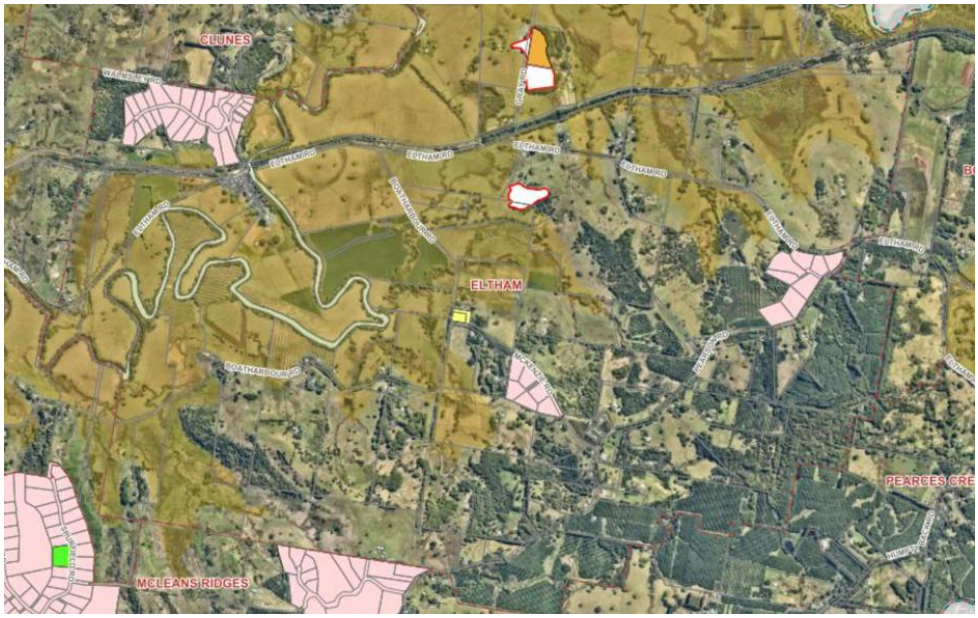
Cluster Two Zoning: R5, RU5 and River Land



Cluster Two Zoning (Clunes): R5, RU5 and River Land



Cluster Two: Potential Opportunity for Rezoning (~39 ha)



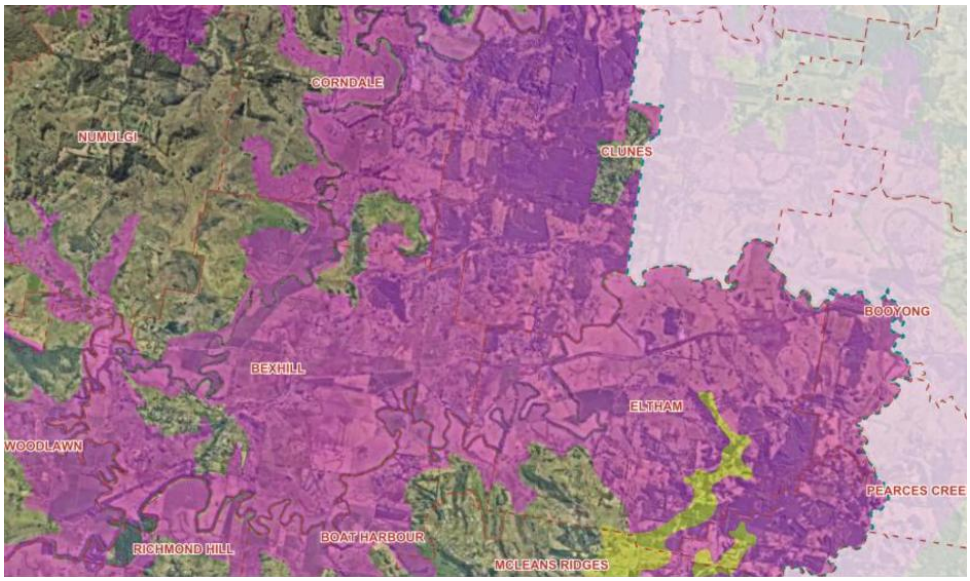
Cluster Two Zoning (Eltham): R5, RU5 and River Land



Cluster Two Zoning (Bexhill): R5, RU5 and River Land



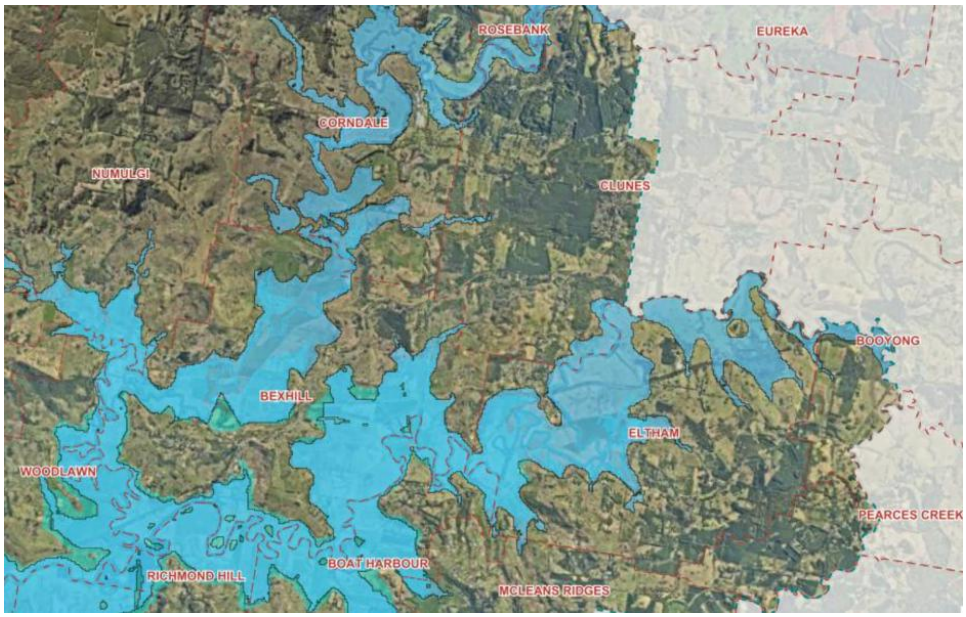
Cluster Two (Bexhill): Example of a Potential Tourism Asset on the Rail Trail and a Catalyst for Growth



Cluster Two: Significant Farmland (~4,470 ha)



Clunes Agricultural Production Areas and Priority Habitats



Cluster Two: Flood Planning


Clunes Septic

This cluster, on the eastern boundary of the LGA, is best understood in terms of geography, agriculture and the growing demand for housing that is more affordable than in Byron Shire. Clunes is zoned mostly for RU1 Primary Production, RU5 Village and a few R5 Large Lot Residential. Eltham requires flood planning consideration and is predominantly zoned for RU1 Primary Production, including two deferred matters and R5 Large Lot Residential.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Regional Growth Coordination – Establish partnerships with Byron Shire and Lismore LGA to manage cross-boundary development impacts, coordinate infrastructure investment, and ensure growth benefits are distributed equitably across affected communities.

2. Strategic Development Location – Direct Byron spillover development to appropriate elevated areas in both Clunes and Eltham while protecting agricultural land and maintaining rural settlement density that supports community institutions.
3. Infrastructure Investment Prioritisation – Focus on reliable access to electricity and improving digital connectivity for remote work arrangements, transport upgrades for increased commuter traffic, and water/wastewater systems designed for higher development density.
4. Community Character Preservation – Implement development controls, design guidelines, and community integration programs that welcome new residents while maintaining established rural community values and social structures.
5. Economic Development Balance – Capture economic benefits from Byron connections through local business development while ensuring existing residents benefit from growth, and rural business character is maintained.
6. Diverse Housing Innovation – Develop community housing models, shared equity arrangements, and development contribution systems that maintain housing options for local families despite external property value pressures.

Implementation Framework

- Community-Centered Growth Management: Planning must balance external development pressures with community sustainability through engagement processes that involve existing residents in growth management decisions while facilitating the successful integration of new residents.
- Regional Impact Coordination: Align with Byron Shire growth management strategies and Lismore LGA planning to ensure Cluster Two's role in regional development serves both local community needs and broader growth accommodation requirements.
- Adaptive Infrastructure Planning: Monitor development intensity, infrastructure capacity, and community character indicators to guide ongoing planning adjustments and investment priorities in response to changing Byron spillover patterns.
- Small Community Resource Optimisation: Utilise shared services, regional partnerships, and innovative delivery models that enable small communities to manage increased service demand while maintaining community identity and rural character.
- Growth Impact Monitoring: Track community sustainability, housing affordability, infrastructure adequacy, and social cohesion measures to ensure Byron spillover effects contribute positively to long-term community viability rather than overwhelming rural community capacity.

15. CLUSTER THREE PROFILE: JIGGI, ROCK VALLEY, LARNOOK

Executive Summary

Cluster Three encompasses three communities—Jiggi, Rock Valley, and Larnook—with a combined population of 1,026 residents. The demographic data shows a slight female majority (51.1% female, 48.9% male), distinguishing this cluster from traditional agricultural-focused areas and reflecting its attraction to households seeking environmental amenity and lifestyle opportunities.

The cluster occupies elevated hinterland areas characterised by extensive native vegetation coverage and steep terrain that limits intensive agricultural development while providing exceptional landscape quality and conservation values. The desktop review identifies this area as having "become a testing ground for emerging agricultural approaches including regenerative agriculture, permaculture systems, agroforestry, and integrated agricultural-environmental management."

The 2022 floods had varied impacts across the cluster, with some creek flats experiencing effects, land slips, and considerable damage to roads. This topographic diversity creates natural zones for different land uses and development approaches while maintaining the cluster's reputation as a focus for environmental stewardship and sustainable rural development.

Geographic Context and Environmental Significance

Community Distribution and Landscape Character

Jiggi, with 527 residents and the cluster's largest population, serves as the primary settlement node with established rural residential development demonstrating successful integration of lifestyle settlement with environmental protection. The community's demographic balance (51.4% female, 48.6% male) reflects diverse economic activities beyond traditional agricultural employment.

Rock Valley (328 residents, 54.0% female, 46.0% male) occupies the most environmentally constrained terrain with extensive native vegetation and steep slopes. The higher female proportion and demographic characteristics indicate attraction to households prioritising environmental values and targeted lifestyle approaches.

Larnook (206 residents, 52.0% female, 48.0% male) bridges environmental focus with traditional rural activities, supporting mixed agricultural operations and conservation-focused land management within environmentally significant landscapes.

Topographic Constraints and Environmental Assets

The cluster's elevated position and extensive native vegetation create both development constraints and exceptional environmental values. The area supports "exceptionally high levels of native vegetation coverage, estimated at 60-80% across much of the area compared to regional averages of 10-20%.

Steep terrain throughout much of the cluster constrains intensive agricultural development while providing landscape amenity, environmental values, and natural hazard protection. This topography has preserved environmental values while limiting development to appropriate locations.

The extensive environmental assets include remnant rainforest, threatened ecological communities, and wildlife habitat that provide both local and regional environmental benefits while influencing community identity and land management practices.

Current Land Profile

- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 22.7km
- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 66.9km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 132 km
- Area hectares: 13,168 ha
- Zoning by hectare:
    - RU1: 13,168 ha
- Significant Farmland: ~2,074 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: 0 ha

Demographic Profile and Community Values

Population Characteristics and Targeted Lifestyle Focus

The combined population of 1,026 residents maintains sufficient community size for diverse institutions while enabling the close social connections characteristic of lifestyle-focused communities. The female majority across all communities (ranging from 48.6% to 54.0%) reflects the area's attraction to households seeking environmental lifestyle benefits rather than male-dominated agricultural or industrial employment.

Age structure reflects both original lifestyle migration from previous decades and ongoing attraction to diverse age groups seeking environmental amenity and community-oriented rural living. The demographic composition indicates successful retention of residents across different life stages.

Community values emphasise environmental sustainability, social cooperation, cultural expression, and alternative economic models that influence community decision-making, development priorities, and approaches to land use planning.

Economic Participation and Alternative Enterprise

The cluster has developed distinctive approaches to rural economic development that integrate environmental stewardship with viable economic activities. The cluster exhibits growth opportunities for economic activities based on environmental services provision, including vegetation restoration, environmental monitoring, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation."

Employment patterns emphasise alternative agriculture, environmental services, creative industries, and remote professional work that utilise rural location benefits while maintaining environmental values and community connections.

Home-based businesses and rural enterprises provide economic opportunities that align with community environmental values while enabling rural residents to access diverse employment opportunities without compromising environmental commitments or community participation.

Economic Baseline

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 3 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	1,030	44,334
Gender Male	% of population	51%	49%

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 3 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Gender Female	% of population	48%	51%
Median Age	Years	49	44
Families	Number of families	300	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.76	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.60	0.60
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.36	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	1,179	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	476	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	411	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	65	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	188	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	95	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	507	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	278	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	70	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	601	21,135
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	1.98	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	14%	15%
GDP - *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 1.2X for Cluster 3. Cluster 3's multiplier is lower due to a lower skilled workforce share, remote work capability, steady household incomes, and moderate social participation drive indirect productivity.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	48	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	117,722	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	46,975	67,939

Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential Land to Be Rezoned	0 ha

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Increased population profile	N/A
Increased number of jobs	N/A
Increased number of families	N/A
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	N/A
Reduction in unemployment	N/A
Estimated locality GDP increase	N/A

Agricultural Profile and Environmental Integration

Alternative Agricultural Systems

Agricultural activities across the cluster emphasise sustainable, small-scale, and environmentally integrated production systems rather than intensive conventional agriculture. These activities include permaculture food production, native plant cultivation, sustainable timber management, and specialty crop production.

Livestock grazing represents the predominant agricultural land use, though typically extensive and integrated with environmental management objectives. These systems often achieve lower per-hectare productivity than intensive systems but provide multiple benefits, including environmental services and landscape management.

The cluster has become a focus for emerging agricultural approaches, including regenerative agriculture, permaculture, and integrated systems that combine production with conservation outcomes. These approaches often appeal to lifestyle-oriented landholders seeking to integrate productive land use with environmental values.

Environmental Stewardship and Conservation

Many properties include areas managed voluntarily for environmental conservation that exceed regulatory requirements to achieve environmental outcomes contributing to regional conservation objectives. These conservation activities include native vegetation restoration, weed control and ecosystem rehabilitation, wildlife habitat enhancement, and water quality protection.

Agricultural systems increasingly integrate environmental management through agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and biodiversity farming that achieve both productive and environmental outcomes. These integrated systems provide enhanced environmental benefits while maintaining economic viability through diversified income streams.

Community-based environmental management involves cooperation across multiple properties for landscape-scale outcomes, including coordinated weed control, wildlife corridor management, and watershed protection that extend beyond individual property boundaries.

Rural Settlement and Housing Development

Low-Density Environmental Integration

Rural residential development throughout the cluster is characterised by generous lot sizes, extensive native vegetation retention, and building design that integrates with natural landscape features. Typical lot sizes range from 2-20 hectares, providing adequate space for environmental protection while maintaining landscape character.

Building placement and design typically respond to topographic features, vegetation patterns, and environmental constraints while capturing views and amenity benefits. This approach maintains rural character while providing lifestyle rewards that attract residents.

The cluster has become a focus for alternative housing approaches, including sustainable design, alternative materials, renewable energy systems, and cooperative housing arrangements that reflect community environmental values and self-reliance preferences.

Infrastructure and Service Challenges

The combination of environmental constraints, low population density, and community preferences for self-reliance creates distinctive infrastructure challenges requiring innovative approaches. Transport access relies on rural roads that may be steep or unsealed, affecting both daily transportation and emergency service provision.

Water supply and wastewater management typically rely on on-site systems, including rainwater harvesting and on-site treatment that must function within environmental constraints while providing adequate service reliability. High rainfall provides good rainwater harvesting opportunities, though storage requirements may be substantial.

Many properties utilise renewable energy systems, including solar, micro-hydro, or wind power, that provide energy independence while reducing environmental impacts. Communications infrastructure may rely on satellite systems that provide connectivity while avoiding environmental impacts from extensive infrastructure.

Economic Development and Innovation

Environmental Economy Development

The cluster's environmental assets and community expertise provide foundations for environmental economic development, including eco-tourism, environmental education, and environmental services that utilise local environmental knowledge while providing economic opportunities.

Environmental restoration activities employ native vegetation establishment, ecosystem rehabilitation, and wildlife habitat enhancement that serve both local clients and broader regional environmental objectives while building local environmental expertise.

Eco-tourism opportunities include guided nature walks and wildlife observation, environmental education programs for schools and community groups, and overnight accommodation that provide rural and environmental experiences.

Creative Industries and Remote Work

The cluster supports residents engaged in creative industries, including visual arts, crafts, music, and design, that benefit from rural inspiration, affordable studio space, and community support while accessing broader markets through digital connectivity.

Digital connectivity improvements have enabled some residents to provide professional services to external clients while maintaining rural residence and community participation. Remote work opportunities enable residents to access diverse employment while contributing to local community sustainability.

Educational and training services utilise local expertise in environmental management, sustainable living, and community development while providing income generation and community capacity building opportunities.

Cooperative and Community-Based Models
The cluster has developed cooperative approaches to economic activities, including shared equipment, cooperative marketing, and joint ventures that enable smaller operators to access resources and markets that are not viable individually.

Community-supported enterprises operate with community involvement that enables economic activities providing community benefits while maintaining economic viability through community participation and investment.

Environmental Management and Sustainability

Landscape-Scale Conservation
Environmental management operates at landscape scales extending beyond individual properties to encompass ecosystem management, habitat connectivity, and watershed protection. Many properties participate in habitat connectivity management that maintains vegetation connections while enabling wildlife movement across the landscape.

The cluster evidence watershed protection and water quality management approaches that benefit both local communities and downstream water users while supporting aquatic ecosystems and riparian vegetation."
Fire management requires coordinated community approaches balancing environmental protection, community safety, and agricultural activities while recognising the ecological role of fire in native ecosystem management.

Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience
The cluster's environmental focus and community cooperation traditions provide foundations for climate adaptation and resilience building. Environmental management activities often incorporate climate adaptation, including ecosystem resilience building, water security enhancement, and natural hazard risk reduction.

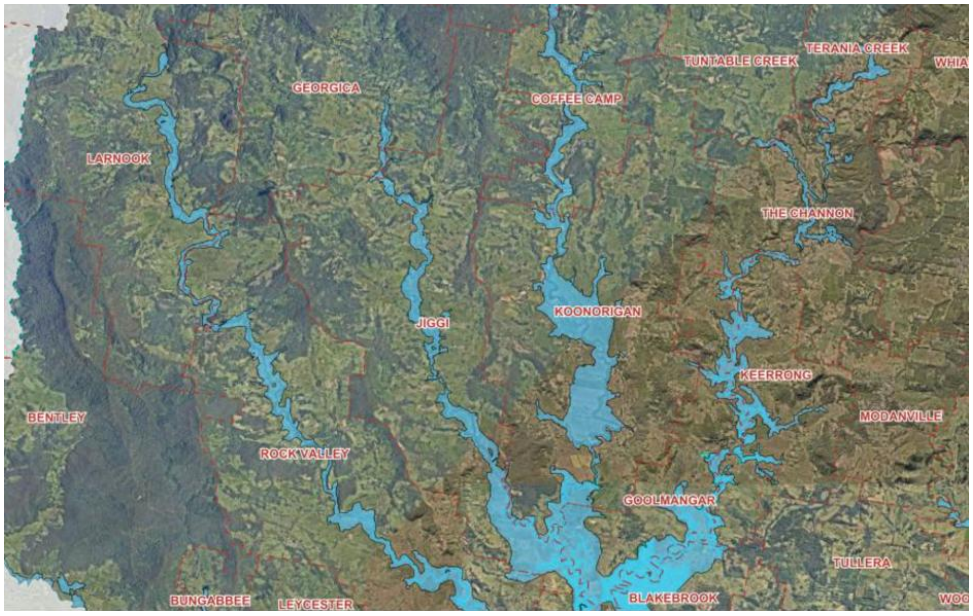
Community preparedness activities include emergency response planning, resource sharing networks, community infrastructure providing emergency services, and local food production that reduces dependence on external supply systems.

Alternative technology adoption includes renewable energy systems providing energy independence, water conservation systems enhancing water security, and waste minimisation reducing environmental impacts while building community self-reliance.

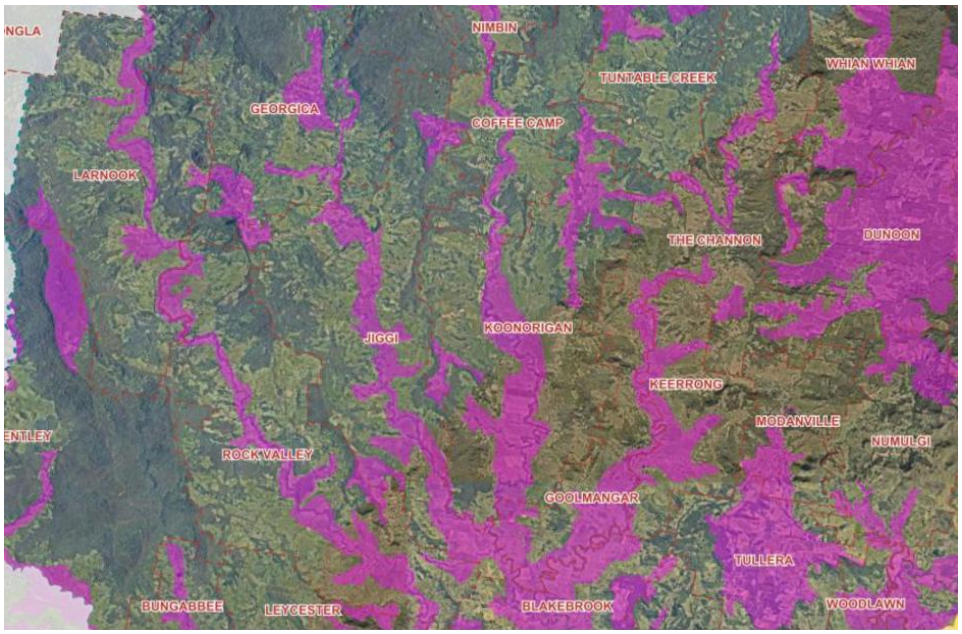
Cluster Three Mapping and Commentary



Cluster Three Zoning: RU1



Cluster Three: Flood Planning



Cluster Three: Significant Farmland (~2,074 ha)



Cluster Three: Priority Habitats and Corridors

Cluster Three is largely defined by its topography, characterised by its steep terrain and natural vegetation. Agricultural activities are mostly reserved for the low-lying areas that are prone to flooding. This cluster is predominantly zoned for RU1 Primary Production.

Strategic Planning Implications

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The environmental significance and lifestyle-oriented character of Cluster Three require specialised planning responses:

- Environmental Asset Protection: Preserve the 60-80% native vegetation coverage through conservation zoning, biodiversity overlays, and stewardship incentives that recognise private environmental contributions.
- Regenerative Agriculture Support: Enable permaculture, organic, and agroforestry systems through flexible agricultural zoning that accommodates alternative production methods and educational activities.
- Alternative Infrastructure Innovation: Consider off-grid renewable energy, rainwater harvesting, and decentralised wastewater systems as legitimate alternatives to conventional infrastructure networks.
- Conservation Economy Development: Foster environmental services, eco-tourism, and restoration enterprises through appropriate commercial zoning and business development frameworks.
- Community Self-Reliance: Strengthen cooperative service delivery, shared infrastructure, and local exchange systems that build community resilience and reduce external dependencies.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Environmental Leadership – Expand payment for ecosystem services programs and biodiversity conservation incentives that reward environmental stewardship.
2. Alternative Agriculture Integration – Support regenerative farming demonstration sites, organic certification pathways, and direct marketing infrastructure for sustainable producers.
3. Infrastructure Resilience – Invest in community-scale renewable energy, water security systems, and emergency preparedness that align with environmental values.
4. Conservation Economy – Develop eco-tourism infrastructure, environmental education facilities, and restoration service enterprises that employ while achieving conservation outcomes.
5. Community Capacity Building – Support volunteer training, cooperative governance, and skills development that strengthen community self-reliance and environmental management capacity.
6. Regional Environmental Coordination – Strengthen partnerships with regional conservation organisations, research institutions, and government agencies to secure funding and technical support for landscape-scale environmental management.

Implementation Framework

- Community-Led Environmental Management: Planning must utilise local environmental expertise and community commitment to conservation outcomes through participatory approaches.
- Performance-Based Conservation: Flexible environmental controls that focus on achieving conservation outcomes rather than prescriptive management requirements.
- Landscape-Scale Coordination: Alignment with regional environmental strategies to ensure local conservation efforts contribute to broader ecosystem management objectives.
- Adaptive Environmental Management: Use ecological indicators, community capacity measures, and economic sustainability metrics to guide ongoing plan refinement.
- Environmental Innovation Demonstration: Document and share sustainable rural development models from Cluster Three as examples for other environmentally significant rural areas.

16. CLUSTER FOUR PROFILE: CANIABA AND SURROUNDS

Executive Summary

Cluster Four represents the most geographically complex rural area within the Lismore LGA, encompassing nine distinct communities, including Caniaba, Tuncester, Fernside, McKees Hill, South Gundurimba, Leycester, Blakebrook, and Booerie Creek, with a combined population of 1,611 residents. The demographic data shows a slight female majority (50.5% female, 49.5% male) and the largest population among all clusters, reflecting the area's mixed agricultural and rural residential character.

The cluster demonstrates significant diversity across its constituent communities, from traditional agricultural areas to established rural residential developments. The desktop review identifies this area as requiring "the most sophisticated planning approaches among all clusters" due to its geographic extent, community diversity, and complex land use patterns that combine agricultural production, lifestyle settlement, and rural services.

The varied topography and community characteristics across the cluster create opportunities for differentiated planning approaches while requiring coordinated infrastructure provision and service delivery across distributed populations and diverse settlement types.

Geographic Context and Community Diversity

Community Distribution and Characteristics

The cluster's nine communities exhibit distinct demographic profiles reflecting different development patterns and economic functions. Caniaba serves as the central community, while Tuncester has evolved toward a rural residential character with lifestyle-oriented development.

The remaining communities—Fernside, McKees Hill, South Gundurimba, Leycester, Blakebrook, and Booerie Creek—represent smaller rural settlements with varied characteristics reflecting their geographic positions, agricultural heritage, and development patterns over recent decades.

The cluster includes several significant valley systems with deep, fertile alluvial soils that represent some of the highest quality agricultural land in the Lismore LGA, alongside elevated areas suitable for rural residential development.

Topographic Diversity and Land Use Implications

The cluster's extensive geography creates significant variation in land capability, development suitability, and environmental constraints. Valley systems provide prime agricultural land supporting intensive agricultural systems, while elevated areas offer landscape amenity and flood immunity preferred for rural residential development.

The 2022 floods affected parts of the cluster differently, with lower-lying agricultural areas experiencing impacts while elevated areas remained largely unaffected. This experience reinforced the understanding of appropriate land use location based on topographic constraints and natural hazard exposure.

The topographic diversity enables natural differentiation of land uses based on capability and constraints, supporting both agricultural protection in suitable areas and rural residential development where appropriate.

Current Land Profile

- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 12.1 km

- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 56.6 km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 185 km
- Area hectares: 18,463 ha
- Zoning by hectare:
    - RU1: 18,382 ha
    - RU5: 73 ha
    - Other (non residential): 9 ha
- Significant Farmland: ~ 11,998 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: ~87 ha

Demographic Profile and Economic Characteristics

Population Structure and Community Composition

With 1,611 residents distributed across nine communities, Cluster Four contains the largest population among all clusters while maintaining rural settlement density and character. The slight female majority (50.5%) approaches regional population patterns more closely than agricultural-dominated clusters, reflecting economic diversity.

The total population provides sufficient scale to support local services, including schools, community facilities, and local businesses, while creating challenges for coordinated service delivery across the extensive geographic area and multiple community nodes.

Community sizes range from larger settlements like Caniaba and Tuncester to smaller rural communities, creating different infrastructure requirements and service delivery approaches while maintaining shared rural identity and planning challenges.

Economic Diversity and Employment

Cluster Four has the most diverse rural economy among all clusters, with employment extending beyond traditional agricultural activities to include professional services, rural businesses, and commuter households accessing urban employment.

Agricultural employment remains significant, though proportionally lower than purely agricultural clusters, reflecting the area's mixed character that supports diverse economic activities while maintaining agricultural production and rural landscape character.

Economic diversity provides community resilience while creating complex planning requirements around supporting different economic activities within integrated rural landscapes that serve both agricultural and residential functions.

Agricultural Profile and Mixed Land Use

Agricultural Systems and Production

Agricultural activities across the cluster include traditional livestock operations, horticultural enterprises, and emerging alternative agricultural systems. Dairy and beef cattle operations continue to represent the foundation of agricultural activity across much of Cluster Four.

Dairy operations concentrate in areas with suitable soils and infrastructure, particularly around valley systems with reliable water access. Beef cattle operations utilise both intensive and extensive systems depending on property characteristics and management approaches.

The cluster has experienced growth in horticultural activities, including subtropical fruit production, market gardens, and specialty crops that take advantage of diverse microclimates and proximity to regional markets.

Agricultural Capability and Land Protection
Approximately 8,000-10,000 hectares of prime agricultural land within the cluster, representing finite and irreplaceable resources that warrant protection from inappropriate development. These areas concentrate in valley systems with deep, fertile soils suitable for intensive agricultural systems.

The majority of agricultural land falls into moderate capability categories suitable for agricultural use, but with limitations that make extensive rather than intensive systems more appropriate. These areas total approximately 12,000-15,000 hectares and provide opportunities for diverse agricultural systems.

Current fragmentation patterns show that approximately 70% of properties are smaller than the 40-hectare minimum agricultural lot size, though larger agricultural holdings continue to occupy substantial areas, indicating that agricultural landscape scale has been maintained despite subdivision pressure.

Rural Residential Development and Housing

Settlement Patterns and Development Pressure
The cluster has experienced more extensive rural residential development than agricultural-focused clusters, reflecting attractiveness for lifestyle development and proximity to transport corridors. Fragmentation has been most intensive in areas with attractive landscapes, good access, and separation from intensive agricultural activities.

Tuncester demonstrates successful rural residential development that provides housing options while maintaining landscape character. Other communities show varying degrees of lifestyle development integrated with continuing agricultural activities.

Development pressure continues due to rural amenities, accessibility to urban services, and relative affordability compared to urban alternatives. This demand requires management to ensure development supports community sustainability while preserving agricultural land and rural character.

Housing Diversity and Community Integration
Housing types range from traditional farmhouses to agricultural properties to contemporary rural residential development on lifestyle blocks. Community diversity supports varied housing needs while requiring infrastructure provision and community services adapted to different settlement densities and household types.

The integration of agricultural and residential land uses creates both opportunities for rural economic diversity and challenges around managing potential conflicts between different land use types and community expectations.

Community integration requires balancing diverse household needs, development preferences, and rural lifestyle expectations while maintaining rural character and agricultural viability across mixed-use rural landscapes.

Infrastructure and Service Provision

Infrastructure Challenges and Opportunities

The extensive geography and diverse settlement patterns create complex infrastructure requirements. The most challenging service provision is due to geographic spread and varied settlement densities, requiring sophisticated approaches to infrastructure investment.

Digital connectivity improvements represent the highest infrastructure priority, with potential benefits for agricultural productivity, business development, and community connectivity across the diverse economic base and geographic extent.

Water security requires coordinated approaches that serve both agricultural and residential needs while building resilience to climate variability and extreme weather events. The cluster's diverse topography creates both opportunities for water storage and challenges for service delivery.

Service Delivery Models

Service provision across nine communities requires innovative approaches, including shared services, regional cooperation, and community-based delivery models. The population size provides opportunities for economies of scale, while the geographic distribution creates service delivery complexity.

Community facilities, including schools, halls, and emergency services, serve multiple communities while requiring coordination and resource sharing to maintain adequate service levels across the cluster's extensive area.

Rural fire services and other volunteer organisations provide essential services while building community capacity and social connections across the diverse communities within the cluster.

Economic Development and Enterprise

Economic Diversity and Innovation

The cluster's economic diversity provides foundations for rural economic development that builds on agricultural strengths while supporting alternative enterprises and rural services. Value-adding and processing activities represent an opportunity to enhance farm gate returns while providing local employment.

Rural services, including construction, transport, and professional services, serve both local communities and broader rural regions while providing employment opportunities that complement agricultural activities.

Home-based businesses and rural enterprises utilise the cluster's improving digital connectivity and rural amenities to provide diverse economic opportunities while maintaining rural lifestyle benefits.

Economic Baseline

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 4 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	1,968	44,334
Gender Male	% of population	53%	49%

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 4 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Gender Female	% of population	52%	51%
Median Age	Yrs	44	44
Families	Number of families	544	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.94	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.87	0.60
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.77	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	1,838	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	718	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	680	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	38	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	248	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	141	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	1,058	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	432	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	102	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	1,172	21,135
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	2.43	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	17%	15%
GDP - *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 2.0X for Cluster 4. Cluster 4's multiplier is higher due to high household incomes, large dwelling sizes, strong commuter mobility (2+ vehicles), and skilled trade concentrations strengthen local productivity.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	208	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	305,842	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	105,677	67,939

Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential Land to Be Rezoned	87 ha (~96.3 acres)

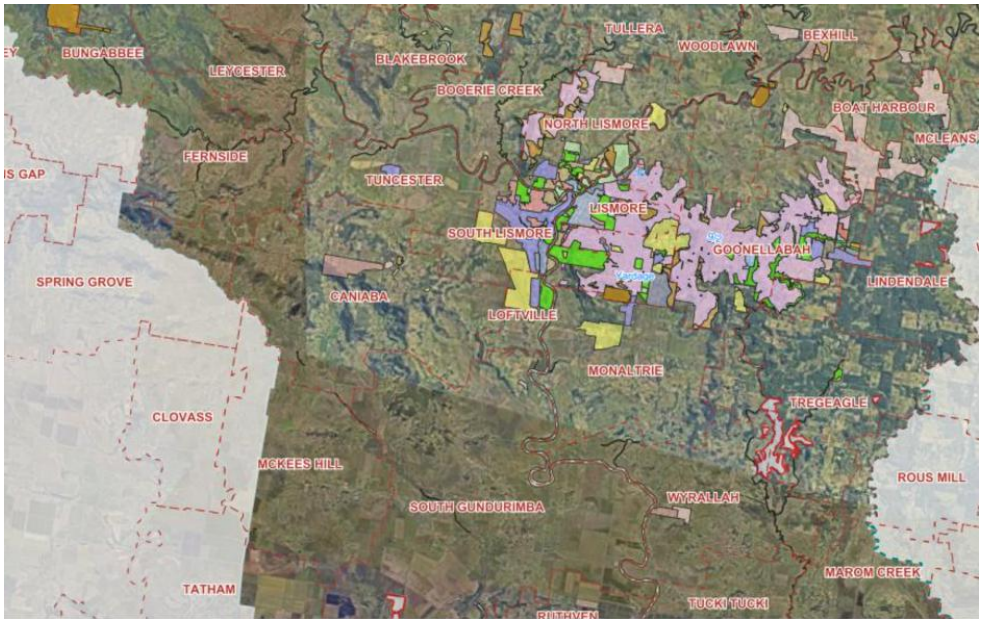
Increased population profile	322 people (assumes population concentration of 1.5 persons per acre)
Increased number of jobs	~151 jobs created (assumes 47% of residents are new residents to the LGA and cluster and would enter the local workforce or work from home)
Increased number of families	~80 families
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	Agriculture, tourism, science research, health and education
Reduction in unemployment	Unemployment reduces by ~3w% in the cluster
Estimated locality GDP increase	~$10 million to ~$16 million per annum (assumes GDP per capita is within Cluster and LGA GDP profile per above)

Value Added Activities

The cluster's landscape quality and agricultural diversity provide foundations for value-adding activities, including on-farm processing, direct marketing, specialty production and targeted agritourism that enhance agricultural returns while creating visitor experiences and employment opportunities.

Community-scale economic development includes shared facilities, cooperative marketing, and collaborative approaches that enable smaller enterprises to access resources and markets while building community economic capacity.

Cluster Four Mapping and Commentary



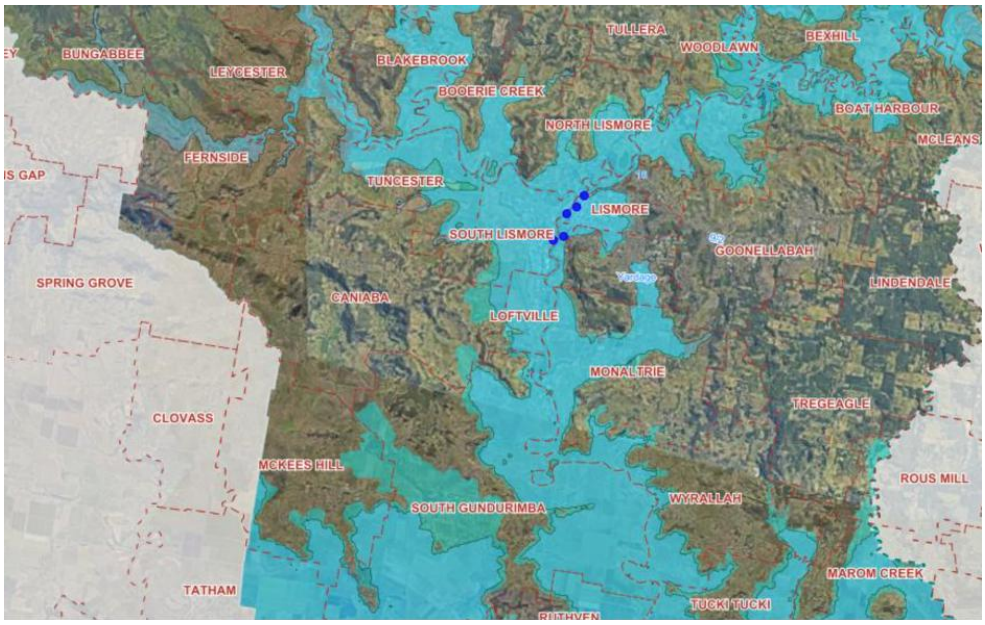
Cluster Four Zoning



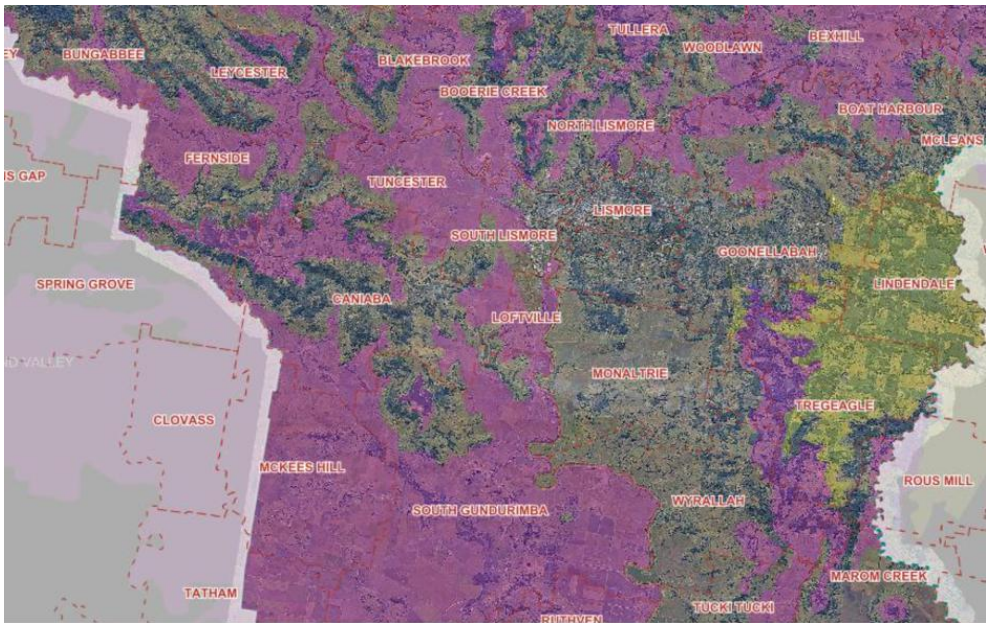
Cluster Four: Caniaba Zoning



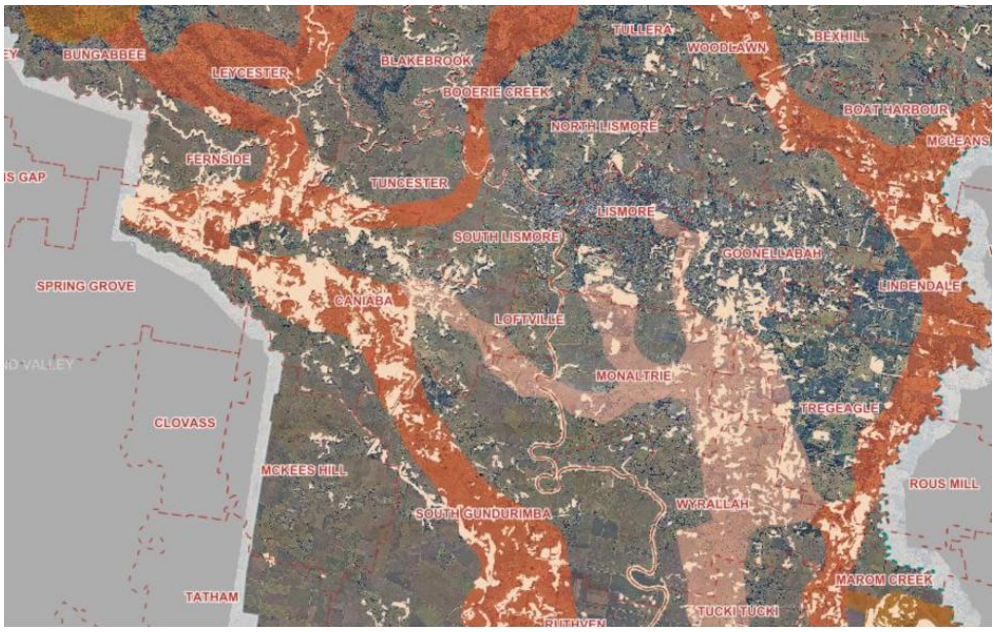
Cluster Four: Potential Land for Rezoning (~87 ha)



Cluster Four: Flood Planning



Cluster Four: Significant Farmland (~ 11,998 ha)



Clueter Four: Priority Habit and Corridors

The largest and most diverse of the clusters, Cluster Four exhibits several key considerations. This cluster is defined by significant agricultural use and prime grazing and cultivation capacity. There are significant flooding considerations in the Northeast and South of the cluster.

Caniaba benefits from public infrastructure and is zoned predominantly for RU1 Primary Production, RU5 Village, with limited R5 Large Lot Residential. Tuncester is mostly zoned for RU1 Primary Production with E4 General Industrial. The remaining surrounds are zoned for RU1 Primary Production.

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The geographic complexity and demographic diversity of Cluster Four require sophisticated planning responses:

- Precinct-Based Differentiation: Develop distinct planning frameworks for agricultural protection areas (valley systems), rural residential zones (elevated areas), and mixed-use transitional areas that recognise varying land capabilities and community characteristics.
- Integrated Infrastructure Planning: Coordinate service delivery across nine communities through shared facilities, regional cooperation, and strategic investment that achieves economies of scale while meeting diverse settlement needs.
- Agricultural Land Protection: Preserve the 8,000-10,000 hectares of prime agricultural land through targeted zoning while enabling value-adding enterprises and farm diversification in suitable locations.
- Fragmentation Management: Address the perception and impact of fragmentation due to succession, through performance-based controls that maintain agricultural landscape function while accommodating established rural residential development.
- Economic Diversification Support: Enable rural services, home-based businesses, and agricultural value-adding through flexible commercial zoning that serves both local communities and broader regional markets.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Infrastructure Coordination – Prioritise digital connectivity and water security investments that serve multiple communities while enabling shared service delivery and regional economic participation.
2. Agricultural Innovation – Support on-farm processing, direct marketing, and agritourism development that enhances farm viability while maintaining productive agricultural landscapes.
3. Settlement Management – Direct rural residential development to appropriate elevated areas while protecting prime agricultural land through strategic zoning and development sequencing.
4. Community Integration – Strengthen connections between the nine communities through shared facilities, coordinated planning, and collaborative economic development initiatives.
5. Service Delivery Innovation – Develop efficient models for education, health, and emergency services that serve distributed populations while managing per-capita costs through regional cooperation.
6. Regional Economic Integration – Build on the cluster's diverse economy to serve as a rural services hub for surrounding agricultural areas while maintaining community character and landscape values.

Implementation Framework

- Multi-Community Coordination: Planning must balance individual community identity with cluster-wide resource efficiency through collaborative governance structures and shared decision-making processes.
- Performance-Based Development Controls: Flexible planning approaches that focus on achieving rural character and agricultural protection outcomes rather than uniform prescriptive standards across diverse communities.
- Infrastructure-Led Development: Align development capacity with infrastructure investment to ensure sustainable growth while managing service delivery costs across the extensive geographic area.
- Adaptive Management: Use demographic trends, economic development indicators, and infrastructure capacity metrics to guide ongoing planning adjustments and resource allocation.
- Regional Service Integration: Coordinate with Lismore LGA and neighbouring rural areas to optimise service delivery efficiency while maintaining local community autonomy and character.

17. CLUSTER FIVE PROFILE: WYRALLAH, TUCKI TUCKI, RUTHVEN

Executive Summary

Cluster Five encompasses three communities, Wyrallah, Tucki Tucki, and Ruthven, with a combined population of 917 residents, representing the agricultural heartland of Lismore's Southern rural area. The demographic data shows a pronounced male majority (52.3% male, 47.7% female).

The cluster maintains the strongest agricultural profile among all clusters, with productive farming systems that contribute significantly to regional agricultural output. The demographic composition, community sizes (Wyrallah: 489 residents, Tucki Tucki: 308 residents, Ruthven: 120 residents), and gender distribution indicate established agricultural operations supporting viable rural communities centred on primary production.

This cluster has demonstrated proactive, forward-looking leadership in setting strategic foundations for rural renewal, and emphasises its role in testing approaches to agricultural innovation while maintaining productive capacity.

Geographic Context and Agricultural Landscape

Community Distribution and Agricultural Character

Wyrallah, as the largest community with 489 residents, functions as the cluster's primary agricultural centre. The demographic profile indicates significant agricultural employment and established farming operations that support rural services and community infrastructure.

Tucki Tucki (308 residents) represents the cluster's most intensive agricultural area, due to favourable conditions, including reliable rainfall, fertile soils, and established infrastructure networks.

Ruthven (120 residents) occupies the western portion with more varied agricultural systems adapted to diverse topographic conditions. The smaller population reflects the area's more extensive agricultural operations and lower settlement density.

Agricultural Infrastructure and Production Systems

The cluster benefits from established agricultural infrastructure that supports intensive production systems.

The agricultural economy encompasses traditional livestock operations, emerging horticultural enterprises, and agricultural services that collectively contribute substantial value to the regional economy. The demographic stability and male-dominated employment profile indicate continuing agricultural viability and investment.

Community consultation has raised concerns about transport networks and their ability to provide adequate access to regional markets and processing facilities. Given the cluster's agricultural infrastructure, access to regional and extra-regional agricultural processing and distribution systems is critical.

Current Land Profile

- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 11.2 km
- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 63.7 km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 56km
- Area hectares: 5,562 ha
- Zoning by hectare:

  - RU1: 5,529 ha
  - RU5: 17 ha
  - R5: 16 ha
- Significant Farmland: ~2,637 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: ~49 ha

Demographic Profile and Community Characteristics

Population Structure and Rural Identity

The combined population of 917 residents across three communities creates sufficient scale for agricultural support services while maintaining rural settlement density. The pronounced male majority across all communities (ranging from 52.2% to 52.7%) reflects agricultural employment patterns and distinguishes this cluster from areas with more diverse economic bases.

The demographic composition indicates established agricultural families and continuing agricultural operations that provide employment and economic stability. The gender distribution patterns suggest ongoing agricultural investment and operational viability that support community sustainability.

Community sizes reflect different agricultural intensities and settlement patterns, with Wyrallah providing rural services and community facilities while Tucki Tucki and Ruthven focus primarily on agricultural production with supporting residential populations.

Agricultural Employment and Economic Base

Agricultural employment represents a significantly higher proportion of total employment in Cluster Five compared to other clusters, estimated at 30-35% of the workforce, compared to regional averages of 6-8%. This high proportion reflects the cluster's agricultural land use focus and employment opportunities.

Agricultural employment includes farm operators, family workers, employees of larger agricultural enterprises, and agricultural service providers. The demographic stability indicates successful agricultural operations that provide viable employment and support community institutions.

The cluster's agricultural economy provides both economic stability through productive land use and employment opportunities that enable residents to maintain a rural lifestyle while participating in viable agricultural industries.

Agricultural Profile and Production Systems

Sugar cane production

Sugar cane production serves as the backbone of agricultural production across Cluster Five, in the Southern, flat land of the LGA. The Broadwater sugar mill processes the cane, which is then sent to Harwood for refining. The sugar industry in the Northern Rivers region currently returns $280M to the local economy.

Diversified Agricultural Systems

Beef cattle operations complement dairy systems across the cluster, utilising both dedicated beef properties and integrated systems that optimise land use. Operations typically focus on breeding, backgrounding, and finishing, depending on property characteristics and market opportunities.

Mixed farming approaches combine traditional livestock systems with alternative enterprises, including small-scale horticulture, value-adding activities, and agricultural contracting services. These diversification strategies provide risk management benefits while often improving overall farm profitability.

The cluster demonstrates agricultural innovation through the adoption of rotational grazing, pasture improvement, and environmental management practices that maintain productivity while enhancing sustainability outcomes.

Agricultural Support and Infrastructure
The cluster benefits from established agricultural support networks, including veterinary services, contractors, input suppliers, and processing facilities. The desktop review notes that "agricultural operations across the cluster show varying levels of technology adoption" with opportunities for precision agriculture and digital farm management.

Infrastructure includes transport networks that could be improved for agricultural traffic, electricity supply supporting agricultural operations, and climate suited to dry land agriculture without the need for irrigation, and providing water resources for livestock. Digital connectivity remains inconsistent but represents a priority for agricultural modernisation and business development.

Agricultural support services depend on maintaining sufficient agricultural activity to justify service provision, with the cluster's concentrated agricultural operations providing a viable market for specialised rural services. These services can play a vital role in minimising land use conflicts due to unreasonable noise, dust and smoke related to cattle management and crop harvesting and haulage.

Rural Settlement and Community Development

Settlement Patterns and Housing
Housing across the cluster primarily consists of farmhouses on agricultural properties, with limited rural residential development reflecting the area's continued agricultural focus. The demographic composition and community sizes indicate successful retention of agricultural families and rural populations.

Settlement density remains low, reflecting agricultural property sizes and extensive land use patterns. This settlement pattern maintains rural character while creating challenges for infrastructure provision and service delivery across distributed rural populations.

The cluster demonstrates successful rural community development that maintains agricultural viability while supporting community institutions and services necessary for rural family life and community sustainability.

Infrastructure and Service Provision
Infrastructure provision across the cluster reflects agricultural requirements and rural settlement needs. Digital connectivity is a key priority, with improvements necessary to support precision agriculture and contemporary farm management systems.

Water security benefits from good rainfall, farm dams, and groundwater resources, with some operations investing in significant water storage infrastructure.

Transport infrastructure serves agricultural traffic and rural residents, with ongoing maintenance requirements to support heavy agricultural vehicles and access during adverse weather conditions. School transport and emergency services provide essential rural services across the distributed population.

Community Services and Facilities
Community facilities include rural fire services, community halls, and other institutions that serve multiple functions, including emergency response, community meetings, and social connection. Volunteer services are critical in maintaining rural community capacity.

Educational services include local schools and transport arrangements enabling rural children to access educational opportunities while maintaining rural community connections. Health services rely primarily on regional facilities, with local volunteer emergency services providing critical response capacity.

Community institutions depend on volunteer participation that provides emergency services, community activities, and mutual support networks essential for rural community resilience and social cohesion.

Economic Development and Agricultural Innovation

Agricultural Modernisation and Technology
The cluster provides opportunities for agricultural modernisation, including precision agriculture, improved genetics, and sustainable production systems. Technology adoption is constrained by infrastructure limitations, but essential for maintaining agricultural competitiveness.

Agricultural innovation includes improved pasture management, integrated environmental management, and value-adding activities that enhance farm profitability while maintaining productive capacity. Some operations demonstrate sustainable practices that provide environmental benefits alongside production outcomes.

The cluster's agricultural foundation provides a platform for testing modernisation approaches that could be adapted across broader agricultural regions while maintaining core productive capacity and rural employment.

Value-Adding and Market Development
Agricultural operations increasingly incorporate value-adding, direct marketing, and diversification activities that provide enhanced returns while maintaining agricultural land use. Opportunities exist for expanded adoption of on-farm processing, specialty food production, and farm-based tourism.

Direct marketing, farmers markets, and value-added production enable agricultural operators to capture retail value while building connections with consumers. These activities often provide better profit margins than commodity production while maintaining agricultural operations.

Agricultural diversification opportunities, including educational activities and environmental services, have the potential to provide additional income streams while showcasing agricultural operations and building community connections.

Rural Economic Development
The cluster's agricultural base and community characteristics provide foundations for rural economic development that maintains agricultural character while enhancing economic opportunities. Rural services,

agricultural contracting, and specialised agriculture-related businesses provide employment while serving broader rural regions.

Economic development opportunities include agricultural innovation, expanded processing, productivity improvement and rural services that complement agricultural operations while employing rural residents. Rural economic development should build on agricultural strengths while addressing challenges, including aging populations, infrastructure limitations, and maintaining viable rural services that support agricultural operations and rural communities.

Economic Baseline

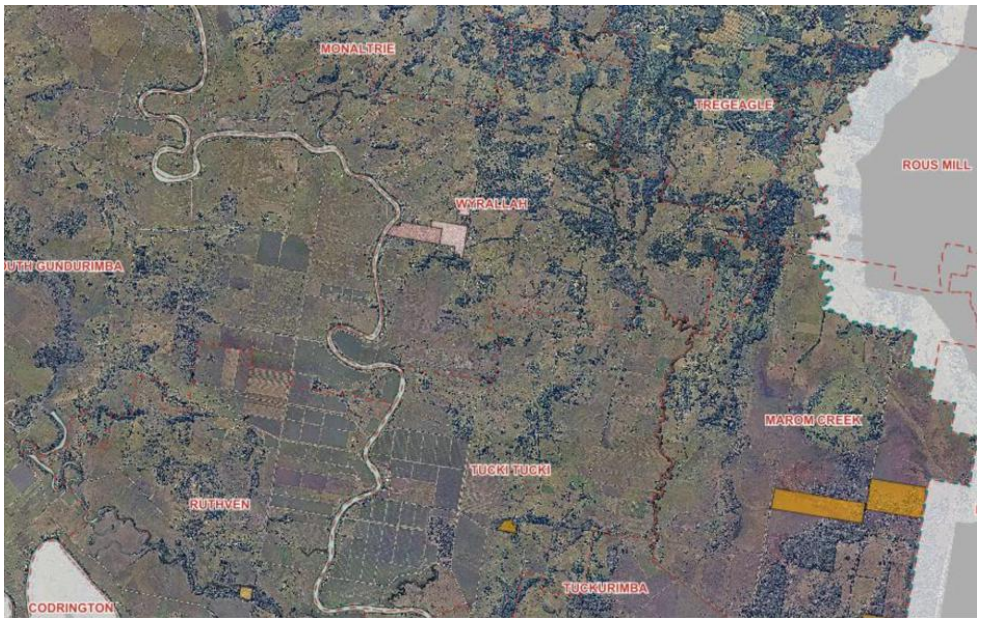
COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 5 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	735	44,334
Gender Male	% of population	52%	49%
Gender Female	% of population	48%	51%
Median Age	Yrs	44	44
Families	Number of families	202	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.87	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.88	0.60
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.88	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	1,907	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	261	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	236	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	25	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	100	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	70	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	367	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	179	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	45	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	429	21,135

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 5 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	2.43	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	20%	15%
GDP - *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 2.0X for Cluster 5. Cluster 5's multiplier is higher due to high household incomes, large dwelling sizes, strong commuter mobility (2+ vehicles), and skilled trade concentrations strengthen local productivity.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	75	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	317,378	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	101,906	67,939

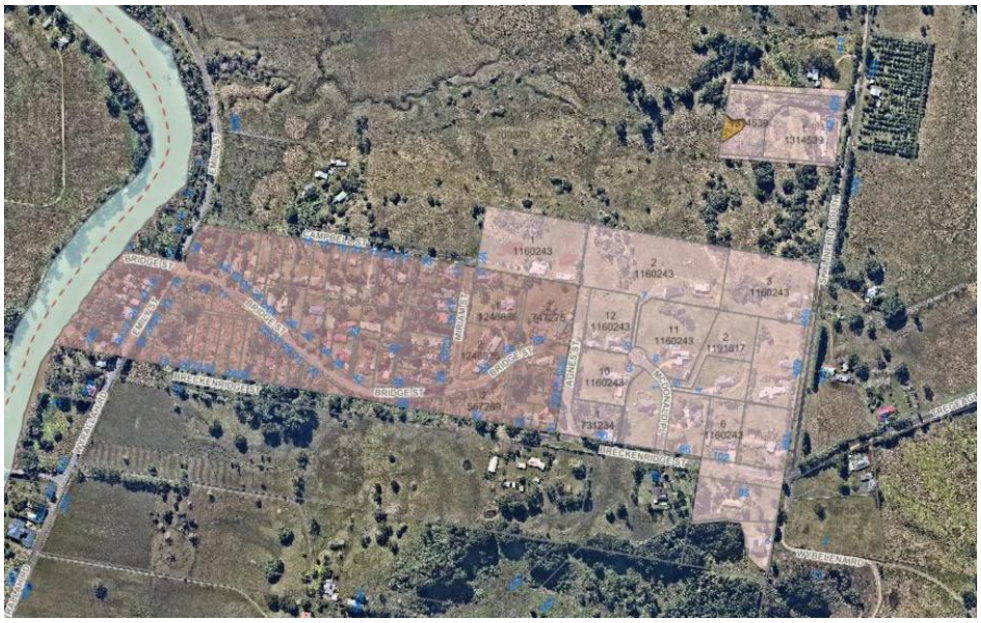
Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential Land to Be Rezoned	49 ha (~121.1 acres)
Increased population profile	182 people (assumes population concentration of 1.5 persons per acre)
Increased number of jobs	~85 jobs created (assumes 47% of residents are new residents to the LGA and cluster and would enter the local workforce or work from home)
Increased number of families	~45 families
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	Agriculture, tourism, science research, health and education
Reduction in unemployment	Unemployment reduces by ~4% in the cluster
Estimated locality GDP increase	~$5.5 million to ~$9 million per annum (assumes GDP per capita is within Cluster and LGA GDP profile per above)

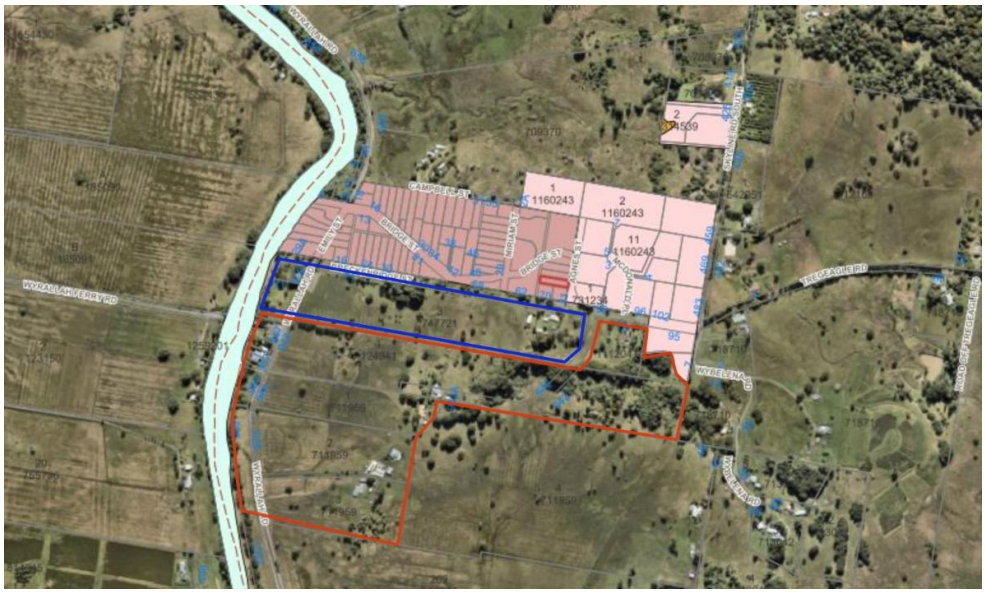
Cluster Five Mapping and Commentary



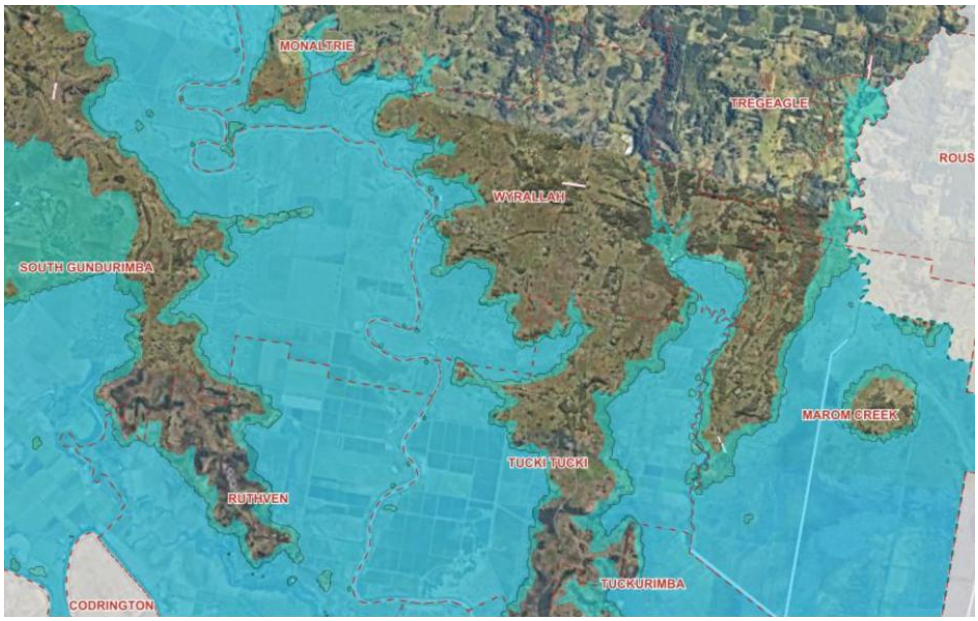
Cluster Five Zoning



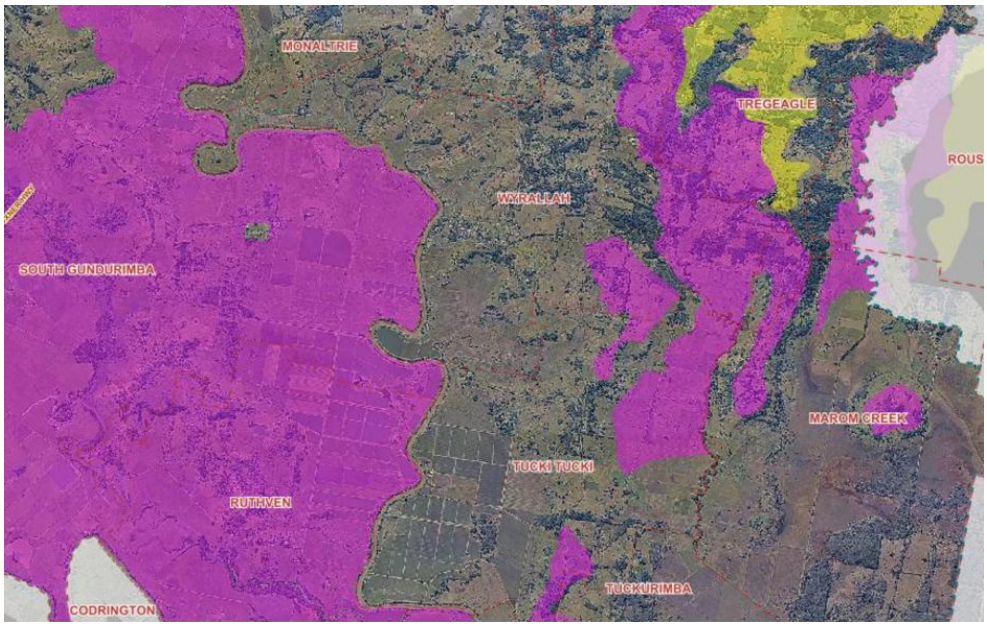
Cluster Five Zoning: Wyrallah Detail



Cluster Five: Potential Land for Rezoning (~49 ha)



Cluster Five: Flood Planning



Cluster Five: Significant Farmland (~2,637 ha)



Cluster Five: Prioirty Habitats and Corridors

Cluster Five is characterised by both its intensive agricultural capacity and its flood risk. Wyrallah is predominantly zoned for RU1 Primary Production, RU5 Village and R5 Large Lot Residential. Tucki Tucki is zoned for RU1 Primary Production and C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves, and Ruthven is zoned for RU1 Primary Production.

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The agricultural dominance and community stability of Cluster Five require production-focused planning responses:

- Agricultural Protection and Enhancement: Preserve prime agricultural land through strengthened rural zoning while enabling infrastructure investment, technology adoption, and farm modernisation that maintains the cluster's role as the regional agricultural heartland.
- Dairy Industry Support: Facilitate industry infrastructure, including processing facilities, worker accommodation, and transport upgrades that support the concentrated dairy operations, particularly in Tucki Tucki's intensive production areas.
- Rural Community Sustainability: Address the 30-35% agricultural employment base and aging demographic trends through succession planning support, youth retention strategies, and rural services that enable agricultural families to remain viable.
- Infrastructure Modernisation: Prioritise digital connectivity, water security, and transport improvements that support precision agriculture adoption and contemporary farm management systems.
- Agricultural Innovation Integration: Enable value-adding, direct marketing, and farm diversification that enhance agricultural returns while maintaining the cluster's productive agricultural character.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Agricultural Modernisation – Support precision agriculture technology, sustainable farming practices, and infrastructure upgrades that maintain the cluster's competitive advantage and beef production.
2. Workforce Development – Address agricultural labour shortages through worker accommodation, training programs, and succession planning that supports intergenerational farm transfer and attracts young farmers.
3. Infrastructure Investment – Prioritise digital connectivity for farm management systems, flood management for agricultural operations, and transport infrastructure that manages agricultural traffic and market access.
4. Value-Adding Support – Enable on-farm processing, direct marketing, and agritourism development through flexible planning provisions and shared infrastructure that enhances farm profitability.
5. Community Services – Strengthen rural schools, health services, and emergency response capacity that support agricultural families while building community resilience and rural lifestyle quality.

Implementation Framework

- Agricultural Industry Partnership: Planning must engage dairy cooperatives, beef producers, and agricultural service providers to ensure strategies support industry viability and growth.
- Production-Focused Zoning: Maintain and strengthen agricultural land protection while providing flexibility for farm diversification, worker housing, and agricultural infrastructure development.
- Infrastructure-Agricultural Integration: Coordinate infrastructure investment with agricultural development needs to ensure rural services support farm productivity and competitiveness.
- Community Capacity Monitoring: Track agricultural employment, demographic trends, and rural service adequacy to ensure planning supports long-term agricultural community sustainability.
- Agricultural Innovation Demonstration: Document and share sustainable farming practices and rural development models from Cluster Five as examples for other agricultural regions.

18. CLUSTER SIX PROFILE: TREGEAGLE, LINDENDALE, MAROM CREEK, AND MONALTRIE

Executive Summary

Cluster Six encompasses four rural communities, Tregeagle, Lindendale, Marom Creek, and Monaltrie, with a combined population of 1,068 residents representing 2.4% of the Lismore LGA's population. The demographic data shows a balanced gender distribution (50.1% male, 49.9% female) across communities with distinct characteristics: Tregeagle as the largest settlement (427 residents), Lindendale (260 residents), Monaltrie (234 residents), and Marom Creek (147 residents).

The cluster occupies the eastern portion of the LGA with varied topography that supports both productive agriculture and rural residential development. This cluster is experiencing development pressure due to accessibility while maintaining rural character, requiring careful planning to balance agricultural protection with appropriate residential growth.

The 2022 floods impacted parts of the cluster, lower-lying agricultural areas, highlighting the need for climate-resilient land use planning that considers topographic variations across the four communities.

Geographic Context and Settlement Patterns

Community Characteristics and Development

Tregeagle functions as the agricultural centre of the cluster, with 427 residents and demographic patterns (49.9% male, 50.1% female). The community size supports agricultural infrastructure and services while maintaining rural character through productive land use.

Lindendale, with 260 residents and balanced gender distribution (50% male, 50% female), demonstrates successful rural residential development that maintains community viability. The community has evolved from agricultural settlement to accommodate lifestyle migrants while retaining rural identity.

Marom Creek (147 residents, 51.7% male, 48.3% female) and Monaltrie (234 residents, 49.6% male, 50.4% female) represent smaller rural settlements with distinct demographic profiles reflecting their geographic positions and economic functions within the broader rural landscape.

Topographic Diversity and Land Use Implications

The cluster's varied topography creates natural zones for different land uses. Lower-lying areas, particularly around Tregeagle, experienced flood impacts in 2022, affecting agricultural operations and infrastructure. Elevated areas in Lindendale and parts of other communities remained flood-free, reinforcing their suitability for rural residential development.

This topographic variation enables differentiated planning approaches that direct agricultural activities to suitable flats that do not encroach on productive agricultural sites.

Current Land Profile

- Distance to Lismore City Centre: 10.8km
- Distance to Byron Bay Centre: 52.2 km
- Flood Risk: Medium (indicative)
- Area square kilometres: 79 km
- Area hectares: 7,862 ha

- Zoning by hectare:
    - RU1: 7,862 ha
- Significant Farmland: ~3,466 ha
- Potential Land for Rezoning: ~202 ha

Demographic Profile and Economic Characteristics

Population Structure and Community Composition

The total population of 1,068 across four communities provides sufficient scale for local services while maintaining rural settlement density.

The gender balance across all communities (ranging from 49.9% to 50.1% male) indicates a stable population with access to diverse economic opportunities beyond traditional male-dominated rural industries. This demographic stability supports community institutions and enables the retention of families across different life stages.

Economic Activities and Employment

The cluster exhibits a strong agricultural foundation, with perennial horticulture and beef operations as primary economic activities. Tregeagle's larger population and agricultural focus support labour-intensive operations, while other communities combine smaller-scale agriculture with rural services and commuter households.

Marom Creek exhibits a number of factors that impact land use, with limited horticulture operations, cropping in the South and significant steep drop-offs from the plateau. There is also conservation land associated with the Tuckean Wetlands.

The cluster's proximity to Lismore enables cluster residents to access urban employment, while providing Lismore residents access to fresh, locally produced food, as well as employment opportunities. Home-based businesses and rural enterprises provide additional employment opportunities that complement agricultural activities.

Economic Baseline

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 6 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Population	Number of people	1,072	44,334
Gender Male	% of population	50%	49%
Gender Female	% of population	50%	51%
Median Age	Yrs	51	44
Families	Number of families	326	11,434
Avg children per family with children	Number of people	1.81	1.80
Avg children per family (all households)	Number of people	0.67	0.60

COMPONENT	UNIT	CLUSTER 6 (ABS 2021)	LISMORE LGA (ABS 2021)
Avg people per household	Number of people	2.64	2.40
Median weekly household income	$ per week	1,796	1,319
Dwellings Total	Number of dwellings	444	18,475
Dwellings – occupied	Number of dwellings	413	17,154
Dwellings – unoccupied	Number of dwellings	31	1,321
Bachelor Degree & above	Number of people	228	7,672
Advanced Diploma & Diploma	Number of people	91	3,263
In the labour force	Number of people	578	21,135
Not in the labour force	Number of people	295	12,878
Not stated (in/not in labour force)	Number of people	41	2,735
No long-term health condition(s)	Number of people	619	21,135
Vehicles per dwelling (avg)	Number of vehicles	2.42	1.90
Hours worked intensity (≥45h or combined)	% of population	15%	15%
GDP - *the GDP profile assumes a regional multiplier of 1.6X for the LGA and 1.9X for Cluster 6. Cluster 6's multiplier is higher due to higher median age combined with strong labour participation, skilled occupations, and significant vehicle mobility enhance productivity resilience.*			
GDP (approx, $m)	$ millions	117	3,012
GDP Per Dwelling ($) adjusted	$ per dwelling	283,932	175,585
GDP Per Capita ($) adjusted	$ per person	109,388	67,939

Potential Future Economic Baseline Through Rezoning

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Potential Land to Be Rezoned	202 ha (~499.1 acres)
Increased population profile	748 people (assumes population concentration of 1.5 persons per acre)
Increased number of jobs	~351 jobs created (assumes 47% of residents are new residents to the LGA and cluster and would enter the local workforce or work from home)
Increased number of families	~187 families
Industry activity to support increased number of jobs	Agriculture, construction, tourism, science research, health and education

COMPONENT	MEASURE
Reduction in unemployment	Unemployment reduces by ~10% in the cluster due to increased employed population profile
Estimated locality GDP increase	~$23 million to ~$38.5 million per annum (assumes GDP per capita is within Cluster and LGA GDP profile per above)

Agricultural Profile and Land Use

Primary Production Systems

The cluster maintains significant agricultural activity with perennial horticulture crops including macadamias, avocados, and other tree crops. Tregeagle and Lindendale support beef cattle grazing. The agricultural sector contributes an estimated annual gross value of production exceeding regional averages per hectare, reflecting the productive capacity of agricultural land within the Cluster.

Horticultural activities, including nuts, subtropical fruit and market gardens, provide a strong agricultural base, leveraging the Cluster's favourable climate and proximity to regional markets.

Land Capability and Protection

Almost all of the Cluster is mapped as either State or Regionally Significant farmland, warranting protection from inappropriate development. Specific emphasis should be given to maintaining productive agricultural capacity while enabling appropriate rural residential development in areas with limited agricultural potential.

Current land fragmentation patterns show that while subdivision has occurred, larger agricultural holdings continue to dominate the landscape by area, indicating that agricultural scale has been maintained despite development pressure.

Housing and Settlement Development

Settlement Patterns and Housing Types

Housing across the cluster ranges from traditional farmhouses on agricultural properties to contemporary rural residential development on lifestyle blocks. The community sizes support diverse housing types while maintaining rural character through appropriate lot sizes and building integration with rural landscapes.

The cluster's accessibility to urban services creates ongoing housing demand that requires management to ensure development supports community sustainability while preserving agricultural land and rural character.

Infrastructure and Service Requirements

The distributed population across four communities creates infrastructure challenges and opportunities. Digital connectivity is a key infrastructure priority, with current services inconsistent across rural areas, affecting both residential amenity and agricultural productivity.

Water security represents another infrastructure priority, with communities relying on various supply sources, including rainwater harvesting, groundwater, and some reticulated supplies.

Transport infrastructure connecting communities to regional services enables economic participation while requiring ongoing maintenance to support agricultural traffic and rural development.

Economic Development Opportunities

Value-Adding and Rural Enterprise

The cluster's agricultural base and community characteristics provide foundations for value-adding enterprises, including on-farm processing, direct marketing, and agritourism development, specialty food production, and farm-based tourism could enhance agricultural returns.

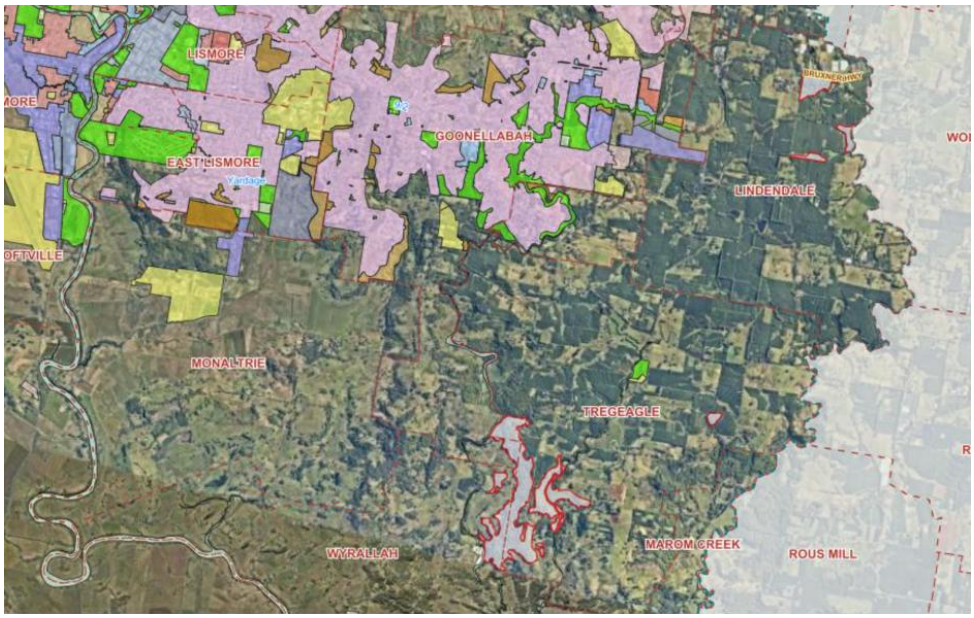
The community sizes and demographic diversity support local businesses and services that serve both residents and visitors, creating opportunities for rural economic development that complements agricultural activities.

Tourism and Recreation

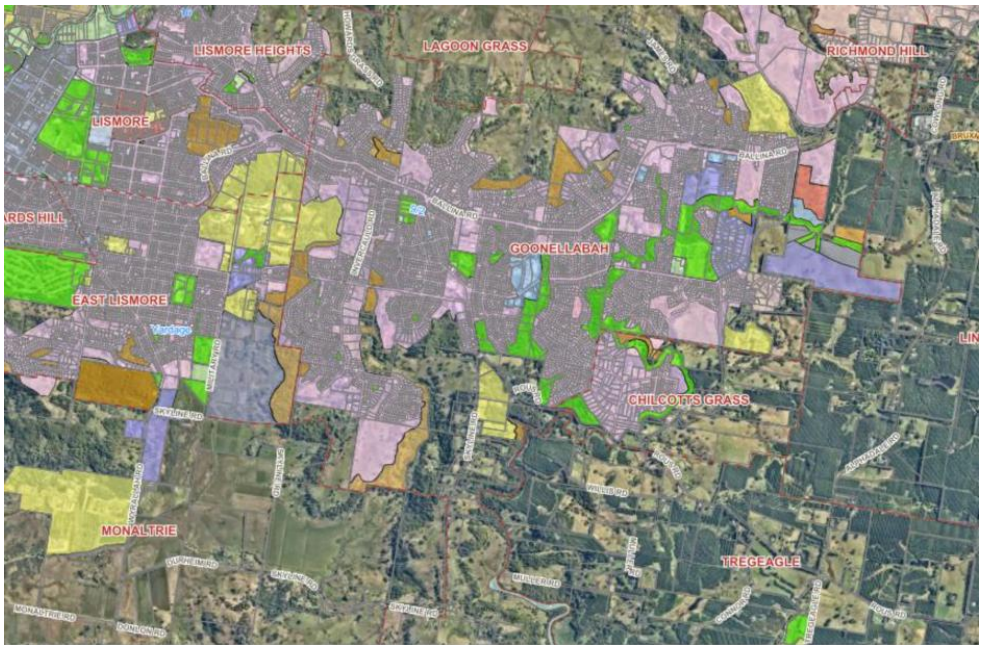
Rural tourism opportunities include farm stays, agricultural tours, and recreational activities that utilise the cluster's rural landscapes and agricultural heritage. The proximity to regional tourist routes provides market access, while the rural character offers authentic rural experiences.

Development of tourism activities requires careful planning to avoid conflicts with agricultural operations while ensuring that tourism contributes to community economic development and sustainability.

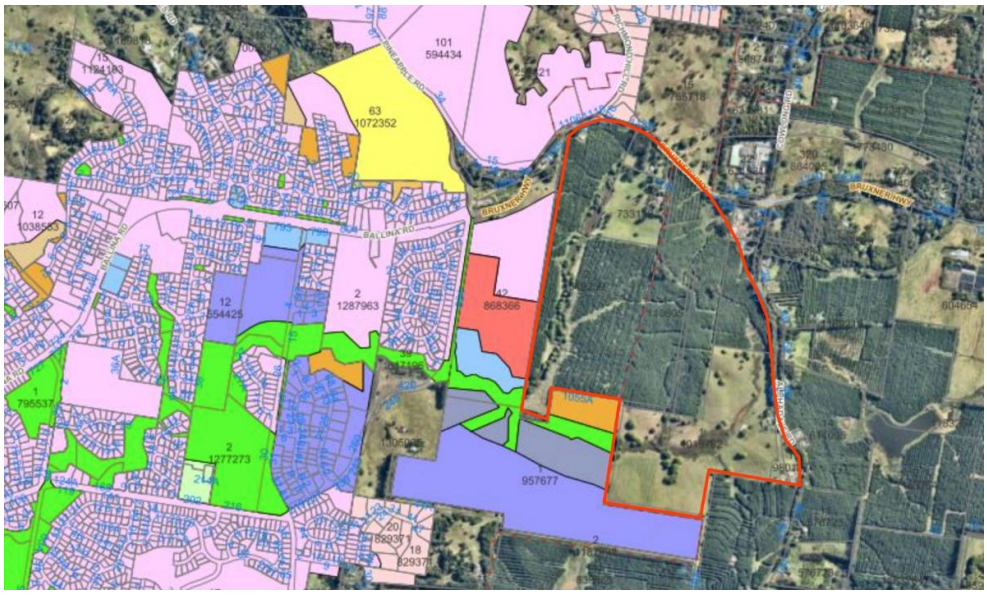
Cluster Six Mapping and Commentary



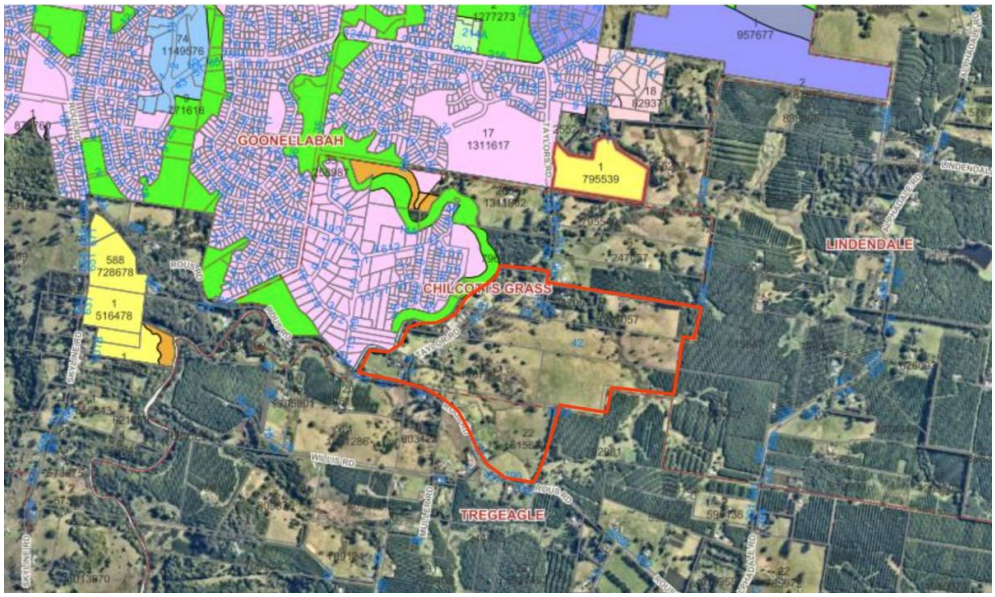
Cluster Six: Zoning



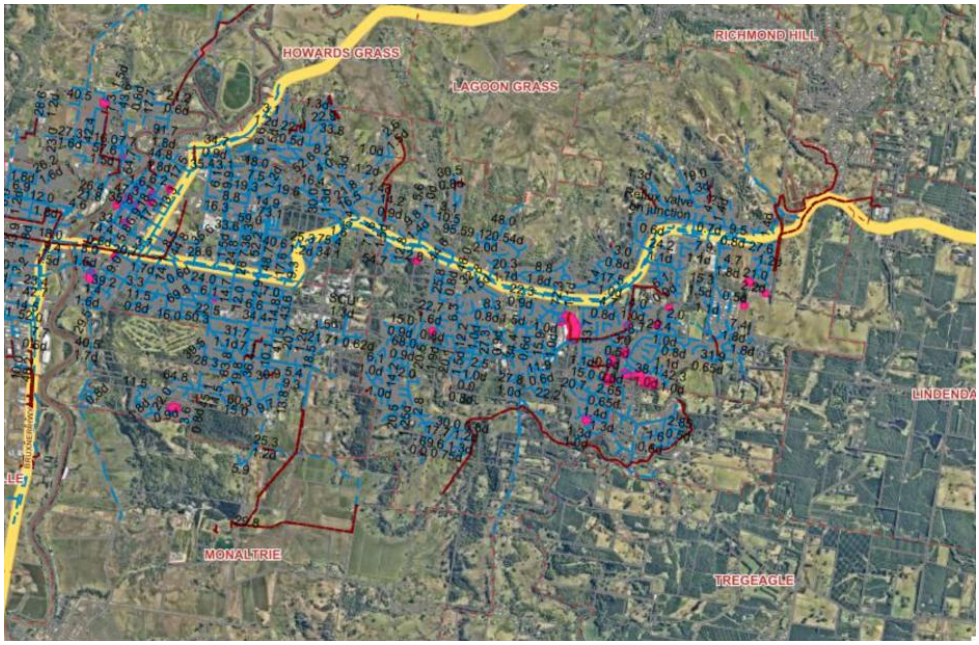
Cluster Six Growth: Exploration



Cluster Six: Growth Option (Boundary Alphadale Rd) (~120 ha)



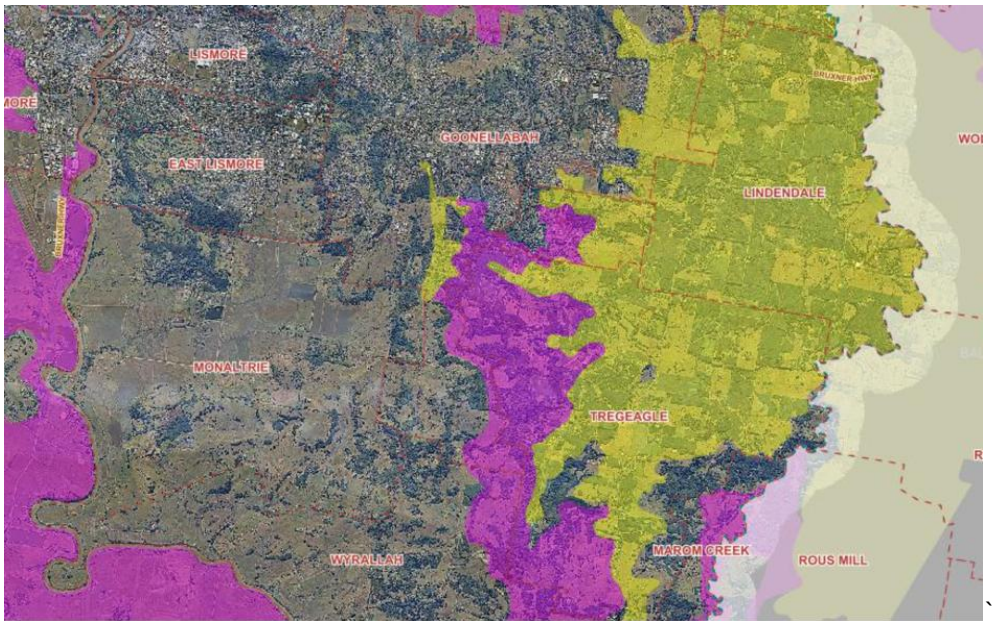
Cluster Six: Growth Option (~82 ha)



Cluser Six: Water, Sewer and Rainwater



Cluster Six: Flood Planning



Cluster Six: Significant Farmland (~3,466 ha)



Cluster Six: Priority Habitats and Corridors

Cluster Six is characterised by its agricultural capacity, its proximity to processing, future processing, and value adding as well as its access to residential areas for labour. Flooding considerations are reserved mostly for the South of this cluster. Tregeagle is predominantly zoned for RU1 Primary Production, with RE1 Recreation and SP2 Infrastructure. Lindendale is zoned for RU1 Primary Production. Marom Creek is zoned for RU1 Primary Production as well as C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves, and Monaltrie is zoned for RU1 Primary Production, E4 General Industrial and SP2 Infrastructure.

Strategic Rural Land Use Implications

The mixed agricultural and lifestyle character of Cluster Six requires balanced planning responses:

- Topographic-Based Zoning: Ensure that high-productivity land on the plateaus is protected for agricultural use, concentrating residential development on elevated, flood-immune sites that allow landscape amenity without diminishing the Cluster's capacity for production.
- Agricultural Resilience Building: Support agricultural adaptation through improved drainage, climate-resilient infrastructure, and diversification opportunities that maintain productive agricultural capacity.
- Balanced Development Management: Accommodate lifestyle development pressure while protecting prime agricultural land, particularly around Tregeagle's horticultural areas, through strategic location of rural residential growth.
- Infrastructure Differentiation: Provide appropriate infrastructure for diverse settlement types, from agricultural support systems in Tregeagle to rural residential services in elevated areas of other communities.
- Community Integration: Strengthen connections between the four communities while recognising their distinct agricultural, rural residential, and mixed-use characteristics.

Strategic Recommendations

1. Climate-Resilient Agriculture – Support flood recovery and adaptation through improved drainage systems, climate-smart farming practices, and diversified agricultural enterprises that build resilience to extreme weather events.
2. Strategic Rural Residential Growth – Direct lifestyle development to appropriate elevated areas while maintaining agricultural production capacity through performance-based zoning that protects productive valley systems.
3. Infrastructure Prioritisation – Invest in digital connectivity for farm management and home-based businesses, water security for both agricultural and residential uses, and transport infrastructure that serves diverse community needs.
4. Agricultural Value-Adding – Enable on-farm processing, direct marketing, and agritourism development that enhances farm viability while providing economic diversification opportunities.
5. Community Service Integration – Develop shared services and facilities that serve all four communities efficiently while maintaining individual community identity and character.
6. Flood Adaptation Planning – Implement land use strategies that work with natural flood patterns while protecting essential agricultural and residential infrastructure through strategic location and design.

Implementation Framework

- Multi-Community Coordination: Planning must balance the distinct needs of Tregeagle's agricultural focus, Lindendale's rural residential character, and Marom Creek and Monaltrie's mixed development patterns through differentiated but coordinated approaches.
- Hazard-Informed Development: Use flood risk mapping and topographic analysis to guide appropriate land use location while enabling both agricultural recovery and rural residential development in suitable areas.
- Agricultural-Residential Interface Management: Develop planning controls that minimise conflicts between farming operations and rural residential development while enabling both land uses to coexist successfully.
- Infrastructure Resilience Monitoring: Track infrastructure adequacy, flood recovery progress, and community sustainability indicators to guide ongoing planning adjustments and investment priorities.
- Regional Gateway Integration: Leverage the cluster's position as the Eastern gateway to rural Lismore through coordinated planning with urban fringe areas and regional transport networks.

PART 3 PROJECT OPTIONS AND COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

19. LISMORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Building on the comprehensive review, analysis, and community-led insights established through the first two stages of work, a targeted portfolio of project options has been developed that give practical effect to the RLUS.

These options translate the evidence base and community narratives into implementable, costed initiatives that deliver on Council's three guiding objectives:

- Strengthening Rural Economies
- Supporting Rural Living
- Sustaining the Environment

This section presents the process undertaken to identify, assess, and prioritise these project options, as well as the rationale that underpins each recommendation.

Approach to Project Identification and Assessment

To progress from analysis to implementation, Terra Rossa undertook the following process:

1. Opportunity Mapping: Cross-referencing the locality narratives with strategic planning objectives and economic data to identify viable growth corridors, renewal areas, and thematic opportunity clusters:
    - Growth Corridors:
      Nimbin (north) and Clunes (east) as primary village growth fronts; eastern and western expansion areas around Lismore city for housing and employment.
    - Tourism and Connectivity:
      Rail Trail development and supporting enterprise activation as a catalyst for visitor spending and local employment.
    - High-Value Agricultural Land:
      Plateau and transitional zones identified for intensified horticulture, regenerative farming, and diversification.
2. Strategic Evaluation: Each proposed initiative was evaluated against five criteria to test feasibility and public value:
    - Alignment with RLUS goals and Council's policy framework.
    - Contribution to economic resilience and diversification.
    - Enhancement of social outcomes (housing, liveability, access).
    - Environmental sustainability and land capability alignment.
    - Deliverability, including existing governance, partnerships, and funding pathways.
3. Cost–Benefit and Implementation Analysis: Each initiative was subject to a high-level cost–benefit appraisal and delivery pathway assessment, ensuring a balance between ambition and practicality.

Key inputs included expected capital investment, operating implications, potential funding partners, and local co-benefits.

Portfolio of Priority Project Options

Based on this structured process, Terra Rossa identified six initial opportunities aligned with the RLUS themes and grounded in the evidence collected through earlier stages of work:

CATEGORY	PROJECT OPTION	PRIMARY FOCUS	INDICATIVE AREA / CLUSTER
Growth Corridors	1. Nimbin residential and enterprise expansion	Large-lot development integrating creative and rural industries	Cluster 1
	2. Clunes eastward growth interface	Village expansion and housing supply from Byron corridor	Cluster 2
	3. Lismore East and West urban-rural interface	Managed peri-urban growth through integrated land use planning	Clusters 4 & 6
Tourism Corridor	4. Rail Trail development program	Activation of nodes, enterprise clustering, and visitor economy linkages	Multi-cluster
High-Value Agriculture	5. Plateau horticulture and diversification	Transition of plateau and grazing areas to high-value crops	Multi-cluster
Resilience and Environment	6. Northern Valleys water security and flood mitigation feasibility	Investigate pumped hydro, water storage, and multi-use dam potential	Northern clusters

This portfolio is sequenced to meet Council's deadlines: preliminary option definition and inputs for the Local Strategic Planning Statement and Economic Development Strategy by 18 November, with the final RLUS implementation pack completed by mid-December (pre-Christmas) for integration into those strategies and Council's 2025–2028 Delivery Program.

Project-Specific Strategic Rationale and RLUS Alignment

Each initiative has been developed to directly respond to the three core RLUS themes—Strengthening Rural Economies, Supporting Rural Living, and Sustaining the Environment and is grounded in the evidence, analysis, and community feedback established in the Comprehensive Desktop Review and Synthesis and Community-Led Narrative Development by Rural Locality.

Together these inputs define the why for each project, ensuring every recommendation connects an identified challenge or opportunity with a measurable outcome under Council's strategic framework. The analysis integrates:

- Quantitative economic and land-use data (employment, output, zoning, flood exposure, agricultural productivity).
- Qualitative narratives capturing local aspirations, growth constraints, and resilience priorities.

- Alignment with Council's adopted strategies:
    - Inspire Lismore 2040 – LSPS
    - Climate Ready Lismore (Draft 2024)
    - Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024
    - Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy
    - Destination Management Plan 2024–2028
    - Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2025
    - Connecting with Country Framework (Jagun Alliance)

Project 1 – Nimbin Large-Lot and Enterprise Growth Zone

Project Overview and Scope:
This project proposes the establishment of a dedicated *Large-Lot and Enterprise Growth Zone* on the outskirts of Nimbin to unlock constrained land supply for creative industries, rural enterprises, and light manufacturing. It seeks to accommodate demand for enterprise-scale lots (1–2 hectares) suitable for eco-businesses, co-operatives, and value-adding agricultural ventures. The project will involve land-use planning, zoning reform, and infrastructure coordination to create a new generation of employment and innovation opportunities within a rural setting.

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council will lead the planning and feasibility work, supported by the New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (within the Department of Regional New South Wales), local landowners, and the Nimbin Chamber of Commerce. Infrastructure New South Wales and Regional New South Wales will be engaged to identify funding and delivery pathways.

What It Will Deliver:

- An integrated framework for Nimbin's economic expansion — including structure planning, rezoning, servicing strategies, and a pilot business park that complements Nimbin's cultural identity.
- A servicing feasibility confirming sewer versus advanced-septic options and staged potable/recycled-water solutions for the growth area, ensuring sustainable servicing and environmental protection.

RLUS Themes: Strengthening Rural Economies and Supporting Rural Living

Strategic Rationale: Nimbin (pop. ~ 1,600) supports a creative-enterprise economy built on tourism, micro-manufacturing, and small-scale agriculture. Land analysis shows 7,288 ha total area (RU1 ~ 6,970 ha) with only ~ 24 ha suitable for rezoning. Stakeholders emphasised limited land supply for emerging eco-businesses and co-operatives.

Policy Alignment:

- Inspire Lismore 2040 Direction 2 – "Empower villages as economic and cultural centres."
- Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024 Pillar 1 – "Diversify the rural economy and support creative industries."

- Rural Zoning and LEP Reform Program – review of RU2/R5 flexibility for small-enterprise development

Expected Outcomes: Creation of 1–2 ha enterprise lots; co-located light-industry hubs; improved housing-employment balance.

Project 2 – Clunes–Eltham Village Growth and Byron Interface Program

Project Overview and Scope:
This initiative will guide sustainable residential and service growth for Clunes and Eltham villages, which sit at the Byron–Lismore interface. It will coordinate land-use planning, infrastructure upgrades, and community facilities to respond to migration and housing pressure from the coastal corridor while protecting the agricultural and landscape values of the hinterland.

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council will lead the project in partnership with Byron Shire Council, the New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, utility providers, and local community associations. Collaboration between the two councils will focus on regional infrastructure coordination and cross-local-government-area housing delivery.

What It Will Deliver:

- A village-edge growth framework with identified development envelopes, servicing plans, and staged rezoning that provides affordable, flood-resilient housing and reinforces the rural-village character.
- Preparation of Village Development Plans for Clunes and Eltham (vision, land-use envelopes, character and design codes, movement and servicing plans) to anchor village-led diversification.
- A village-edge servicing feasibility testing sewer versus advanced-septic options and a staged potable/recycled-water plan to inform joint servicing strategies with Byron Shire Council.

RLUS Theme: Supporting Rural Living

Strategic Rationale: Clunes (564 residents) and Eltham (322) face growth pressures from Byron migration, driving land-value increase and infrastructure strain. High-quality soils and topography sustain horticulture (~ 4,850 ha productive land), requiring balanced expansion.

Policy Alignment:

- Inspire Lismore 2040 Direction 3 – "Provide diverse and affordable housing in connected villages."
- Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy – village intensification within serviced envelopes.
- Climate Ready Lismore – integration of flood-resilient settlement planning.

Expected Outcomes: Village-edge growth framework, sequenced rezoning (~ 33 ha potential), Byron–Lismore service integration, and flood-aware design standards.

Project 3 – Lismore East and West Urban–Rural Interface Corridors

Project Overview and Scope:

This project establishes a coordinated planning framework for the transition zones east and west of Lismore, particularly around Caniaba and Wyrallah. It will define future land-use patterns, environmental buffers, and infrastructure sequencing to manage peri-urban pressures and protect productive agricultural land.

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council will work with the New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Infrastructure New South Wales, and local landowners. Collaboration with water and transport agencies will ensure infrastructure readiness and hazard mitigation.

What It Will Deliver:

- Integrated corridor plans balancing housing demand, agricultural protection, and biodiversity resilience, with zoning and design controls supporting long-term sustainability.
- A servicing feasibility for peri-urban nodes to guide sewer versus advanced-septic choices and potable/recycled-water staging, ensuring infrastructure sequencing aligns with growth and flood-management objectives.
- Introduction of a Right-to-Farm overlay and interface-management controls (noise, odour, and traffic buffers; disclosure on titles) to protect ongoing agricultural operations and reduce land-use conflict.

RLUS Themes: Supporting Rural Living and Sustaining the Environment

Strategic Rationale: Caniaba and Wyrallah areas are under peri-urban pressure with mixed RU1/RU2 zoning, moderate-to-high flood risk, and infrastructure shortfalls. Economic modelling identifies rural-residential conversion risks to prime agricultural land.

Policy Alignment:

- Inspire Lismore 2040 Direction 1 – "Grow within our means and protect rural character."
- Climate Ready Lismore – hazard-informed land use and water-sensitive urban design.
- Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2025 – preserve habitat corridors and soils.

Expected Outcomes: Adoption of peri-urban transition guidelines; buffer zones for high-value soils; stormwater and biodiversity corridor integration. Introduce a Right-to-Farm overlay and interface management controls (noise/odour/traffic buffers, disclosure on titles) to protect ongoing agricultural operations and reduce conflict.

Project 4 – Rail Trail Tourism and Enterprise Activation

Project Overview and Scope:
The Rail Trail Activation Project focuses on transforming the Northern Rivers Rail Trail through the Lismore local government area into a catalyst for tourism, local enterprise, and cultural activation. It will identify key nodes along the trail for business clustering, eco-accommodation, and cultural storytelling experiences.

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council will lead the program in partnership with Destination North Coast, the New South Wales

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, local landowners, First Nations organisations, and creative industry partners. Private sector participation will be sought for eco-tourism ventures and commercial activation.

What It Will Deliver:
Five activation nodes integrating farm-gate markets, artisan studios, accommodation, and digital wayfinding strengthening the visitor economy and connecting rural communities. Seasonal activation program (harvest festivals, maker trails, temporary installations) to realise multi-season, multi-use benefits consistent with the 'Swiss-army-knife' approach to rural land.

RLUS Themes: Strengthening Rural Economies and Supporting Rural Living

Strategic Rationale: The Rail Trail crosses multiple clusters, linking Eltham, Bexhill, and Nimbin. Community feedback called for leveraging it to support farm-gate markets, eco-accommodation, and cultural enterprises. Tourism spend ~ $82 m per year, with potential growth of 7–10 %.

Policy Alignment:

- Destination Management Plan 2024–2028 – "Activate village tourism precincts and visitor experiences."
- Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024 – Pillar 3 "Grow the visitor economy."
- Connecting with Country Framework – embed cultural interpretation and First Nations participation.

Expected Outcomes: Five activation nodes with co-located tourism and creative industry uses; shared branding and digital wayfinding.

Project 5 – Plateau Horticulture Diversification and Value-Add Program

Project Overview and Scope:
This program will support the intensification and diversification of high-value agriculture across the Lismore Plateau and adjoining transition zones. It aims to enhance production, processing, and branding capacity for horticultural products such as macadamias, berries, and avocados. Pilot a Small-Lot Rural Production Zone (for example 1–5 hectares) that enables a primary dwelling linked to an enterprise (horticulture/ processing / agrifood) with streamlined approval pathways and support seasonal and temporary uses (pop-up processing, farm-gate, harvest-season accommodation) through tailored permit settings.

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, farmer cooperatives, industry bodies (including the New South Wales Farmers' Association and the Australian Macadamia Society), and agribusiness investors. Collaboration with local training and research institutions will strengthen innovation and workforce development.

What It Will Deliver:
A coordinated investment program for shared processing facilities, cold-chain logistics, and regenerative farming transition, strengthening the region's agrifood competitiveness.

RLUS Themes: Strengthening Rural Economies and Sustaining the Environment

Strategic Rationale: Agriculture remains Lismore's economic base but faces succession and climate risks. Horticulture (macadamia, berries, avocados) is expanding yet processing and storage capacity are limited. This project focuses on co-operative processing, shared infrastructure, and regenerative farming transition.

Policy Alignment:

- Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024 – Pillar 2 "Support agribusiness and value-add."
- Climate Ready Lismore – transition to climate-resilient agriculture.
- Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2025 – encourage sustainable land management and soil health.

Expected Outcomes: Increase in value-added output; regional branding for horticultural products; water-efficient irrigation systems on plateau lands.

Project 6 – Northern Valleys Water Security and Flood Mitigation Feasibility

Project Overview and Scope:
This feasibility study will investigate water-security and flood-mitigation infrastructure options for the Northern Valleys — one of Lismore's most flood-affected agricultural areas. It will assess the technical, environmental, and economic feasibility of multi-use storage solutions (irrigation, energy co-use, and flood control).

Key Partners and Delivery Roles:
Lismore City Council, the New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (Water Division), the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Infrastructure New South Wales, the New South Wales Reconstruction Authority, and local farming enterprises. Early engagement with the Australian Government's *Water for Regions* and *Disaster Ready Fund* programs will be critical.

What It Will Deliver:
A feasibility report with hydrological modelling, cost-benefit analysis, and implementation roadmap to inform future capital funding submissions.

RLUS Themes: Sustaining the Environment and Strengthening Rural Economies

Strategic Rationale: Hydrological and topographical analysis identifies Northern Valleys as the most flood-affected production zone. Farmers report repeated crop loss and infrastructure damage. A multi-use water-storage and flood-mitigation feasibility study will test infrastructure options for irrigation and energy co-use.

Policy Alignment:

- Climate Ready Lismore – "Deliver climate-resilient water and energy systems."
- Inspire Lismore 2040 – Direction 5 "Invest in resilient infrastructure and community safety."
- Rural Zoning and LEP Reform Program – integrate floodplain management into zoning updates.

Expected Outcomes: Hydrological modelling; benefit–cost assessment; regional funding eligibility for NSW Water Security for Regions Program.

These six projects translate the RLUS from strategy into delivery. Each is backed by evidence, community insight, and alignment with Council's current policy suite, ensuring that Lismore's rural land strategy directly supports its adopted LSPS, climate-adaptation agenda, and economic-development priorities. Together, they present a funding-ready, implementable roadmap for resilient and inclusive rural growth.

20. BUSINESS CASE FRAMEWORK AND COST–BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

This section translates the six identified project opportunities into an initial business case and cost–benefit framework. It evaluates each initiative's potential social, economic, and environmental impacts, implementation pathway, and investment-readiness to guide Council's prioritisation and funding approach.

All assessments are high-level, informed by available data and stakeholder feedback gathered through the RLUS process. Detailed feasibility studies and financial modelling will be required to advance each project to business case or funding application stage.

Business Case Framework

To evaluate the six proposed project options, a business case assessment framework was developed that aligns with widely adopted investment evaluation principles. The framework ensures each initiative can be objectively tested for its economic, social, and environmental value, and that it aligns with Council's long-term strategic priorities.

Each project has been assessed through a triple-bottom-line approach, examining its contribution to sustainable growth, liveability, and resilience. This enables a consistent comparison of projects at different stages of maturity and provides a defensible basis for prioritisation and funding pursuit.

IMPACT AREA	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DATA SOURCES / REFERENCE
Economic	Local employment creation, gross regional product (GRP) contribution, private investment leverage, productivity uplift	Regional economic profile, cluster-level land-use data, ABS Census 2021
Social	Housing diversity, community wellbeing, accessibility of services, activation of rural centres	Community Scorecard Survey, Phase 2 narratives
Environmental	Land capability alignment, flood and hazard mitigation, biodiversity enhancement, emissions reduction	Climate Ready Lismore, Biodiversity Management Strategy
Governance and Delivery	Institutional alignment, funding pathways, partnerships, planning readiness	Inspire Lismore 2040, Council's Capital Works Plan

Each project's impacts have been rated on a low–medium–high scale, providing Council with a comparable index of benefit and readiness for implementation.

Cost–Benefit Summary

Indicative economic analysis has been applied to each project using benchmark multipliers for regional infrastructure, rural enterprise, and tourism investment. While these are preliminary and qualitative, they illustrate the scale of potential returns and prioritisation

PROJECT	INDICATIVE PLANNING / FEASIBILITY INVESTMENT (AUD)	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION VALUE RANGE (AUD)	PRIMARY BENEFITS	RELATIVE ECONOMIC LEVERAGE / RETURN POTENTIAL	DELIVERY HORIZON
1. Nimbin Large-Lot and Enterprise Growth Zone	$0.5–0.8 million	$8–10 million	Employment growth, small business expansion, rural housing	Moderate to High	Short–Medium
2. Clunes–Eltham Village Growth & Byron Interface Program	$0.4–0.7 million	$6–8 million	Housing supply, infrastructure coordination, service access	High	Short–Medium
3. Lismore East and West Urban–Rural Interface Corridors	$0.3–0.6 million	$5–7 million	Land-use efficiency, flood resilience, infrastructure sequencing	Moderate–High	Medium
4. Rail Trail Tourism and Enterprise Activation	$0.6–1.0 million	$10–15 million	Tourism revenue, creative industry jobs, regional branding	High	Short
5. Plateau Horticulture Diversification and Value-Add Program	$0.5–0.8 million	$8–12 million	Agricultural productivity, processing jobs, export growth	High	Medium
6. Northern Valleys Water Security and	$0.3–0.5 million	$2–3 million (feasibility study only)	Infrastructure resilience, water security,	Moderate	Short

PROJECT	INDICATIVE PLANNING / FEASIBILITY INVESTMENT (AUD)	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION VALUE RANGE (AUD)	PRIMARY BENEFITS	RELATIVE ECONOMIC LEVERAGE / RETURN POTENTIAL	DELIVERY HORIZON
Flood Mitigation Feasibility			flood-risk reduction		

Interpretation: At this stage, the financial figures represent indicative planning and feasibility investment needs, not full capital commitments. The "implementation value range" provides a sense of potential project magnitude if each initiative were developed to delivery stage in partnership with State and Federal agencies and excludes private investment required to fully activate.

Implementation Pathways

Each project has been mapped to a delivery pathway identifying the lead agency, key partners, and critical enabling actions. This provides a practical roadmap for Council to coordinate investment sequencing and partnerships.

PROJECT	LEAD AND KEY PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION STAGES	INDICATIVE FUNDING AND SUPPORT PATHWAYS
1. Nimbin Large-Lot and Enterprise Growth Zone	Lead: Lismore City Council (planning and facilitation). Partners: New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure; New South Wales Department of Regional New South Wales; Infrastructure New South Wales; local landowners and business associations.	Structure planning to servicing feasibility (sewer vs advanced septic; potable/recycled water staging) to rezoning to infrastructure design to subdivision and delivery.	Funding: Growing Regions Fund (Australian Government); Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (NSW); developer contributions; private co-investment.
2. Clunes–Eltham Village Growth and Byron Interface Program	Joint Lead: Lismore City Council and Byron Shire Council. Partners: New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure; utility providers; Department of Regional New South Wales.	Settlement framework to servicing feasibility (village edges; sewer vs advanced septic; potable/recycled water staging) to Local Environmental Plan amendment to joint servicing and	Funding: Regional Precincts Program (Australian Government); Housing Acceleration Fund (NSW); cross-council infrastructure partnership.

PROJECT	LEAD AND KEY PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION STAGES	INDICATIVE FUNDING AND SUPPORT PATHWAYS
		infrastructure strategy.	
3. Lismore East and West Urban–Rural Interface Corridors	Lead: Lismore City Council. Partners: New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure; Department of Primary Industries; Infrastructure New South Wales; water and transport agencies.	Peri-urban transition framework to servicing feasibility for peri-urban nodes (sewer vs advanced septic; potable/recycled water staging) to new planning controls to stormwater and flood-modelling integration.	Funding: Climate Ready Lismore Program; Resilient Infrastructure Grants; Regional Growth Fund.
4. Rail Trail Tourism and Enterprise Activation	Lead: Lismore City Council (masterplanning and coordination). Partners: Destination North Coast; Tourism and Hospitality Industry representatives; local chambers of commerce; First Nations organisations; local landholders.	Masterplanning to detailed design to activation works to branding and marketing.	Funding: Growing Regions Fund; Tourism Activation Grants; Regional Development and Funding Assistance programs; private tourism investment.
5. Plateau Horticulture Diversification and Value-Add Program	Lead: New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (agricultural leadership). Partners: Lismore City Council; farmer co-operatives; agribusiness investors; Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers; research institutions.	Feasibility and business case to co-operative formation to shared infrastructure to market access and branding.	Funding: New South Wales Primary Industries Fund; Regional Jobs Investment Package; industry co-funding; Australian Research Council agrifood innovation grants.
6. Northern Valleys Water Security and Flood Mitigation Feasibility	Joint Lead: Lismore City Council and New South Wales Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (Water Division). Partners: Department of Primary Industries; Infrastructure New	Feasibility to options modelling to cost–benefit analysis to project business case to capital works planning.	Funding: New South Wales Water Security for Regions Program; Australian Government Disaster Ready Fund; future State–Federal co-funding.

PROJECT	LEAD AND KEY PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION STAGES	INDICATIVE FUNDING AND SUPPORT PATHWAYS
	South Wales; New South Wales Reconstruction Authority; regional producer groups.		

Key Observations

- Council's Role: Focused on leadership, planning, and advocacy, not full funding.
- State Government: Critical for regulatory change, infrastructure co-investment, and program alignment (Planning, Regional NSW, Primary Industries, Infrastructure NSW).
- Federal Government: Primary source for large-scale capital and resilience funding (e.g., Growing Regions Fund, Disaster Ready Fund).
- Private Sector and Community: Expected to participate through co-operatives, landowner agreements, or tourism partnerships.
- Transport value case: Each project's access and freight improvements will be mapped to the state-funded road rebuild to demonstrate how new economic activity offsets depreciation impacts via employment, GRP uplift, and rate base growth.
- For all projects, incorporate digital connectivity requirements (National Broadband Network/mobile coverage, smart wayfinding, ag-tech enablement) to lift enterprise capacity and remote-work viability.

Delivery Barriers and Mitigation Strategies

The success of each Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS)–aligned project will depend not only on the strength of its business case but also on the collective ability of Council, State agencies, and delivery partners to anticipate and manage delivery barriers that could constrain implementation.

Barriers were identified through:

- Review of regulatory and infrastructure dependencies.
- Stakeholder engagement.
- Assessment of implementation risks based on similar regional projects.

Each barrier was then mapped against the corresponding mitigation strategy, identifying practical actions within Council's control or influence such as policy reform, early feasibility investment, or inter-agency coordination.

The resulting framework provides a risk-informed delivery roadmap, helping Council to focus early effort on the most material constraints and to strengthen its case for external funding.

BARRIER CATEGORY	COMMON ISSUES IDENTIFIED	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES
Planning and Regulatory	Outdated rural zoning controls (RU1/RU2) and lengthy rezoning and DA processes can delay project commencement.	Integrate priority projects within the upcoming Rural Zoning and LEP Reform Program; use early engagement with NSW Department Of Planning And Environment to establish streamlined pathways for rural enterprise and village growth proposals.
Infrastructure Capacity	Water, sewer, and road network constraints limit development potential in Nimbin, Clunes, and peri-urban corridors.	Align project staging with infrastructure upgrades identified in Inspire Lismore 2040 and Council's Capital Works Plan; coordinate with utility providers to embed RLUS projects in forward servicing schedules.
Financial Viability	Early-stage projects lack feasibility funding or private co-investment to progress beyond concept phase.	Secure enabling grants through the Growing Regions Fund and Regional Precincts Program; promote co-investment models such as public–private partnerships or community cooperatives.
Environmental and Flood Risk	Flood exposure, slope instability, and biodiversity constraints could affect project design and cost.	Integrate Climate Ready Lismore data into site selection and design; apply hazard-informed development controls and green infrastructure approaches to manage resilience and biodiversity impacts.
Community Confidence and Social Licence	Concerns about rural character, increased activity, or environmental impact may slow community support.	Implement early, transparent engagement; develop Village Character Statements and Design Codes ensuring that growth reflects local identity and values.

Each risk category has been assessed qualitatively based on likelihood, impact, and Council influence, with mitigation strategies prioritised accordingly. High-likelihood/high-impact risks—particularly zoning inflexibility and infrastructure constraints—are flagged for immediate action through the RLUS implementation plan and Council's forward work program.

Collectively, these strategies provide a risk-responsive implementation framework, ensuring that the six RLUS projects can progress from concept to delivery efficiently, sustainably, and with strong community and policy alignment.

Investment Readiness and Next Steps

Each project has been rated for investment readiness based on its policy alignment, technical definition, stakeholder support, and feasibility maturity. This assessment helps Council and its partners determine sequencing priorities for funding applications and delivery mobilisation.

PROJECT	INVESTMENT READINESS	NEXT STEP
Nimbin Large-Lot and Enterprise Growth Zone	**Medium**	Initiate structure plan and rezoning; prepare business case for Growing Regions Fund.
Clunes–Eltham Village Growth & Byron Interface	**Medium**	Joint settlement framework and LEP amendment with Byron Shire Council.
Lismore East & West Urban–Rural Corridors	**Medium**	Peri-urban transition guidelines and hazard mapping.
Rail Trail Tourism & Enterprise Activation	**High**	Activation masterplan; identify priority nodes and delivery partners.
Plateau Horticulture Diversification Program	**Medium**	Feasibility and co-operative business case with Department of Primary Industries.
Northern Valleys Water Security Feasibility	**Emerging**	Commence hydrological study and funding application to Water Security for Regions.

RLUS Implementation Governance

To progress these projects, Council may establish a Rural Land Use Strategy Implementation Working Group, convened quarterly, comprising Council officers and representatives from:

- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Department of Primary Industries / Regional NSW
- Infrastructure NSW
- Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers
- Local stakeholder and industry groups

This governance structure will coordinate sequencing, funding applications, and monitoring of project progress against RLUS objectives.

Monitoring and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To ensure the RLUS projects deliver measurable and enduring benefits, Council should consider establishing a structured monitoring and evaluation framework linked to the Implementation Working Group.

This would involve defining clear KPIs for each project to track delivery progress, investment leverage, and community outcomes.

Proposed Monitoring Approach

Council should consider:

- Defining KPIs per project, covering economic, social, environmental, and delivery outcomes such as:
    - Jobs supported and local business formation
    - Value-added output and private co-investment leveraged
    - Serviced lots and infrastructure delivered
    - Reduction in hazard exposure and improved environmental performance
    - Visitor-spend and enterprise activation linked to tourism and agrifood initiatives
- Establishing baseline data from 2024–25 Council datasets and feasibility studies.
- Setting short-term (1 year) and medium-term (3 year) targets aligned with each project's delivery horizon.
- Integrating KPI reporting into annual RLUS progress updates and Council's Delivery Program reporting cycle.

Governance and Reporting

- Monitoring and evaluation should be coordinated through the RLUS Implementation Working Group, with representation from key State partners and Council units (strategic planning, infrastructure, economic development, environment).
- KPI results should be reviewed annually to:
    - Assess progress against objectives
    - Re-sequence projects or adjust delivery priorities
    - Support evidence-based funding applications and advocacy.
- The Working Group may also maintain a shared risk and performance register, linking identified delivery barriers to mitigation actions and KPI performance trends.

APPENDIX 1: REVIEWED MATERIALS, KEY DOCUMENTS AND DATA SOURCES

The development of the Lismore Rural Land Use Strategy (RLUS) was underpinned by a comprehensive desktop review of over 100 documents supplied by Lismore City Council and publicly available sources. These documents span strategic planning, infrastructure, environment, economic development, and housing, and form the foundational evidence base for the RLUS. They have been reviewed thematically in alignment with the RLUS scope and Council's strategic pillars.

Council Strategies and Plans

- Inspire Lismore 2040 – Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)
- Growth and Realignment Strategy (2022)
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPandR)

Council Plan 2022–2026

- Economic Development Strategy 2019–2024
- Affordable and Diverse Housing Strategy (2024)
- Climate Ready Lismore (Draft)
- Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2025
- Destination Management Plan and Events Strategy
- Infrastructure Readiness and Local Environmental Plan (LEP) Review

Post-Disaster and Recovery Reports

- 2022 Flood Recovery Documentation and Community Submissions
- Infrastructure Mapping Working Paper (LCC)
- Community Engagement Summaries from Rural Industry Roundtables

Technical Inputs and Assessments

- LEP and Zoning Maps (current and proposed amendments)
- Servicing and Infrastructure Assessments
- Land Capability and Agricultural Mapping (NSW DPI)
- ABS Census Data 2021 and Regional Projections
- NSW Planning Portal and DPIE Spatial Datasets
- Northern Rivers Joint Organisation Planning and Economic Strategies
- SEED Environmental Data NSW
- Soil and Landscape Grid of Australia
- Lismore City Council Intramaps (LismorePublic > Bush Fire Prone Land Map (BFPLM))

Stakeholder Engagement and Industry Intelligence

- Sector insights from Norco, NSW Farmers Federation, and local producers.
- Submissions from rural community associations and landholders
- Previous Council-led workshops, surveys, and consultation records

Planning for Agriculture in Rural Land Use Strategy

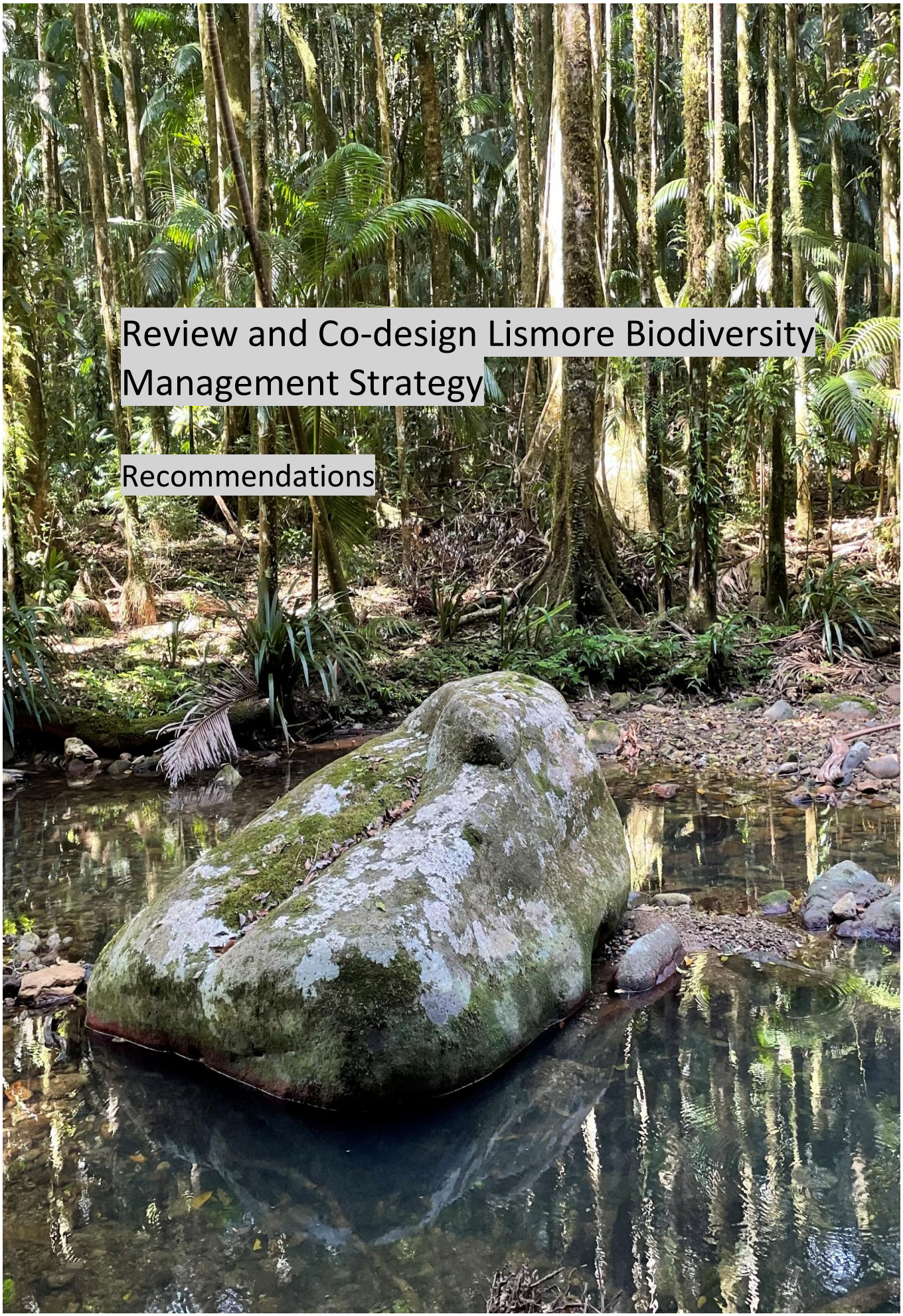
- Local Strategic Planning Statements – Agricultural Planning Advice for Councils
- Planning for Agriculture in Rural Land Use Strategies - May 2022
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production and Rural Development) 2019
- NSW Right to Farm Policy
- NSW Maintaining Land for Agricultural Industries Policy Jurisdiction Zoning Review

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Review and Co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy

Recommendations

Project control

Project name: **Review and Co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy** Recommendations

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1 Executive Summary

Australian Wetlands Consulting (AWC) has been engaged by Lismore City Council (LCC) to carry out a review and co-design of the *Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2035* (BMS). A review of the BMS is required every five years to ensure that LCC is on track to meet the commitments of the BMS and ensure that the most up-to-date and effective tools, knowledges and resources are being utilised to do so.

This report contains a suite of recommendations for a revised BMS based on the review of changes in the operating environment since the previous BMS review in 2019, internal and external stakeholder consultation and evaluation of the implementation of the BMS. The recommendations address a range of matters including the program logic, framework for delivery for the BMS, objectives, actions and performance indicators.

The evaluation of the implementation of the BMS recommended consideration of a revised program logic that replaces the current 'streams' with 'themes' and this has been incorporated into the recommendations for the revised BMS.

Several key opportunities emerged from the supporting work carried out for the BMS review which have been addressed in the recommendation, being:

- Incorporation of BMS in Council planning documents
- Council land for offsetting biodiversity impacts
- Aquatic environment
- Council as facilitator and educator
- Resilience in ecological restoration
- Ecological restoration approach
- Structure and presentation of the BMS
- First Nations Engagement
- Monitoring of implementation and outcomes

Several key impediments to implementation of the BMS were identified in the supporting work conducted for the BMS review and these have been incorporated in the recommendations where feasible.

The objectives associated with each stream have been consolidated, amended and refined to align with the recommended themes. An amended framework for the revised BMS, comprising themes and revised objectives, has been developed to reflect the outcomes of the supporting work conducted for the BMS review.

2 Introduction and Background

Australian Wetlands Consulting (AWC) has been engaged by Lismore City Council (LCC) to carry out a review and co-design of the *Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2035* (BMS). A review of the BMS is required every five years to ensure that LCC is on track to meet the commitments of the BMS and ensure that the most up-to-date and effective tools, knowledges and resources are being utilised to do so.

This review of the BMS is supported by Action 5.2.1 which states:

> *Undertake a comprehensive operational review of the BMS, including:*
>
> - *Updates to mapping, biodiversity databases, scientific knowledge, legislation and industry practice*
> - *The progress on all actions, their prioritisation and resourcing needs*
> - *Engagement with key internal and external stakeholders*

2.1 Outline

This report contains a suite of recommendations for a revised BMS based on the review of changes in the operating environment since the previous BMS review in 2019, internal and external stakeholder consultation and evaluation of the implementation of the BMS. The supporting work that has informed the suite of recommendations can be found in:

- Australian Wetlands Consulting (2025) *Review and co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy: Evaluation Report*. Prepared by Australian Wetlands Consulting for Lismore City Council (ER) (refer Appendix A – Evaluation Report)
- Australian Wetlands Consulting (2025) *Review and co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy: Operating Environment Review*. Prepared by Australian Wetlands Consulting for Lismore City Council (OER) (refer Appendix B – Operating Environment Review)
- Australian Wetlands Consulting (2025) *Review and co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy: Stakeholder Engagement Report*. Prepared by Australian Wetlands Consulting for Lismore City Council. (SER) (refer Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report)

The recommendations address a range of matters including the framework for delivery for the BMS, revised objectives and actions, monitoring of implementation and biodiversity outcomes and communication.

The current BMS separates actions into three ‘streams’ being Internal, Rural and Urban. The Evaluation Report recommended consideration of a revised program logic that replaces the current ‘streams’ with ‘themes’ that extend across the entire Lismore LGA. Several themes emerged from the review process that are relevant to rural, urban and Council land and activities such as:

- Resilience and adaptation to climate change and natural hazards
- Protect natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity
- Promote green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability

Recommended revisions to the BMS framework including the themes and revised objectives and actions are detailed in Section 3. Recommendations for ongoing implementation of the revised BMS are provided in

Section 15.

The current BMS also contains 10 performance indicators. The performance indicators are expected to require reconsideration and/or re-alignment with the revised framework, objectives and actions. Should the revised BMS continue to contain performance indicators, it is recommended that actions be added to ensure necessary information is collected to demonstrate, and report on, progress in achieving performance indicators.

2.2 Background

The first edition of BMS (LCC, 2015) was prepared by Lismore City Council over 2013-2015 and adopted in May 2015 and focused on developing existing and new community partnerships.

This second edition of the BMS (LCC, 2020) was informed by the first, four-yearly review, which identified changes to the scientific and legislative context, progress on actions to date, barriers to implementation, and priorities for the next period. This second edition of the BMS (LCC, 2020) focused on integration of biodiversity management into all of Council's functions.

2.3 BMS Purpose

The BMS identifies the most important natural assets of the LCC LGA, the threats to these assets and the strategies and actions to manage these threats (LCC, 2020). The BMS is integral to delivering relevant goals of the LCC local strategic planning statement (LSPS), referred to as 'Inspire Lismore 2040' (LCC, 2020b).

The BMS is designed as a medium to long term strategy (20 years) and extends to 2035.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Opportunities

Several opportunities emerged from the supporting work carried out for the BMS review. These opportunities ranged from incorporation of the BMS into LCC strategic planning documents to pro-active sourcing of biodiversity offset sites. Key opportunities identified by the review are discussed below.

3.1.1 Incorporation of BMS in Council planning documents

A desire for the BMS to be referenced in other LCC planning documents arose during internal stakeholder workshops (Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report). Implementation of the BMS is expected to benefit from cohesion and consistency with relevant LCC strategic planning documents such as the LSPS but also by incorporation into development assessment from inclusion of a biodiversity management requirement in the local environmental plan (LEP).

The need for consistency in formatting and messaging between the BMS and other Council strategic planning documents was also identified during internal stakeholder workshops.

3.1.2 Council land for offsetting biodiversity impacts

LCC could benefit from establishing a database of locations at which ecological rehabilitation works could be completed. These locations could be used to offset vegetation and habitat removal:

- required by Council works/activities,
- proposed by development applications where on-site offsetting is not feasible and the vegetation removal is not governed by the biodiversity offset scheme (BOS), and/or
- where Council has successfully pursued compliance and enforcement.

LCC is not currently offsetting vegetation and habitat removal associated with its works program and does not have an express strategy for utilising funds collected via compliance and enforcement of unapproved vegetation and habitat clearing.

There may also be an opportunity for Council to add to the locations at which ecological rehabilitation works could be completed. This could be via options including:

a. Subdivision development applications which create residual lots with minimal development potential but suitable to create/enhance habitat or that are in priority locations (e.g., riparian zones and wildlife corridors).
b. Suitable locations along road corridors or within road reserves.

3.1.3 Aquatic environment

A lack of express consideration of the aquatic environment in the BMS was identified during stakeholder workshops (Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report). Objectives and actions in the BMS relating to the aquatic environment are limited to those associated with the *Coastal Zone Management Plan for the Richmond River Estuary* (CZMP) and the *Coastal Management Program* (CMP). The 2022 flooding events created a reorientation in socio-cultural perspectives toward waterways in the LGA as evidence by feedback received from stakeholder engagement. There is an opportunity for the BMS to champion and contribute to

the improvement of the condition of the aquatic environment, particularly in the upper areas of catchments, and to facilitate reconnection of the community with waterways in the Lismore LGA. Options for facilitating community re-engagement with waterways and the aquatic environment include:

- Holding public events (e.g., workshops) at key waterway sites
- Development and implementation of education programs that 'bridge the gap' between the health of aquatic environments and biodiversity
- Establishing an ambient water quality monitoring program for urban waterways in and around Lismore city. Water quality results would be shared with the community via a targeted communication approach

3.1.4 Council as facilitator and educator

External stakeholder consultation identified that Council may achieve the best value from resources in the role of facilitator and educator. Internal stakeholder consultation identified a lack of skilled staff resources to deliver Council's environmental communication and education commitments (Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report). Engaging a person or organisation with skills and experience with science communication and education would be valuable in Council bolstering its role as facilitator and educator.

The supporting work conducted for the BMS review has identified communication and education opportunities including:

- Work with Rous County Council to educate and upskill landholders and relevant industries about key biosecurity risks and issues that may impact on biodiversity and habitat rehabilitation projects. There may also be an opportunity to establish or improve reciprocal sharing of biosecurity information/data between LCC and Rous County Council, relevant state, federal or scientific agencies.
- Utilise the potential collaboration opportunities presented by local and regional events to facilitate region-wide network building and resilience (e.g., a workshop held in collaboration with Lismore Friends of the Rainforest Botanic Gardens, support and integration of Bat Night with other community events in March/April)
- Communication and celebration of BMS milestones and achievements
- Facilitation and hosting of events listed in the revised BMS
- Development and support of citizen science programs to monitor biodiversity actions and outcomes and engage and motivate the community
- Educating new rural landholders on biodiversity issues and opportunities and biosecurity challenges and weeds/pest species to recognise and control.

3.1.5 Resilience in ecological restoration

The 2019 bushfires and 2022 floods impacted areas of valuable biodiversity including habitat regeneration and restoration projects. Lessons from these recent natural disasters and natural hazards generally should be incorporated in the objectives and actions of the BMS.

The value and role of vegetated riparian zones in flood mitigation emerged as a key point of feedback from external stakeholder engagement (Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report). Methods and approaches for carrying out natural hazard and climate-resilient ecological restoration, particularly for riparian zones, should be investigated, communicated and adopted for the Lismore LGA.

The interaction between the revegetation and restoration of riparian zones and the implementation of

nature-based solutions (NBS) for flood mitigation should also be investigated as synergies are likely.

Feedback on the impacts of, and adaptation to, natural hazards and climate change captured by the stakeholder engagement process included:

- Flood resilient floristic assemblages may include native species outside of their regular habitat type (e.g., the persistence of planted Swamp Mahogany (*Eucalyptus robusta*) through the 2022 floods at Rocky Creek, Coronation Park)
- Utilising hydro dispersal in the seedbank can reduce restoration effort and maximise chances of success (e.g., focusing on restoration works downstream from the Boat Harbour Big Scrub remnant)
- Carrying out weed management step-by-step to reduce erosion and assist in retaining bank stability (e.g., in some circumstances it can be beneficial to conduct complete removal of ground level weeds whilst large woody species such as Camphor Laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*) are poisoned, but temporarily retained, until restoration planting is established and has developed a canopy)
- Supporting restoration projects based on location and a consideration of natural hazards can maximise the benefit of ecological enhancement projects
- Prioritising Council bush regeneration works on land adjoining, or containing, High Conservation Value (HCV) vegetation would provide biodiversity enhancement benefits
- Developing guidance for habitat and riparian restoration with minimal or no herbicide use may facilitate the desired outcome of encouraging landholders reluctant to use chemicals to engage in restoration works on their properties

3.1.6 Ecological restoration approach

The need for Council to promote ecological restoration over revegetation was identified in the supporting work conducted for the BMS review. The ecological restoration approach is intended to restore the entire ecosystem and provide multi-species resilience. The ecological restoration approach may include:

- Ecological restoration of Koala habitat rather than planting of Koala feed trees
- Riparian restoration and NBS
- The promotion of, and education regarding, overlooked species and the value of including them in ecological restoration projects
- Ongoing ecological restoration of the Big Scrub and other rainforest
- Creating landscape linkages which connect isolated habitats, encourage genetic exchange, allow for natural movement of species and that extend ecosystems across climatic and elevation gradients
- Recognising the importance of fire in the landscape and restoration objectives. Rainforest habitat for instance will colonise adjoining sclerophyll forests in the absence of fire, with the gradual removal of valuable habitat features as Koala food trees, old growth Grass Trees, etc

3.1.7 Structure and presentation of the BMS

Both internal and external stakeholder engagement processes identified the need for structural and formatting changes to increase accessibility and interest in the BMS. The following formatting and structural changes should be considered for the revised BMS to maximise readability and engagement:

- Breaking up of the action tables into smaller sections (i.e., one table for each objective rather than a table for each stream) and placing the smaller action tables at the end of the relevant section/objective

- Include case studies and specific examples
- Reduction of text information and increased use of graphics, images, maps and simple flow charts
- Incorporate the performance indicators (measures of success) into the body of the BMS rather than their current location in an appendix

Inspiration can be sourced from similar, recently released strategies such as the *Tweed Conservation Strategy 2025-2035* (TSC, 2025) and *Byron Shire Council Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2020 – 2030* (BSC, 2020).

3.1.8 First Nations Engagement

Feedback from First Nations stakeholders was not received during the period allowed for external consultation (Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report). The granting of Native Title to the Widjabul Wia-bal Gurrumbil Aboriginal Corporation is a significant change since the last review of the BMS. There is also an increasing awareness of the benefits of cultural burning to not only reduce fuel loads but promote growth of native plants and maintain biodiversity. These changes necessitate engagement with, and involvement of, First Nations stakeholders in biodiversity management in the Lismore LGA. The revised BMS should include the following:

- Opportunities for First Nations stakeholders to participate in the BMS delivery and actions
- Identification of any barriers to implementing cultural burning in the LGA
- The promotion of biodiversity management methods in the LGA that have been prepared in consultation with the Widjabul Wia-bal Gurrumbil Aboriginal Corporation and in alignment with developed First Nations Cultural Protocols

3.1.9 Monitoring of implementation and outcomes

Monitoring of implementation and outcomes is required to ensure that actions prescribed in the BMS are being carried out, but also that biodiversity objectives are being achieved. Council has been monitoring implementation (Appendix A – Evaluation Report) however there is a lack of monitoring to demonstrate whether the implementation of actions is resulting in biodiversity improvements. Time and cost-efficient biodiversity monitoring methods are available and should be considered for the revised BMS. Considerations for biodiversity outcome monitoring include:

- Use of remote sensing and spatial tools for measuring native vegetation cover, weed cover and habitat areas and extents
- Incorporating citizen science databases into analysis (e.g., eBird, Atlas of Living Australia)
- Use of proxy indicators of ecosystem health to reduce reliance on in-depth sampling (e.g., aquatic macroinvertebrates for stream health)

All monitoring programs should be developed to ensure both cost-efficient and obtaining scientifically useful data. Practical monitoring design should be established prior to allocating costs, rather than general funding being sought and how to use the funds being determined subsequently. Clear aims for the use of the data should be established as part of any program design and adaptive management should be an integral component

3.2 Impediments to implementation

Several impediments to implementation of the BMS were identified in the supporting work conducted for the BMS review, which included:

- A lack of Council procedures for managing impacts of activities on biodiversity

- Absence of incentives for partner organisations to carry out monitoring in collaborative projects
- High Conservation Value (HCV) mapping and associated attributes requiring updating to reflect contemporary on-the-ground information
- A lack of, and need for, comprehensive data management protocols to ensure monitoring of BMS implementation and projects is coherently captured for the life of the BMS and/or project

3.3 Framework

Revisions to the current framework are recommended based on the outcomes of the BMS review. It is suggested that transitioning to themes be considered over the current streams (Internal, Rural and Urban). The themes will better align with the goals of the current BMS (refer to Figure 3.1).

- Develop a greater understanding of the flora and fauna, habitats and ecological processes of the area and their value
- Identify and mitigate the pressures on these biodiversity values
- Improve the broader community's awareness of biodiversity through education and engagement activities
- Foster partnerships with and build capacity for rural landholders, industry and community groups to improve biodiversity stewardship on private lands
- Foster partnerships with and build capacity for community groups to protect and improve biodiversity on Council-managed, public lands
- Promote a landscape connectivity approach as the basis for managing biodiversity and building landscape resilience to climate change
- Embed the principles of ecologically sustainable development into planning processes
- Provide a long-term strategic framework to guide on-the-ground actions that lead to measurable biodiversity outcomes
- Foster an adaptive management approach so that the strategy can continuously improve on its delivery

Figure 3.1 Goals of the current BMS

The recommended themes relate to biodiversity management and outcomes, and the use of themes acknowledges that many objectives relate to more than one of the current streams. The objectives associated with each stream have been consolidated, amended and refined to align with the recommended themes. An amended framework for the revised BMS, comprising themes and revised objectives, has been developed to reflect the outcomes of the supporting work conducted for the BMS review and is outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Amended framework, themes and objectives for the revised BMS

Themes	Revised objectives
Adaptation to climate change and natural hazards	1. Consider climate change and natural hazards in biodiversity management 2. Promote ecological restoration approaches that support or improve flood resilience 3. Encourage consideration of biodiversity resilience in strategic planning and planning

Themes	Revised objectives
	assessments 4. Promote landscape connectivity in biodiversity management and ecological restoration
Protect and enhance natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity	5. Identify and assess pressures and threats to biodiversity 6. Mitigate and manage pressures and threats to biodiversity 7. Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity in strategic planning and development assessment processes 8. Identify opportunities for offsetting biodiversity impacts 9. Protect and improve biodiversity partnerships and incentives
Enhance green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability	10. Leverage biodiversity outcomes through urban greening initiatives and encouraging green infrastructure 11. Support best practice biodiversity management in Council operations 12. Continue implementation of the Urban Green Corridors Plan and Roadside Vegetation Management Plan
Monitor and communicate biodiversity management and outcomes	13. Inform and educate the community on biodiversity management 14. Collect, refine and use spatial data for biodiversity management decision-making 15. Prioritise communication of biodiversity management actions and outcomes 16. Monitor and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes 17. Participate in, and support, local and regional partnerships 18. Identify opportunities for First Nations stakeholders to participate in the biodiversity management

A graphic presentation of the amended framework for the revised BMS is illustrated in Figure 3.2.

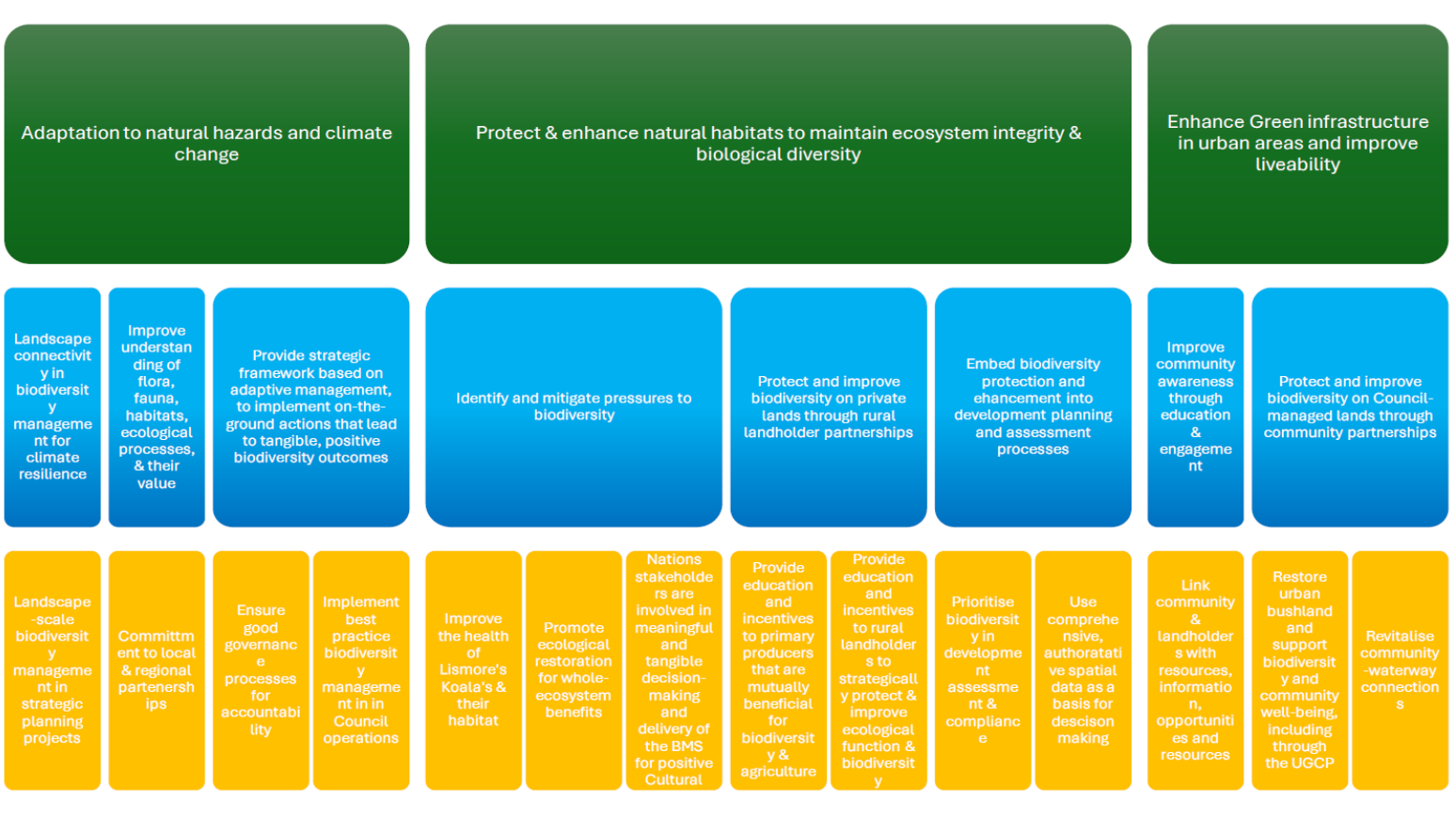


Figure 3.2 Graphic presentation of framework for revised BMS

4 Revised Actions

A suite of new and revised actions has been developed to reflect the outcomes of the supporting work conducted for the BMS review and are outlined in the sections and tables below. The new and revised actions have been listed under the recommended themes. Actions from the current BMS that have been retained or refined are identified with a reference their Identifier in the current BMS.

Drafting of the new and revised actions should be carefully reviewed and amended, if required, to avoid some of the identified challenges to achieving actions in the BMS over the last 5 years (Appendix A – Evaluation Report) including:

- Avoid combining multiple outputs into a single action.
- Be careful using specific wording as this reduces or prevents flexibility in delivery of the action.
- Be careful using overly vague wording as this can prevent confirming the action has been achieved.
- Incorporate interim or annual steps into ongoing actions.

4.1 Adaptation to climate change and natural hazards

New and revised actions have been developed to support the 'Adaptation to climate change and natural hazards' theme and associated objectives being:

1. Consider climate change and natural hazards in biodiversity management
2. Promote ecological restoration approaches that support or improve flood resilience
3. Encourage consideration of biodiversity resilience in strategic planning and planning assessments
4. Promote landscape connectivity in biodiversity management and ecological restoration

The suggested actions for the 'Adaptation to climate change and natural hazards' theme are detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Adaptation to climate change and natural hazards - Actions

Action number	Action	Notes
Objective 1. Consider climate change and natural hazards in biodiversity management		
1.1	Investigate the impacts of the 2022 floods on riparian vegetation	New action
1.2	Assess the impacts of the recent floods and bush fires on bushland restoration projects	New action
1.3.	Develop a mechanism to incorporate current knowledge and spatial data on natural hazards into biodiversity management decision-making	New action
1.4	Develop a method to track habitat lost from natural hazards	New action - extension of current actions e.g., 2.2.1, 3.2.1-3.2.3
1.5	Develop an understanding of anticipated impacts of climate change on biodiversity in the Lismore City Council area	New action
Objective 2. Promote ecological restoration approaches that support or improve flood resilience		
2.1	Investigate approaches to ecological restoration that have potential to improve biodiversity and reduce flooding	New action
2.2	Prepare a guideline/factsheet for improving flood resilience through ecological restoration	New action
Objective 3. Encourage consideration of biodiversity resilience in strategic planning and planning assessments		
3.1	Investigate opportunities to incorporate consideration of biodiversity resilience in strategic planning	New action
3.2	Investigate opportunities to incorporate consideration of biodiversity resilience in development assessment	New action
Objective 4. Promote landscape connectivity in biodiversity management and ecological restoration		
4.1	Encourage and prioritise biodiversity management and ecological restoration effort in wildlife corridors	New action
4.2	Encourage and prioritise biodiversity management and ecological restoration effort that connects separate areas of high conservation value vegetation or habitat	New action

4.2 Protect and enhance natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity

New and revised actions have been developed to support the 'Protect and enhance natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity' theme and associated objectives being:

5. Identify and assess pressures and threats to biodiversity
6. Mitigate and manage pressures and threats to biodiversity
7. Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity in strategic planning and development assessment processes
8. Identify opportunities for offsetting biodiversity impacts
9. Protect and improve biodiversity through partnerships and incentives

The suggested actions for the 'Protect and enhance natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity' theme are detailed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Protect and enhance natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity - Actions

Action number	Action	Notes
Objective 5. Identify and assess pressures and threats to biodiversity		
5.1	Continue to identify threats and pressures to biodiversity and undertake control projects where required	Revised action - based on Action 10.1.3 – currently restricted to threats and the Urban stream. Expanded to entire LGA. Split into two actions – 5.1 and 5.2
5.2	Develop and undertake projects to mitigate and manage threats and pressures to biodiversity	Revised action - based on Action 10.1.3 – currently restricted to threats and the Urban stream. Expanded to entire LGA. Split into two actions – 5.1 and 5.2
5.3	Develop and maintain knowledge of biosecurity issues that have the potential to impact biodiversity and habitat restoration projects	New action
Objective 6. Mitigate and manage pressures and threats to biodiversity		
6.1	Continue weed management in high value biodiversity areas, priority riparian areas and/or in association with habitat restoration projects	Revised action - based on Action 10.1.2 – limited to weed control but expanded beyond riparian areas. Bush regeneration separated into Action 10.2
6.2	Maintain a partnership with Rous County Council to continue addressing biosecurity issues for biodiversity	New action
6.3	Continue to implement mitigation measures according to the priorities identified in the Wildlife Roadkill Mitigation Report 2019 and monitor their effectiveness	Previous Action 4.2.1
6.4	Maintain any installed road strike mitigation infrastructure including retrofitted culverts, fencing, grids, pavement markings and signs	Previous Action 4.2.4
6.5	Investigate opportunities to mitigate and manage pressures and threats to biodiversity	New Action
6.6	Work with community partners and other stakeholders to collect data on wildlife road strikes to inform mitigation and management	Revised action – based on Action 4.2.2
6.7	Work with neighbouring councils and other stakeholders on a regional approach to mitigating wildlife roadstrike	Revised action – based on Action 4.2.3
6.8	Support education on ways for owners to minimise impacts on biodiversity from their pets	Revised action – based on Action 10.3.3

Action number	Action	Notes
Objective 7. Embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity in strategic planning and development assessment processes		
7.1	Integrate the BMS into other Council strategic planning documents	New Action
7.2	Support and promote integration of the BMS into the Local Environmental Plan and other strategic plans	New Action
7.3	Participate in the update of Council plans and policies regarding biodiversity management	Revised action – based on Action 1.1.1
7.4	Participate in the ongoing update of internal DA assessment procedures, guidelines, checklists and standard conditions relating to biodiversity impact assessment, mitigation and management	Revised action – based on Action 2.1.3
7.5	Provide a biodiversity management induction for new DA assessment staff	Revised action – based on Action 2.3.1
7.6	Support and contribute to the preparation of the Richmond River Coastal Management Program (CMP)	Revised action – based on Action 6.1.1 and 6.1.2
7.7	Support and contribute to the review of the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management	New action
Objective 8. Identify opportunities for offsetting biodiversity impacts		
8.1	Establish a record of Council land suitable for ecological rehabilitation works that could be used to offset vegetation and habitat removal	Revised action – based on Action 1.1.2
8.2	Develop a strategy for providing offsets within the Lismore LGA for vegetation and habitat removal associated with: a. required by Council works/activities, b. proposed by development applications where on-site offsetting is not feasible and the vegetation removal is not governed by the biodiversity offset scheme (BOS), and/or c. where Council has successfully pursued compliance and enforcement	New action
8.3	Investigate the option for Council to acquire land suitable for ecological rehabilitation via subdivision DAs that create residual lots with minimal development potential but are suitable to create/enhance habitat or that are in priority locations (e.g., riparian zones and wildlife corridors)	New action
8.4	Assess Council road reserves and road corridors for suitable locations for ecological rehabilitation works	New action
8.5	Investigate the opportunity for Council to acquire land suitable for ecological rehabilitation through the New South Wales Reconstruction Authority	New action
8.6	Investigate the potential for Council to enter into biodiversity stewardship agreements	New action
Objective 9. Protect and improve biodiversity through partnerships and incentives		

Action number	Action	Notes
9.1	Continue to employ the RLI Extension Officer to support private landholders in improving biodiversity on rural properties	Revised action – based on Action 9.1.1
9.2	Deliver a small grants program to support ecological restoration projects on rural properties	Revised action – based on Action 9.1.3
9.3	Complete the trial of providing grants to individual landowners and community groups in alternate years	Revised action – based on Action 9.1.4
9.4	Investigate options to incentivise monitoring of ecological restoration projects funded by RLI grants	Revised action – based on Action 9.1.5
9.5	Provide a source of information on the RLI program and opportunities for the community	Revised action – based on Action 9.2.2
9.6	Continue to work with industry, primary producers and other partners on current and emerging ecological restoration projects	Revised action – based on Action 9.3.1
9.7	Investigate development of a strategy to prioritise RLI projects based on the principles of protecting and restoring ecological function and biodiversity	New action
9.8	Provide an extension service to support individuals and community groups engaged in koala habitat restoration (KPoM #14)	Previous action 8.3.1
9.9	Develop and implement priorities for a koala habitat restoration program (KPoM #15)	Previous action 8.3.2
9.10	Continue to utilise external funding opportunities to implement the koala habitat restoration program (KPoM #15)	Previous action 8.3.3

4.3 Enhance green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability

New and revised actions have been developed to support the 'Enhance green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability' theme and associated objectives being:

10. Leverage biodiversity outcomes through urban greening initiatives and encouraging green infrastructure
11. Support best practice biodiversity management in Council operations
12. Continue implementation of the Urban Green Corridors Plan and Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

The suggested actions for the 'Enhance green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability' theme are detailed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Enhance green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability - Actions

Action number	Action	
Objective 10. Leverage biodiversity outcomes through urban greening initiatives and encouraging green infrastructure		
10.1	Continue bush regeneration in high value biodiversity areas and in association with habitat restoration projects	Revised action - based on Action 10.1.2 – limited to bush regeneration but expanded beyond riparian areas. Weed control into Action 6.1
10.2	Assist schools and community groups in applying for funding for management of urban and/or riparian bushland	Revised action – based on Action 10.2.2
10.3	Provide support for Landcare groups to adopt safe work methods when conducting ecological maintenance and restoration	Revised action – based on Action 10.2.3
10.4	Provide appropriate infrastructure and interpretation to connect residents with urban bushland reserves	Previous Action 10.3.5
10.5	Seek opportunities to partner with organisations, including Northern Rivers Science Hub (NRSH), Southern Cross University (SCU) and health organisations, to deliver educational and wellbeing activities around local biodiversity	Previous Action 10.3.6
10.6	Identify and promote established citizen science projects, for example Backyard Bird Count and the Great Koala Count	Revised action - based on Action 10.3.7– limited to promotion of citizen science projects. Communication of results separated into Action 15.3
Objective 11. Support best practice biodiversity management in Council operations		
11.1	Detail the activities (programs, projects and events) from the BMS that will be undertaken during a financial year as part of Council's Operational Plan	Previous Action 5.1.1
11.2	Undertake a comprehensive operational review of the BMS, including: a. Updates to mapping, biodiversity databases, scientific knowledge, legislation and b. industry practice c. The progress on all actions, their prioritisation and resourcing needs	Previous Action 5.2.1

Action number	Action	
	d. Engagement with key internal and external stakeholders	
11.3	Investigate opportunities to incorporate best practice biodiversity management in Council operations	New action
Objective 12. Continue implementation of the Urban Green Corridors Plan and Roadside Vegetation Management Plan		
12.1	Continue implementing the bushland restoration works program (UGCP #1)	Previous Action 10.1.1
12.2	Develop appropriate place-based responses/initiatives to protect urban bushland reserves from weeds on adjacent private property as identified during bushland health assessments or restoration works (UGCP #8-11)	Previous Action 10.3.4
12.3	Provide information for landholders wanting to control Indian Mynas on their property (UGCP #13)	Revised action – based on Action 10.3.8
12.4	Develop and implement an annual works schedule which prioritises weed control in areas of HCV around road infrastructure (RVMP #5.2.2)	Action 4.1.1
12.5	Coordinate a biennial audit of roadside HCV guideposts with roads and maintenance team, and reinstall as required (RVMP #8.8)	Revised Action – based on Actions 4.1.2 and 4.1.3
12.6	Review implementation of the RVMP to identify achievements, barriers and pathways for improvement	Revised Action – based on Action 4.1.5
12.7	Provide financial support for Landcare groups, schools and community groups undertaking management of urban and/or riparian bushland (UGCP #15)	Revised action – based on Action 10.2.1
12.8	Develop, install and maintain interpretive signage to promote the values of urban bushland reserves at sites that currently contain walking tracks or have facilitated public access, including Tucki Tucki Creek, Wilsons River, Robinsons Lookout, and Rotary Park (UGCP #24)	New action
12.9	Encourage use of the Tucki Tucki Land Acquisition Strategy to carry out ecological restoration works throughout the Tucki Tucki corridor	New action
12.10	Engage with private landholders within the Urban Green Corridor to encourage and support ecological restoration on private land (UGCP #3)	New action
12.11	Undertake revegetation activities to establish a minimum of 0.4 hectares of native vegetation each year, which is suitable habitat for koalas (UGCP #4)	New action
12.12	Undertake revegetation activities to establish a minimum of 0.6 hectares of vegetated riparian zone and/or rainforest each year (UGCP #5)	New action

Action number	Action	
12.13	Install signs at revegetation sites advising of the bush regeneration works in progress and the impacts of dumping garden waste (UGCP #9)	New action
12.14	Review the UGCP and management activities undertaken to inform development of the works program (UGCP #29)	Revised action – based on Action 10.1.6

4.4 Monitor and communicate biodiversity management and outcomes

New and revised actions have been developed to support the 'Monitor and communicate biodiversity management and outcomes' theme and associated objectives being:

13. Inform and educate the community on biodiversity management
14. Collect, refine and use spatial data for biodiversity management decision-making
15. Prioritise communication of biodiversity management actions and outcomes
16. Monitor and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes
17. Participate in, and support, local and regional partnerships
18. Identify opportunities for First Nations stakeholders to participate in the biodiversity management

The suggested actions for the 'Monitor and communicate biodiversity management and outcomes' theme are detailed in Table 4.4Table 4.3.

Table 4.4 Monitor and communicate biodiversity management and outcomes - Actions

Action number	Action	
Objective 13. Inform and educate the community on biodiversity management		
13.1	Development information for the community on methods to incorporate resilience into ecological restoration projects	New action
13.2	Development information for the community on consideration of natural hazards in ecological restoration projects	New action
13.3	Development information for the community on the relationship between the health of aquatic environments and biodiversity	New action
13.4	Development information for the community on low-chemical and 'chemical free' weed management techniques	New action
13.5	Promote multi-species and ecosystem function benefits associated with rainforest/ Big Scrub restoration, Koala conservation and riparian restoration efforts	New action
13.6	Hold at least one field day per year to promote the RLI small grants program and the benefits of implementing ecological restoration on private land	Revised action – based on Action 9.1.2
13.7	Hold at least one public event per year to promote the benefits of ecological restoration and relation between riparian vegetation and aquatic ecosystem health	New action
13.8	Contribute to community education for fire management in preferred koala habitat (KPoM #32b)	Previous action 8.2.3
Objective 14. Collect, refine and use spatial data for biodiversity management decision-making		
14.1	Review Council's spatial environmental data and identify opportunities for improvement and required updates	Revised action – based on Action 3.1.1 and 3.3.2
14.2	Update GIS mapping with the locations of koala habitat removed, restored and/or replaced (KPoM #3c)	Previous Action 3.2.1
14.3	Update GIS mapping to identify the locations of restoration projects carried out on private land under the Rural Landholder Initiative (RLI)	Previous Action 3.2.2
14.4	Update GIS mapping with the locations of restoration projects carried out on public land under the urban bushland restoration program	Previous Action 3.2.3
14.5	Liaise with State Government departments to share spatial environmental data	Revised action – based on Action 3.3.4
14.6	Review and update high conservation value (HCV) vegetation mapping	New action

Action number	Action	
14.7	Continue to track, using spatial data, habitat lost and gained from approved development applications – vegetation to be removed and compensatory planting (KPoM #3,#7)	Revised action – based on Action 2.2.1
14.8	Incorporate spatial data on the extent of natural hazards, including the 2022 floods and 2019 bush fires, into assessment of biodiversity projects, ecological restoration efforts and identification of potential offset sites	New action
14.9	Investigate mapping of groundwater-dependant ecosystems	New action
14.10	Develop and adopt data recording and management protocols to ensure the quality of spatial data	New action
Objective 15. Prioritise communication of biodiversity management actions and outcomes		
15.1	Share biodiversity management and outcomes information with the community using suitable communication approaches	Revised action – based on Action 7.1.2
15.2	Ensure biodiversity information on Council's website is current and correct	Revised action – based on Action 7.1.1
15.3	Communicate local results of established citizen science projects, for example Backyard Bird Count and the Great Koala Count	Revised action - based on Action 10.3.7– limited to communication of results. Promotion of citizen science projects separated into Action 10.6
15.4	Investigate employment of a science education and communications officer to develop an integrated communications plan for biodiversity management actions and outcomes	New action
15.5	Prepare an annual summary on BMS implementation for the community	Previous Action 7.1.3
15.6	Hold one event per year to recognise, acknowledge and celebrate our community's biodiversity management achievements	Revised action – based on Action 7.2.1
15.7	Develop a report for the community on biodiversity outcomes of the BMS	New action
15.8	Following development, issue a report for the community on biodiversity outcomes of the BMS annually	New action
Objective 16. Monitoring and report on biodiversity management actions and outcomes		
16.1	Monitor and report on activities (programs, projects and events) from the BMS undertaken during each financial year	Previous Action 5.1.2
16.2	Continue the monitoring and evaluation actions in the UGCP 2017 (UGCP #24-28)	Previous Action 10.1.5
16.3	Develop a strategy to measure and evaluate biodiversity outcomes of the BMS	Previous Action 5.2.2

Action number	Action	
16.4	Develop and implement a standardised approach for recording implementation of ecological restoration activities	New action
16.5	Investigate development of a routine water quality and health monitoring program designed to detect changes associated with biodiversity management activities	New action
16.6	Conduct a study to estimate Koala density and population size within the Koala planning area every 3 years (KPoM #29)	Previous action 8.1.6
16.7	Prepare an annual report on management activities under the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (KPoM #2)	Revised action – based on Action 8.1.2
Objective 17. Participate in, and support, local and regional partnerships		
17.1	Participate in collaborative regional projects to access external funds to achieve biodiversity outcomes	Previous action 6.1.3
17.2	Maintain a partnership with Richmond Landcare Inc. to increase the capacity for ecological restoration projects	Previous action 6.2.1
17.3	Participate in collaborative projects with local community groups increase the capacity for to achieve biodiversity outcomes	Previous action 6.2.2
17.4	Continue stakeholder participation in the delivery of the KPoM and other Koala programs	Revised action – based on Action 8.1.1
17.5	Engage with prospective research partners and contribute to their Koala projects (KPoM #36)	Previous action 8.1.3
17.6	Collaborate on the regional communications program to inform and educate the community on Koala projects	Previous action 8.1.5
17.7	Support Friends of the Koala and other wildlife care groups regarding standardising and improving the quality of Koala data provided to the State Government (KPoM #31)	Previous action 8.2.1
17.8	Continue identifying potential sites for, and supporting the establishment of, Koala food tree plantations to supply leaf for koalas in care (KPoM #30)	Previous action 8.2.2
Objective 18. Identify opportunities for First Nations stakeholders to participate in the biodiversity management		
18.1	Provide opportunities for First Nations stakeholders to have input into biodiversity management activities	New action

5 Implementation

Funding for the ongoing implementation of the BMS is sourced primarily from the Special Rate Variation that commenced on 1 July 2016 and has been permanently secured in the rates base. The proposed expenditure for 2024-2025 was $609,000 (LCC, 2025). Predicted funding for implementation of the BMS from the Special Rate Variation for the next five years is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Predicted funding for implementation of the BMS for the next 5 years

Financial Year	Budget
2026/27	$642,500
2027/28	$661,800
2028/29	$681,700
2029/30	$702,200
2030/31	$723,300

Opportunities to leverage implementation of the revised BMS and achieving biodiversity objectives include:

- Ensuring biodiversity objectives that are consistent with the BMS appear in relevant LCC strategic planning documents.
- Ensuring biodiversity objectives that are consistent with the BMS are incorporated into development assessment ideally by inclusion of a biodiversity management requirement in the local environmental plan (LEP).
- Identifying Council land suitable for ecological rehabilitation works that can be available for offset planting to compensate for vegetation removal associated with Council works/activities, development consents or required by compliance and enforcement action
- Dedication of residual land associated with subdivisions that is suitable for ecological rehabilitation in combination with funding for rehabilitation.
- Support citizen science programs to monitor biodiversity actions and outcomes and incorporate results into reporting (Section 3.1.9)

The Environmental Strategies section of LCC is primarily responsible for implementation of the BMS however, some actions require other sections from Council to participate in delivery. The revised BMS will needs to provide a clear indication of the responsibilities and enabling roles of all sections of Council in implementing the plan. To this end, the final suite of actions will also need to identify the section/s of Council that will be responsible for delivery of each action.

Monitoring of the BMS should be expanded, from the current focus on implementation of actions, to include biodiversity outcomes and relevant adaptive management procedures (aligned with the revised framework and objectives) (refer to Section 3.1.9).

Implementation of the BMS would benefit from enhanced and targeted communication of the achievement of BMS actions and biodiversity outcomes (refer to Section 3.1.4). The recommended expanded scope for monitoring of the BMS to include biodiversity outcomes would support this communication.

An increased focus on communication and presentation of the BMS and associated reporting is anticipated to increase community interest and participation (refer to Section 3.1.7).

6 Conclusions

A review of the BMS is required every five years and is required to include (Action 5.2.1):

- *Updates to mapping, biodiversity databases, scientific knowledge, legislation and industry practice*
- *The progress on all actions, their prioritisation and resourcing needs*
- *Engagement with key internal and external stakeholders*

The review of the BMS comprised an operating environment review, stakeholder engagement and an evaluation of implementation over the last 5 years. The review identified a strong commitment to, and reasonable success, in implementing the BMS, reflected by annual funding and integration into Council operations. The outcomes and feedback from these components of the review have been used to develop a suite of recommendations for revision of the BMS. The recommendations address a range of matters including the framework for delivery for the BMS, revised objectives and actions, monitoring of implementation and biodiversity outcomes and communication.

Ongoing review and revision of the BMS will ensure the objectives and actions remain current, funding opportunities and efficiencies are identified, continual community engagement, and that desired biodiversity outcomes are achieved.

7 References

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LCC (2025c) *Internal communications on the development and implementation status of a First Nations*

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Appendix A – Evaluation Report

Appendix B – Operating Environment Review

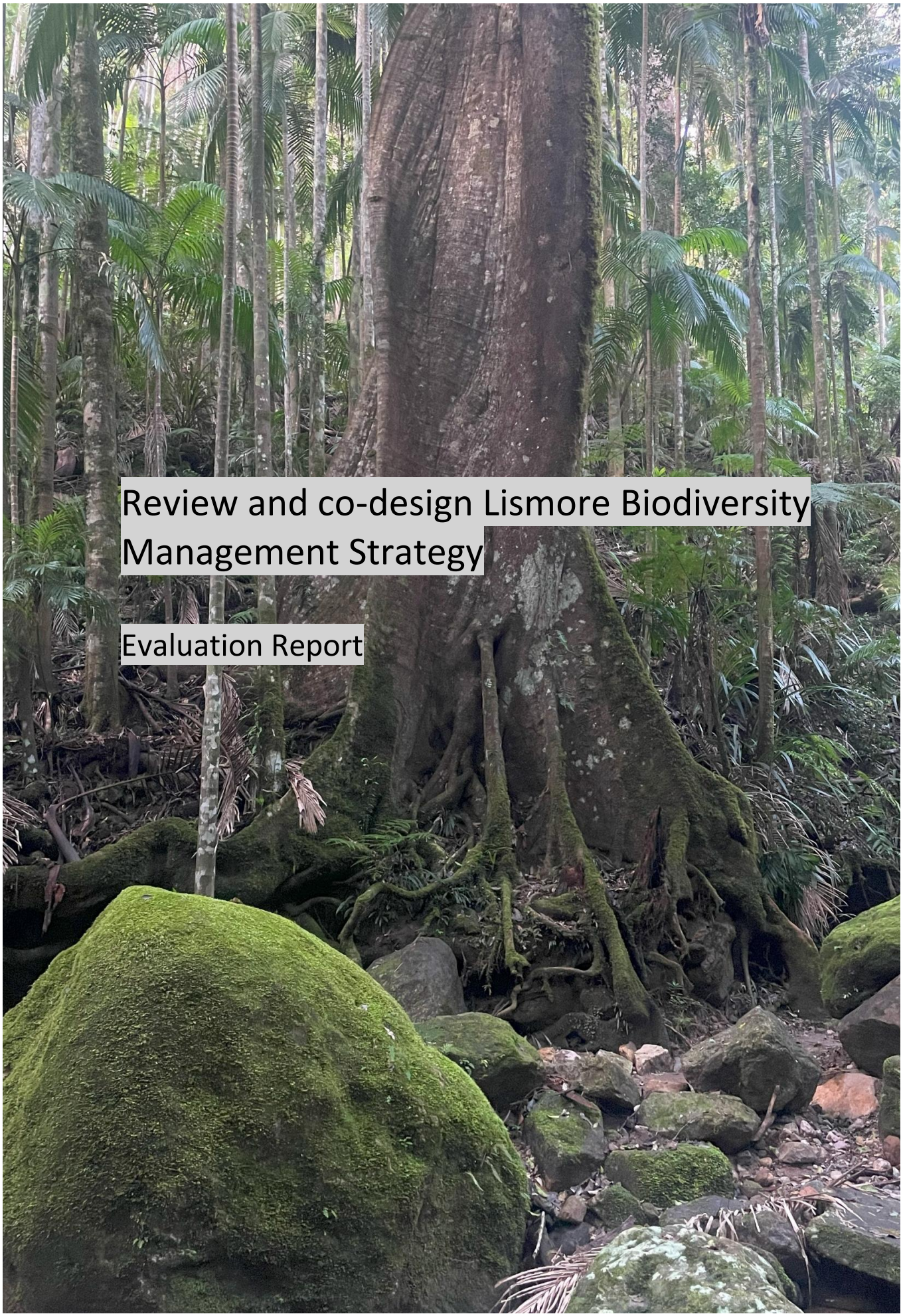
Appendix C – Stakeholder Engagement Report



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Review and co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy

Evaluation Report

Project control

Project name: **Review and co-design Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy**
Evaluation Report

Job number: 252182-3a
Client: Lismore City Council
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1 Introduction and Background

Australian Wetlands Consulting (AWC) has been engaged by Lismore City Council (LCC) to carry out a review and co-design of the *Lismore Biodiversity Management Strategy 2015–2035* (BMS). A review of the BMS is required every five years to ensure that LCC is on track to meet the commitments of the BMS and ensure that the most up-to-date and effective tools, knowledges and resources are being utilised to do so.

1.1 BMS Framework

A strategic framework has been utilised to deliver the goals of the BMS (refer to Figure 1.1).

- Develop a greater understanding of the flora and fauna, habitats and ecological processes of the area and their value
- Identify and mitigate the pressures on these biodiversity values
- Improve the broader community's awareness of biodiversity through education and engagement activities
- Foster partnerships with and build capacity for rural landholders, industry and community groups to improve biodiversity stewardship on private lands
- Foster partnerships with and build capacity for community groups to protect and improve biodiversity on Council-managed, public lands
- Promote a landscape connectivity approach as the basis for managing biodiversity and building landscape resilience to climate change
- Embed the principles of ecologically sustainable development into planning processes
- Provide a long-term strategic framework to guide on-the-ground actions that lead to measurable biodiversity outcomes
- Foster an adaptive management approach so that the strategy can continuously improve on its delivery

Figure 1.1 Goals of the BMS (LCC, 2020)

The strategy framework comprises three delivery streams being:

- Internal – *Cleaning up our own backyard*
- Rural – *Working with rural landholders*
- Urban – *Working in the urban environment*

Under each of the delivery streams are a suite of objectives numbered one through ten (refer to Figure 1.2). Under the objectives are a suite of sub-objectives and actions.

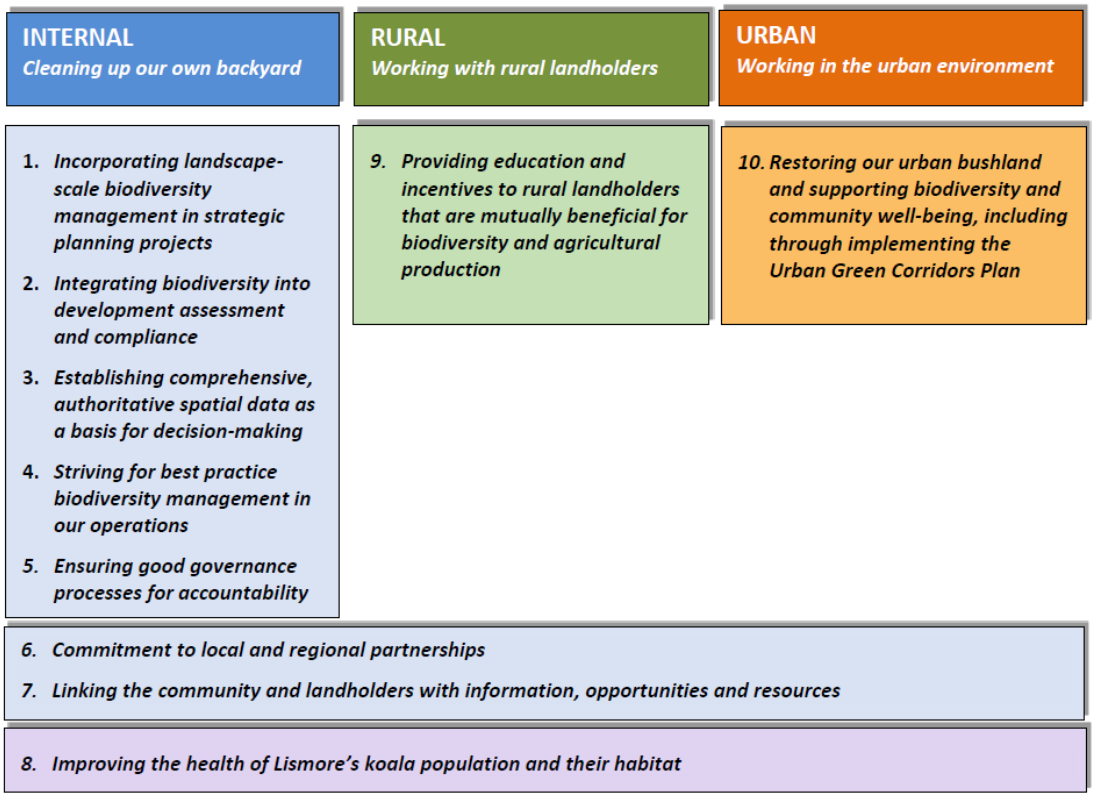


Figure 1.2 The BMS Framework including streams and objectives (LCC, 2020)

1.2 Overview and Scope

The Evaluation Report (ER) comprises a comprehensive review of the implementation of actions in the BMS since the previous review of the BMS (2020–2025) was carried out in 2019 and published in 2020 (LCC2020a, 2020b).

The progress with implementation of actions assessed in the ER report was based on information provided by LCC (Appendix A) and is presented as a 'report card' detailing the achievement status of the actions.

A suite of high-level recommendations have been provided for actions deemed 'not achieved' or 'not completed', in Section 3. A comprehensive set of recommendations are provided in the *Recommendations Report* (AWC 2025).

2 Implementation Status of Actions

2.1 Approach

A summary of actions of achieved, partially achieved and not achieved has been provided for each of the BMS streams. For each stream, the summary of actions is followed by a 'report card' that illustrates the status of each of the actions using a coloured 'traffic light' approach (refer to Figure 2.1). Actions that are expected to continue into the next phase of BMS implementation have been assigned the status of 'partially achieved', and 'ongoing'.



Figure 2.1 Report card 'traffic light' approach

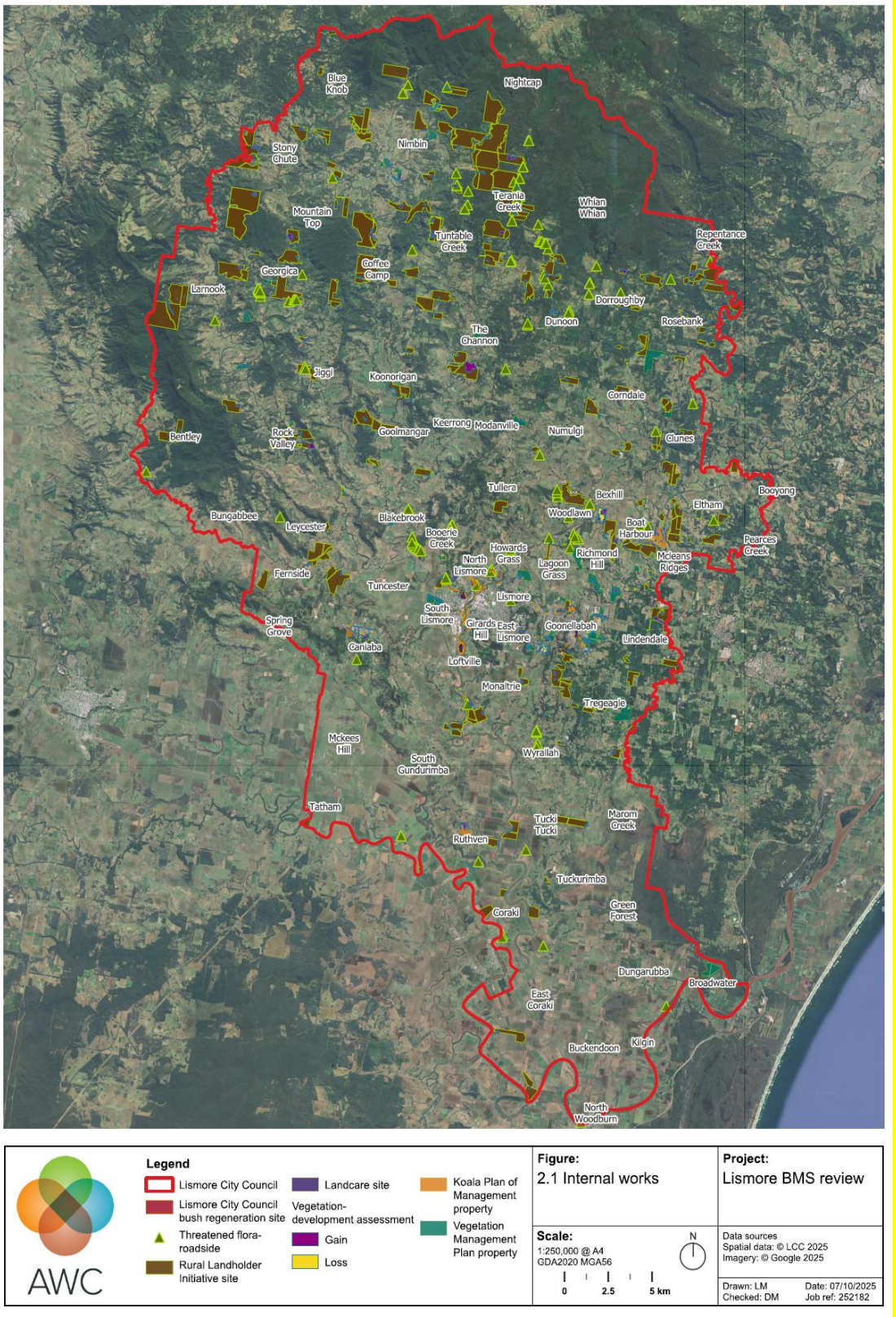
2.2 Internal - Summary

Of the 48 prescribed actions under the internal stream of the BMS, 71% were achieved, 15% were partially achieved and 15% were not achieved.

Key actions achieved include:

- Staff from the Environmental Strategies Team of LCC have been engaged in early planning stages of projects including:
  - Rotary Park Plan of Management (PoM)
  - Currie Park PoM
  - Local Environmental Plan (LEP) review
  - Development Control Plan (DCP) review
  - Lismore Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)
- The development of *Guidelines for the preparation of Vegetation Management Plans* (LCC 2024)
- Preparation of standard conditions for development consents

The tracking and recording of the following spatial data (refer



- Figure 2.2):
    - Habitat lost and gained (i.e., through compensatory planting) resulting from development consents granted by Council (Action 2.2.1)

  - Koala habitat removed, restored and/or replaced (Action 3.2.1)
  - Rural Land Initiative (RLI) projects (Action 3.2.2)
  - Restoration projects carried out on public lands (Action 3.2.3)
- The contribution of the following data to State government agencies:
  - Koala surveys
  - Biodiversity Values (BV) mapping
  - Threatened species
  - Flying-fox hub
  - Riparian hub
- The allocation of an annual budget for the management of weeds at key high conservation value (HCV) sites
- Mitigation of wildlife road strike hotspots by:
  - Working with Friends of the Koala and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to capture data on Koala vehicle strikes
  - Speed monitoring at Wyrallah Road Vehicle Activated Signs
  - Collaboration with Regional Koala Officers and Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) Councils to implement regional Koala Road strike mitigation measures
  - Maintenance of mitigation infrastructure including Skyline Road fence, Tatham Koala fence and Wyrallah Road pavement marking
- Contribution from LCC to the Coastal Management Program (CMP)
- Continued collaboration with local community groups and a formal partnership with Richmond Landcare Inc to access additional funding for biodiversity management projects within the LCC area
- The continued sharing of information to the public via quarterly newsletters
- Annual reporting on the Special Rate Variation (SRV) used to fund implementation of the BMS
- The full implementation of all actions associated with objective eight- *Improving the health of Lismore's Koala population and their habitat*

The following actions were partially achieved:

- 1.1.2 Identify sites with potential habitat value on Council-owned or managed land that could be used be used as receive sites for compensatory habitat for smaller impact development:
  - Preliminary work identifying sites and mapping has been carried out
- 3.3.2 Develop a mechanism to keep the spatial data live and current:
  - Ongoing updates are implemented through the Council Geographical Information System (GIS) officer, but additional refinement is required
- 4.1.3 Undertake a biennial audit of roadside HCV guideposts and reinstall as required:
  - Guideposts have been partially installed
  - One audit has been completed
- 4.1.4 Identify roads that are priorities for HCV restoration and prepare Action Plans (APs) which document vegetation types, threatened species and habitat, threats, restoration methods. These plans will incorporate a Review of Environmental Factors (REF):
  - Priority roads have been identified
  - Some APs have been completed
  - The REF has not been completed however the Environmental Strategies Team at LCC has advised that an REF may not be required
- 7.1.1 Review existing website content and prioritise updating pages where information is outdated (e.g. legislation, initiatives, mapping):
  - The biodiversity management information on the LCC website was updated in 2024 (Biodiversity Management Strategy Lismore City Council)
- 7.2.1 Hold one recognition event per year to acknowledge and celebrate our community's

achievements:

- Two events have been held during the last five years
- Restrictions implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2022 floods and a lack of staff resources inhibited the full implementation of this action

Actions that were not achieved include:

- 2.1.2 Work with the NRJO on developing a Regional Biodiversity Offset Program where development triggers the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme:
  - Regional barriers to implementation were identified
  - The potential to achieve negative outcomes for biodiversity has been flagged by the Environmental Strategies Team at LCC
- 2.3.1 Continue to deliver training to DA staff as required (related to the Koala Plan of Management (KPoM))
- 3.3.1 Undertake an internal stakeholder survey of spatial data use:
- 3.3.3 Run capacity-building workshops to train staff in use of this spatial data
- 4.1.5 Review implementation of the RVMP 5 years after adoption to identify achievements, barriers and pathways for improvement:
  - Review of other LCC plans and strategies were prioritised over review of the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP)
- 4.3.1 Identify Council operations that have high risk to biodiversity and review and update Standard Operating Procedures to manage that risk
- 5.2.2 Establish and work with a reference group to develop a strategy to measure and evaluate biodiversity outcomes of the BMS

2.3 Internal – Report Card

A ‘report card’ of the status of Internal stream actions is provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Report card of Internal BMS actions

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
1.	**Incorporating landscape-scale biodiversity management in strategic planning projects**		
1.1	**Review and update of Council policies, strategies and plans to incorporate biodiversity values**		
1.1.1	Staff from Environmental Strategies are part of internal engagement in the early planning stages of projects, including: · Plans of Management · Asset Management Plans · Street Tree Master Plan · LEP and DCP reviews · Growth Management Strategy · Local Strategic Planning Statement	Strategic Planning, Assets (Parks)	Yes
1.1.2	Identify sites with potential habitat value on Council-owned or managed land that could be used be used as receive sites for compensatory habitat for smaller impact development	Environmental Strategies, Civic Pride, Assets (Parks)	Partial
2.	**Integrating biodiversity into development assessment and compliance processes**		
2.1	**Implement a comprehensive biodiversity DA framework**		
2.1.1	Complete the new Vegetation DCP and supporting documentation / guidelines	Strategic Planning, Development Assessment, Environmental Strategies	Yes
2.1.2	Work with the NRJO on developing a Regional Biodiversity Offset Program where development triggers the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme	Environmental Strategies	No
2.1.3	Update internal DA procedural documents to accommodate the new DCP, guidelines, application assessment checklists and standard Conditions of Consent	Development Assessment, Environmental Strategies	Yes
2.2	**Monitor the effectiveness of habitat compensatory measures**		
2.2.1	Develop a framework to track habitat lost and gained as a result of development impacts and compensatory measures (KPoM #3,#7)	Environmental Strategies, Development Assessment	Yes
2.3	**Provide training to address gaps in knowledge and barriers to implementation**		
2.3.1	Continue to deliver training to DA staff as required (KPoM #12)	Environmental Strategies, Development Assessment	No
3.	**Establishing comprehensive, authoritative spatial data as a basis for decision-making**		
3.1	**Build a fit-for-purpose spatial data structure**		
3.1.1	Review Council's spatial environmental data, including existing data layers and archiving old data	Environmental Strategies, GIS	Partial/ongoing

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
3.2	**Investigate the feasibility of capturing historical data associated with habitat lost and gained, and restoration works as far as possible under the KPoM, UGCP and RLI**		
3.2.1	Update GIS mapping with the locations of koala habitat removed, restored and/or replaced (KPoM #3c)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
3.2.2	Update GIS mapping to identify the locations of restoration projects carried out on private land under the Rural Landholder Initiative (RLI)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
3.2.3	Update GIS mapping with the locations of restoration projects carried out on public land under the urban bushland restoration program	Environmental Strategies	Yes
3.3	**Ensure all decisions and operations reference authoritative spatial data**		
3.3.1	Undertake an internal stakeholder survey of spatial data use	Environmental Strategies, GIS	No
3.3.2	Develop a mechanism to keep the spatial data live and current	Environmental Strategies, GIS	Partial/ ongoing
3.3.3	Run capacity-building workshops to train staff in use of this spatial data	Environmental Strategies, GIS	No
3.3.4	Liaise with State Government departments to discover their data needs	Environmental Strategies, GIS	Yes
4.	**Striving for best practice environmental management in our operations**		
4.1	**Manage roadside vegetation in High Conservation Value (HCV) areas** **Responsibility**		
4.1.1	Develop and implement an annual works schedule which prioritises weed control in areas of HCV around road infrastructure (RVMP #5.2.2)	Roads Maintenance Environmental Strategies	Yes
4.1.2	Install guideposts to mark roadside HCV and threatened species locations identified by 2019 survey work and mapping in the northern Lismore LGA 'Green Zone' (RVMP #8.5)	Roads Maintenance Environmental Strategies	Yes
4.1.3	Undertake a biennial audit of roadside HCV guideposts and reinstall as required (RVMP #8.8)	Roads Maintenance	Partial
4.1.4	Identify roads that are priorities for HCV restoration, and prepare Action Plans which document vegetation types, threatened species and habitat, threats, restoration methods. These plans will incorporate a Review of Environmental Factors (RVMP #6)	Environmental Strategies, Roads Maintenance	Partial
4.1.5	Review implementation of the RVMP 5 years after adoption to identify achievements, barriers and pathways for improvement	Environmental Strategies, Infrastructure Services	No
4.2	**Mitigate wildlife roadstrike in identified hotspots**		
4.2.1	Continue to implement mitigation measures according to the priorities identified in the Wildlife Roadkill Mitigation Report 2019 and monitor their effectiveness	Environmental Strategies	Yes
4.2.2	Work with community partners and other stakeholders to improve data capture on wildlife roadstrikes for adaptive management of current and future wildlife strike zones	Environmental Strategies	Yes
4.2.3	Continue to work with neighbouring councils and other stakeholders on a regional approach to mitigating road strike including behaviour change strategies, for example projects under the NSW Koala Strategy (KPoM #24)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
4.2.4	Maintain any installed road strike mitigation infrastructure including retrofitted culverts, fencing, grids, pavement markings and signs	Roads Maintenance	Yes

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
4.3	**Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) incorporate best practice biodiversity management**		
4.3.1	Identify Council operations that have high risk to biodiversity and review and update Standard Operating Procedures to manage that risk	Environmental Strategies, Infrastructure Services, WHS	No
5.	**Ensuring good governance processes for accountability and continuous improvement**		
5.1	**Report through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP & R) framework**		
5.1.1	Detail the activities (programs, projects and events) from the BMS that will be undertaken during a financial year as part of Council's Operational Plan	Environmental Strategies	Yes
5.1.2	Report on these activities and the measures of success	Environmental Strategies	Yes
5.2	**Ongoing evaluation of the Biodiversity Management Strategy (BMS)**		
5.2.1	Undertake a comprehensive operational review of the BMS, including: · Updates to mapping, biodiversity databases, scientific knowledge, legislation and industry practice · The progress on all actions, their prioritisation and resourcing needs · Engagement with key internal and external stakeholders	Environmental Strategies	Partial
5.2.2	Establish and work with a reference group to develop a strategy to measure and evaluate biodiversity outcomes of the BMS	Environmental Strategies	No
6.	**Exploring and upholding commitment to local and regional partnerships**		
6.1	**Participate in regional environmental programs, including the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) and the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP)**		
6.1.1	Contribute to the preparation of a Coastal Management Program (CMP) when review of the CZMP is due	Environmental Strategies	Yes
6.1.2	Implement the CZMP and then the CMP together with relevant partners	Environmental Strategies	Yes
6.1.3	Participate in collaborative regional projects to access external funds to achieve biodiversity outcomes	Environmental Strategies	Yes
6.2	**Partner with the local community on projects that have biodiversity outcomes**		
6.2.1	Develop a formal partnership with Richmond Landcare Inc. to increase the capacity for restoration projects in rural and urban areas	Environmental Strategies	Yes
6.2.2	Participate in collaborative projects with local community groups to access external funds to achieve biodiversity outcomes	Environmental Strategies	Yes
7.	**Linking the community with resources, information and opportunities**		
7.1	**Provide up-to-date information**		
7.1.1	Review existing website content and prioritise updating pages where information is outdated (e.g. legislation, initiatives, mapping)	Environmental Strategies Media and Comms	Partial
7.1.2	Disseminate information to the broader community through various media (e.g. the quarterly Biodiversity News e-newsletter, fortnightly Local Matters publication, media releases, static displays at Council facilities)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
7.1.3	Prepare an annual summary on BMS implementation for the community	Environmental Strategies	Yes

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
7.2	**Recognise and celebrate our community's connection with biodiversity and their contribution to its protection and enhancement**	**Responsibility**	
7.2.1	Hold one recognition event per year to acknowledge and celebrate our community's achievements, for example: · A breakfast or morning tea for all volunteers · Biodiversity Awards · An open day / showcase of urban Landcare groups	Environmental Strategies	Partial
8.	**Improving the health of Lismore's koala population and their habitat**		
8.1	**Contribute to regional projects that support koala conservation**		
8.1.1	Identify the most effective mechanisms for stakeholder participation in the delivery of the KPoM and other koala programs	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.1.2	Council to produce an annual report on management activities as required by the Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (KPoM #2)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.1.3	Engage with prospective research partners and contribute to their projects (KPoM #36)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.1.5	Collaborate on the regional communications program to inform and educate the community	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.1.6	Conduct a study to estimate koala density and population size within the koala planning area every 3 years (KPoM #29)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.2	**Provide support to Friends of the Koala (FOK)**		
8.2.1	Support FOK and other wildlife care groups regarding standardising and improving the quality of data provided to the State Government (KPoM #31)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.2.2	Continue identifying potential sites for, and supporting the establishment of, food tree plantations to supply leaf for koalas in care (KPoM #30)	Environmental Strategies, Civic Pride	Yes
8.2.3	Contribute to community education for fire management in preferred koala habitat (KPoM #32b)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.3	**Restore koala habitat**		
8.3.1	Provide an extension service to support individuals and community groups engaged in koala habitat restoration (KPoM #14)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.3.2	Develop and implement priorities for a koala habitat restoration program (KPoM #15)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
8.3.3	Continue to utilise external funding opportunities to implement the program (KPoM #15)	Environmental Strategies	Yes

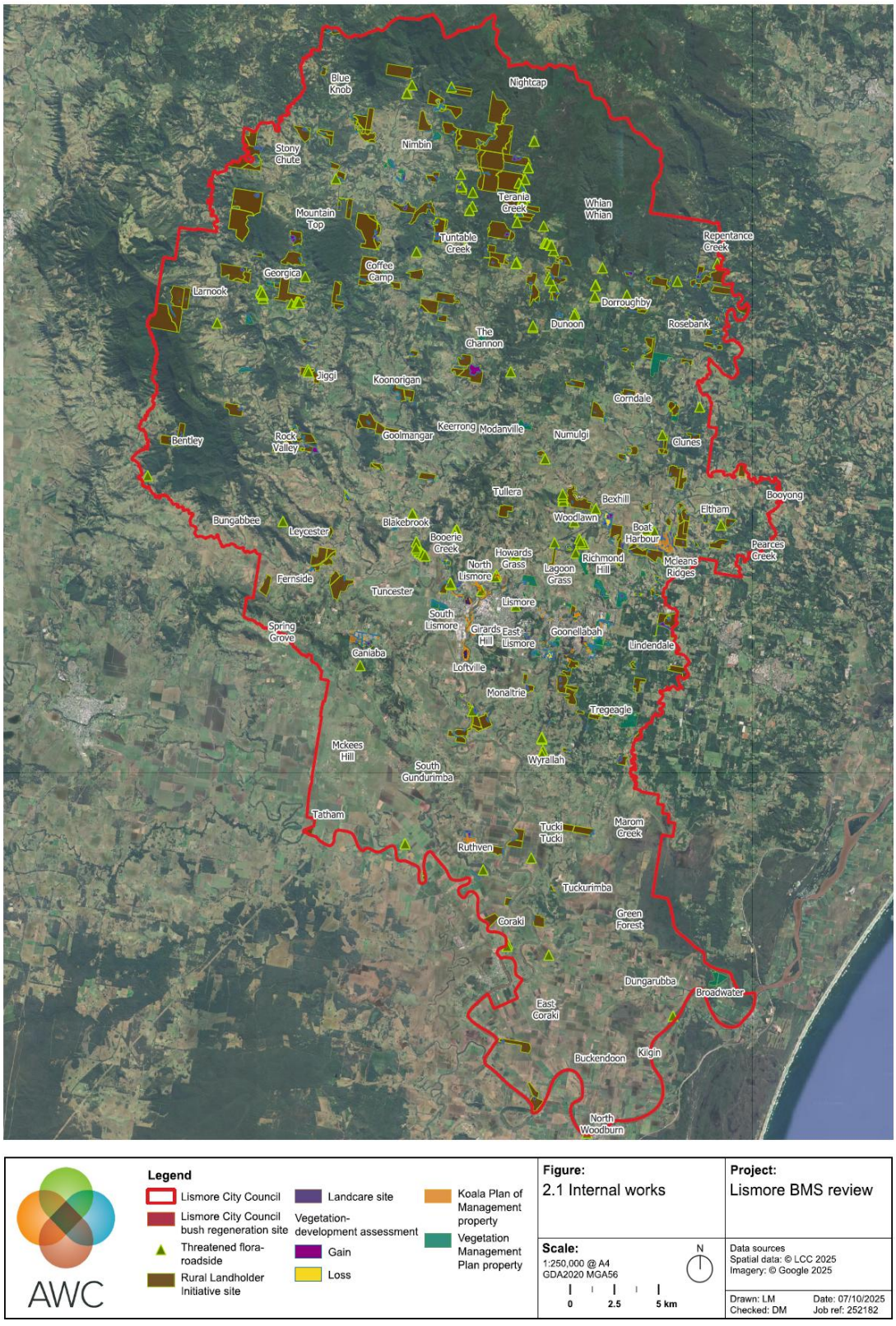


Figure 2.2 Location and extent habitat lost and gained under Internal spatial data actions

2.4 Rural - Summary

Actions under the rural stream of the BMS were delivered with mixed success. Of the nine actions, 44% were achieved, 22% (two actions) were not achieved and 33% were partially achieved. Works delivered through the RLI program were generally concentrated in the north of the local government area (LGA). Works delivered through the RLI program generally fell into the following broad, non-exclusive categories (refer

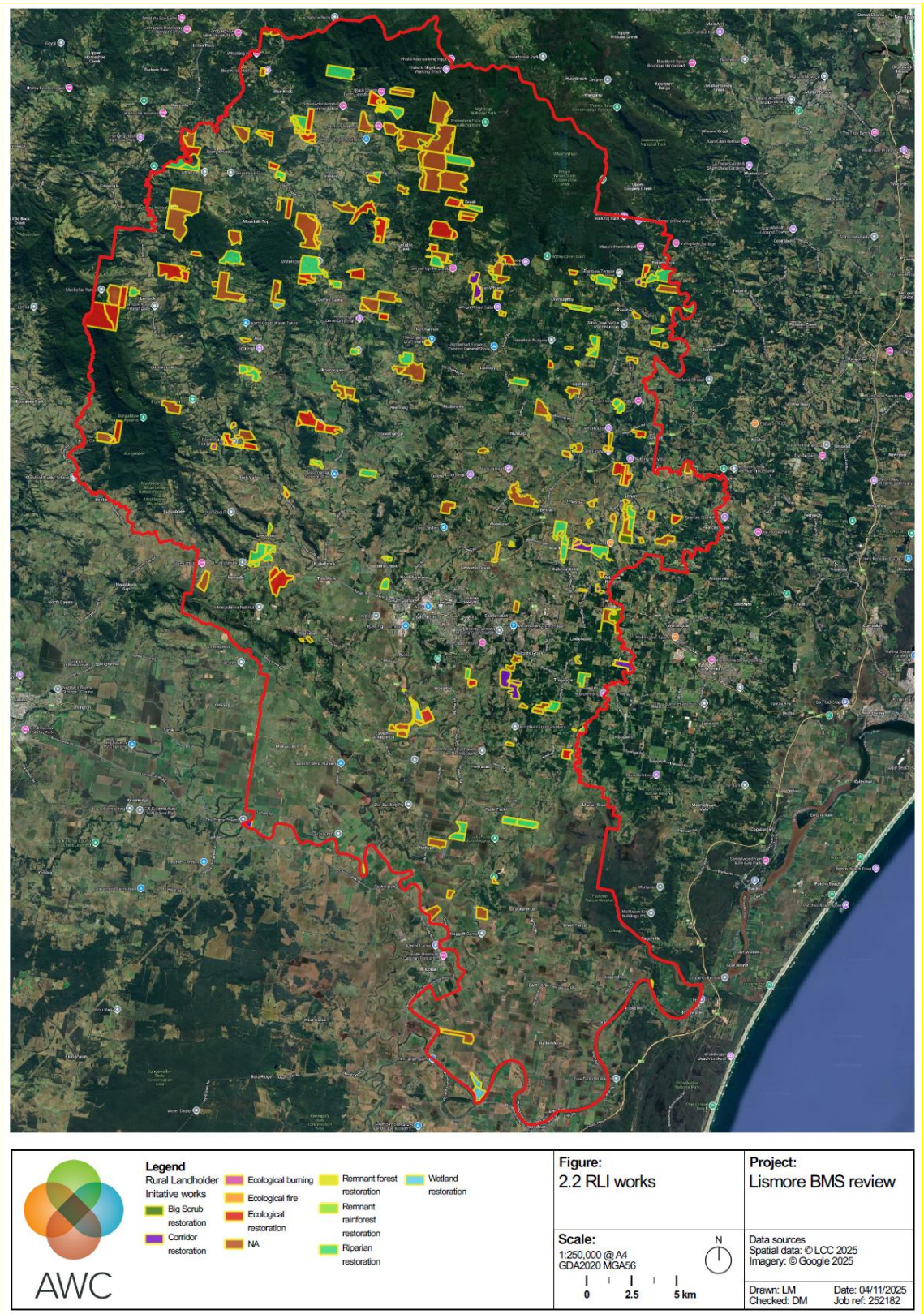


Figure 2.3):

- Riparian restoration

- Wetland restoration
- Big Scrub/ remnant restoration
- Corridor restoration
- Ecological restoration (this included works to restore Koala habitat)
- Ecological fire

Successfully delivered actions through the rural stream of the BMS included:

- The continued employment of a RLI Extension Officer
- Delivery of small grants to support rural, community restoration projects
- Implementation of a trial to change the delivery of program grants to individual and community grants in alternating years
- Continued partnership with industry, primary producers and other rural stakeholders on existing and emerging projects

The remaining actions that were partially or not achieved include:

- 9.1.2 Hold up to five field days per annum- partially achieved:
  - Fifteen (15) field events were held over the five-year period June 2020–July 2025, with a total of 811 participants. Field days were not held due to restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic- followed by severe impacts to sites and communities by the 2022 floods. Field days were not held during 2024-2025 due to LCC having insufficient resources during this period
- 9.1.5 Investigate options to incentivise ongoing monitoring of RLI projects by landholders- not achieved
- 9.2.1 Review and update the following resources on RLI webpages - Farm Health Assessment Tool, education booklets and planning tools- not achieved:
  - Collaborated with Local Land Services on development of the *Bush regeneration in progress: An ongoing management guide for landholders in the North Coast* (LLS, 2025)
- 9.2.2 Review and update resources for an annual mailout to new landholders- partially achieved:
  - One mailout to new landholders occurred in 2020–2021
- 9.3.2 Develop a strategic framework for investing in regenerative / sustainable agriculture- partially achieved:
  - An internal discussion paper was prepared that identified that Southern Cross University has regenerative agriculture program and concluded that a better approach would be to provide support to the Southern Cross University program
  - Regenerative / sustainable agriculture is to instead be included in the Rural Land Use Strategy

2.5 Rural – Report Card

A ‘report card’ of the status of rural stream actions is provided in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Report card of Rural BMS actions

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
9.	**Providing education and incentives to rural landholders that are mutually beneficial for biodiversity and agricultural production**		
9.1	**Continue implementation of the Rural Landholder Initiative (RLI) program**		
9.1.1	Continue to employ the RLI Extension Officer to provide extension services to rural landholders	Environmental Strategies	Yes
9.1.2	Hold up to 5 field days per annum	Environmental Strategies	Partial
9.1.3	Deliver a small grants program to support the rural community to undertake restoration	Environmental Strategies	Yes
9.1.4	Commence a trial of changing the delivery framework to individual grants and community grants in alternate years	Environmental Strategies	Yes
9.1.5	Investigate options to incentivise ongoing monitoring of RLI projects by landholders	Environmental Strategies	No
9.2	**Distribute information to eligible rural landholders**		
9.2.1	Review and update the following resources on RLI webpages - Farm Health Assessment Tool, education booklets and planning tools	Environmental Strategies	No
9.2.2	Review and update the following resources for an annual mailout to new landholders: · Cover letter about the RLI and their eligibility · Case studies from RLI champions relevant to their location / land use	Environmental Strategies	Partial
9.3	**Partner with industry and community groups**		
9.3.1	Continue to work with industry, primary producers and other partners on existing and emerging projects	Environmental Strategies	Yes
9.3.2	Develop a strategic framework for investing in regenerative / sustainable agriculture (soil, water, air elements)	Environmental Strategies Strategic Planning	Partial

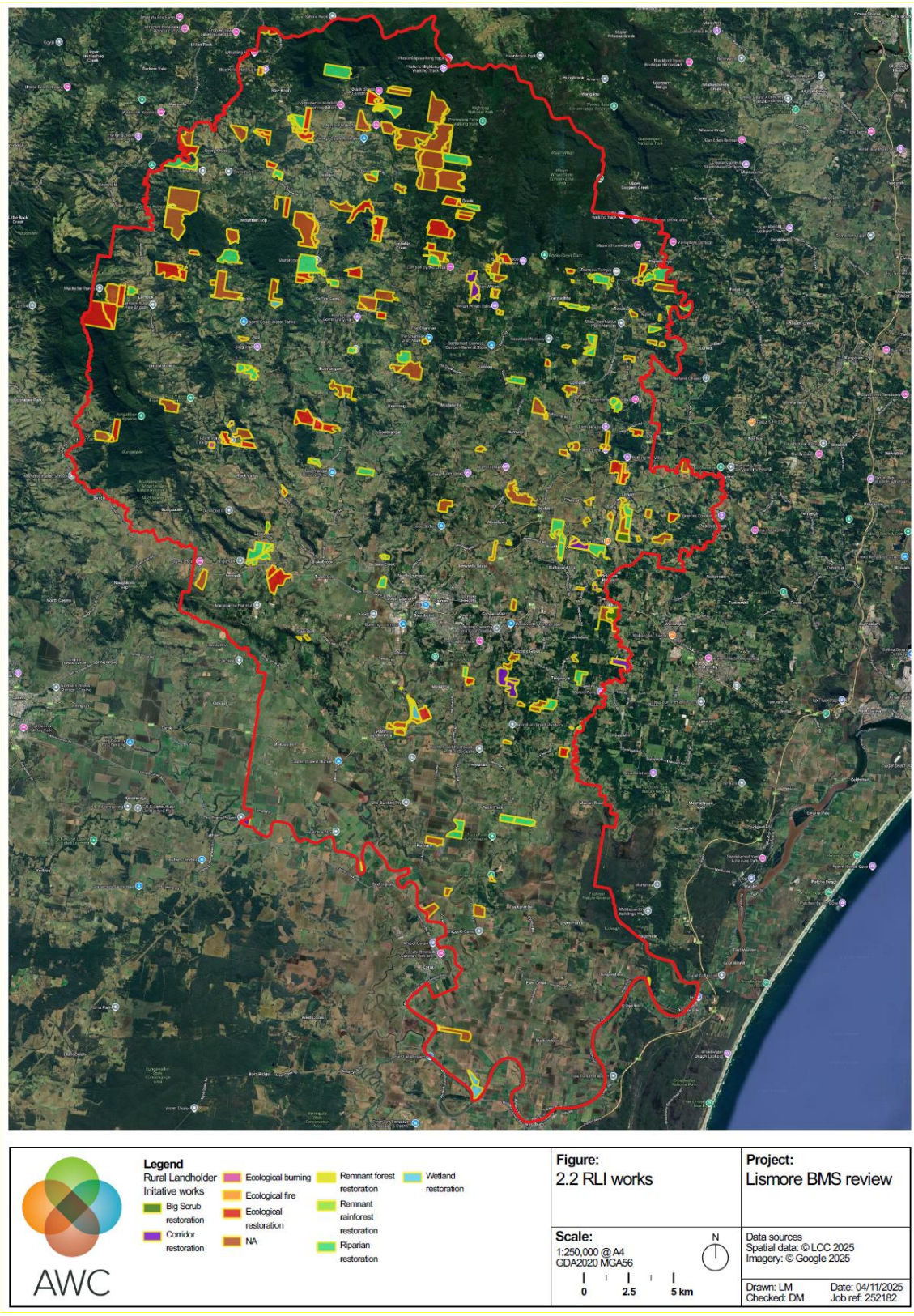


Figure 2.3 Location and extent of restoration works carried out under the RLI program

2.6 Urban - Summary

There was a relatively high level of success in implementing the actions under the urban stream of the BMS. Of the 17 actions, 71% were achieved, 18% were not achieved and 12% were partially achieved. Works carried out under the urban stream of the BMS, comprising bush regeneration sites and Landcare sites, are shown in

Figure 2.4.

Successfully delivered actions include:

- Continued implementation of the bushland restoration works program
- Continued weed management and bush regeneration in high priority urban riparian areas to improve connectivity
- Continued identification of threats to biodiversity and implementation of control projects where required
- Continued monitoring and evaluation of the actions in the Urban Green Corridors Plan (UGCP)
- Review of the UGCP and management activities to inform the development of a works program for 2021–2026
- Provided in-kind and financial support for Landcare groups
- Provided in-kind support for schools and school groups to apply for external funding
- Provided opportunities for Landcare groups to develop their capacity to work safely
- Developed place-based responses/initiatives to protect urban bushland reserves from weeds on adjacent private property
- Provided appropriate infrastructure and interpretation to connect residents with urban bushland reserves
- Delivered educational and wellbeing activities around local biodiversity with partner organisations
- Promoted established citizen science projects and communicated local results, including:
    - Backyard Bird Count
    - Great Koala Count

Actions that were partially achieved include:

- 10.3.3 Integrate behaviour change programs into existing per ownership initiatives as external funding becomes available:
    - Friends of the Koala *Koalas and Dogs a Proactive Approach (https://friendsofthekoala.org/koalas-and-dogs/)*
    - NSW Koala Strategy “leave it” program
    - Installed ‘Dogs on lead’ signage and letter box drops in response to local dog attacks and roaming dogs
- 10.3.8 Continue to facilitate the loaning of traps and information for landholders wanting to control Indian Mynas on their property
    - Traps loaned by Council were damaged and have not been repaired
    - Information on how to build your own trap for Indian Mynas is provided via the LCC Customer Services

The actions that were not achieved included:

- 10.1.4 to investigate opportunities to apply fire management in urban bushland:

- 10.3.1 Design and pilot a Habitat for Wildlife program for residents
- 10.3.2 Implement a Habitat for Wildlife program, as trialled in the pilot and adjusted based on experience and feedback

2.7 Urban – Report Card

A 'report card' of the status of actions under the urban stream is provided in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Report card of Urban BMS actions

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
10	**Restoring our urban bushland and supporting biodiversity and community well-being, including through implementing the Urban Green Corridors Plan**		
10.1	**Restore and maintain the ecological integrity and connectivity of urban bushland**		
10.1.1	Continue implementing the bushland restoration works program (UGCP #1)	Civic Pride Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.1.2	Continue weed management and bush regeneration in high priority urban riparian areas to improve connectivity	Civic Pride Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.1.3	Continue to identify threats to biodiversity and undertake control projects where required	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.1.4	Investigate opportunities for applying fire management in urban bushland reserves (UGCP #6,7)	Civic Pride, Environmental Strategies	No
10.1.5	Continue the monitoring and evaluation actions in the UGCP 2017 (UGCP #24-28)	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.1.6	Review the UGCP and management activities undertaken to inform the development of a works program for 2021-2026 (UGCP #29)	Civic Pride Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.2	**Provide support for Landcare, schools and community groups undertaking management of urban and/or riparian bushland**		
10.2.1	Provide in-kind support and financial support for Landcare groups, including to develop site action plans and work reports	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.2.2	Provide in-kind support for schools and groups to apply for external funding	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.2.3	Provide opportunities for Landcare groups to develop their capacity to work safely	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.3	**Enable our residents' connection with and stewardship of urban bushland**		
10.3.1	Design and pilot a Habitat for Wildlife program for local residents	Environmental Strategies	No
10.3.2	Implement a Habitat for Wildlife program, as trialled in the pilot and adjusted based on experience and feedback	Environmental Strategies	No
10.3.3	Integrate behaviour change programs into existing pet ownership initiatives, as external funding becomes available	Environmental Strategies, Rangers	Partial
10.3.4	Develop appropriate place-based responses/initiatives to protect urban bushland reserves from weeds on adjacent private property as identified during bushland health assessments or restoration works (UGCP #8-11)	Environmental Strategies, Civic Pride	Yes
10.3.5	Provide appropriate infrastructure and interpretation to connect residents with urban bushland reserves	Environmental Strategies, Civic Pride	Yes
10.3.6	Seek opportunities to partner with organisations, including Northern Rivers Science Hub (NRSH), Southern Cross University (SCU) and health organisations, to deliver educational and wellbeing activities around local biodiversity	Environmental Strategies	Yes
10.3.7	Identify and promote established citizen science projects, for example Backyard Bird Count and the Great Koala Count and communicate the local results	Environmental Strategies	Yes

Action No.	Action	Responsibility	Achieved
10.3.8	Continue to facilitate the loaning of traps and information for landholders wanting to control Indian Mynas on their property (UGCP #13)	Environmental Strategies	Partial

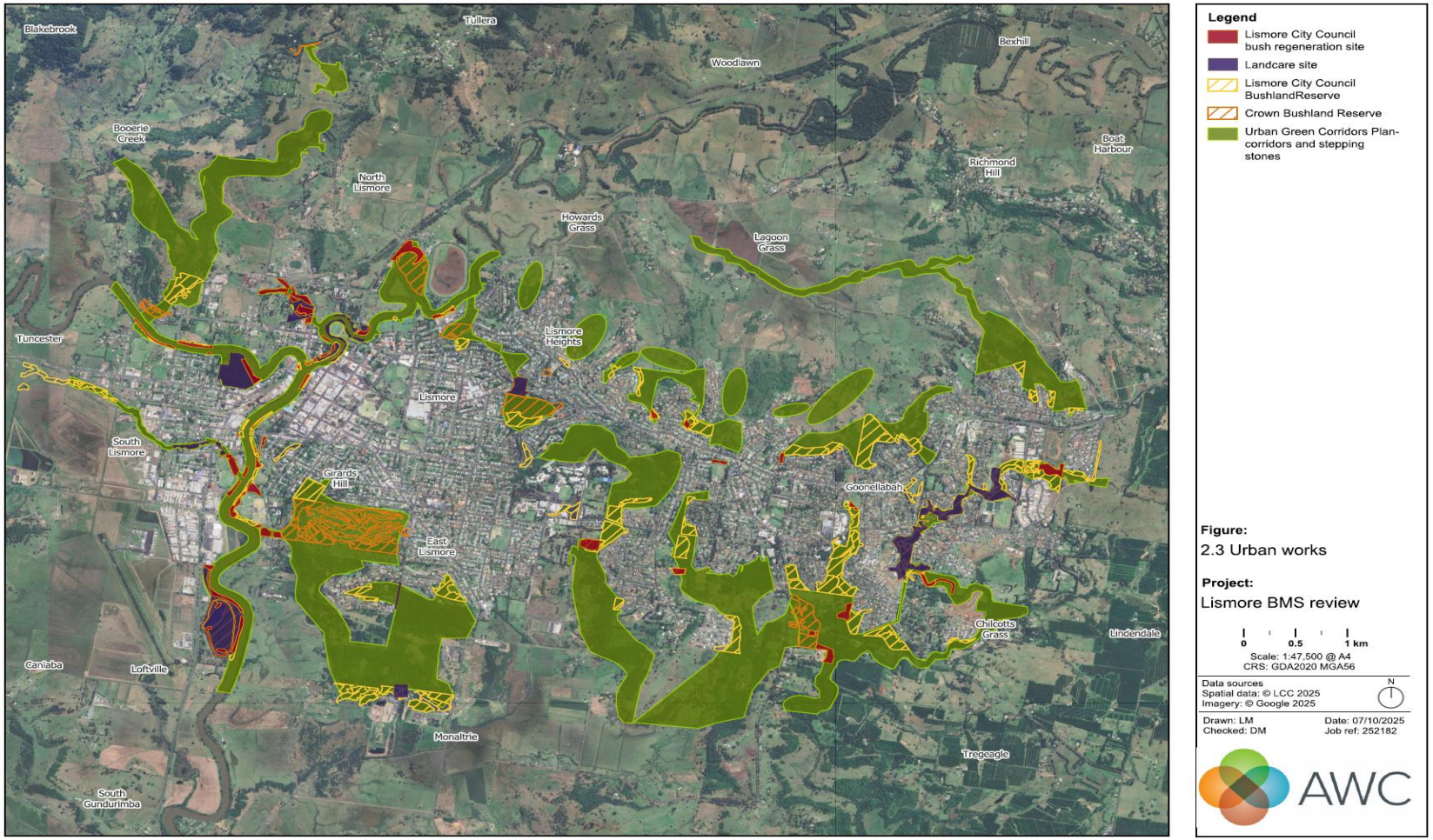


Figure 2.4. Location and extent of Urban works

2.8 Performance Indicators

Ten performance indicators (PIs) were developed with the original BMS (LCC, 2015) and were retained in the revised 2nd edition of the BMS (LCC, 2020). Of the ten PIs, only three were met. A summary of progress in achieving the PIs over the last 5 years is provided in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Summary of progress against performance indicators

No.	Performance Indicator	Progress comments	Performance context
1	*Projects delivered under the BMS have measurable indicators of success including, but not limited to: hectares of priority areas regenerated and revegetated; kilometres of riverbank protected; area of HCV areas restored and protected.*	• PI met • Spatial data captures properties where regeneration and/or revegetation has been conducted under the BMS • • Project reports estimate the length of riverbank where regeneration and/or revegetation has been conducted using BMS funding. Available as a data set. • Council has spatial data for the location and extent of HCV vegetation so can determine the extent of HCV vegetation restored or protected under the BMS using spatial data sets.	• This PI could be measured more effectively with the design and implementation of a proforma for recording and storing consistent, easily trackable data
2	*Council has signed agreements with a minimum of 25 landholders per annum to engage in the RLI.*	• PI substantially met across the five-year period • 32 new RLI projects were commenced in 2020 • 25 RLI projects were commenced in 2021 • 28 new RLI projects commenced in 2022 • 31 new RLI projects were commenced in 2023 • 18 new RLI projects commenced in 2024. An increase in grant amounts on offer resulted in fewer projects during this period • The delivery of all projects extends across a	• RLI project initiation in was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 floods • This PI would be met more consistently if the PI was changed from a set number of new RLI projects per annum, to an average number over the five-year period

No.	Performance Indicator	Progress comments	Performance context
		2–3 years period	
3	*Annual surveys show a minimum of 80% satisfaction by RLI participants with the program's delivery.*	• Not measured/Data unavailable	• Allocate resourcing to enable feedback is obtained from RLI participants for future projects
4	*80% of attendees to selected education programs are satisfied*	• Not measured/Data unavailable	• Allocate resourcing to enable feedback is obtained from education program participants for future events
5	*Each year Council has a minimum of 5 active partnerships with relevant stakeholder groups, including community conservation groups and industry groups.*	• PI met • Active partnerships across stakeholder and industry groups including - Conservation Volunteers Australia, OzFish, Food Co-op Casino, Richmond Landcare Inc and multiple associated local groups, Jagun Alliance Aboriginal Corporation, Ngulingah Aboriginal Land Council, SoilCare, Australian Macadamia Society, Friends of the Koala, Bodhi Tree Forest Monastery and Southern Cross University	
6	*Once a Biodiversity Development Control Plan is in place, there are no examples of relevant development applications (DA's) not being assessed for impacts on biodiversity.*	• PI Data unavailable/not measured • The Vegetation Protection Chapter in the Lismore DCP and Guidelines for the preparation of Vegetation Management Plans were developed as substitute for the Biodiversity Development Control Plan	• This PI would be more effectively measured by keeping an ongoing record of DA's assessed/not assessed for biodiversity impacts via a regular audit • Reporting on this PI requires the support of Town Planning staff as they determine referral of DAs for impacts on biodiversity
7	*Council delivers all outstanding KPoM actions within 2 years (aside from ongoing actions).*	• PI partially met • Annual reports on implementation of the KPoM were produced in	• PI would be more effective if changed to '*Council delivers all KPoM actions each year,*

No.	Performance Indicator	Progress comments	Performance context
		2022/23 and 2024/25.	*including ongoing actions*' or similar
8	*All ongoing actions in the KPoM and CZMP are carried out.*	• PI met • The scoping Study for the Richmond River Coastal Management Program (CMP) commenced in 2020/21. CMP has progressed to Stage 2 of 5. The CMP has not progressed to a stage where actions have been finalised for implementation.	• PI should be updated to refer to the CMP rather than the CZMP
9	*Riparian areas on the western side of the Wilsons River, between the two bridges are regenerated and restored within 10 years.*	• PI continues to be met as an ongoing action	• Riparian regeneration and restoration works are ongoing, although the site was impacted by the 2022 floods • Consider updating the location/area for this PI to '*Council-managed public riparian areas in urban Lismore*' or similar
10	*An annual random survey of rate payers and residents identifies an increased awareness of BMS related actions.*	• Not met/ data unavailable	• Dedicated annual random surveys of BMS awareness were not undertaken • The 2023 Community Strategic Planning survey indicates low awareness of BMS related actions.

3 Conclusions

3.1 Actions achieved

The implementation of the BMS over the past 5 years has had mixed success. A relatively high percentage of actions from the Internal and Urban streams were achieved (both 71%) whereas only 44% of actions in the Rural stream were achieved. Key actions successfully implemented across all streams include:

- A Vegetation Protection Chapter in the Lismore DCP and Guidelines for the preparation of Vegetation Management Plans (LCC, 2024)
- Creating and maintaining spatial data sets for:
    - Habitat lost and gained via development consents,
    - Koala habitat lost and gained,
    - Habitat restoration projects
    - Bushland restoration works in urban areas
- Identification of high conversation value vegetation in road reserves
- A formalised partnership with Richmond Landcare Inc.
- Collaborative projects with community groups
- Koala population monitoring
- Ongoing employment of the RLI Extension Officer with effective delivery of projects and success in working with industry, primary producers and other partners
- Review of the UGCP

3.2 Actions partially achieve or not achieved

Several key challenges to achieving actions in the BMS over the last 5 years have been identified and are summarised below:

- **Multiple outputs combined into a single action.** For example, Action 4.1.4 combines identification of roads that are priorities for HCV restoration and preparation of actions plans that include a review of environmental factors (REF). Priority roads were identified but only some actions plans were completed, and an REF was not prepared.
- **Actions using specific wording do not allow flexibility in delivery**. For example, Action 7.2.1 requires one event to be held per year to acknowledge and celebrate community achievements. Several events were held to acknowledge and celebrate community achievements, but an event was not held each year. For some actions, specific wording prevented or hindered the opportunity for adaptive management.
- **Actions using overly vague wording do not allow achievement of action to be confirmed.** For example, Action 2.3.1 is to deliver training to DA staff 'as required'. Measures have been taken to educate DA staff however training requirements have not been formally set.
- **Ongoing actions.** For example, Action 7.1.1 requires review and updating of website content where information is outdated which is an ongoing obligation.
- **Loss of experienced staff** to deliver community education and awareness programs affected LCC capacity to deliver integrated engagement of the BMS objectives (e.g., update and deliverer of RLI information brochures).

3.3 Program Logic

The BMS strategy framework currently comprises three delivery streams being Internal, Rural and Urban and

a broad range of actions that require a considered and pragmatic approach for successful implementation. The program logic has been considered as part of the review of the BMS framework to ascertain whether revision is warranted. Program logic maps what will be done (activity), with what resources (inputs), producing what outputs towards progressional outcomes (short, medium and long term). Essentially it provides a program of 'actions' for the achievement of the 'goals' (What is a Program Logic? - Intelligence and Insights).

Considerations for revision of the program logic include:

- Replacing the current 'streams' with themes and revised objectives that capture related actions. For example, the following three themes incorporate the actions on Council, urban and rural land:
  - Resilience and adaptation to climate change and natural hazards
  - Protect natural habitats and waterways to maintain ecosystem integrity and function, and biological diversity
  - Promote green infrastructure in urban areas and improve liveability
- Expressly acknowledging the impact of natural hazards and human-induced climate change on biodiversity and habitats and generating specific actions in response (refer Figure 3.1)
- Acknowledging the importance of education and communication by creating a separate stream or objective.
- Developing an approach for compensatory planting and habitat offsetting for works and development in the LGA.
- Incorporation of river/waterway health and/or outlining clear linkages/the relationship to the Richmond River Coastal Management Program.
- Enhanced consideration of First Nations cultural heritage in biodiversity management.

3.4 Ecological/Biodiversity Outcomes

The BMS does not currently include ecological or biodiversity outcomes in the objectives. However, two of the PIs could be considered a proxy for ecological or biodiversity outcomes being:

- *1. Projects delivered under the BMS have measurable indicators of success including but not limited to: hectares of priority areas regenerated and revegetated; kilometres of riverbank protected; area of HCV areas restored and protected.*
- *9. Riparian areas on the western side of the Wilsons River, between the two bridges are regenerated and restored within 10 years.*

The implementation status information provided by LCC (Appendix A) did not include progress towards achievement of PIs.

3.5 Monitoring Program

The BMS does not include any express requirement to monitor:

- Implementation of the specified actions,
- Progress against PIs, or
- Biodiversity or ecological outcomes

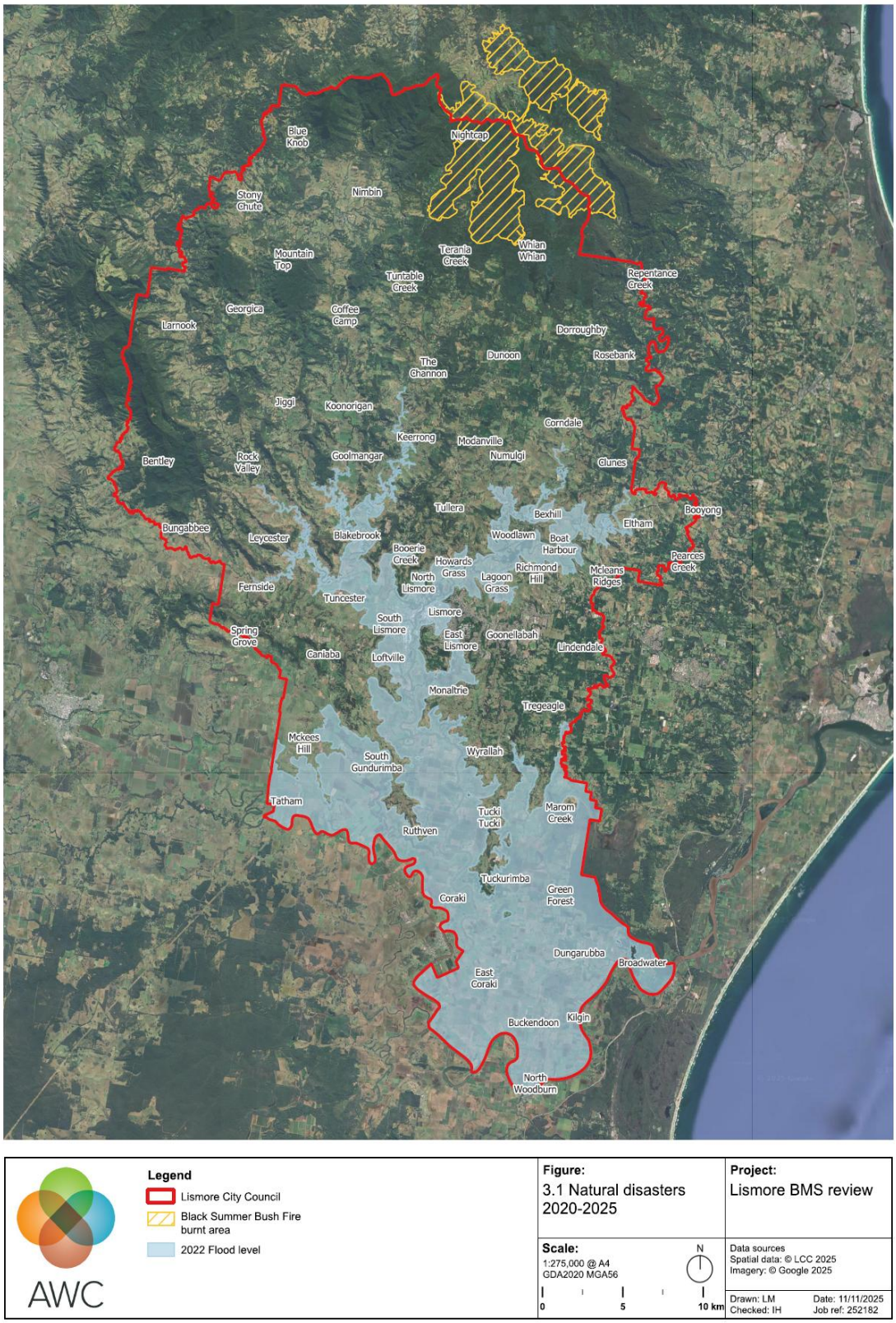


Figure 3.1 Extent of 2019 bushfires and 2022 floods in the Lismore LGA (source: LCC)

4 References

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LCC (2025) *Revised Urban Green Corridors Plan 2025–2035*. Lismore City Council, Goonellabah NSW.

LLS (2025) *Bush regeneration in progress: An ongoing management guide for landholders in the North Coast*, Local Land Services, NSW

The Behaviour Change Collaborative (2025) *Building focus and calm responses when wildlife is nearby*. Available at: https://www.leaveit.com.au/everyday-dog-training-tips/teach-your-dog-to-ignore-wildlife/

Appendix A – Actions Table- Lismore BMS 2nd Edition



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Lismore Building Height Study

December 2025 (C)



Report title	Building Height Study
Document number	240498-1
Prepared for	Lismore City Council, Meridian Urban
Authors	Tony Dickson, Duncan Moore
Revision number	C
Revision issue date	01/12/2025

Disclaimer: This report has been prepared in accordance with the scope of services described in the contract or agreement between Place Design Group Pty Ltd ACN 082 370063 and the Client. The report relies upon data, surveys, measurements and results taken at or under the particular times and conditions specified herein. Any findings, conclusions or recommendations only apply to the aforementioned circumstances and no greater reliance should be assumed or drawn by the Client. Furthermore, the report has been prepared solely for use by the Client and Place Design Group accepts no responsibility for its use by other parties.

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Purpose

The purpose of this study is to prepare a building height study to inform future updates to the planning provisions of the Lismore LEP that support Lismore City Council housing growth, diversity and delivery strategies. In coordination with LCC and Meridian Urban, identify development controls and performance criteria for key precinct considerations of increased building height

Limitations of Study

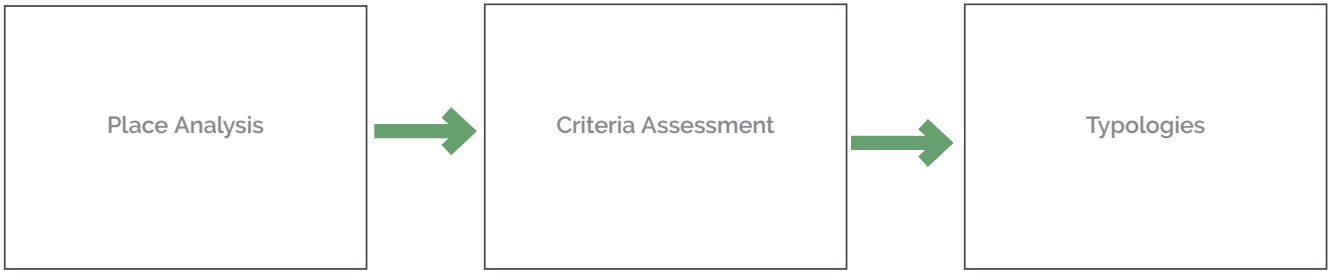
The analysis and recommendations within this study have been prepared through the following methodology:

- Desktop study and analysis of GIS data layers to yield existing building typology, building heights, site contours, flood overlay and heritage considerations.
- Site visit and use of aerial photography to study view corridors and further opportunities.
- Simple built form massing of existing buildings and the topography. Not based on accurate survey and for graphical representation only.
- No formal visual assessment was undertaken.

Analysis of visual context was informed by site visits and desktop assessments of building massing.

- Key precinct design work for the Lismore CBD is still to be undertaken.
- Transportation strategy work for Lismore has not yet been undertaken.
- Broader strategic planning work is been undertaken concurrently through development of the LSPS.

Study Approach



Assessment of key elements, analysis of site and conditions to establish opportunities and constraints and combining together to establish a plan for greater building height opportunities.

Performance criteria assessment to inform building height. Highlight areas with potential for increase heights and opportunities to greater density.

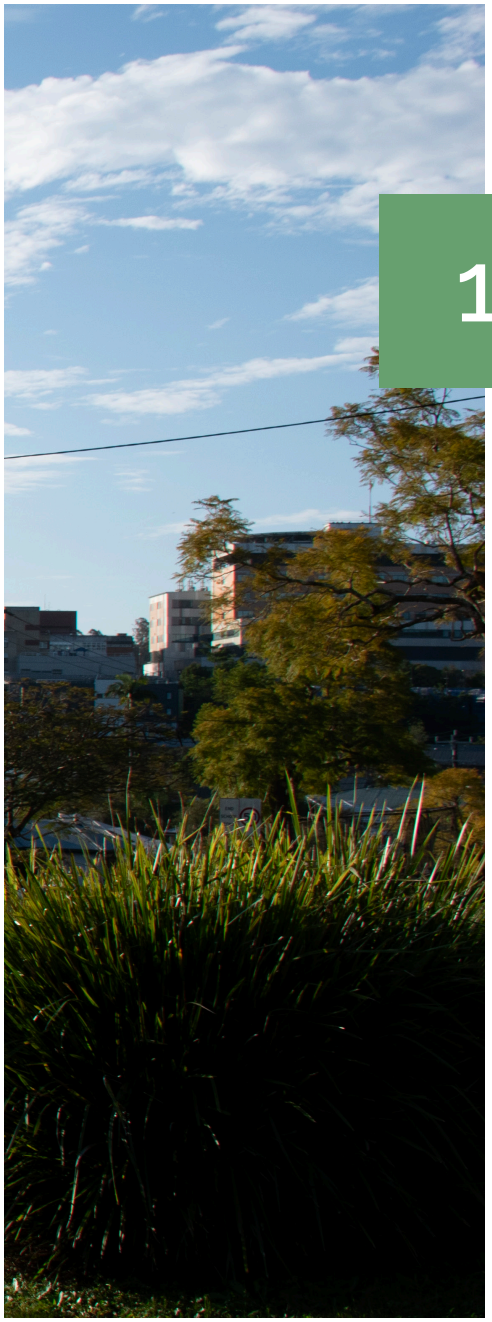
Identifying locally responsive massing typologies for scenario testing.

Scenario 1 : Key movement corridors & economic drivers

Scenario 2 : Preserve key vistas

Scenario 3 : Low growth - focus on key intersections





1.0 Place analysis

Place character

Analysis based on site visit and desktop review of existing precinct. Reviewing context, existing building typology and heights, land form, land use. As well as gaining an understanding of community and heritage features, highlighting key views and sight lines to and from the precincts.

Built Form - Housing







Built Form - Community Buildings







Streets

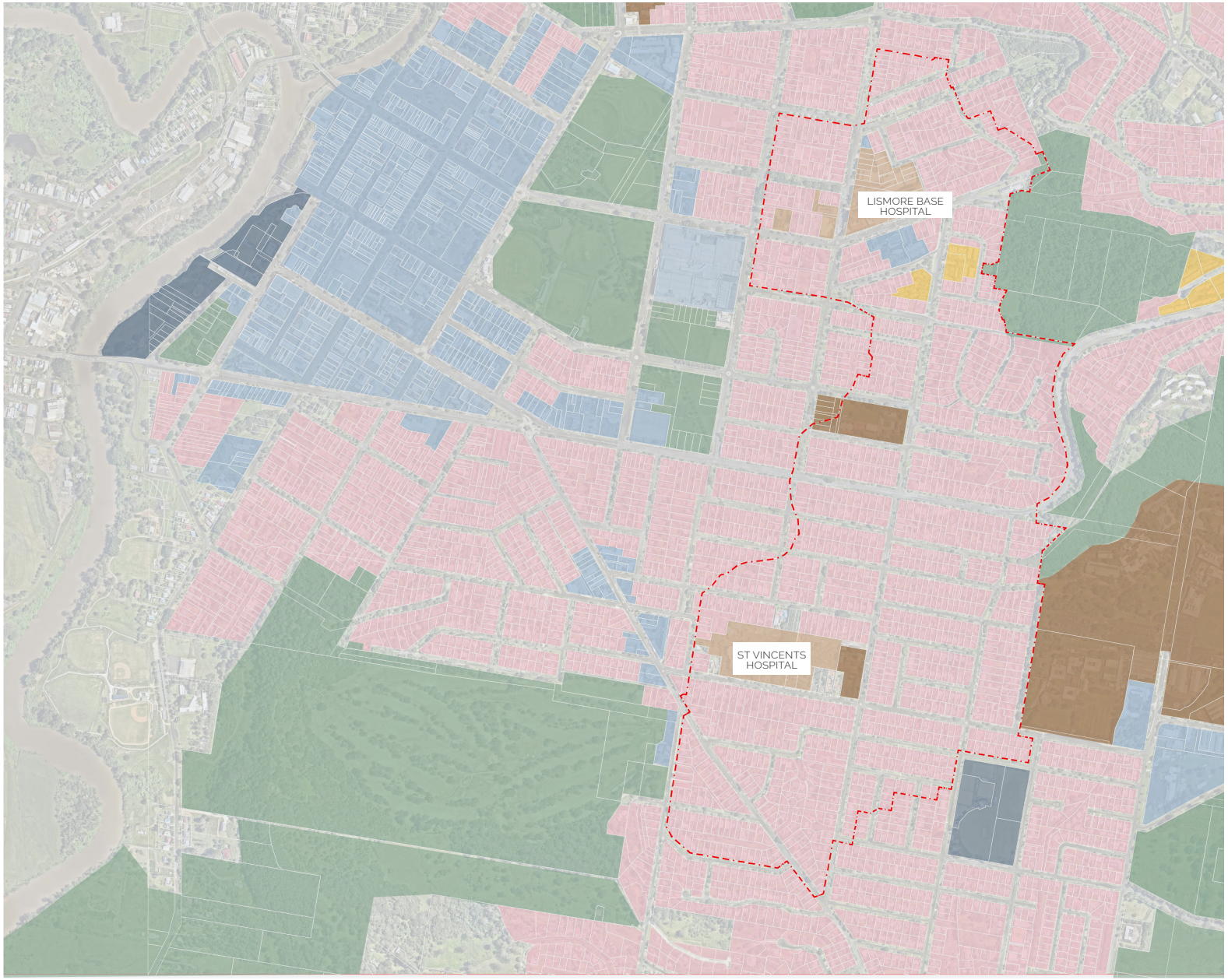







Study Area Context
LISMORE CBD
LISMORE BASE HOSPITAL
SOUTH LISMORE
Wilson River
Uralba Street
ACCESS TO MOTORWAY M1
Ballina Road (B60)
Wyrallah Road
Southern Cross University
ST VINCENTS HOSPITAL
Dalley road
EAST LISMORE
place design group.

Lismore Building Height Study



Urban Environment

Description

Study area is generally single residential environment with some stand alone community and commercials building. The two health precincts, Lismore Base Hospital and St Vincents Private Hospital are key areas and have further associate medical facilities adjacent.

Influence on building heights

- Predominantly low density residential environment

LEGEND

- Residential (Low density)
- Residential (Medium density)
- Community
- Education
- Health
- Commercial
- Green Space (Parks etc)

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Lot sizes

Description

Predominant residential lot sizes range from approximately 600 sqm with a range up to 1000 sqm.

Influence on building heights

- Lot sizes above 600sqm capable of delivering 3-4 storeys building
- Potential amalgamations of lots required for buildings above 4 storeys
- Assume to be driven by market outcomes and dependent on private sector.

LEGEND

Existing lot size

- 00 - 599 sqm
- 600 - 799 sqm
- 800 - 999 sqm
- 1000 - 1999 sqm
- 2000 - 3999 sqm
- 4000 + sqm

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Existing building typology & heights

Description

Predominately detached house environment with a few medium density dwellings. Some community and commercial buildings including the two hospitals, school and aged care facilities are interspersed, generally along the main road network.

Most houses single storey with height zoning noted at 8.5 - 9m.

Influence on building heights

- Need to consider transitions and site planning considerations to minimise impact on single-two storey dwellings.
- Multi dwelling development has lower potential for change or urban renewal.

LEGEND

Heights of Buildings

- 8.5 - 9m (I-J)
- 11.5m (L)
- 13.0 - 14.5m (N1 & N2)
- 16.0m (O)
- 17.5m (P)
- 20.5m (Q

0 20 40 60 80 100

Low Density Detached Houses







Mix of detached single storey homes, predominantly brick and weather board with some post war Fibro homes

Medium Density Housing







Minimal amount of multiple dwellings, typically a amalgamated double block with two storey block or terraced bungalows. Larger modern aged care developments with mix units and bungalows.

Community Buildings and Infrastructure







Community amenities within the study area, mix of small stand alone medical facilities that support the two health care precincts, as well as churches and a primary and secondary school.

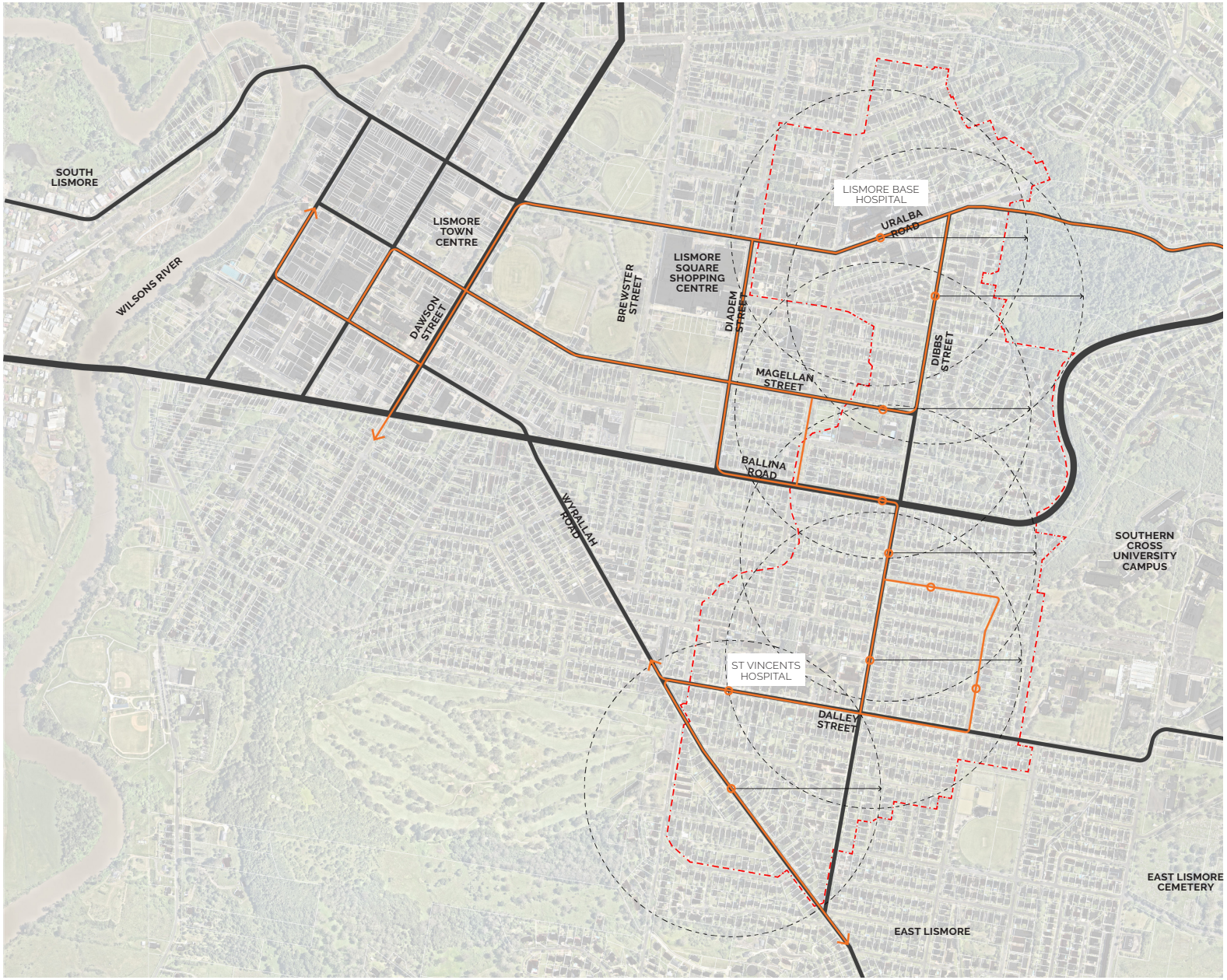
Commercial





Minimal commercial offerings apart from the medical facilities, noting there are small home based businesses included in study area.

Lismore Building Height Study



Transport & movement

Description

The study area is intersected by two key roads, Ballina Road (B60) to the south which is the main connection road to the regional Motorway (M1). Uralba Road links the Base hospital to the town centre and on ward to South Lismore.

An existing bus network also intersects the study area and runs centrally down Dibbs street, providing walk-able (5 minutes walk) access to bus opportunities.

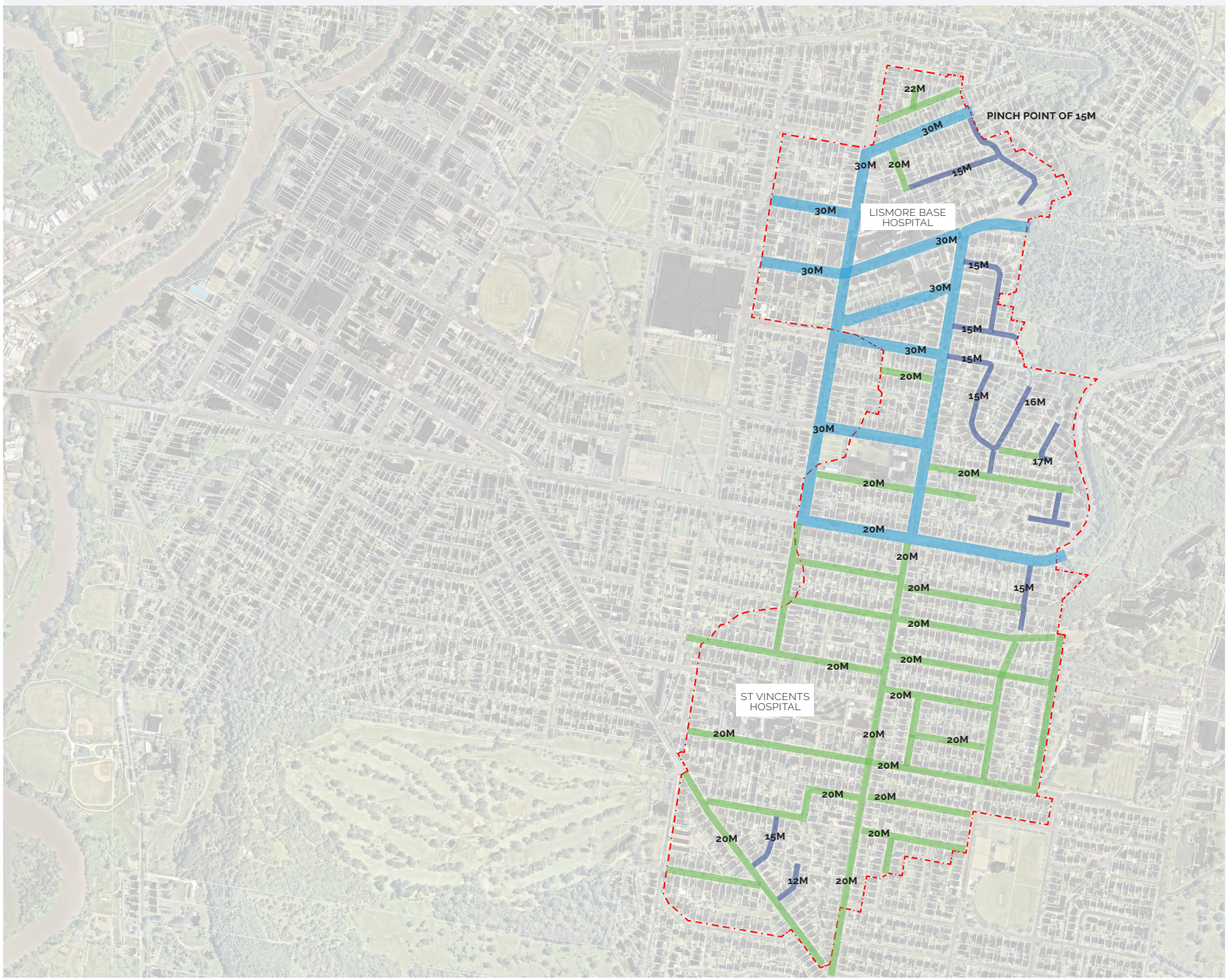
Influence on building heights

- Key road and transport corridors offer opportunities for high density living with good transit connections.
- Entire study area is within 5 minuter walk of a bus stop.

LEGEND

- Major road
- Minor roads
- Major Bus Routes
- Bus Stops (in study area)
- Walking Circle 400m or 5 minute

0 20 40 60 80 100



Street widths

Description

Residential road reserve widths within the study area are nominally 20m wide, but where the neighbourhoods starts to traverse the sloping terrain to the east the roads wind and decrease in width.

Influence on building heights

- No increase in building heights on road reserve widths under 17m (under current DCP requirements).
- Culs de sac offer less active transport permeability and spreading of increased traffic into the surrounding network

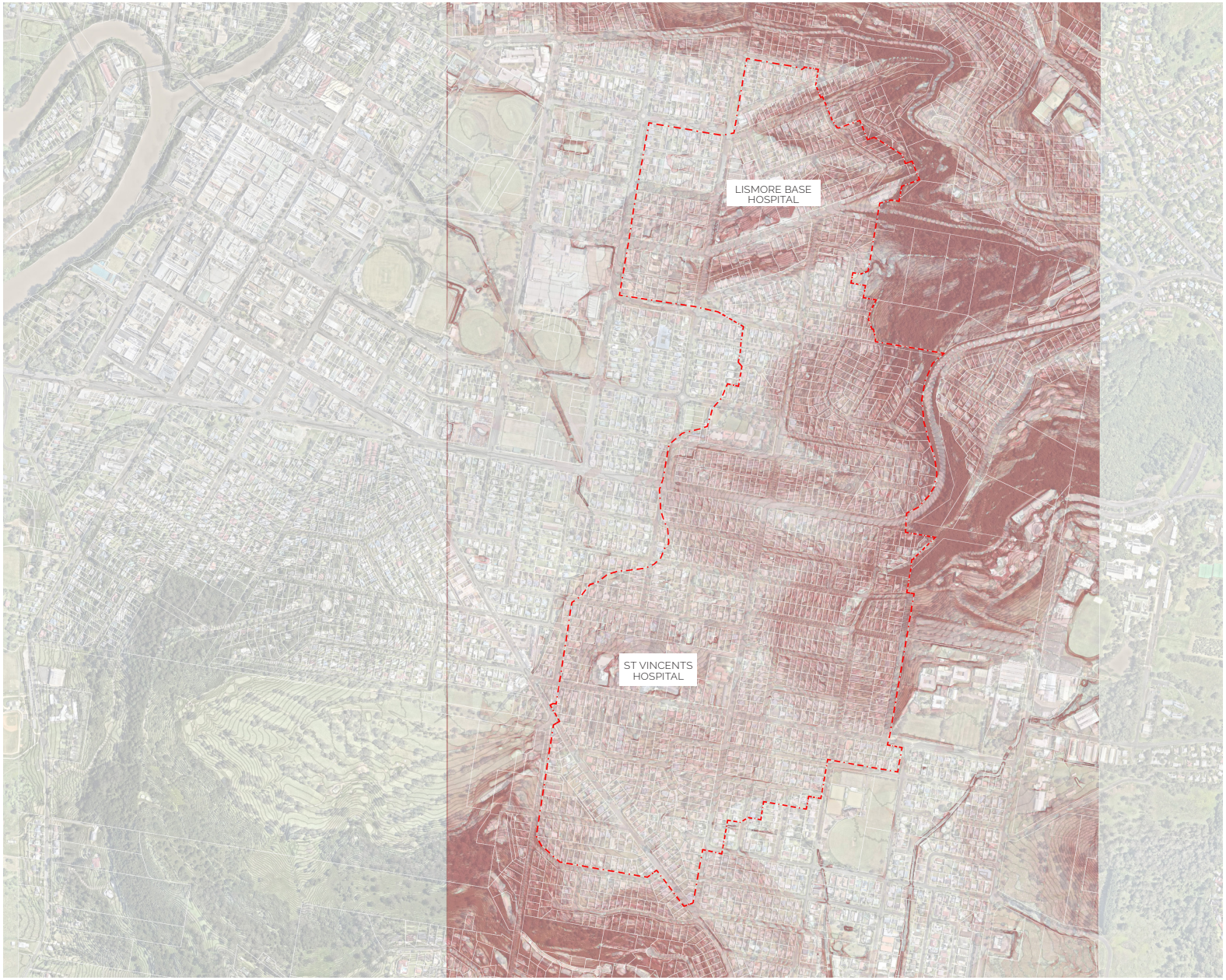
LEGEND

Road reserve widths

- 16m and less
- 17 - 20m
- 25m +

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Slope analysis

Description

The eastern edge of the study area is defined by a steep slope that marks the cut away for the Ballina Road (B60). Lismore has prevalence of steep blocks with residential houses built on slope up to 25degrees.

Influence on building heights

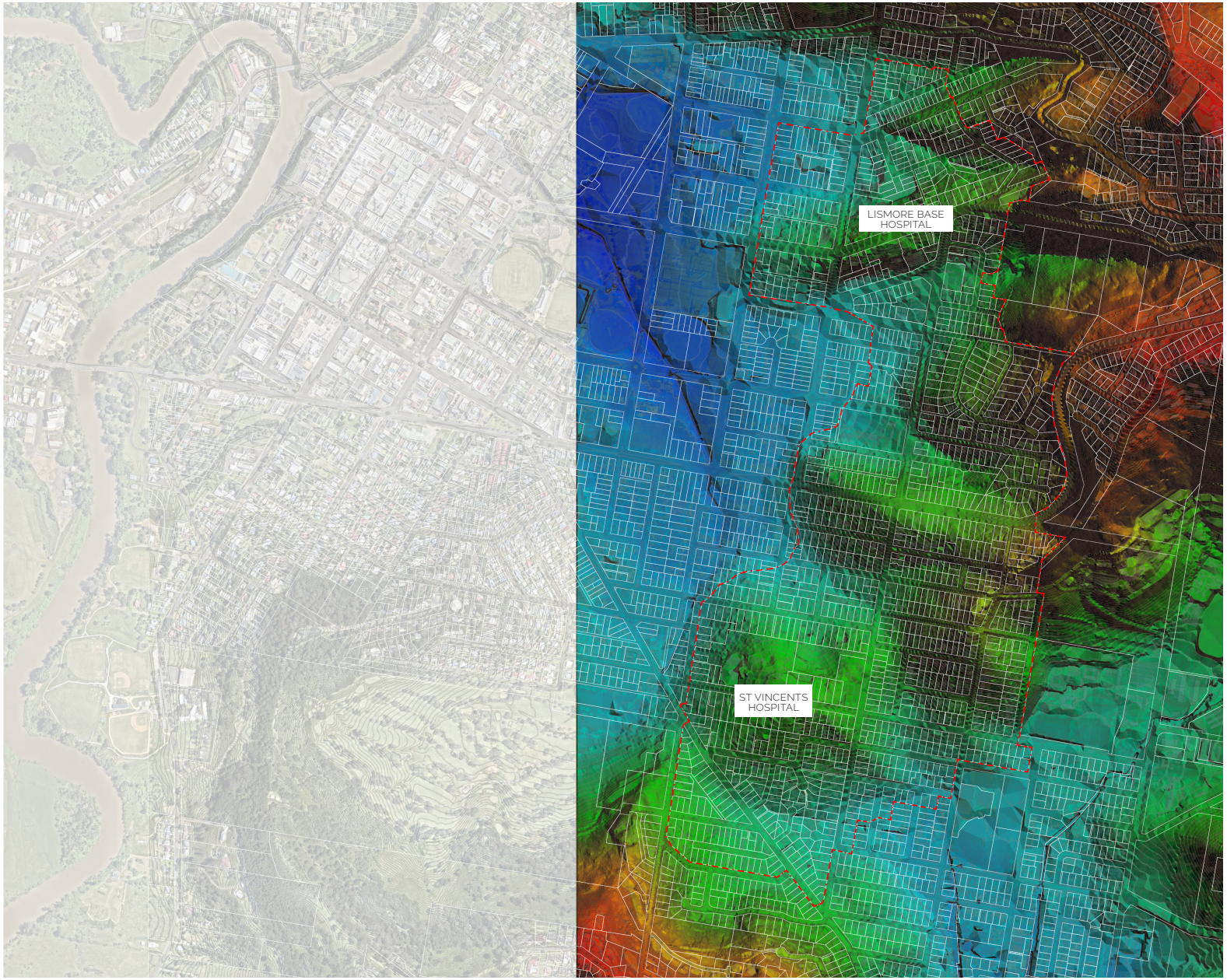
- Generally, steeper slopes reduce building configuration opportunities.
- Potential increase construction costs associated with civil and ground works.

LEGEND

Slope Analysis

15.0 °	27%
12.5 °	22%
10.0 °	18%
7.5 °	13%
5.0 °	9%
2.5 °	4%
0.0 °	0%

0 20 40 60 80 100



Elevation analysis

Description

A ridge line to the east with continuing peaks of high elevation permeate the study area as it slopes down west towards Wilson River.

Influence on building heights

- Overall elevation height of lots will need to consider visibility within Lismore, its sky line and any key view corridors.
- Prominent/ elevated lots will need to consider transitions and context.

Lismore Building Height Study



Heritage & conservation





Description

Seven heritage buildings are located within the study area, predominantly around the Base Hospital Precinct, including two heritage landscape areas with established street trees. The Conservation area facing the Private Hospital to the south, contains series of detached houses that are a mix of commercial and residential use.

Influence on building heights

- Lots adjacent to heritage area may take into account transition zones to alleviate impact on existing heritage and character buildings.

LEGEND

Heights of Buildings
Heritage area general
Heritage landscape
Heritage item archaeological
Heritage Conservation area
0 20 40 60 80 100



Multiple dwellings & non-residential uses

Description

Study area consists of predominantly stand alone residential house, highlighted are the lots with more than three titles. Also highlighted are the established community elements, such as schools, churches, aged care and medical facilities.

Influence on building heights

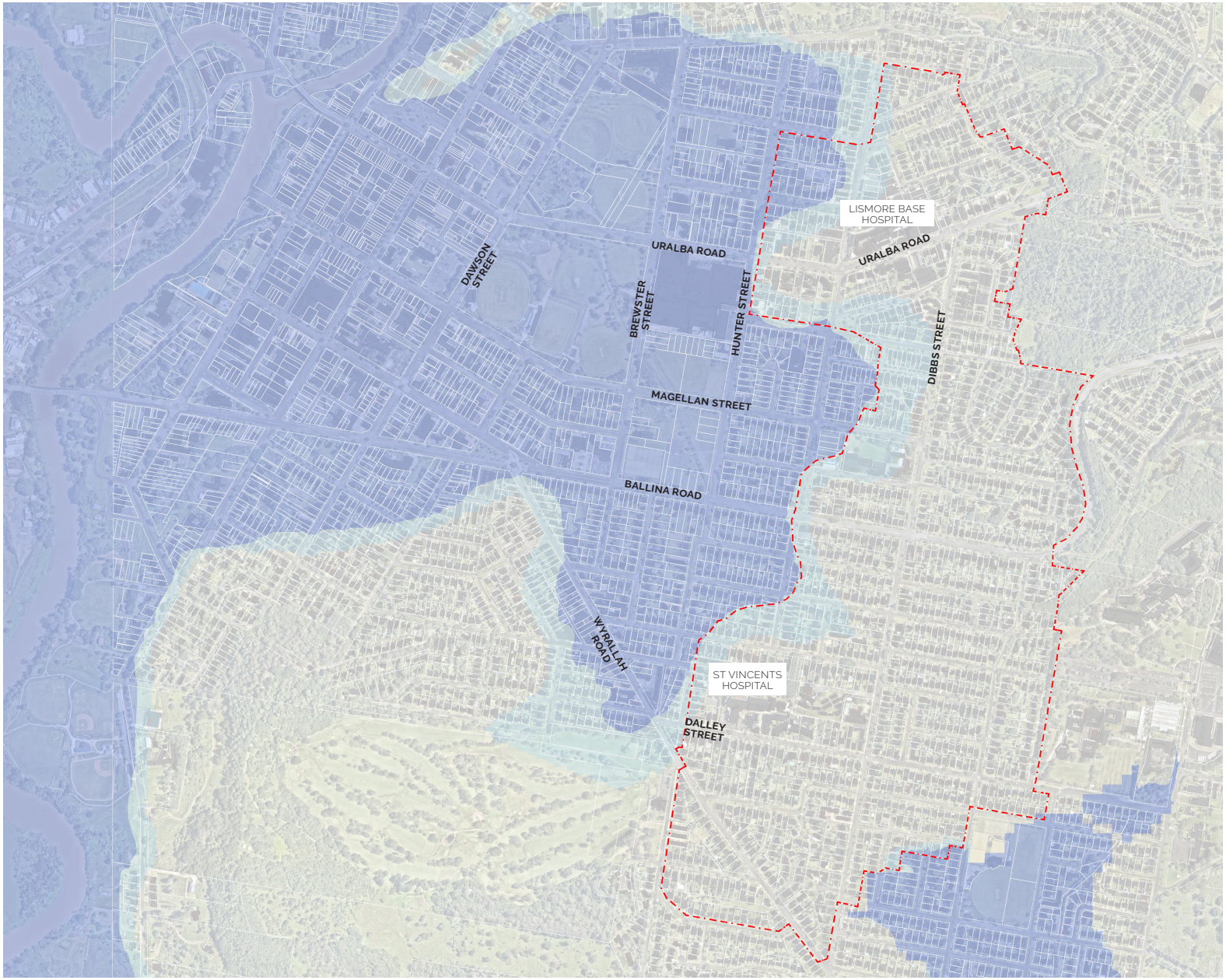
- Multi-unit developments in excess of 3 titles will be a impediment to urban renewal within the local market setting

LEGEND

Existing lot size
Multiple dwellings
Community elements
Walking Circle 400 m or 5 minute

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Flood overlay

Description

The flood affected area noted defines the edge of the western and south-eastern boundary of the study area, with the probable maximum flood level encroaching.

Influence on building heights

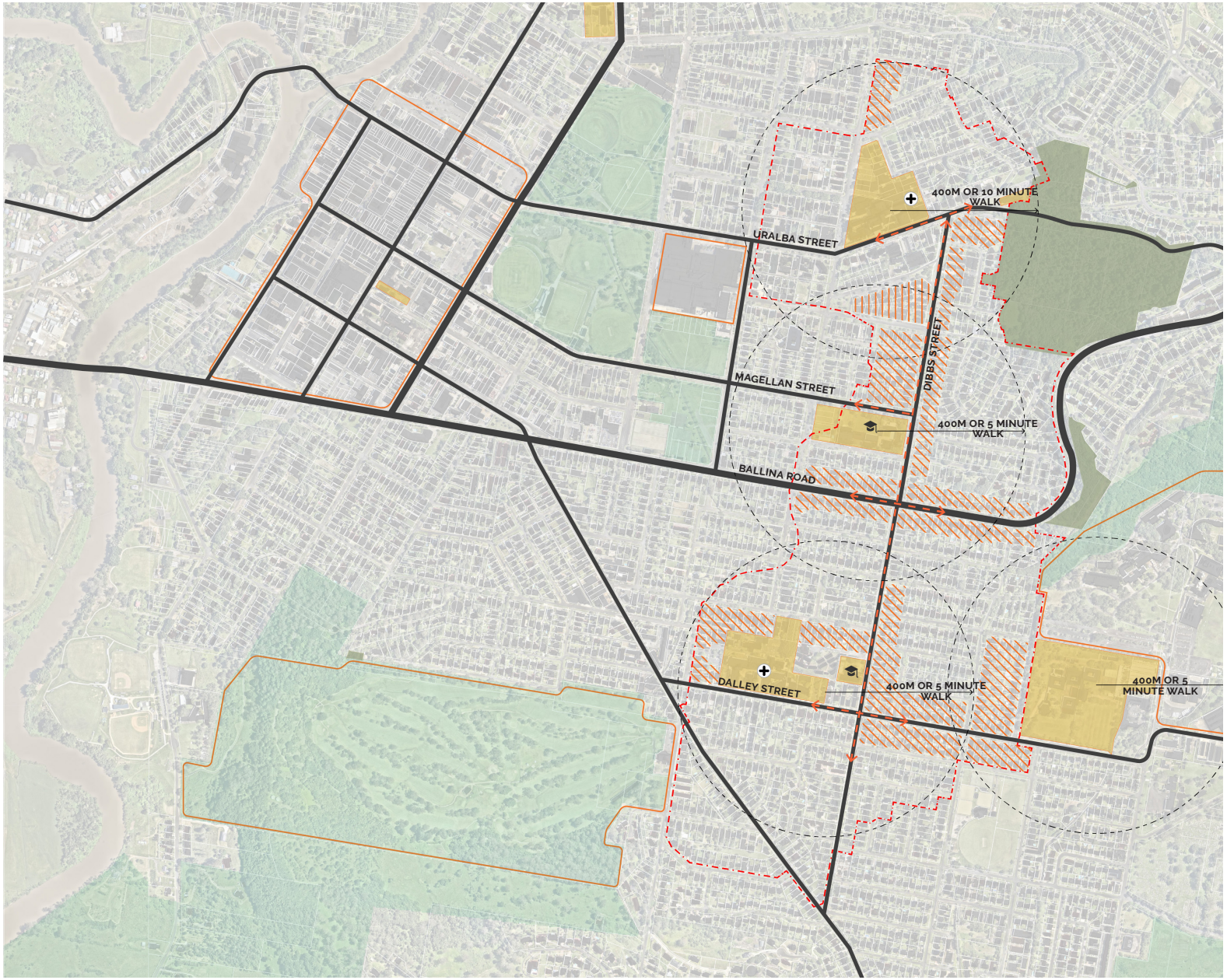
- No effect on building heights, noting ground level or underground parking in lots adjacent to flooding area would need to take appropriate measures.

LEGEND

- Council Flood Planning Area
- Probable Maximum Flood Level

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Amenity drivers & key corridors

Description

The community amenities, schools and health precincts, are located off key connection roads, with the remaining study area within 5 minutes walk of a junction of these roads.

Main road corridors offer the opportunity for improved active and public transport infrastructure as well as street scape enhancements that could support development intensification

Influence on building heights

- Key movement corridors and access to community facilities or employment nodes can support increased living densities.

LEGEND

- Community elements (schools)
- Existing Community Elements
- Key Corridors

0 20 40 60 80 100

View corridors - Internal



View from northern end of Hunter Street



View south down Dibbs Street



View looking west down McKenzie Street


View looking west down Music Street

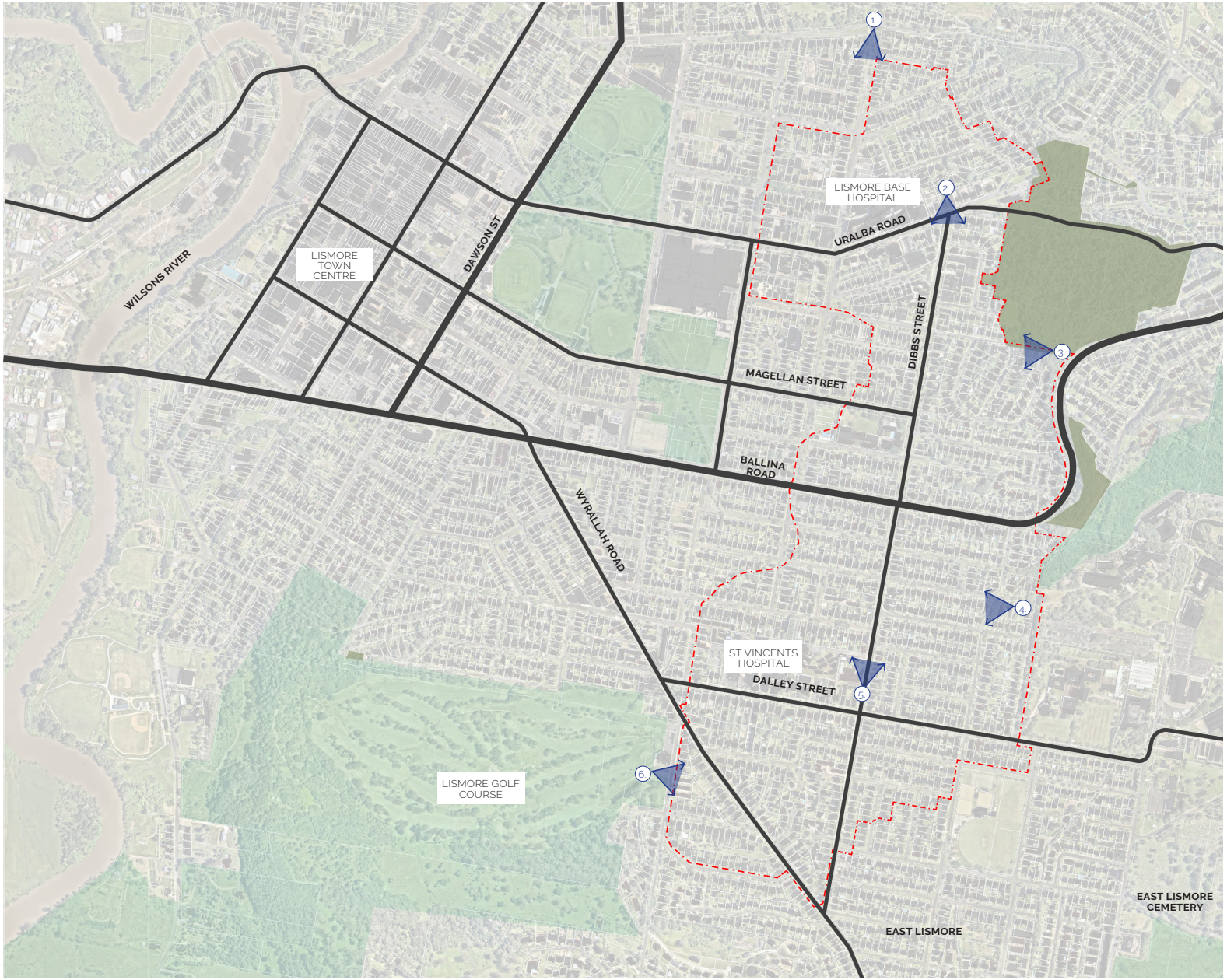


View north down Dibbs Street, towards Lismore Base Hospital



View east across East Lismore from Lismore Workers Golf Club.

Lismore Building Height Study



Description

The topography of study area allows for clear views across the study area and across greater Lismore. Clear view corridors down Dibbs Street and the prominence of the taller buildings in the health care make for easy way finding.

Influence on building heights

- Valuable views and vistas should be maintained

0 20 40 60 80 100

View corridors - External









Lismore Building Height Study



Description

Views to the mountains that surround Lismore make a integral part of the vistas around the city. Visible upon approach from the main roads into Lismore.

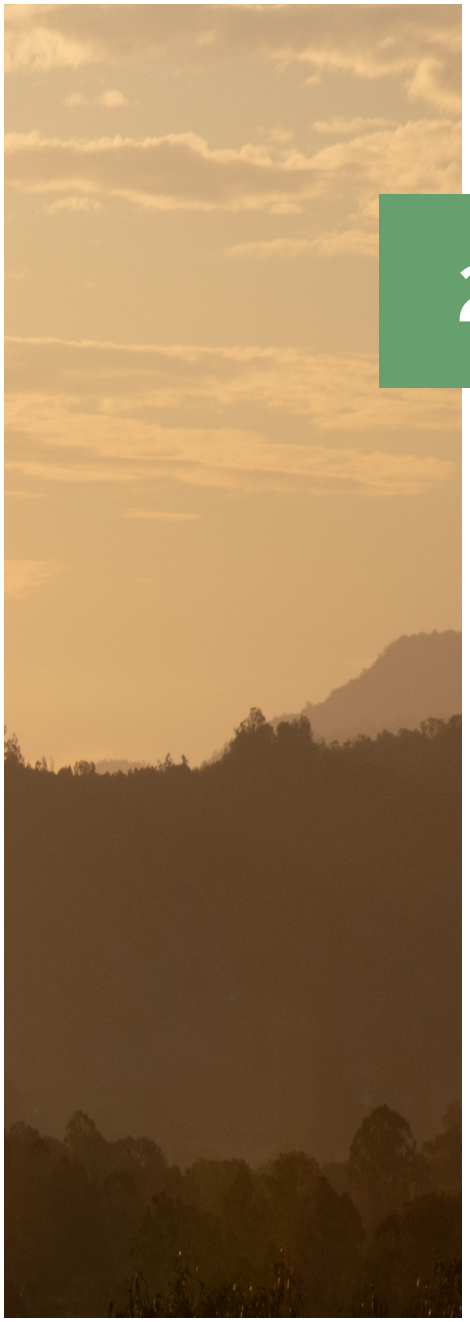
The two healthcare precincts sit on prominent positions within Lismore and in relation to the study area. Both precincts have taller buildings that are visible from around the city and are part of the sky line. .

Influence on building heights

- Retaining key view corridors along access roads of Ballina and Uralba Road,and protecting vistas to the mountains.

0 20 40 60 80 100

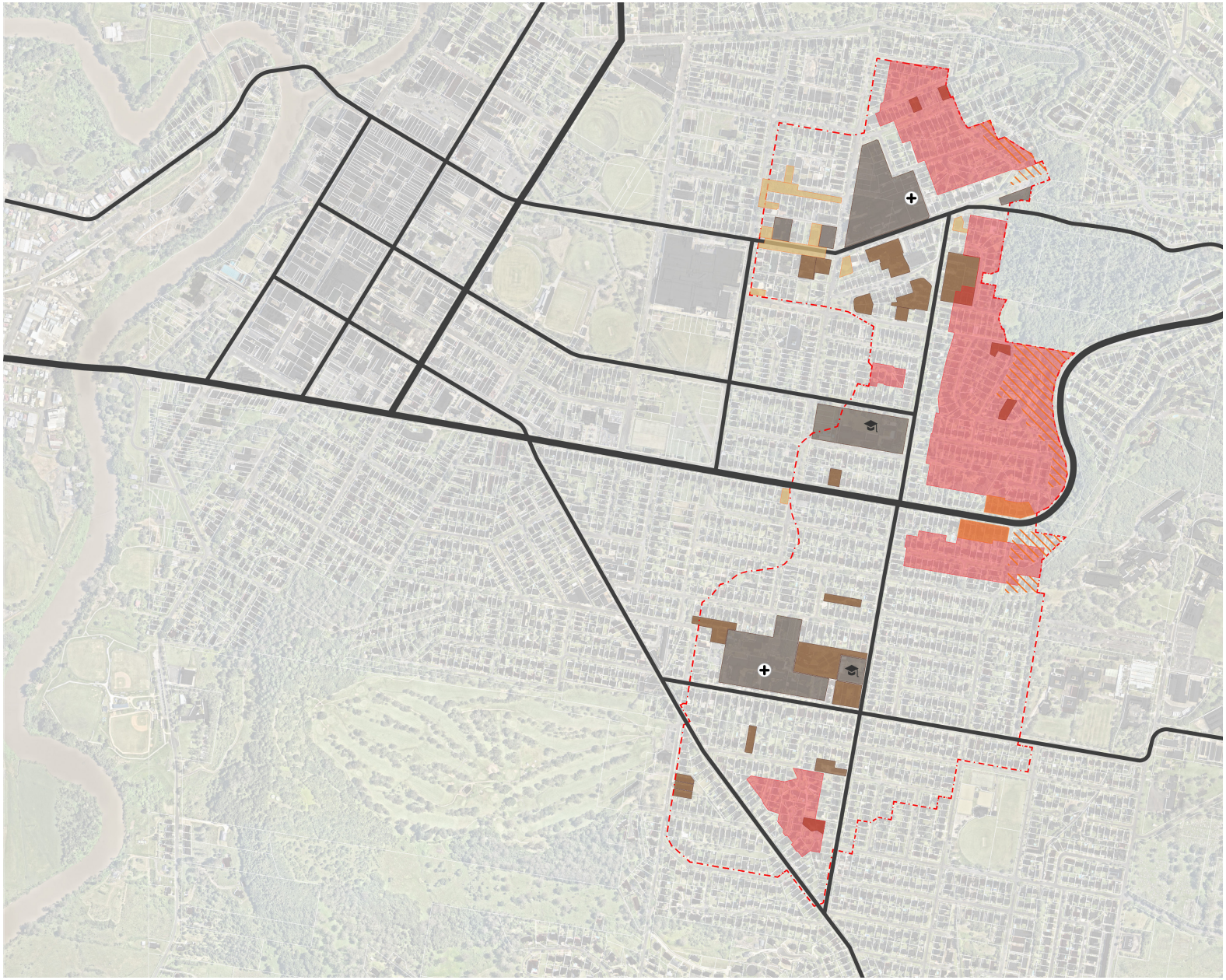




2.0 Criteria Assessment

Criteria Assessment Summary

Criteria	Influence on Height	Performance criteria informing building height
Urban Environment	• Predominantly low density residential environment with an existing height limit	• None
Lot Size	• Lot sizes above 600sqm capable of delivering 3-4 storeys building • Potential amalgamations of lots required for buildings above 4 storeys • Assume to be driven by market outcomes and dependent on private sector.	• None
Existing building typology & heights	• Need to consider transitions and site planning considerations to minimise impact on single-two storey dwellings. • Multi dwelling development has lower potential for change or urban renewal.	• Minimise impacts of height transitions and overshadowing
Transport & Movement	• Key road and transport corridors offer opportunities for high density living with good transit connections. • Entire study area is within 5 minuter walk of a bus stop.	• None
Street Width	• No increase in building heights on road reserve widths under 17m (under current DCP requirements). • Culs de sac offer less active transport permeability and spreading of increased traffic into the surrounding network	• Minimum road reserve width of over 17m required • Roads ending in culs de sac excluded
Slope Analysis	• Generally, steeper slopes reduce building configuration opportunities. • Potential increase construction costs associated with civil and ground works.	• Slopes in excess of 20% are excluded
Elevation	• Overall elevation height of lots will need to consider visibility within Lismore, its sky line and any key view corridors. • Prominent/ elevated lots will need to consider transitions and context.	• None
Heritage & Conservation	• Lots adjacent to heritage area may take into account transition zones to alleviate impact on existing heritage and character buildings.	• Heritage lots excluded • Lots adjacent to heritage buildings are limited to 4 storeys
Multiple dwellings and non residential uses	• Multi-unit developments in excess of 3 titles will be a impediment to urban renewal within the local market setting	• Lots with 3+ community or strata titles excluded
Flood overlay	• No effect on building heights, noting ground level or underground parking in lots adjacent to flooding area would need to take appropriate measures.	• None
Amenity drivers & walk ability	• Key movement corridors and access to community facilities or employment nodes can support increased living densities.	• Height is maximised adjacent or within walking distance of key amenity drivers • Community lots excluded
View corridors - internal	• Valuable views and vistas should be maintained	• At a project level these key internal view need to be considered to determine building heights.
View corridors - external	• Retaining key view corridors along access roads of Ballina and Uralba Road,and protecting vistas to the mountains.	• At a project level these key external view need to be considered to determine building heights.



Lot and Areas with limited potential for increased height

Description

Based on the criteria assessment the potential build-able area can be refined based on performance criteria:

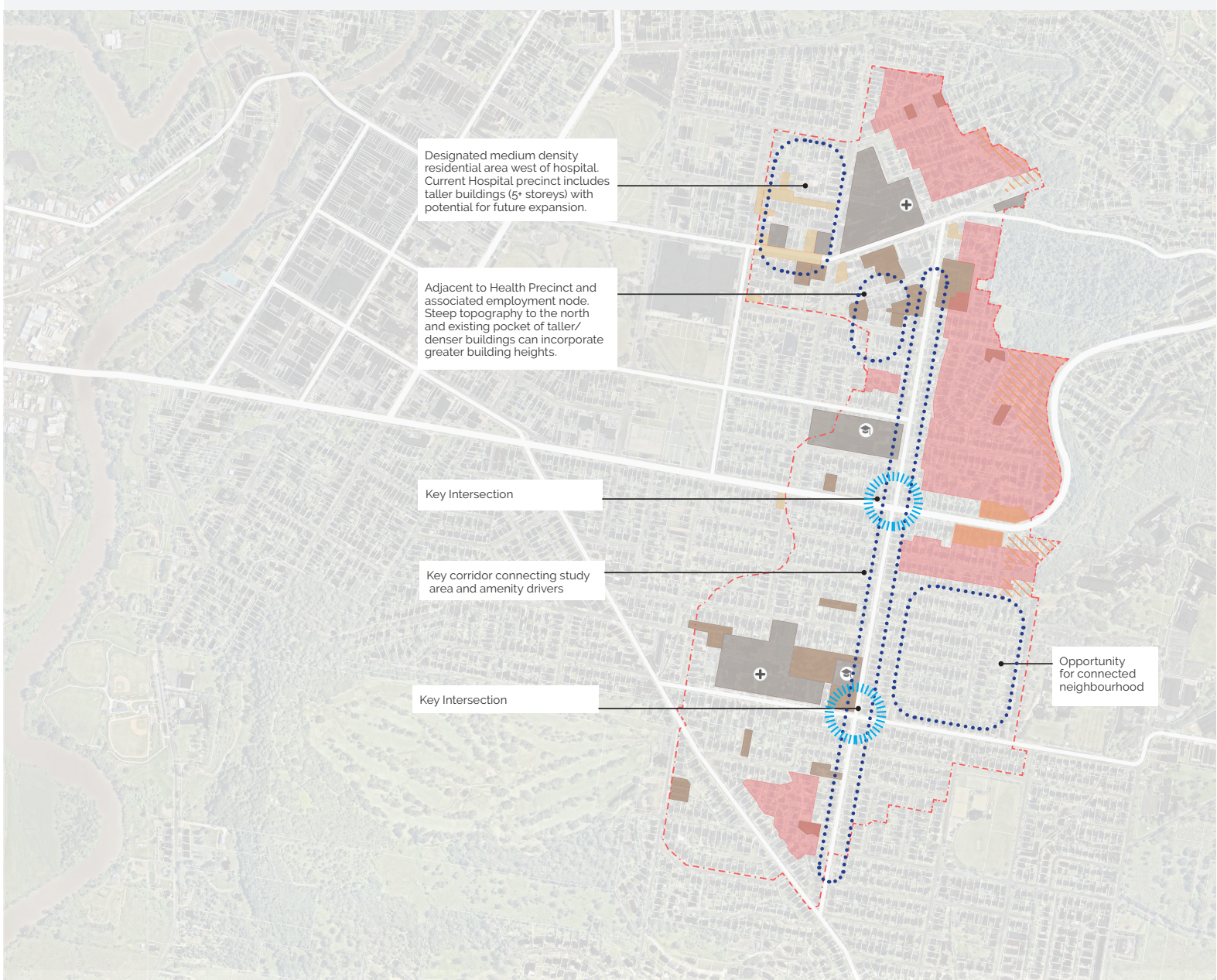
- Minimum road reserve width of 17m +
- No dead end/ culs de sac access roads
- Slope not exceeding 20degrees
- Heritage lots excluded
- Lots with 3 + strata titles excluded
- Community lots excluded

LEGEND

- Road widths overlay
- Slope overlay
- Heritage lots
- Lots with 3+ strata titles
- Community lots
- View Corridor restrictions

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



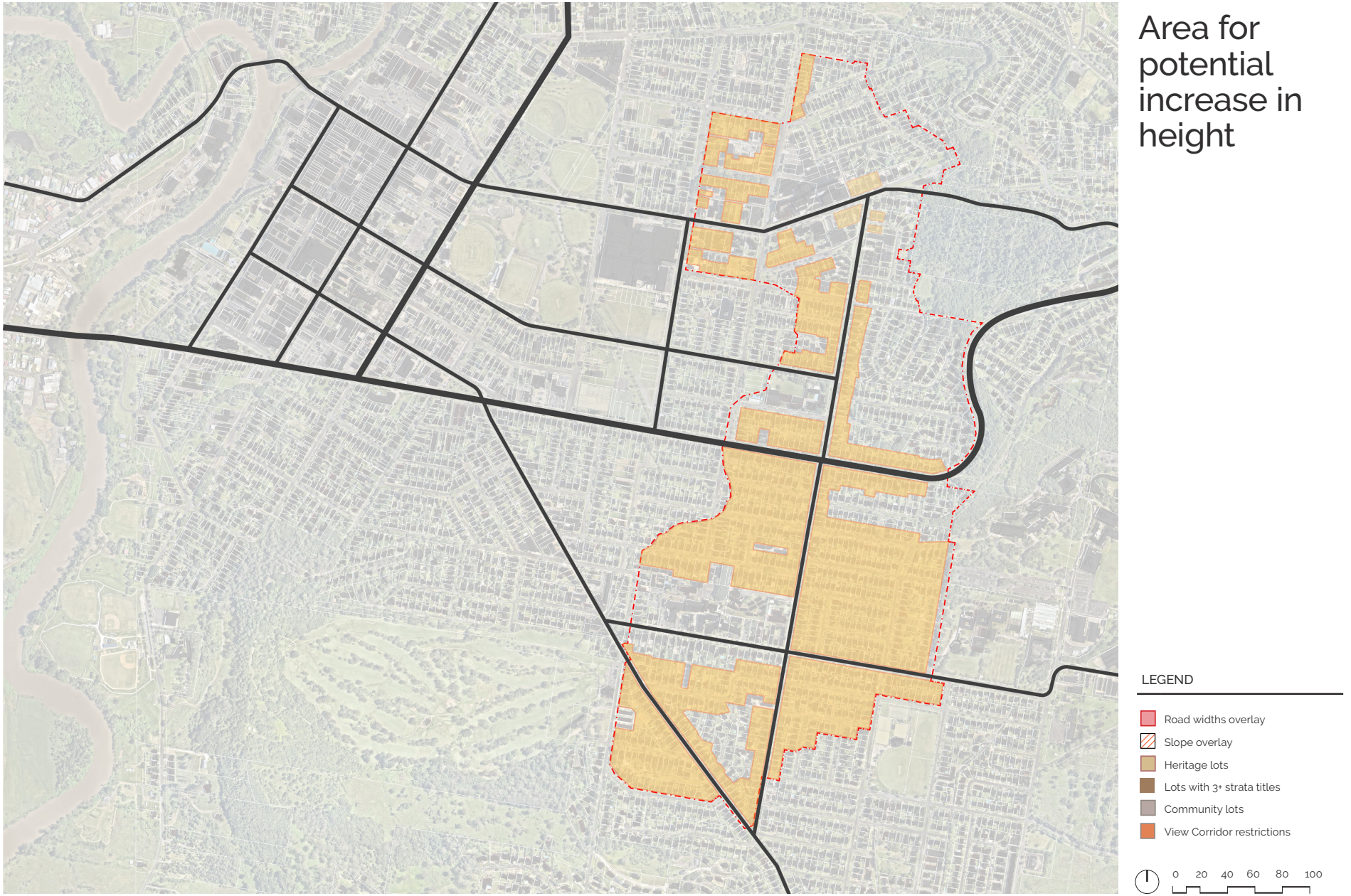
Opportunities for increased height

LEGEND

- Road widths overlay
- Slope overlay
- Heritage lots
- Lots with 3+ strata titles
- Community lots
- View Corridor restrictions

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study





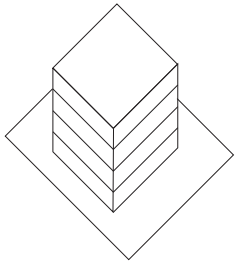


3.0 Typologies

Residential Building Typologies

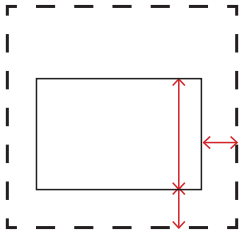
Preliminary set backs and input based on the NSW Apartment Guide Lines, and current DCP for Health Precinct.

3 - 4 STOREY



4 Storey can include option of duplex (duel level apartment for level 3-4). Nominal height 12-16m

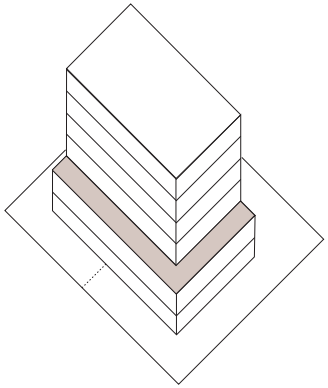
Minimum front set back	6m off primary road 4m off secondary road
Separation between residential buildings	12m
Depth of building	12-18m max
Car parking	None provided within front of building





Royal Quarters, Jener Street, Sydney

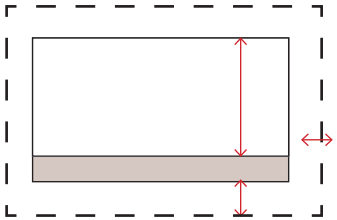
6 STOREY



Over 3 storeys recommends site of 1200 SQM.

Nominal height 18-24m

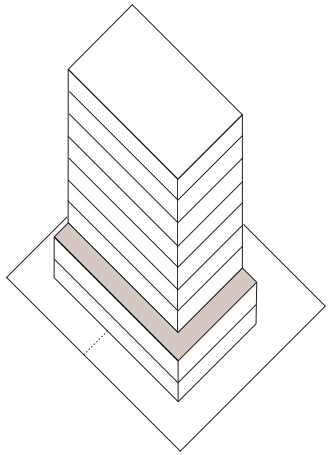
Minimum front set back	6m off primary road (If over 3 storeys) then the building/ tower has additional 3m set back
Separation between residential buildings	12m
Depth of building	12-18m max
Car parking	None provided within front of building

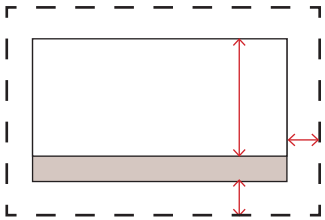




Royal Quarters, Kings Ave, Sydney

8 - 9 STOREY





Over 3 storeys recommends site of 1200 SQM.

Nominal height 32-36m

Minimum front set back	6m off primary road (If over 3 storeys) then the building/ tower has additional 3m set back
Separation between residential buildings	25m
Depth of building	12-18m max
Car parking	None provided within front of building



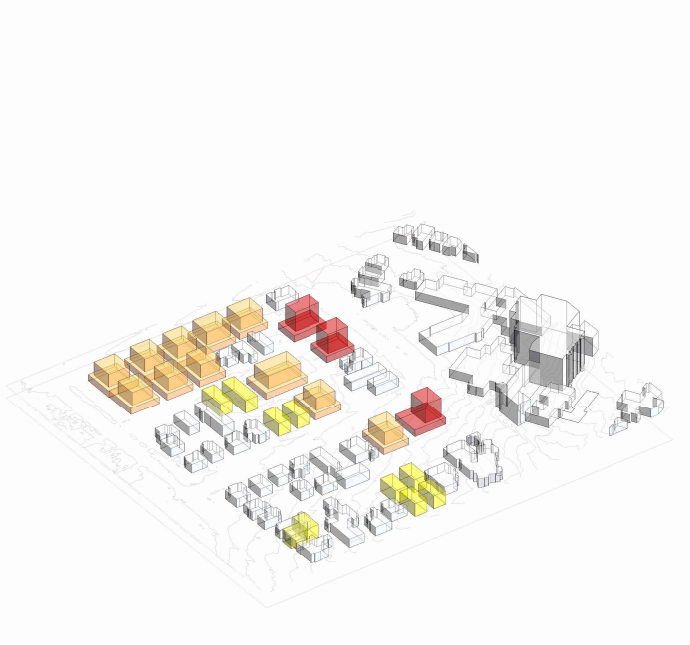
Landscaped setback, 268 Pitt Street, Sydney



8 Francis Street, Sydney
Parking access visibility minimised,

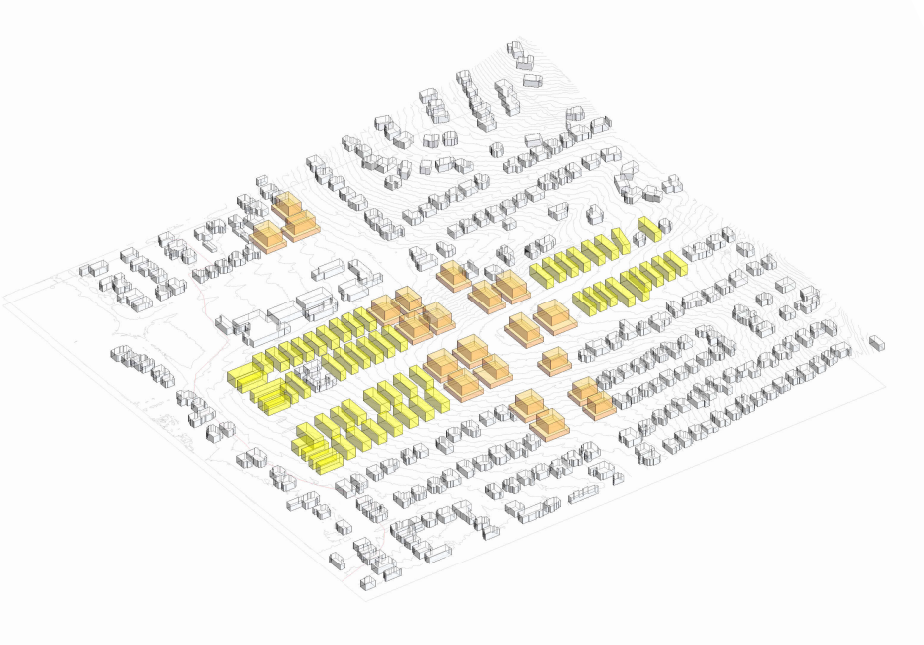
Urban design height considerations

Urban design strategies and opportunities to integrate and create appropriate height increases.



Scale Transitions

- Provide logical transitions in scale between existing and new buildings to minimise impacts of overshadowing and overlooking and support an interesting skyline.



Key corners and intersections

- Use greater building height to express key intersections and corners.



Frame key roads and movement corridors

- Use greater building height to express key streets and active transport routes. Coordinate with street scape enhancements and active transport improvements to elevate the quality and urban character of these corridors.

Lismore Building Height Study



Building Height Scenario 1A

Focus growth on key movement corridors & economic drivers

Description

- Focus height increase around key drivers and movement corridors, specifically growth around the health precincts.
- Location of these key drivers along main entry roads to Lismore and at higher elevations offering opportunity to create way points/ visual anchors within Lismore for way finding.
- Western boundary of study area along Diadem Street, denotes edge of council buy back scheme, due to flood prone land. Proposed future open space including green areas and car parking. Potential for hard edge of development without need of a transition zone to existing residential.

LEGEND

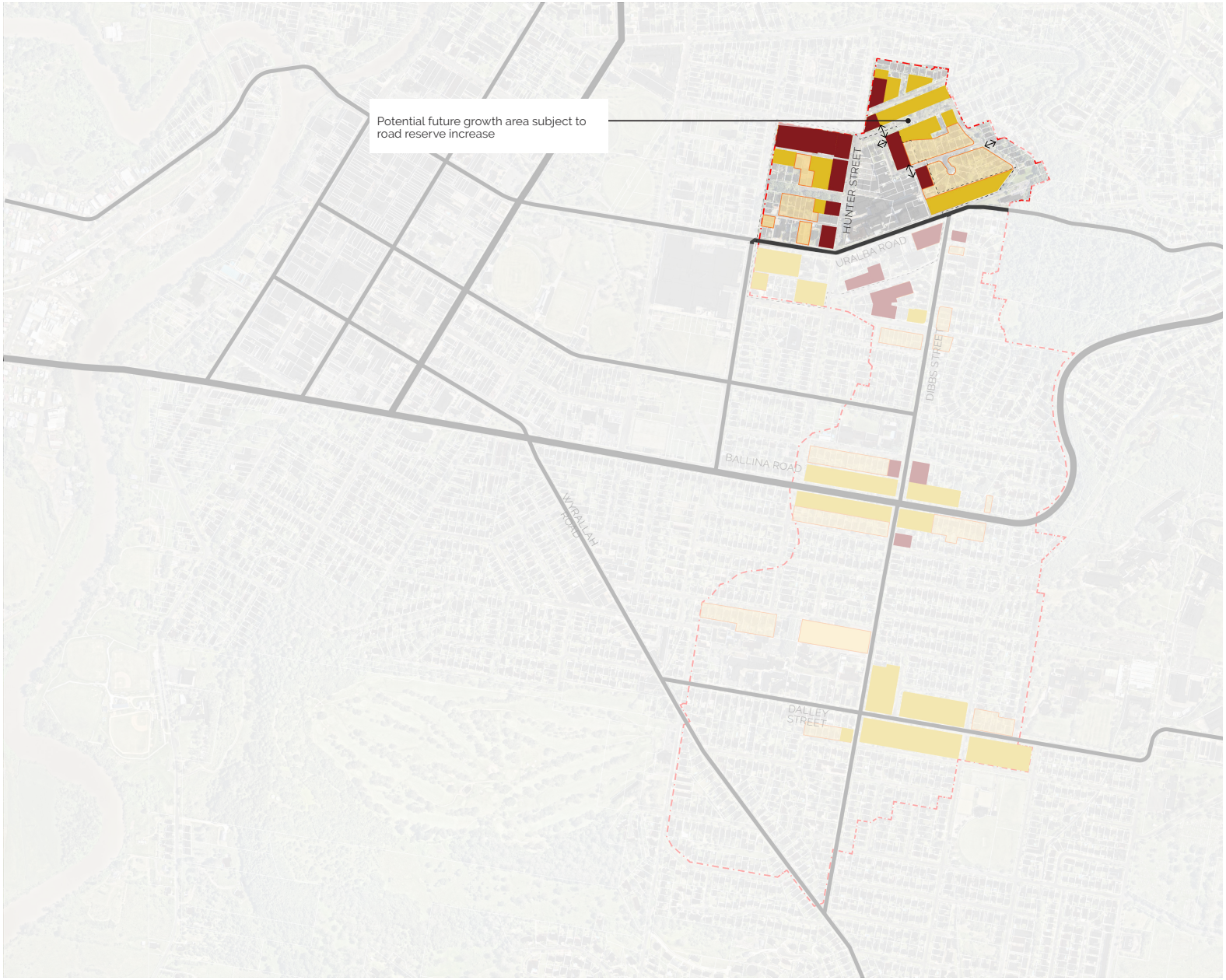
- 3-4 Storey Building
- 6 Storey Building
- 8-9 Storey Building

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Lismore Building Height Study



Building Height Scenario 1B

A strategic focus on the Lismore Base Hospital

Description

- Focused on strategically located lots around the Lismore Base Hospital and within current growth nominated growth area in the DCP.
- Existing residential roads to east of Base Hospital are less than recommended 17m width, but amalgamation of plots with significant front verge could allow for future road verge expansion to allow adequate access and circulation.
- 9 storey buildings included along hunter street, height impact reduced due to current 13 storey tower at Base hospital.
- As per Scenario 1A, western edge to study area is flood prone land and Council's future plans will utilise as open space. Development height can be increased with minimal transition zone and close proximity to CBD.

LEGEND

- 3-4 Storey Building
- 6 Storey Building
- 8-9 Storey Building

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Lismore Building Height Study



Building Height Scenario 2

Protect key vistas

Description

- Preserve the key vista as you enter Lismore from the east along Ballina Road and Uralba Street and mitigate visual impact to sightliness to and from the CBD.
- Utilise the existing topography to minimise visual impact of taller buildings, nominating 4 storeys and above at lower levels.
- Low lying Dibbs street can incorporate height increase and creates a strong link between the key east west movement corridors of Dalley St, Ballina Rd and Uralba St.
- 8-9 Storey opportunity at low elevation south of Uralba road, adjacent to health precinct .

LEGEND

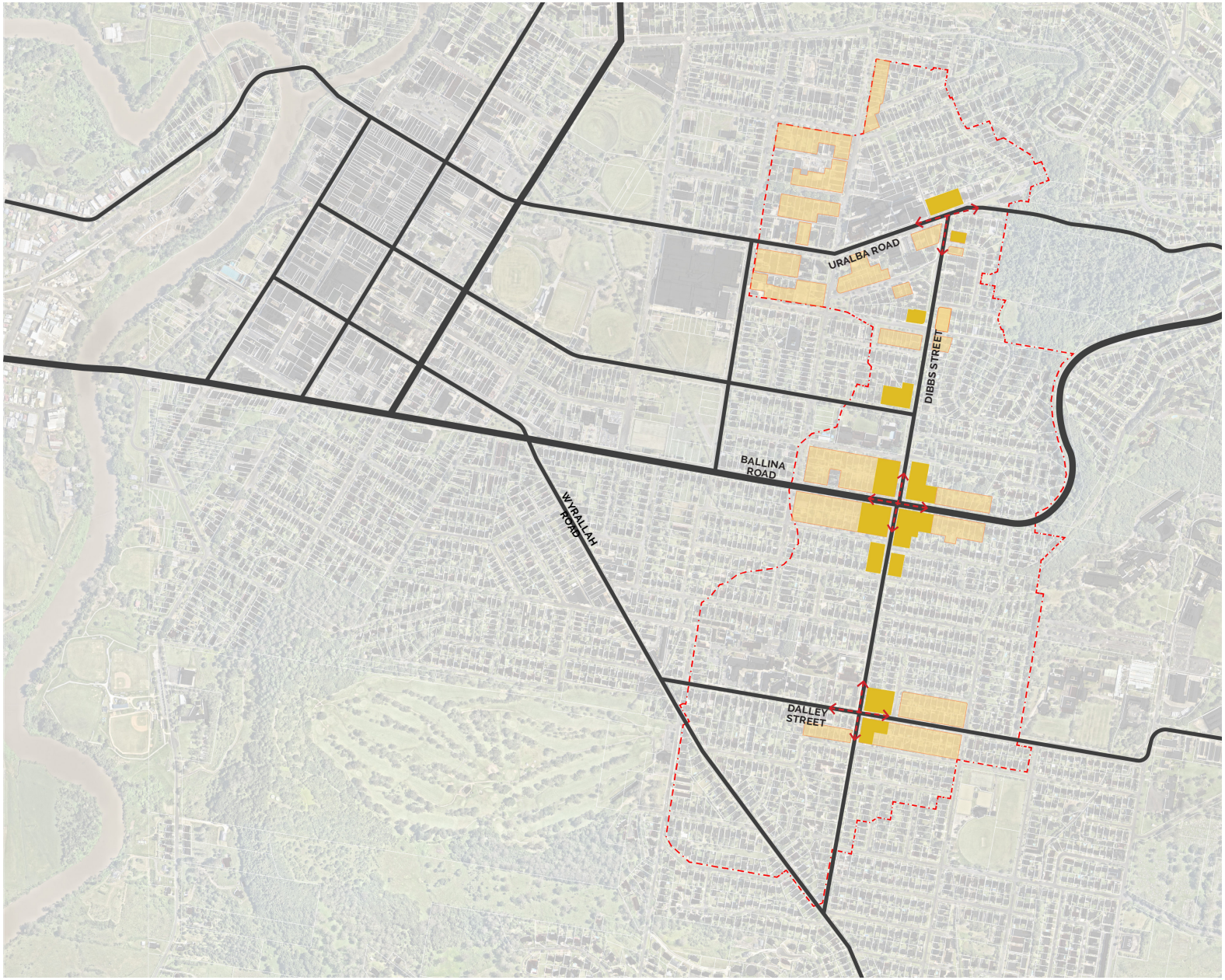
- 3-4 Storey Building
- 6 Storey Building
- 8-9 Storey Building

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study



Lismore Building Height Study



Building Height Scenario 3

Low growth - focused on key intersections

Description

- Focus increasing building height around key movement intersections to feed into road network and existing amenity drivers.
- Develop along key east west movement corridors of Ballina Road and Dalley street, with potential to utilise and expand public transport connections around Lismore.
- Opportunity to establish amenity nodes and mixed use precincts to support adjacent communities.

LEGEND

- 3-4 Storey Building
- 6 Storey Building
- 8-9 Storey Building

0 20 40 60 80 100

Lismore Building Height Study




place
design
group.


Disability Inclusion
Action Plan
2026–2030
DRAFT
Lismore
City Council


Acknowledgement of Country
Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.
We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.
We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.
Lismore
City Council



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Lismore City Council

Message from Mayor Krieg



I am pleased to present Lismore City Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2026-2030. We have worked consistently to create a region that is accessible and inclusive. As leaders in the community, Council has invested in upgrading physical access to community buildings and improving inclusive practices at our events and facilities. We are proud of our role as advocates for an inclusive community and recognise our responsibility to ensure every person can participate in meaningful ways across Lismore and its surrounding villages.

Council has made strong progress in delivering the actions outlined in the DIAP 2022–2025 over the past four years. While much has been achieved, we acknowledge this work is ongoing and continue to strive for further improvements in disability inclusion.

The DIAP 2026-2030 outlines the key areas of Council's focus for the next four years. Its development was guided by community consultation and our values. We are also privileged to be supported by our Disability and Inclusion Advisory Group (DIAG), which includes members of the Lismore Local Government Area (LGA) community with a lived experience of disability, as well as individuals who support people with disability. The DIAG has worked tirelessly to advocate for the community, promoting a culture of access and inclusion. I want to thank them for their ongoing assistance over the past four years and for their contribution to this DIAP.

Council will continue to advocate for the rights of people with disability by breaking down discrimination barriers, enabling people with disability to live and participate meaningfully in the community. The implementation of our DIAP requires cooperation and involvement from the community, associated agencies and groups, and I look forward to working together to ensure its success.

Message from General Manager Eber Butron



Council is committed to promoting accessibility and inclusion for our staff, residents and visitors with disabilities. The DIAP 2026-2030 guides the improvement of inclusive practices across our facilities, our approaches to recruitment and training and the future development of Lismore and surrounding villages.

Council has achieved many milestones in improving our city's liveability and advocating for an inclusive community. This DIAP builds on our achievements to date, promoting fair and equitable access to services and employment for people with disability. Working through the DIAP involves a cross-section of Council teams and departments. This collaboration as one team demonstrates the whole-of-Council approach required to promote equal rights for our community. The DIAP is also underpinned by Council's policies, legislative and regulatory requirements.

This Plan will be incorporated into Council's Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan, and responsibilities will be allocated throughout the organisation to support accountability and delivery. Council looks forward to continuing to work with our community to address our collective access and inclusion needs.

About this Plan

Lismore City Council recognises its social responsibility to break down the barriers to inclusive and accessible participation in our communities, to protect the rights of people with disability, and to promote diversity in the community.

Council's DIAP is a four-year framework outlining the key strategies and actions Council will deliver to support disability access and inclusion within the Lismore LGA.

This DIAP sets out a series of principles, strategies, and actions to guide Council operations over the next four years. These align with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031, various State and Federal Disability and Discrimination Acts, the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014, as well as the NSW State Disability Inclusion Plan which specifies four focus areas which require consistent effort from Government and the wider community to create long-term change.

These include:

1. Developing positive community **attitudes and behaviours**.
2. Creating **liveable communities**.
3. Supporting access to **meaningful employment**.
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better **systems and processes**.

Council has listed the actions in the DIAP under these focus areas to clearly define how the organisation will make targeted, ongoing efforts to reduce barriers across the Lismore LGA for people living with disabilities.

The impact of the unprecedented flooding events of February and March 2022 has led Council to pay particular attention to updating our emergency management approach, with a greater focus on accessibility and inclusion. This has resulted in a series of bespoke actions that Council will undertake for the first time with concerted focus.

Likewise, a deliberate effort has been made to ensure Council's DIAP actions address the needs of people living with both seen and unseen disabilities.

Council's ambition is for everyone to have the opportunity to participate in our services, activities, and programs. The DIAP 2026-2030 will help us deliver on that promise.





Community Profile

Lismore is located in the heart of the Northern Rivers.

As a regional city and services hub, Lismore supports a large urban population and provides vital services to many outlying villages, hamlets, and rural areas.

Lismore's population of around 44,000 encompasses a diverse range of people from all walks of life. Lismore is a city where difference is embraced, and community is strong. Our population is projected to reach 48,021 by 2036.

According to the 2021 Census, 3,133 people (or 7.1% of the population) in Lismore City reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This was a 1% increase from 2016. (profile.id)

Lismore City Council

Disability Facts and Figures

While Council's focus is on our local community, we recognise the importance of also understanding the broader Australian context.

The 2022 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC), released in July 2024, identified that:

5.5 million Australians
have a disability*
which represents 21.4% of the population, up from 17% in 2018.



7.9% of all Australians
have a profound or severe disability.



Disability prevalence
was similar for males **(21.0%)** and females **(21.8%)**.

- Just over three-quarters (75.3%) reported a physical condition as their long-term health condition, a decrease since 2018 (77.4%). Approximately one-quarter (24.7%) reported a mental or behavioural disorder as their main condition, up from 22.6% in 2018.
- Almost 4.8 million people (87.4%) have a limitation with at least one of the core activities of communication, mobility or self-care, and/or a schooling or employment restriction.
- The prevalence of disability increases with age; one in seven (15.0%) people aged 0-64 years and just over one in two (52.3%) people aged 65 years and over have disability.
- Most people with disability were living in households (96.8%), with only a small minority (3.3%) living in care accommodation (hospitals, nursing homes and aged care hostels).
- Almost half (45.3%) of people with disability who were 15 years or older and living in households had completed year 12 or an equal level of education, a 33.4% increase from 2018. And among those of working age, over half (56.1%) were employed, compared with 82.3% of people without a disability.
- There were 1.2 million primary carers in Australia, and of these, 43.8% had a disability themselves.

Source: Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2022 | Australian Bureau of Statistics

*In the SDAC, a person is considered to have a disability if they have any limitation, restriction or impairment that restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for six months or more.

Lismore City Council

Policy and Legislative Framework

The definition of disability in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 is what guides our understanding and approach to the DIAP.

It describes disability as: *"the long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."*

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 requires all NSW Government agencies and councils to develop a Disability Action Inclusion Plan to ensure their services, infrastructure, and community facilities are more accessible to people with disability.

Council's DIAP 2026-2030 has been informed and developed through a series of dedicated consultations and prepared in accordance with the following Australian and international legislations:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- NSW State Disability Inclusion Plan
- NSW Government Sector Employment Act 2013
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
- Federal Equal Opportunity Act 1987



Key Achievements of DIAP 2022-2026

Over the past four years, Council has worked hard to deliver many of the actions outlined in the existing DIAP. While some remain a work in progress, our achievements to date include:

Positive community attitudes and behaviour

- ✓ Lismore Regional Gallery staff undertook regular accessibility training through Accessible Arts.
- ✓ Increased Council staff awareness of what it means to live with a disability, what disability can 'look' like and how this effects people in the workplace.
- ✓ Lismore Regional Gallery hosted one exhibition per year with an artist/s living with a disability.
- ✓ Council promoted support that is available for all (especially relevant to those with a disability).
- ✓ Lismore Regional Gallery provided accessible community engagement programs for people living with a disability and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Liveable communities

- ✓ The DIAG worked with Council to identify key spaces for accessibility upgrades around the Lismore CBD.
- ✓ The DIAG worked with Council to inform accessibility needs at existing parks and facilities.
- ✓ Accessibility and connectivity through Heritage Park were improved.
- ✓ Attention was given to major community events to ensure each was accessible to all members of the community. These included Legends of Cricket, the Lismore Lantern Parade and the Jets versus Roar Soccer game.



Key Achievements of DIAP 2022-2026 (continued)

Liveable communities (continued)

- ✓ Developed and implemented a promotional campaign and a usage agreement for better awareness and use of the beach wheelchair.
- ✓ Developed and implemented a promotional campaign to increase awareness and use of the accessible facilities and equipment at GSAC and Lismore Memorial Baths.
- ✓ The DIAG worked with Council, providing feedback to inform the design of the Nimbin Rainbow Walk.
- ✓ Transitioned from text-heavy to more iconography-focused signage to ensure all signage and communications on public facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
- ✓ Provided accessible communications during emergencies and natural hazards. This included having AUSLAN interpreters in disaster centres during the 2022 floods.
- ✓ Provided accessible destination and tourism resources to ensure residents and visitors could easily plan region-wide accessible experiences.
- ✓ Delivered capital works and renewals upgrades at industry standards, to support connectivity across the transport network.
- ✓ Introduced the dyslexia reading collection at Richmond Tweed Regional Library.

Supporting access to meaningful employment

- ✓ Ensured the positions vacant page was compatible with screen readers.
- ✓ The recruitment process was updated to include unconscious bias training for all panel members.
- ✓ Included assessment and provision of accessible workplace equipment/ modifications for each employee (as required) at induction.
- ✓ Recruited staff for attitudes towards diversity and inclusion.
- ✓ Ensured application and interview questions included themes around attitude towards diversity and inclusion.

Accessible systems and processes

- ✓ Consulted with the DIAG before publishing the updated Lismore City Council website, to ensure all accessibility standards were met.

Community Consultation

Council is committed to continuing to address barriers to accessibility and inclusion across the Lismore LGA, protecting the rights of people with disability, and promoting diversity in the community. Fundamental to achieving this ambition is empowering the community to play an integral role in improving the lives of those with disabilities and determining the goals, strategies, and actions we take.

When developing the DIAP 2026-2030, Council used various channels and initiatives to consult with the community. The key results of the engagement are captured below:

- Council's DIAP 2026-2030 Your Say page received a total of:
  - 242 people who visited the page
  - 69 people who interacted with the page
  - 23 people who took action
  - 16 people who wanted to stay connected.
  - The feedback survey was promoted via the Your Say Lismore eNewsletter (3,793)
- Five announcements were posted on Council's social media channels resulting in a reach of over 2,000 people and more than 18,000 impressions.
- Eight interviews were conducted with local disability service providers.
- Staff attended a Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness workshop for people with disabilities to engage with presenters and participants.
- An email promoting the feedback survey was sent to Northern Rivers Disability Interagency database (80).
- The feedback survey was promoted on the Northern Rivers Disability Interagency LinkedIn page (88 followers).
- A workshop and in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 Council departments.
- 11 employees completed the staff survey.
- Council's DIAG was engaged to offer counsel.



Community Consultation (continued)

The feedback received provided Council with further insight into what it's like to live with a disability in the Lismore region and where opportunities exist to provide improvements. The key findings from the community are included on the following page. This has been summarised into the four focus areas outlined in the NSW State Disability Inclusion Plan as follows:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours.
2. Creating liveable communities.
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment.
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

What we heard:

Positive community attitudes and behaviours

- Continue to build awareness and understanding of the diversity of disabilities in our community.
- Better promote Council initiatives developed to serve people with disabilities.
- Need for further staff training on disability, with particular focus on managers.

Liveable communities

- Ensure all events are accessible and inclusive for people with seen and unseen disabilities.
- Extend Council staff's understanding of accessibility beyond compliance to include lived experience, ensuring our accessible car parks, playgrounds, and amenities adequately meet the needs of the community they are designed to serve.
- Provide additional accessible parks and playgrounds for children with special needs.
- Ensure all works on footpaths and roads are adequately signed to accommodate people with disabilities.

Supporting access to meaningful employment

- Make Council an exemplary employer of people with disabilities.
- Improve our recruitment processes to promote accessibility and inclusion better.
- Continue to ensure our office spaces adequately support people with disabilities.

Accessible systems and processes

- Explore the possibility of Council joining the global Hidden Disabilities Sunflower network.
- Improve our support of the disabled community in the lead-up to and during emergencies or natural hazards.
- Maintain close liaison with Council's DIAG and the disability community to continue to seek their input and expertise in this domain and inform Council decisions.

Key Outcome Areas and Actions



Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours

Aim: To build community awareness of the rights and abilities of people with disability, and to support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
1	Train Council's Sign Shop team on best-practice accessible design standards as required annually to maintain inclusive signage across all Council facilities.	Roads and Infrastructure	External	x	x	x	x
2	Develop and incorporate standard demographic questions into Council's Your Say community engagement surveys and associated workshops, to report on diverse participation in consultation for Council projects.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x
3	Continue to communicate and engage with the disability sector bi-monthly through Council's DIAG and as required with the Northern Rivers Disability Interagency provider group to gain insight for consultation outcomes on Council projects.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x
4	Establish communities of interest maps and profiles to understand where to source inclusive feedback from various demographic groups in the Lismore region.	Emergency Management	External	x	x		
5	Update the Lismore City Council Event Guide for organisations delivering community events in the Lismore LGA to include clear, best-practice guidance on access and inclusion, supported by practical, off-the-shelf access-enhancing options that can be easily integrated into their event planning.	City Activation & Sports	External	x			
6	Include a disclaimer in communications and promotions for Council events outlining possible behavioural triggers for people with disabilities.	City Activation & Sports	External	x	x	x	x
7	Provide and promote a channel for people with disabilities to contact Council to request access requirements at non-ticketed Council events.	City Activation & Sports	External	x	x	x	x

Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours (continued)

Aim: To build community awareness of the rights and abilities of people with disability, and to support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
8	Ensure all ticketed Council events include opportunities for people with disabilities to identify and request any specific access needs.	City Activation & Sports	External	x	x	x	x
9	Collate deidentified disability-related data to develop precinct-level vulnerability priorities, and integrate this information into emergency management planning to better inform Council, supporting agencies and functional areas on preparedness, response and recovery activities.	Emergency Management	External	x	x	x	
10	Advocate and work collaboratively with the Department of Communities and Justice and relevant agencies, through the Northern Rivers Local Emergency Management Committee, to ensure local evacuation centre activation plans include disability inclusion, accessibility and priority support considerations.	Emergency Management	External	x	x		
11	Include the use of captioned videos, interactive maps and virtual reality tools to make planning concepts easy to understand by all people, including those with a disability.	Planning and Environment	External	x	x	x	x
12	Conduct an audit of both digital and physical planning processes for compliance and best practice for accessibility annually.	Planning and Environment	External	x	x	x	x
13	Explore the possibility of Council joining the global Hidden Disabilities Sunflower network.	People & Culture	Internal External	x			

Creating liveable communities

Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, transport, health and wellbeing.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
1	Ensure Council's community engagement approach is accessible by using plain language and offering multiple channels, engagement times, and locations, making it easy for everyone in our community to participate, as outlined in Council's Community Engagement Strategy 2025.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x
2	Establish a minimum standard checklist for engagement events to ensure that engagement locations and venues are accessible to all attendees.	City Brand & Advocacy City Activation & Sports	External	x			
3	Conduct an audit of all Council event facilities, sports fields and venues across the Lismore LGA to identify where work is needed to meet compliance with best-practice access and inclusion standards to inform future forward works plans.	City Activation & Sports	External	x			
4	Publish detailed access information for each Council event facility in relevant marketing materials.	City Activation & Sports	External	x			
5	Ensure information about access options at Council events is readily available before and during the event.	City Activation & Sports	External	x	x	x	x
6	Support local disability and community service providers to deliver person-centred emergency planning (PCEP) activities, assisting people with disability and hard-to-reach community members to prepare for disasters.	Emergency Management	External	x	x	x	x
7	Consult the DIAG and Australian Standards to develop a 'Guide to Accessibility at Council' to inform the design and construction of future Council building assets and forward works (including swipe access height, door size, electrical socket placement, self-service counter heights, etc).	Roads and Infrastructure	External Internal		x		

Creating liveable communities (continued)

Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, transport, health and wellbeing.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
8	Review the suitability of accessible car spaces, pathways and access at the Lismore Memorial Gardens with the aim of improving accessibility in future maintenance and upgrades.	Parks and Open Spaces	External		x		
9	Actively seek grant funding to target accessibility and inclusion improvements within parks, playgrounds and recreational areas in line with key priority areas.	Parks and Open Spaces	External	x	x	x	x
10	Consider and incorporate access and inclusion in the planning, design, and upgrades of parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas in line with Council's Open Space Strategy 2024-2034.	Parks and Open Spaces	External	x	x	x	x
11	Ensure the National Public Toilet Map is updated regularly to reflect upgrades and closures of Council's disabled facilities.	Parks and Open Spaces	External	x	x	x	x
12	Improve infrastructure planning on future works and maintenance projects to enhance access and inclusion (including gutter ramps, footpaths, and disabled car parking).	Roads and Infrastructure Strategic Planning Waste Water and Open Spaces	External	x	x	x	x
13	Actively seek grant funding to target access and inclusion improvements for roads, footpaths and other capital works projects.	Roads and Infrastructure Strategic Planning Waste Water and Open Spaces	External	x	x	x	x
14	Map and analyse the physical journeys of people with disabilities across Lismore's road and footpath network to identify gaps for consideration in future capital works programs.	Roads and Infrastructure Waste Water and Open Spaces	External	x			

Creating liveable communities (continued)

Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, transport, health and wellbeing.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
15	Use the insights gleaned in Action 14 to prioritise targeted infrastructure projects that progressively deliver continuous, compliant, accessible pathways across Council's transport network.	Roads and Infrastructure Waste Water and Open Spaces	External		x	x	x
16	Continuously review development standards to maintain compliance with national and state transport and accessibility guidelines, including Austroads Guides, Australian Standards and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, with the aim of embedding access improvements into new capital works and renewals and strengthening connectivity of accessible paths of travel across the transport network.	Roads and Infrastructure	External	x	x	x	x
17	Communicate and engage with the DIAG to enhance Local Traffic Internal Working Group (LTIWG) and Local Traffic Committee (LTF) outcomes by sending a delegate to represent the LTIWG and LTF outcomes to the DIAG for feedback on decisions.	Roads and Infrastructure	External	x	x	x	x
18	Nominate a ringfenced annual budget to address/support reactive works arising from LTIWG, DIAG and community-identified critical issues.	Roads and Infrastructure	External	x	x	x	x
19	Ensure all Council planning documents, including Development Controls, Place Plans and Master Plans, consider the needs of people with disabilities by incorporating accessible urban design features, such as clear and interactive signage, accessible paths, and dedicated disability parking, into the design of public spaces.	Planning and Environment	External	x	x	x	x
20	Ensure the parking audit conducted across Lismore CBD, the Health Precinct, and South Lismore includes an assessment of the supply, demand, and quality of our accessible parking bays, and integrate the results into Council's ongoing parking strategy and operations.	Planning and Environment Road and Infrastructure Law Enforcement	External	x	x	x	x

Supporting access to meaningful employment

Aim: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future and exercise choice and control as a result of economic security.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
1	Develop an annual training program on Council's standards, language and commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion.	Learning and Development	Internal	x			
2	Train staff on Council's standards, language and commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion and roll out training annually.	Learning and Development	Internal		x	x	x
3	Develop a peer reference group to support employees with a disability and provide an internal avenue for engagement in organisational change that may impact accessibility and inclusion.	People & Culture	Internal		x		
4	Conduct annual psychosocial safety audit of Council, communicate results and set actions for required improvements.	People & Culture	Internal		x	x	x
5	Review all HR policies and procedures annually, to ensure Council meets current Australian legislative standards and requirements related to accessiblity and inclusion.	People & Culture	Internal	x	x	x	x
6	Develop accessible, inclusive onboarding resources.	People & Culture	Internal	x			
7	Distribute accessible, inclusive resources to new Council staff during onboarding, as required.	People & Culture	Internal		x	x	x
8	Collect diversity data on current employees annually through a survey, asking how employees can be best supported by the organisation.	People & Culture	Internal	x			

Supporting access to meaningful employment (continued)

Aim: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future and exercise choice and control as a result of economic security.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
9	Ensure all managers and other recruitment panel members participate in bi-annual training courses focused on inclusion and unconscious bias to support access from the beginning of an employee lifecycle.	People & Culture	Internal		x		x
10	Develop and implement a Workplace Adjustment Procedure to facilitate open conversations and document processes for reasonable workplace modifications to accommodate employees with disabilities, ensuring they can perform their roles effectively and inclusively.	People & Culture	Internal		x		

Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Aim: To ensure that people with disability are able to make informed choices about available services and easily and efficiently access mainstream Council services.

No.	Action	Responsibility (proposed new structure) Team	Audience Internal External	Year 1	2	3	4
1	Develop and update a centralised disability access and inclusion information point on Council's website and Nest pages, clearly outlining available services, like the supply of MLAK keys.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x
2	Whenever possible, include Australian Sign Language (Auslan) on Council videos produced during emergency events.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x
3	Review public ticketing systems to find an appropriate, accessible option.	City Activation & Sports	External	x			
4	Develop a Local Guide providing an overview of accessible attractions in and around Lismore and publicise it through Visit Lismore channels.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x			
5	Ensure Council's correspondence standards are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with Australian Standards.	City Brand & Advocacy	External	x	x	x	x

Delivering the Plan & Reporting

Lismore City Council's Executive Leadership Team is committed to supporting the implementation of this Plan and to improving access and inclusion in the Lismore LGA.

Council will liaise regularly with its DIAG to monitor the progress of the actions outlined in this Plan, ensure the priorities listed remain relevant and that Council delivers on community needs.

Council will also include an update on the actions listed in this Plan in its Annual Report, which will be published on Council's website.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Council will, each year, inform the Disability Inclusion and Reporting team at the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice of outcomes against the actions outlined in this Plan.

In the final year of this Plan, Council will measure community satisfaction through a survey and other engagement activities.

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Lismore
City Council


Lismore City Council
Monthly Finance &
Investment Report
April 2026

Please Note

- The results reported are for the 8 months to 28th February 2026.
- Comparison of actual revenue/expense to budgets requires consideration as budgets are not fully phased (over the year). Budget phasing will be improved as part of the Finance uplift in 2026/27.
- At this stage, it is best to focus on the Full Year Budget and the Year-to-Date actual expressed as a percentage of the full year budget.
- Reporting excludes Flood Restoration Program (FRP) unless otherwise stated.
- Budgets have been revised following adoption of the December quarter QBRS by Council.
- Investment report to 28th February is now included in this report (report to 31st March is available on 2nd April).
- As we iterate on this Report, feedback is welcome.



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Externally and Internal Restricted Assets as at 28th February 2026 (Liquidity)

Investment Performance Report
1. As at 28th February 2026
2. As at 31st March available on 2nd April and included as an appendix

Capital Works Program - Expenditure by program

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1. Debt recovery process for rates, annual charges and water billing
2. Investment Performance Report as at 31st March 2026



Summary and Key Highlights

Measure	Where we are at		
Operating expenses	✓		
Revenue		⊖	
Rates and Water Recoveries			✗
Other Receivables (including Grant Funding expended not claimed)			✗
External Reserves and Internal Reserves			✗
Investment performance	✓		
Revised Capital Works Program			✗

Key takeaways for the month

1. **Internal Reserves :** Internal Reserves available are being significantly impacted by uncollected grants across the business as well as outstanding rates and annual charges. In addition, there was an error in the cash reconciliation for grants associated with FRP. Internal Reserves available at 28th Feb 2026 are $12.4m a drawdown of $17.5m. This month's report shows that this issue has been ongoing since 2023 at least. We remain focused on cash management and cash recovery. We are now reporting on Externally and Internally Restricted Assets/Reserves monthly.
2. **Outstanding receivables now total $48.7m across rates, water, grants and general debtors. Cash collection is being prioritised**
   - Overdue rates/water now total $14m with debt recovery process escalating for 230 ratepayers with first stage of legal action (Statements of Liquidated Claims lodged with the Court on 20th March).
   - Discussions underway with Reconstruction Authority in relation to outstanding acquittals and potential use of forward cash grants
   - Finance team proactively chasing up property arrears
3. **Capital works:** Significant reforecasting was undertaken as part of the December QBRS. For the 8 months ended February 2026 capital works expenditure was $77.1m which represents 40% of the revised full year budget. A significant uptick in capital expenditure is required (we are 67% through the year already) for the remainder of the year to meet the revised capital works program. Risks remain in the delivery of this revised program across the business.
4. **Expense management:** On a positive note, expenses are below budget across all 3 funds. Highlighting that our focus on sustainability is having an impact**.** Recent events in the Middle East and the flow on effect on fuel costs will have a significant negative impact on Materials and Services costs both directly and indirectly.
5. **Investment strategy** – we have commenced implementing Councils revised Investment Strategy with a $2m purchase of higher yielding debt security

Operating Expenses by Fund

Year to date operating expenses for all three funds are below revised budget.

Operating expenses by	FY Budget $000	YTD actual to FY budget %	YTD Budget $000	YTD Actual $000	YTD Variance $000	YTD Var. vs prior month $000
General Fund	93,093	64.3%	62,045	59,860	2,185	555
Sewer Fund	6,142	51.3%	4,094	3,149	945	88
Water Fund	10,784	64.2%	7,158	6,928	230	29
Total operating expenses	**110,020**	**64.2%**	**73,296**	**69,936**	**3,360**	

Key takeaways

- Total operating expenses for the General Fund for the year to date (YTD) 28 February 2026 are below revised budget by $2.2m with positive variances of $1.2m in workforce costs, and $0.9m in materials & services costs. The favourable variance is $3.3m below revised budget if we remove unbudgeted one-off workplace change costs incurred since 31 December of $1.1m. The General Fund's operating expenses by type are set out in more detail on the next page.
- The operating expenses for both the Sewer and Water Funds are running below budget by $0.9m and $0.2m respectively:
    - The favourable variance for the Sewer Fund is primarily in materials and services $0.8m with contributions from materials $0.3m, Contractors Other $0.3m and Electricity $0.1m.
    - The favourable variance for the Water Fund is primarily in materials and services - Contractors Other $0.4m. This is offset by an unfavourable $0.2m variance in workforce costs.
- Recent events in the Middle East and the flow on effect on fuel costs will have a significant negative impact on Materials and Services costs both directly and indirectly as the costs flow into the cost of other materials and services provided by suppliers.

Operating Expenses by expense type – General Fund

Year-to-date total operating expenses for the General Fund are $2.2m below revised budget and $3.3m below budget if we remove unbudgeted one-off workplace change costs incurred since 31 December.

Operating expenses	FY Budget $000	YTD actual to FY budget %	YTD Budget $000	YTD Actual $000	YTD Variance $000	YTD Var. vs prior month $000
Workforce costs and on-costs	46,832	65.2%	31,746	30,541	1,205	(313)
Materials and services	42,046	63.2%	27,488	26,557	931	490
Other expenses	4,216	65.5%	2,811	2,761	49	378
Total operating expenses	**93,093**	**64.3%**	**62,045**	**59,860**	**2,185**	

Key takeaways

- In summary, year to date operating expenses for the General Fund are $2.2m below revised budget and $3.3m below revised budget if we remove unbudgeted one-off workplace change costs incurred since 31 December of $1.1m (excluding payouts of leave entitlements).
  - Workforce costs and on-costs have contributed $1.2m of the favourable variance due to savings in Salaries, Wages and On-costs from the second workplace change not yet recognised in the revised budget partly offset by one off workplace change costs and above budget external labour costs.
  - Materials and services (MS) costs are $0.9m under budget:
    - 12 cost categories have positive variances greater than $0.1m (YTD budget vs actual) including Contractor costs, Operating Lease costs, Legal Services, and Management Fees with YTD total positive variances across these categories being $6.0m. We will have more clarity on how much of these positive variances are permanent savings as we enter the last quarter of the financial year.
    - The MS budget was reduced because of the requirement for a budget efficiency dividend ($3.4m YTD).
    - Timing issues associated with recognising the expenditure in the budget vs when they are actually incurred. For example, Insurance premiums ($0.8m).
    - Actual YTD costs include at least $0.6m of CCRR funded costs, which do not form part of the BAU budget.

Total Revenue by Fund

Year to date revenue is below budget mainly due to lower capital grant income in the General Fund which is dependant on projects achieving milestones and lower operating grant income in the General Fund which is a result of timing in budget vs actual recognition.

Revenue from operations, grants and sale of assets, and treasury activities by Fund	FY Budget $000	YTD actual to FY budget %	YTD Adj. Budget $000	YTD Actual $000	YTD Variance $000	YTD Var. vs prior month $000
General fund	97,684	78.4%	79,723	76,618	(3,105)	n/a
Sewer Fund	18,218	92.8%	17,271	16,911	(360)	n/a
Water fund	18,291	49.6%	8,131	9,068	937	n/a
Total Revenue from Business as Usual	**134,193**	**76.5%**	**105,125**	**102,597**	**(2,528)**	

Key takeaways:

- General Fund YTD revenue is $3.1m behind budget with both capital grants and operating grants being the significant contributors. Please see the following slide for more details.

- The $0.4m negative variance for the Sewer Fund is in line with prior month reporting and is due to:
  - Negative $0.4m of Norco flood related contamination charges reversed in October 2025 as resolved by council.
  - Negative $0.4m relates to capital grant timing with income lagging expenditure on projects being funded by the grants.
  - Positive $0.4m relates to asset disposals where budgeted losses on sales of assets have not yet been realised.

- The Water Fund continues to have a significant positive variance YTD primarily because budgeted asset disposals/losses have not yet occurred.

Total Revenue for General Fund by type

Overall YTD General Fund revenue is below budget due to lower capital grant income which is dependant on projects achieving milestones and operating grant income which is a timing of budget vs actual recognition. User fees & charges and other income are above budget.

Revenue from operations, grants and sale of assets, and treasury activities	FY Budget $000	YTD actual to FY budget %	YTD Adj. Budget $000	YTD Actual $000	YTD Variance $000	YTD Var. vs prior month $000
Operating activities						
Rates and Annual Charges	48,721	100.3%	48,828	48,888	60	(8)
User charges and fees	18,039	75.2%	12,739	13,561	822	(75)
Other income	3,354	78.3%	2,236	2,625	389	16
Total revenue from operations	**70,114**	**92.8%**	**63,803**	**65,074**	**1,271**	
Grants, Contributions & asset sales						
Grants and Contributions provided for operating purposes	18,751	37.0%	9,046	6,942	(2,104)	n/a
Grants and Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	7,761	36.4%	6,169	2,828	(3,341)	(141)
Net gains/(Losses) from disposal of assets	(1,452)	–	(968)	–	968	242
Total revenue from grants, contributions & asset sales	**25,059**	**39.0%**	**14,247**	**9,770**	**(4,477)**	
Interest and Investment revenue from Treasury activities	2,510	70.7%	1,673	1,774	101	n/a
Total revenue for the year	**97,684**	**78.4%**	**79,723**	**76,618**	**(3,105)**	

Key takeaways:

- **Rates & Annual Charges:** are invoiced annually in July. Revenue is recognised in that month. Most ratepayers opt to pay those rates via quarterly instalments.
- **User charges & fees:** are considerably above budget primarily from Weighbridge waste disposal fees with higher than budgeted volumes.
- **Other income:** YTD above budget driven by wage and salary subsidies, sporting events, parking fines and staff vehicle contributions all being above budget.
- **Operating Grants:** below budget with the primary reason being the difference in the timing of recognising income for CCRR grant for budgeting purposes (FY26) vs. statutory reporting (FY25). Net effect on unrestricted cash is nil.
- **Capital Grants:** generally aligned with, or lags, expenditure on projects being funded by the grants. Most of the shortfall in capital grants against budget is projects within the Roads & Bridges program.
- **Disposal of assets:** there is a favourable variance of $1.0m for asset disposals as budgeted losses on sales of assets have not yet been realised.
- **Interest & Investment revenue:** is largely in line with budget.

Rates and Water Recoveries

Overdue amounts for rates and annual charges total $12.3m at 03/03/2026, which is a $3.0m increase since the prior report as 3rd quarter instalments became due on the 28th February 2026. The first round of the formal debt recovery process for rates and annual charges that commenced in September 2025 has entered the first stage of legal actions (230 Statements of Liquidated Claims lodged with the Court on 20th March).

Receivables	Receivable $000	% Overdue	Overdue $000	Mvt from prior month $000
Receivables – rates and annual charges (as at 03/03/2026)	26,446	46.5%	12,290	(2,982)
Receivables – water usage charges (as at 13/03/2026)	1,998	84.9%	1,695	207
Total receivables	**28,444**	**49.2%**	**13,985**	

Key takeaways:

Rates and annual charges:

- These are invoiced annually in July each year, and the receivable is taken up at that time. However, they are collected via quarterly instalment notices. The third instalment for the quarter ended 31st January 2026 became due on the 28th February 2026. A lot of rate payers miss the cut off by a few days and so the overdue balance is expected to decrease significantly by the end of March.
- The first round of the formal debt recovery process for rates and annual charges that commenced in September 2025 have entered the first stage of legal actions (230 Statements of Liquidated Claims lodged with the Court on 20th March with service commencing on 25th March). Please see appendix 1 for steps in the formal debt recovery process.
- NSWRA have paid c$0.6m of overdue general rates on 25th March.
- The balance of prior period rates and annual charges outstanding was $6.0m (as at 03/03/2026) which is a slight $0.2m improvement on that previously reported $6.2m (as at 13/02/2026).

Water Usage Charges:

- Total water usage receivables decreased $1.0m since the prior month reporting. Invoices for water usage are issued quarterly after a 4-week meter reading period. Invoices for the last quarter ended 30 November 2025 for usage and 31 December 2025 for the fixed fee were issued on 7th January 2026 with a due date of 28th January 2026. Invoices for the most recent quarter will be issued at the end of March and due at the end of April.
- First reminder notices for overdue water bills were issued on 28th February. Second reminders will be sent in five weeks time and two weeks later the next round of Letters of Demand combining both overdue rates and annual charges and water bills will be forwarded to Executive Collections for issue.

Outstanding Grants Recoveries As At 28th February 2026 (enterprise wide including FRP)

Grant revenue is generally aligned with, or lags, expenditure on projects being funded by the grants. As at 28 February, $20.3m of expenditure on grant funded projects has either been invoiced to funding bodies but not received or have not yet been claimed which is a significant impost on our liquidity.

Grant Funding Receivables including not in debtors ledger	Fund	As at 28/02/2026
Grant Funding Invoiced / Claimed – FRP	General	8,784
Grant Funding expended not claimed – FRP	General	6,428
Sub-total for FRP grant funded projects		**15,212**
Grant Funding Invoiced / Claimed – BAU	General	1,253
Grant Funding expended not claimed – BAU	General	3,881
Sub-total for BAU grant funded projects		**5,134**
Total Grant Funding Receivables	**General**	**20,346**

Key takeaways:

- Of the $15.2m relating to FRP at 28 Feb 2026:
  - $8.8m was due for payment, of which $6.9m has been received in March 2026.
  - $0.5m is pending acquittal
  - $2.9m is recoverable under the reimbursement model
  - $3.0m relates to TC Alfred – assessment yet to be completed
- Of the $5.1m relating to BAU at 28 Feb:
  - $1.2m relates to a claim lodged for the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) which the funder has undertaken to pay by 31st March.
  - $3.9m has been expended and not yet claimed. Larger balances include $1.0m relating to Airport, $0.6m relating to Bridges, $0.4m relating to Drought Communities Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund. We are following up with the applicable project managers to lodge claims / invoice as soon as possible.

Overall, there is significant outstanding Grant Funding across the Council (both FRP and BAU), and this is significantly impacting our liquidity position. Please refer to the reserves section of this report for further illustration. There is a drive across the business to claim Grant monies owed as soon as possible.

Internal Reserve Cash Drawdown as at 28th February 2026

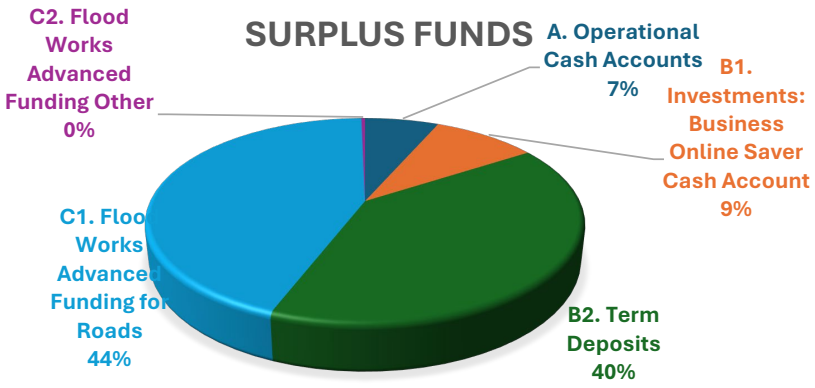
Internal Reserves have been in deficit position for the last 3 financial year ends (as at 30 June). Internal Reserves continue to be in deficit at 28th Feb 2026 and have been drawdown by $17.5m. The balance of internal reserves as at 28th Feb 2026 was $29.9m. However, cash available for Internal Reserves is $12.4m requiring the $17.5m drawdown.

Internal Reserves Cash Drawdown Reconciliation $'000	As at 30 June 2023	As at 30 June 2024	As at 30 June 2025	As at 31 December 2025	As at 28 February 2026
Total Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments	133,200	183,596	209,903	240,011	243,089
Externally Restricted Funds	(110,365)	(169,570)	(188,883)	(222,388)	(230,724)
Internal Reserves Cash Balance (after Drawdown)	**22,835**	**14,026**	**21,020**	**17,623**	**12,365**
Add back: Drawdown of Funds for working capital requirements	13,428	22,940	15,223	10,900	17,526
Internal Reserves (before Drawdown)	**36,263**	**36,966**	**36,243**	**28,523**	**29,891**
Unexpended Grants	***21,206***	***87,753***	***110,899***	***140,725***	***144,101***

Key takeaways:

- Unexpended grants is the most significant component of Externally Restricted Funds ($144m of total externally restricted assets of $230.7m as at 28th February.
- The internally restricted cash balance as at 28th February 2026 is $12.4m which is $5.3m less than the $17.6m reported in the December QBRS. The decrease reflects:
  - Decrease of $15.7m (5 transactions) to be transferred back to the Advanced Funding for the Transport related projects in FRP.
  - Increase in available cash as the third rates instalment became due on 28th February. This cash received will be utilised over the next three months to fund operations and so we expect the Internal Reserves Cash Balance to decrease significantly until the 4th rates instalment becomes due on 31st May.
- Available cash is impacted significantly by:
  - The lag between incurring expenditure on grant funded projects and recovering that expenditure via claims against the funding grants. This balance was $20.3m as at 28th February as per the previous slide – Outstanding Grant Recoveries.
  - The general rates component of Outstanding Rates and Annual Charges. The annual charges component form part of external reserves when collected.
  - There will always be a lag in recovering expenditure on grant funded projects, however we have to become more diligent in managing projects to grant milestones, lodging the claims and following up the resultant receivable.
- Other organisations obtain loan facilities to provide the working capital to cover the lag between incurring expenditure and receivables from sales. LCC requires ministerial approval to access externally restricted funds and it is probably appropriate to commence that approval process ASAP.

Investment Balances as at 28 Feb 26



	Feb-26	Jan-26	Mth over Mth Change
Cash and Investment Breakdown			
A1: Operational Cash Accounts	13,469,885	4,620,304	8,849,581
A2: Restricted Operational Cash Accounts	2,699,018	2,695,625	3,393
A Total Operational Cash Accounts	**16,168,902**	**7,315,929**	**8,852,974**
B1: Investments: Business Online Saver Cash Account	22,898,686	27,060,105	(4,161,418)
B2: Other Investment including Term Deposits	98,515,112	88,515,086	10,000,026
B Total Investments including Term Deposits	**121,413,798**	**115,575,191**	**5,838,607**
C1: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Roads	107,719,474	118,769,245	(11,049,770)
C2: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Buildings	20,041	19,978	63
C3: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Waste	771,121	1,149,490	(378,369)
C Total Flood Works Advanced Funding	**108,510,636**	**119,938,713**	**(11,428,076)**
Total Cash, Investments and Advanced Funding	**246,093,337**	**242,829,832**	**3,263,504.83**

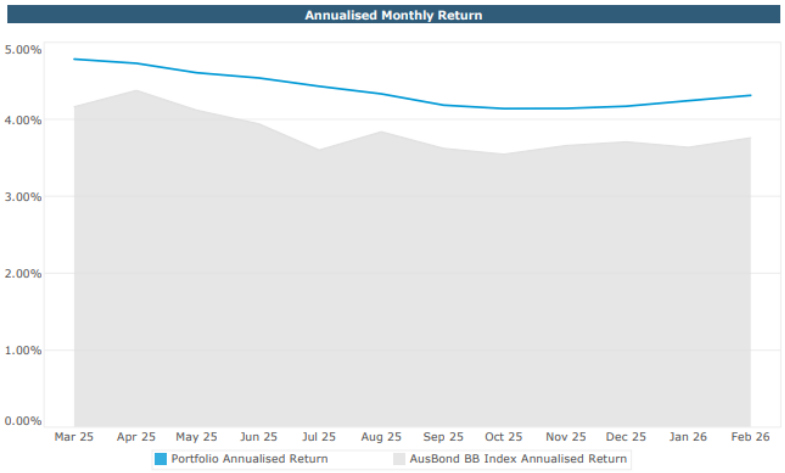
- The total cash & investment balance
$246m (LM:$243m) increase of $3.3m from the prior month.

- Business Online Saver cash account
balance has decreased $4.2m from $27.1m to $22.9m.

- Term Deposits
balance has increased $10m from $88.5m to $98.5m.

- Flood works advanced funding balance
$108.5m, (LM:$119.9m) a decrease of $11.4m due to consumption of funds relating to delivery of flood infrastructure work

Current Investment Returns – Feb:4.31% (LM:4.24%) (YTD 4.24%)



Historical Performance Summary (%pa)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Feb 2026	4.31%	3.76%	0.55%
Last 3 months	4.24%	3.70%	0.54%
Last 6 months	4.20%	3.65%	0.55%
Financial Year to Date	4.24%	3.67%	0.57%
Last 12 months	4.38%	3.83%	0.55%

- ✓ Feb council's portfolio returned 4.31% (LM:4.24%), being 55bps above the annualised Bank Bill BBI of 3.76%.
- ✓ Financial year to date 4.24% (LM:4.23%) being 57bps above the BBI of 3.67%
- ✓ The portfolio return is comparably conservative when compared to other councils due to the low risk profile of our investments, in other words high cash and term deposit balances and currently no Bond or TCorp investments
- ✓ Analysis has been presented for council to review risk & return expectations & appetite for volatility & take a decision on investment mix of surplus funds.

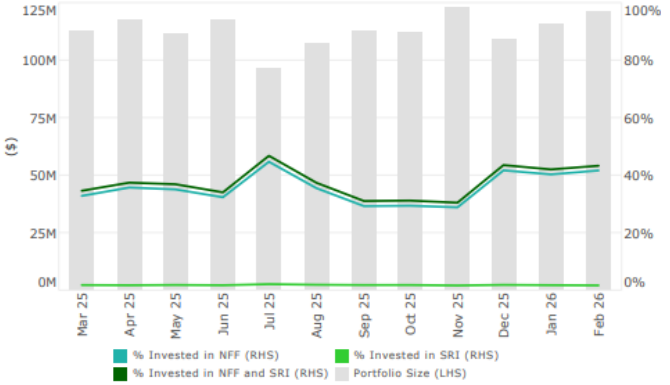


Socially Responsible Investment

Current Breakdown

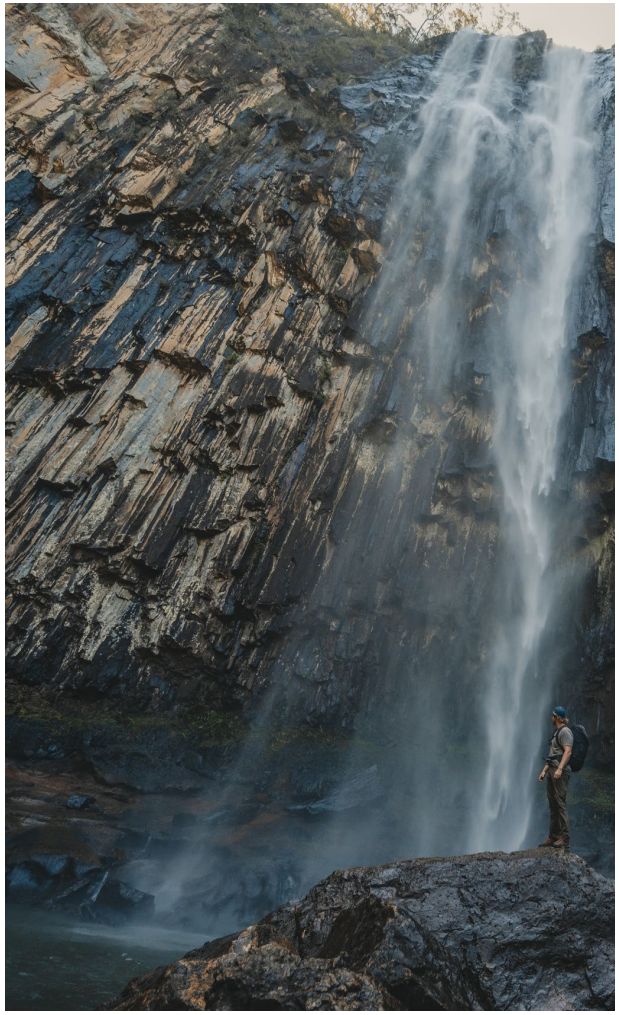
ADI Lending Status *	Current Month ($)		Previous Month ($)	
Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	51,898,686		50,060,105	
National Australia Bank	17,000,000		17,000,000	
	68,898,686	**57%**	**67,060,105**	**58%**
Non Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
AMP Bank	15,112		15,086	
Bank of Queensland	25,000,000		21,000,000	
Summerland Bank	3,500,000		3,500,000	
Suncorp Bank	22,000,000		22,000,000	
	50,515,112	**42%**	**46,515,086**	**40%**
Socially Responsible Investment				
Westpac Group (Green TD)	2,000,000		2,000,000	
	2,000,000	**2%**	**2,000,000**	**2%**
	121,413,798		**115,575,191**	

Historical Portfolio Exposure to NFF Lending ADIs and SRIs



Where the opportunity arises, Council will seek SRI investment opportunities. However, the investment product will be considered in the context of Council's overall cashflow requirements, investment returns and the security of the investment.

✓ In Feb 26 the percentage of the portfolio invested in Socially Responsible Investments (SRI) is stable at 44% (LM:42%), the total value of SRI's ticked up to $50.5m (LM:$46.5m).



Capital Works Expenditure to date

Program	FY Budget* $m	YTD actual to FY budget %	YTD Actual $m
FRP	152.9	42.0%	64.3
Water, Waste and Open Spaces	19.5	27.4%	5.3
Roads & Infrastructure	23.0	30.7%	7.1
Other	–	–	0.4
Total	**195.4**	**39.5%**	**77.1**

Key takeaways:

- *A significant re-forecasting of capex for the FY budget was undertaken as part of the December 2025 QBRS adopted by Council and that is reflected above.
- **FRP YTD actual $64.3m:** The Landslip Restoration Package (LRP), which has been the main cause of project delays, is now active across 18 damage repair locations (vs. 10 at prior month reporting), with Stony Chute Road achieving the package's first site completion. Multiple Roads projects reached practical completion. Baseline project delivery is broadly on track. In Buildings, completion of July 2026 is still achievable with City Hall on track for completion by 31 March 2026. Airport civil and electrical works are progressing under tight delivery windows. Six contracts totalling approximately $2.24m were awarded with a further four tenders valued at approximately $16.9m are in evaluation. A works pipeline exceeding $50m is targeted for release by April. Further information is available in the FRP Monthly report for February 2026.
- **Water, Waste and Open Spaces YTD actual $5.3m:** primarily represents $2.0m Water, $1.3m Waste, $0.8m Sewer and $0.8m Buildings & CBD.
- **Roads & Infrastructure YTD actual $7.1m:** represents $4.9m Roads, $1.4m Fleet, $0.7m Bridges.
- **A significant uptick in capital expenditure required for the last 4 months of the year to meet the full year revised capital works budget.**



Grants pipeline (slide 1 of 2)

Grants Submitted – February/March - projects worth $63K

Grant	Project/Directorate	Outcome notification	Grant funds	Council co-contribution	Total
Youth Week	Youth Week activities GSAC/Events/Library	March 2026	$ 4,216	$3,366	$ 7,582
Festivals Program Australia	Events	June 2026	$46,241	Nil	$46,241
Holiday Break Autumn+Winter Regional Youth grant	Events/Library/Gallery	March 2026	$ 9,095	Nil	$ 9,095

Grants Currently Under Development/Consideration

Grant	Project/Directorate	Submission date	Council co-contribution
The Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP) - Tranche 5	Five projects being developed - Rosehill Road, Rotary Drive, Simeoni Drive, Skyline Road and Tweed-Dunoon Upgrade/ Roads and Infrastructure	30 April	20%
Disaster Ready Funding (Round Four)	Short-list being developed across the Directorates	To be announced	50%
Community Improvement District (CID) Seed Funding program	Would need to request being added to the Foundation List – currently being considered / Planning & Economy	30 April	Nil
Electric Vehicle Fleets Incentive: Kick-start funding	With Fleet Manager for consideration	May 2026	50%
LPG Innovation Development Fund	AI Automation of CCTV Pipe Condition Assessment/Water, Waste and Open Spaces	2 April	50%
Regional Event Fund – 1) Incubator Event Stream, 2) Flagship Event Stream and 3) Event Development Stream	With Events/The Gallery/The Library/People and Community	1 and 2: 12 April 3: 31 December	Nil
NSW Social Cohesion Grants for Local Govt	With People and Community for consideration	22 April 2026	Nil
Floodplain Management Grants	Lismore Urban Overland Flood Study and Lismore Rural Flood Risk Management Study and Plan/Strategic Planning	15 April 2026	33%

Grants pipeline (slide 2 of 2)

Grants Considered/Not Applied

Grant	Reason	Amount Available
Regional NSW Strategic Partnership Program	No business case ready projects and not enough staff resources to develop one within the deadline	$150,000
Circulate Market Grants EPT	No priority project identified	$ 50,000
Regional Events & Partnerships	No priority projects identified	$750,000-$2m

Grants Received - $646K

Grant	Project/Directorate	Grant Amount
Multi-Year Program Funding (2026-2028) for Gallery (awarded Nov 25)	Funding for Lismore Regional Gallery program 2026-2028	$585,000 (over three years)
Holiday Break Autumn+Winter Regional Youth grant (awarded March 26)	Event program successful. Library/Gallery component, unsuccessful	$ 3,995
Youth Week (awarded March 26)	Youth Week activities GSAC/Events/Library	$ 4,216
Flood Management Program (awarded Feb 26)	Lismore Flood Predication and Warning System (currently looking for the co-contribution as part of the budgeting process prior to signing the deed)	$53,333

Appendices

1. Debt recovery process for rates, annual charges and water billing

2. Reserves Reported Per QBRS as at 31 December 2025

3. Investment Performance Report as at 31st March 2026



Appendix 1 – Debt recovery process for rates, annual charges and water billing (1 of 3)

The following sets out the formal debt recovery process for rates and annual charges and water billing. For rates and annual charges, this process recommenced in September 2025 and for water billing recommenced in early March.

	Step	Parameters applied	Timeline	Cost
1	First Reminder Notice. Generates a substantial response.	All ratepayers with outstanding balances exceeding $900 where contact has not been made by the ratepayer to make a payment plan or claim hardship. The average quarterly instalment is $750 and so $900 was selected to exclude those ratepayers slightly late in paying the last instalment. This cut-off has now been decreased to $750.	14 days after the most recent instalment falling due. Given 30 days to make contact	Cost of mail outs by Forms Express as we only have the physical address for the majority ratepayers.
2	Second Reminder Notice. Response is lower than the first reminder	All ratepayers with outstanding balances exceeding $900 where contact has not been made by the ratepayer to make a payment plan or claim hardship. The average quarterly instalment is $750 and so $900 was selected to exclude those ratepayers slightly late in paying the last instalment. This cut-off has now been decreased to $750.	14 days after the most recent instalment falling due. (so 3 months after the first reminder). Given 30 days to make contact	Cost of mail outs
3	First Letter of Demand from Executive Collections (EC). Generates a substantial responsible as it shows that we are serious.	All ratepayers who have received two reminder notices with outstanding balances exceeding $2,000 and where contact has not been made by the ratepayer to make a payment plan or claim hardship. $2,000 used as this is the start of the legal process and costs, while recoverable, are substantial compared to the amount owing.	30 days after 2nd reminder notice with a lag to allow for Christmas, January holiday period. Given 14 days to respond to EC	No cost

Appendix 1 – Debt recovery process for rates, annual charges and water billing (2 of 3)

The following sets out the formal debt recovery process for rates and annual charges and water billing. For rates and annual charges, this process recommenced in September 2025 and for water billing recommenced in early March.

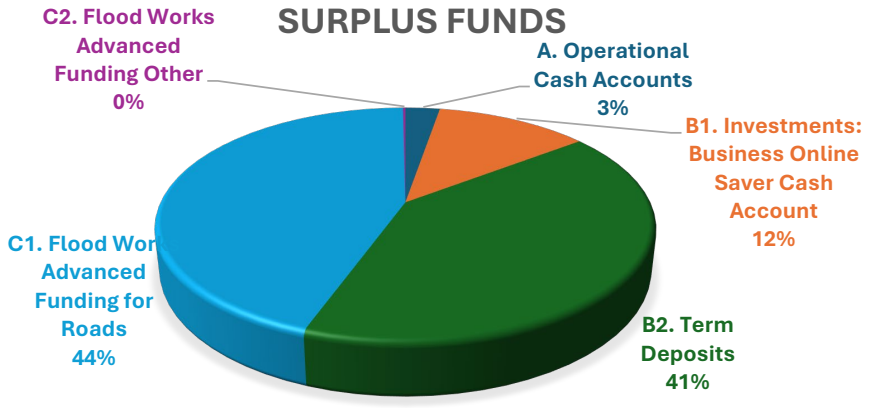
	Step	Parameters applied	Timeline	Cost
4	Second Letter of Demand from Executive Collections (EC). A post flood/covid step. Less of a response than the 1st Letter of Demand	All ratepayers who have received a 1st Letter of demand but have not responded by paying balance owing in full, contacting to make an acceptable payment arrangement or applying for Hardship	14 days from date of 1st Letter of Demand has elapsed	No Cost
5	Statement of Liquidated Claim (SLC) from EC. Start of legal action process. Generates a significant response as legal costs are now being incurred	All ratepayers who have received a 2nd Letter of demand but have not responded by paying balance owing in full, contacting to make an acceptable payment arrangement or applying for Hardship. *230 SLCs lodged to the Court on 20th March.*	After 14 days from date of 2nd Letter of Demand has elapsed	Court costs are a function of the size of the debt.
6	Serving of the SLC by EC	*Serving of the SLC's are scheduled to begin next Wednesday 25th March*		Part of the above cost
7	Judgement or Issue a Rent for Rates notice, or garnishee wages. Recommendation by EC	1) Rent for Rates is only relevant where the property is a rental property. Notice to the Occupier under section 569 of NSW LGA requires any rent to be paid to LCC 2) Notice of Motion Default Judgement for Liquidated Claim (Judgement). May result in listing with Equifax affecting the debtors credit rating for 5 years. A pre-Judgement letter is sent before this action is taken (no cost) and a post judgement letter sent after this action (no cost)	30 days after serving of the SLC	There is a cost.

Appendix 1 – Debt recovery process for rates, annual charges and water billing (3 of 3)

The following sets out the formal debt recovery process for rates and annual charges and water billing. For rates and annual charges, this process recommenced in September 2025 and for water billing recommenced in early March.

	Step	Parameters applied	Timeline	Cost
8	Exam notice	Served to the debtor requesting the Examination notice be completed, provide requested documentation and returned to EC within 28 days. If comply, the information is used to determine whether to apply a wage or bank garnishee or discontinue action.	after judgement	No cost
9	Examination Order	If no response received to Exam Notice, Examination Order lodged with court who respond by advising a court date and time for matter to be heard. Forcing the debtor to attend court and complete Exam Notice and provide necessary documentation (bank statements, payslips etc). The information is used to determine whether to apply a wage or bank garnishee or discontinue action.	28 days after Exam Notice	Cost - TBD
10	Warrant of Apprehension	If the debtor does not attend court under the Examination Order, the Court Sheriff executes the Warrant of Apprehension, arrests the debtor, takes to the Court House to complete the Examination Order.	After the Examination Order date no show	Cost - tbd
11	Selling property	Ratepayer has to be in debt for 5 years	5 years	All above costs recovered

Appendix 2 - Investment Balances as at 31 March 26

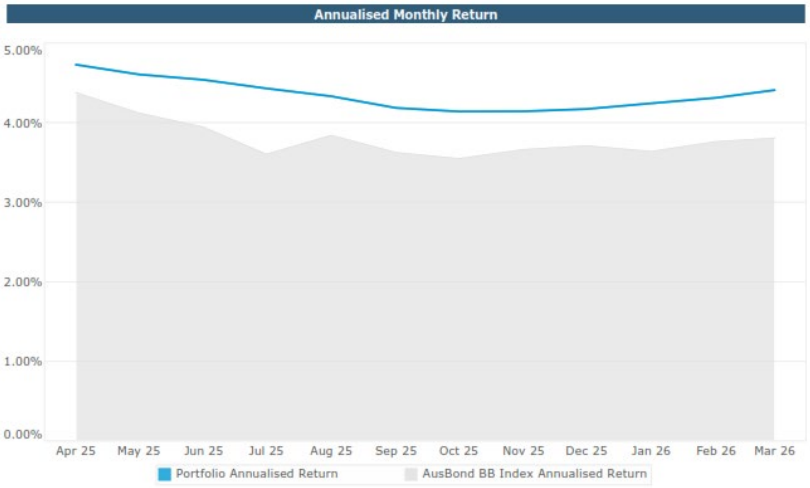


	Mar-26	Feb-26	Mth over Mth Change
Cash and Investment Breakdown			
A1: Operational Cash Accounts	3,898,787	13,469,885	(9,571,098)
A2: Restricted Operational Cash Accounts	2,698,346	2,699,018	(671)
A Total Operational Cash Accounts	**6,597,133**	**16,168,902**	(9,571,769)
B1: Investments: Business Online Saver Cash Account	29,378,650	22,898,686	6,479,964
B2: Other Investment including Term Deposits	100,515,135	98,515,112	2,000,023
B Total Investments including Term Deposits	**129,893,785**	**121,413,798**	8,479,987
C1: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Roads	108,752,835	107,719,474	1,033,360
C2: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Buildings	20,101	20,041	60
C3: Flood Works Advanced Funding for Waste	439,371	771,121	(331,750)
C Total Flood Works Advanced Funding	**109,212,307**	**108,510,636**	**(1,481,894)**
Total Cash, Investments and Advanced Funding	245,703,225	246,093,337	(390,112)

Total surplus cash balance stable month over month

- Total cash & investment balance
  $245.7m (LM:$246.1m) decrease of $0.4m from the prior month.
- Business Online Saver cash account
  balance has increased $6.5m from $22.9m to $29.4m. Largely driven by FRP grant funds received in the month
- Term Deposits
  balance has increased $2m from $98.5m to $100.5m.
- Flood works advanced funding balance
  $109.2m, (LM:$108.5m) a decrease of $1.5m due to consumption of funds relating to delivery of flood infrastructure work

Current Investment Returns – Mar:4.41% (LM:4.31%) (YTD 4.26%)



Historical Performance Summary (%pa)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Mar 2026	4.41%	3.80%	0.61%
Last 3 months	4.32%	3.73%	0.59%
Last 6 months	4.23%	3.68%	0.55%
Financial Year to Date	4.26%	3.69%	0.57%
Last 12 months	4.35%	3.80%	0.55%

- ✓ Mar council's portfolio returned 4.41% (LM:4.31%), being 61bps above the annualised Bank Bill BBI of 3.80%.
- ✓ Financial year to date 4.26% (LM:4.24%) being 57bps above the BBI of 3.69%
- ✓ The portfolio return is comparably conservative when compared to other councils due to the previously low risk profile of our investments, in other words high cash and term deposit balances and no Bond or TCorp investments
- ✓ Following the adoption of the updated investment strategy, a small tranche of bonds (FRN's) has been secured in April

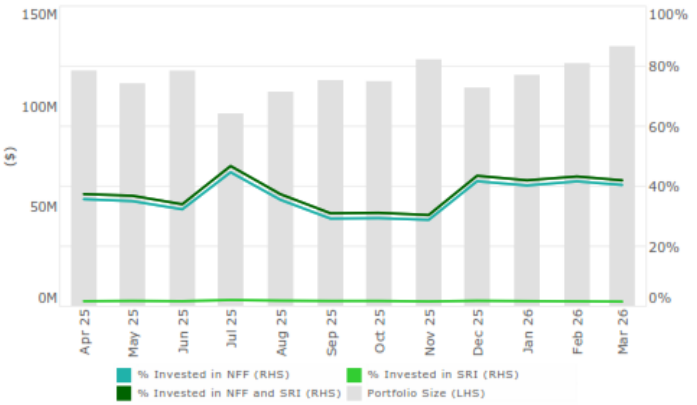


Socially Responsible Investment

Current Breakdown

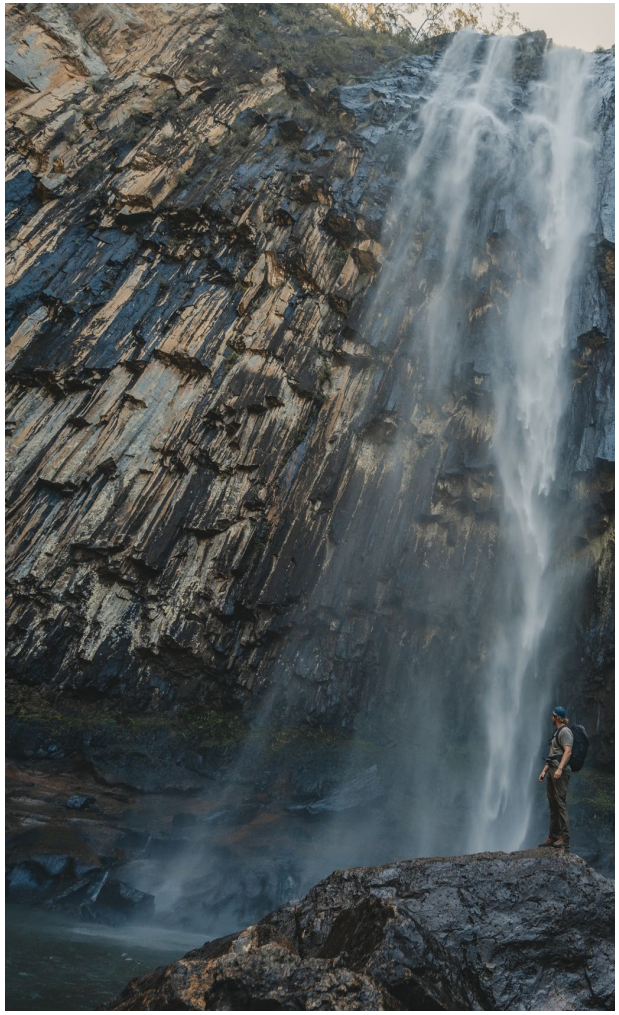
ADI Lending Status *	Current Month ($)		Previous Month ($)	
Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	58,378,650		51,898,686	
National Australia Bank	17,000,000		17,000,000	
	75,378,650	**58%**	**68,898,686**	**57%**
Non Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
AMP Bank	15,135		15,112	
Bank of Queensland	25,000,000		25,000,000	
Summerland Bank	5,500,000		3,500,000	
Suncorp Bank	22,000,000		22,000,000	
	52,515,135	**40%**	**50,515,112**	**42%**
Socially Responsible Investment				
Westpac Group (Green TD)	2,000,000		2,000,000	
	2,000,000	**2%**	**2,000,000**	**2%**
	129,893,785		**121,413,798**	

Historical Portfolio Exposure to NFF Lending ADIs and SRIs



Where the opportunity arises, Council will seek SRI investment opportunities. However, the investment product will be considered in the context of Council's overall cashflow requirements, investment returns and the security of the investment.

✓ In Mar 26 the percentage of the portfolio invested in Socially Responsible Investments (SRI) is stable at 42% (LM:44%), the total value of SRI's ticked up to $54.5m (LM:$52.5m).





Investment Summary Report
March 2026

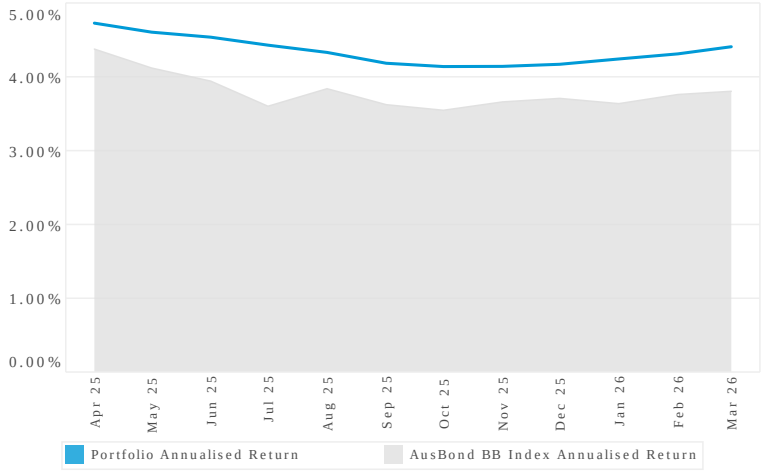
PRUDENTIAL
INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Executive Summary - March 2026

Investment Holdings

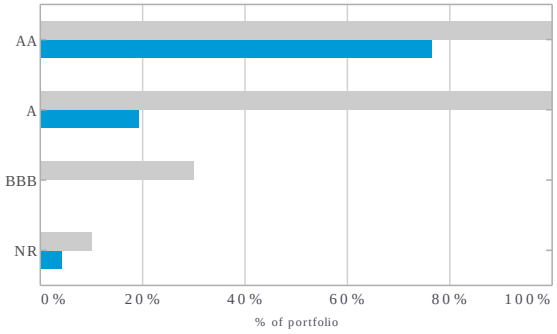
	Face Value ($)	Current Value ($)	Current Yield (%)
Cash	29,393,785	29,393,785	4.1990
Term Deposit	100,500,000	101,608,242	4.5213
	129,893,785	131,002,027	4.4484

Investment Performance

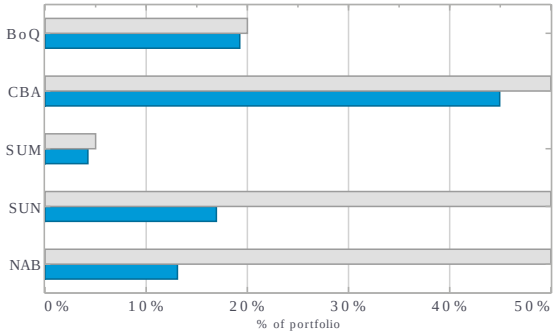


Investment Policy Compliance

Total Credit Exposure



Individual Institutional Exposures





Term to Maturities

	Face Value ($)	Policy Max	
Between 0 and 0.5 years	114,893,785	88% 100%	a
Between 0.5 and 1 years	15,000,000	12% 100%	a
	129,893,785		

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Investment Holdings Report - March 2026

Cash Accounts

Face Value ($)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Current Value ($)	Deal No.	Reference
15,135.14	2.2500%	AMP Bank	BBB+	15,135.14	545721	
29,378,649.83	4.2000%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	29,378,649.83	543330	64
29,393,784.97	4.1990%			29,393,784.97		

Term Deposits

Maturity Date	Face Value ($)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price ($)	Purchase Date	Current Value ($)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest ($)	Next Interest Date	Reference
1-Apr-26	5,000,000.00	4.2200%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	5,000,000.00	30-Oct-25	5,088,446.58	546777	88,446.58	At Maturity	
8-Apr-26	5,000,000.00	4.2200%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	5,000,000.00	30-Oct-25	5,088,446.58	546778	88,446.58	At Maturity	
15-Apr-26	3,000,000.00	4.2000%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	3,000,000.00	11-Nov-25	3,048,673.97	546823	48,673.97	At Maturity	
23-Apr-26	1,000,000.00	4.2500%	Summerland Bank	NR	1,000,000.00	29-May-25	1,035,746.58	546084	35,746.58	At Maturity	
29-Apr-26	2,500,000.00	4.4000%	Summerland Bank	NR	2,500,000.00	27-Nov-25	2,537,671.23	546881	37,671.23	At Maturity	
29-Apr-26	5,000,000.00	4.2400%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	5,000,000.00	27-Nov-25	5,072,602.74	546885	72,602.74	At Maturity	
6-May-26	2,000,000.00	4.2500%	Bank of Queensland	A-	2,000,000.00	4-Nov-25	2,034,465.75	546788	34,465.75	At Maturity	
27-May-26	5,000,000.00	4.3200%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	5,000,000.00	23-Dec-25	5,058,586.30	546962	58,586.30	At Maturity	99
3-Jun-26	10,000,000.00	4.4000%	Bank of Queensland	A-	10,000,000.00	3-Dec-25	10,143,452.05	546909	143,452.05	At Maturity	
10-Jun-26	5,000,000.00	4.3500%	National Australia Bank	AA-	5,000,000.00	10-Dec-25	5,066,739.73	546929	66,739.73	At Maturity	
17-Jun-26	7,000,000.00	4.5000%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	7,000,000.00	16-Dec-25	7,091,479.45	546940	91,479.45	At Maturity	
24-Jun-26	5,000,000.00	4.5500%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	5,000,000.00	23-Dec-25	5,061,705.48	546961	61,705.48	At Maturity	
8-Jul-26	4,000,000.00	4.4700%	National Australia Bank	AA-	4,000,000.00	7-Jan-26	4,041,148.49	547008	41,148.49	At Maturity	
15-Jul-26	4,000,000.00	4.5000%	Bank of Queensland	A-	4,000,000.00	14-Jan-26	4,037,972.60	547034	37,972.60	At Maturity	
12-Aug-26	5,000,000.00	4.6200%	National Australia Bank	AA-	5,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	5,031,010.96	547111	31,010.96	At Maturity	
19-Aug-26	1,000,000.00	4.6200%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	1,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	1,006,202.19	547118	6,202.19	At Maturity	
19-Aug-26	4,000,000.00	4.7500%	Bank of Queensland	A-	4,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	4,025,506.85	547113	25,506.85	At Maturity	
2-Sep-26	5,000,000.00	4.8500%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	5,000,000.00	4-Mar-26	5,018,602.74	547184	18,602.74	At Maturity	
9-Sep-26	2,000,000.00	5.0000%	Summerland Bank	NR	2,000,000.00	10-Mar-26	2,006,027.40	547200	6,027.40	At Maturity	
9-Sep-26	5,000,000.00	4.6500%	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA-	5,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	5,031,212.33	547116	31,212.33	At Maturity	
30-Sep-26	5,000,000.00	5.3000%	Suncorp Bank	AA-	5,000,000.00	30-Mar-26	5,001,452.05	547266	1,452.05	At Maturity	

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council

Investment Holdings Report - March 2026

Maturity Date	Face Value ($)	Current Rate (%)	Institution	Credit Rating	Purchase Price ($)	Purchase Date	Current Value ($)	Deal No.	Accrued Interest ($)	Next Interest Date	Reference
7-Oct-26	3,000,000.00	4.5500%	National Australia Bank	AA-	3,000,000.00	7-Jan-26	3,031,413.70	547009	31,413.70	At Maturity	
28-Oct-26	5,000,000.00	4.5900%	Bank of Queensland	A-	5,000,000.00	27-Jan-26	5,040,241.10	547050	40,241.10	At Maturity	
24-Feb-27	2,000,000.00	4.9200%	Westpac Group	AA-	2,000,000.00	25-Feb-26	2,009,435.62	547160	9,435.62	Semi Annually	
	100,500,000.00	4.5213%			100,500,000.00		101,608,242.47		1,108,242.47		

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council

Accrued Interest Report - March 2026

Investment	Deal No.	Comments	Face Value ($)	Settlement Date	Maturity Date	Interest Received ($)	Days	Interest Accrued ($)	Yield (% pa)
Cash									
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	543330					72,467.83	0	104,201.68	4.20%
AMP Bank	545721					23.39	0	28.92	2.25%
						72,491.22		104,230.60	4.20%
Term Deposits									
Suncorp Bank	546452		5,000,000.00	10-Sep-25	4-Mar-26	99,486.30	3	1,705.48	4.15%
Suncorp Bank	546228		5,000,000.00	1-Jul-25	30-Mar-26	160,219.18	29	17,082.19	4.30%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	546777		5,000,000.00	30-Oct-25	1-Apr-26	0.00	31	17,920.55	4.22%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	546778		5,000,000.00	30-Oct-25	8-Apr-26	0.00	31	17,920.55	4.22%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	546823		3,000,000.00	11-Nov-25	15-Apr-26	0.00	31	10,701.37	4.20%
Summerland Bank	546084		1,000,000.00	29-May-25	23-Apr-26	0.00	31	3,609.59	4.25%
Summerland Bank	546881		2,500,000.00	27-Nov-25	29-Apr-26	0.00	31	9,342.46	4.40%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	546885		5,000,000.00	27-Nov-25	29-Apr-26	0.00	31	18,005.48	4.24%
Bank of Queensland	546788		2,000,000.00	4-Nov-25	6-May-26	0.00	31	7,219.17	4.25%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	546962		5,000,000.00	23-Dec-25	27-May-26	0.00	31	18,345.20	4.32%
Bank of Queensland	546909		10,000,000.00	3-Dec-25	3-Jun-26	0.00	31	37,369.86	4.40%
National Australia Bank	546929		5,000,000.00	10-Dec-25	10-Jun-26	0.00	31	18,472.61	4.35%
Suncorp Bank	546940		7,000,000.00	16-Dec-25	17-Jun-26	0.00	31	26,753.42	4.50%
Suncorp Bank	546961		5,000,000.00	23-Dec-25	24-Jun-26	0.00	31	19,321.92	4.55%
National Australia Bank	547008		4,000,000.00	7-Jan-26	8-Jul-26	0.00	31	15,185.75	4.47%
Bank of Queensland	547034		4,000,000.00	14-Jan-26	15-Jul-26	0.00	31	15,287.67	4.50%
National Australia Bank	547111		5,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	12-Aug-26	0.00	31	19,619.18	4.62%
Bank of Queensland	547113		4,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	19-Aug-26	0.00	31	16,136.99	4.75%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	547118		1,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	19-Aug-26	0.00	31	3,923.83	4.62%
Suncorp Bank	547184		5,000,000.00	4-Mar-26	2-Sep-26	0.00	28	18,602.74	4.85%
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	547116		5,000,000.00	11-Feb-26	9-Sep-26	0.00	31	19,746.58	4.65%
Summerland Bank	547200		2,000,000.00	10-Mar-26	9-Sep-26	0.00	22	6,027.40	5.00%

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council

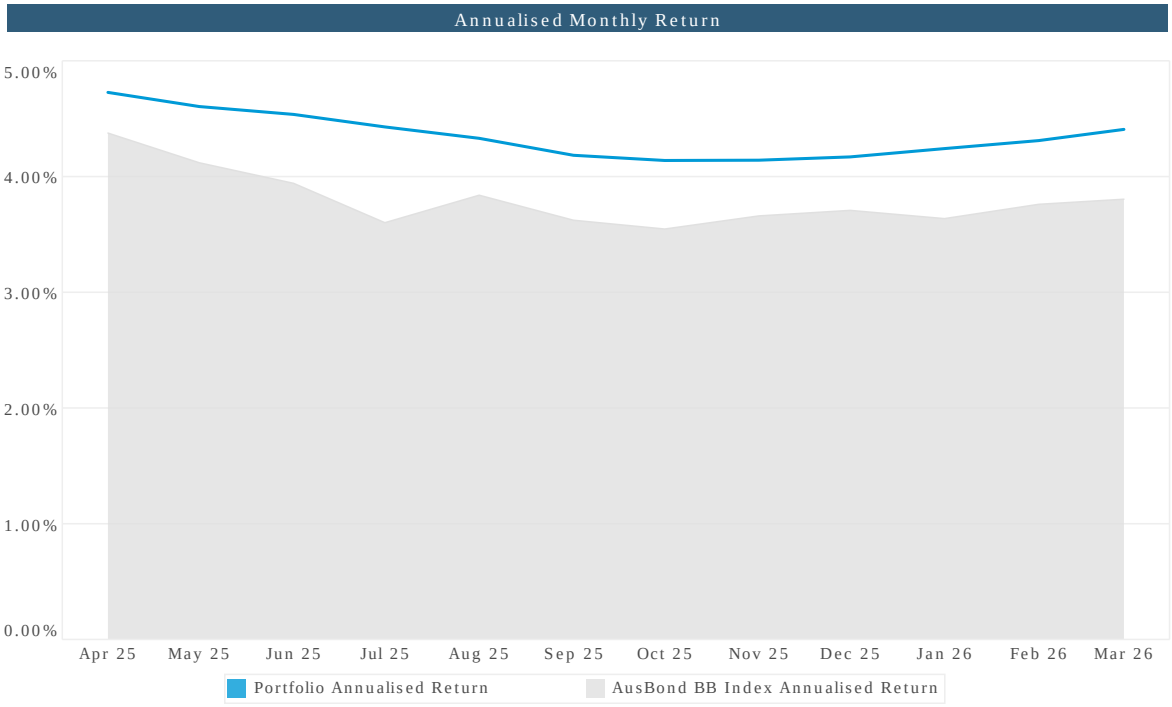
Accrued Interest Report - March 2026

Investment	Deal No.	Comments	Face Value ($)	Settlement Date	Maturity Date	Interest Received ($)	Days	Interest Accrued ($)	Yield (% pa)
Suncorp Bank	547266		5,000,000.00	30-Mar-26	30-Sep-26	0.00	2	1,452.05	5.30%
National Australia Bank	547009		3,000,000.00	7-Jan-26	7-Oct-26	0.00	31	11,593.15	4.55%
Bank of Queensland	547050		5,000,000.00	27-Jan-26	28-Oct-26	0.00	31	19,491.78	4.59%
Westpac Group	547160		2,000,000.00	25-Feb-26	24-Feb-27	0.00	31	8,357.26	4.92%
						259,705.48		379,194.23	4.47%
Grand Totals						332,196.70		483,424.83	4.41%

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council

Investment Performance Report - March 2026



Historical Performance Summary (%pa)			
	Portfolio	Annualised BB Index	Outperformance
Mar 2026	4.41%	3.80%	0.61%
Last 3 months	4.32%	3.73%	0.59%
Last 6 months	4.23%	3.68%	0.55%
Financial Year to Date	4.26%	3.69%	0.57%
Last 12 months	4.35%	3.80%	0.55%

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council

Environmental Commitments Report - March 2026

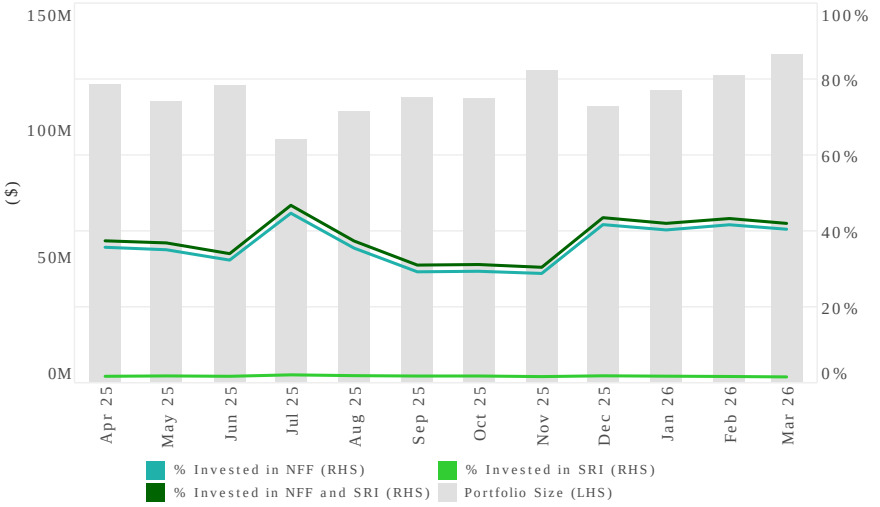
Current Breakdown

ADI Lending Status *	Current Month ($)		Previous Month ($)	
Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	58,378,650		51,898,686	
National Australia Bank	17,000,000		17,000,000	
	75,378,650	58%	68,898,686	57%
Non Fossil Fuel Lending ADIs				
AMP Bank	15,135		15,112	
Bank of Queensland	25,000,000		25,000,000	
Summerland Bank	5,500,000		3,500,000	
Suncorp Bank	22,000,000		22,000,000	
	52,515,135	40%	50,515,112	42%
Socially Responsible Investment				
Westpac Group (Green TD)	2,000,000		2,000,000	
	2,000,000	2%	2,000,000	2%
	129,893,785		121,413,798	

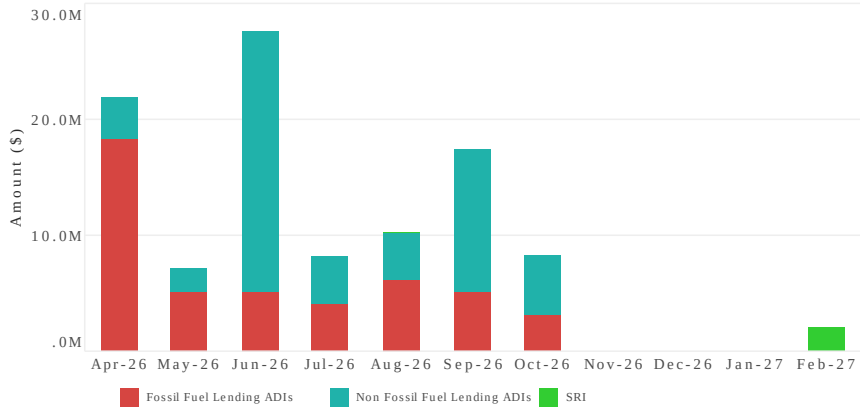
* source: Marketforces & APRA

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Historical Portfolio Exposure to NFF Lending ADIs and SRIs



Upcoming Maturities

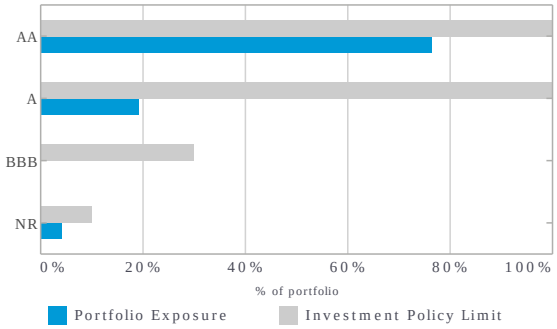


PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

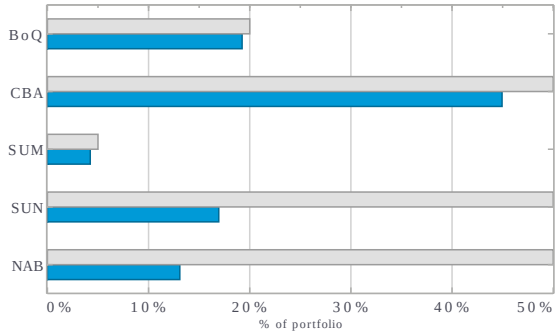
Lismore City Council

Investment Policy Compliance Report - March 2026

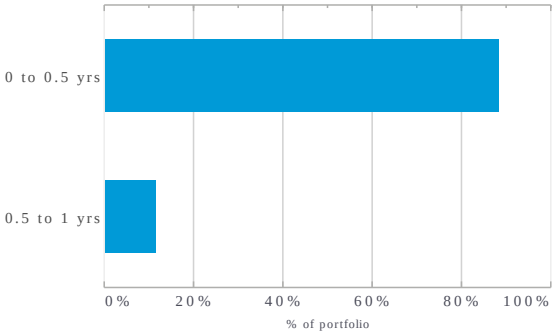
Total Credit Exposure



Individual Institutional Exposures



Term to Maturities



Credit Rating Group	Face Value ($)		Policy Max	
AA	99,378,650	77%	100%	a
A	25,000,000	19%	100%	a
BBB	15,135	0%	30%	a
NR	5,500,000	4%	10%	a
	129,893,785			

Institution	% of portfolio	Investment Policy Limit	
Bank of Queensland (A-)	19%	20%	a
Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-)	45%	50%	a
Summerland Bank (NR)	4%	5%	a
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	17%	50%	a
National Australia Bank (AA-)	13%	50%	a
Westpac Group (AA-)	2%	50%	a

	Face Value ($)	
Between 0 and 0.5 years	114,893,785	88%
Between 0.5 and 1 years	15,000,000	12%
	129,893,785	

Specific Sub Limits				
A-	*25,000,000*	*19%*	*40%*	a
BBB+	*15,135*	*0%*	*30%*	a

a = compliant
r = non-compliant

PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

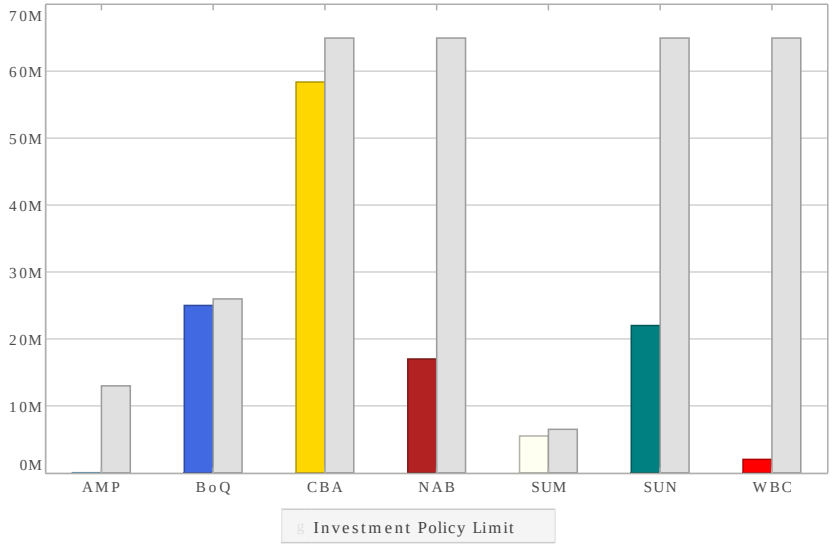
Lismore City Council

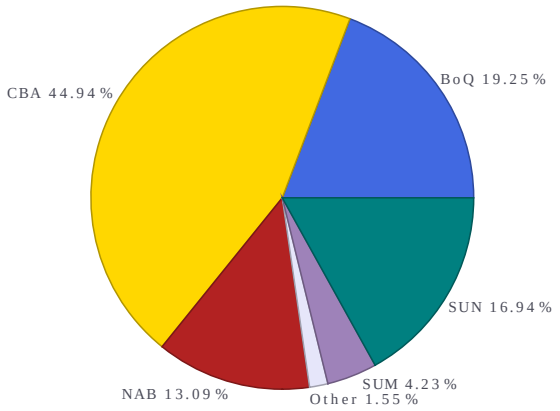
Individual Institutional Exposures Report - March 2026

Individual Institutional Exposures

	Current Exposures		Policy Limit		Capacity
AMP Bank (BBB+)	15,135	0%	12,989,378	10%	12,974,243
Bank of Queensland (A-)	25,000,000	19%	25,978,757	20%	978,757
Commonwealth Bank of Australia (AA-)	58,378,650	45%	64,946,892	50%	6,568,242
National Australia Bank (AA-)	17,000,000	13%	64,946,892	50%	47,946,892
Summerland Bank (NR)	5,500,000	4%	6,494,689	5%	994,689
Suncorp Bank (AA-)	22,000,000	17%	64,946,892	50%	42,946,892
Westpac Group (AA-)	2,000,000	2%	64,946,892	50%	62,946,892
	129,893,785				

Individual Institutional Exposure Charts





PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Cashflows Report - March 2026

Actual Cashflows for March 2026

Date	Deal No.	Cashflow Counterparty	Asset Type	Cashflow Description	Amount
4-Mar-26	546452	Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	5,000,000.00
		Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	99,486.30
				Deal Total	5,099,486.30
4-Mar-26	547184	Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Settlement: Face Value	-5,000,000.00
				Deal Total	-5,000,000.00
				Day Total	99,486.30
10-Mar-26	547200	Summerland Bank	Term Deposit	Settlement: Face Value	-2,000,000.00
				Deal Total	-2,000,000.00
				Day Total	-2,000,000.00
30-Mar-26	546228	Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	5,000,000.00
		Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	160,219.18
				Deal Total	5,160,219.18
30-Mar-26	547266	Suncorp Bank	Term Deposit	Settlement: Face Value	-5,000,000.00
				Deal Total	-5,000,000.00
				Day Total	160,219.18
				Total for Month	-1,740,294.52

Forecast Cashflows for April 2026

Date	Deal No.	Cashflow Counterparty	Asset Type	Cashflow Description	Amount
1-Apr-26	546777	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	5,000,000.00
		Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	88,446.58
				Deal Total	5,088,446.58
				Day Total	5,088,446.58
8-Apr-26	546778	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	5,000,000.00
		Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	92,493.15
				Deal Total	5,092,493.15

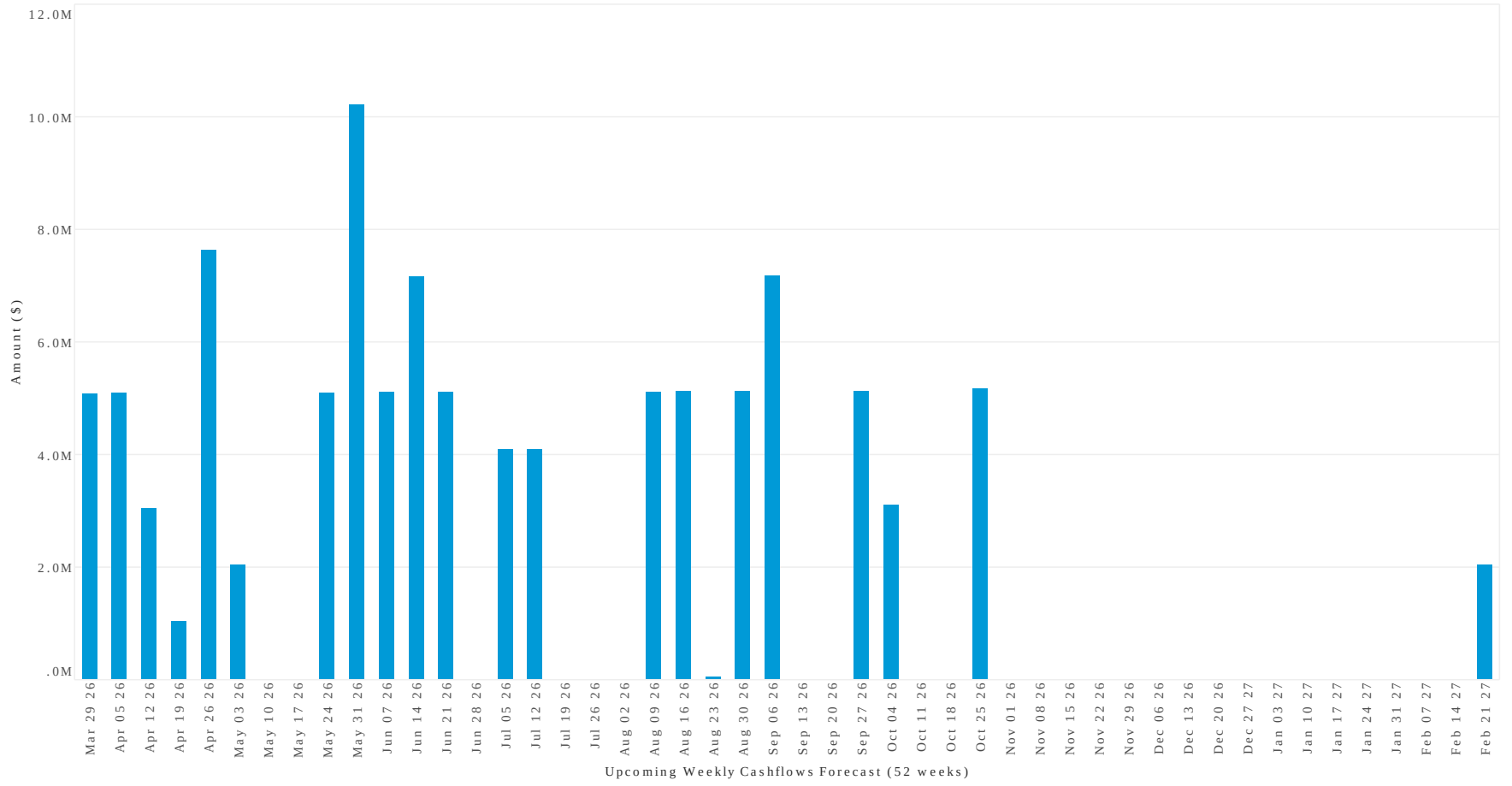
PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Cashflows Report - March 2026

Date	Deal No.	Cashflow Counterparty	Asset Type	Cashflow Description	Amount
				Day Total	5,092,493.15
15-Apr-26	546823	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	3,000,000.00
		Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	53,506.85
				Deal Total	3,053,506.85
				Day Total	3,053,506.85
23-Apr-26	546084	Summerland Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	1,000,000.00
		Summerland Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	38,308.22
				Deal Total	1,038,308.22
				Day Total	1,038,308.22
29-Apr-26	546881	Summerland Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	2,500,000.00
		Summerland Bank	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	46,109.59
				Deal Total	2,546,109.59
29-Apr-26	546885	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Face Value	5,000,000.00
		Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Term Deposit	Maturity: Interest Received/Paid	88,865.75
				Deal Total	5,088,865.75
				Day Total	7,634,975.34
				Total for Month	21,907,730.14

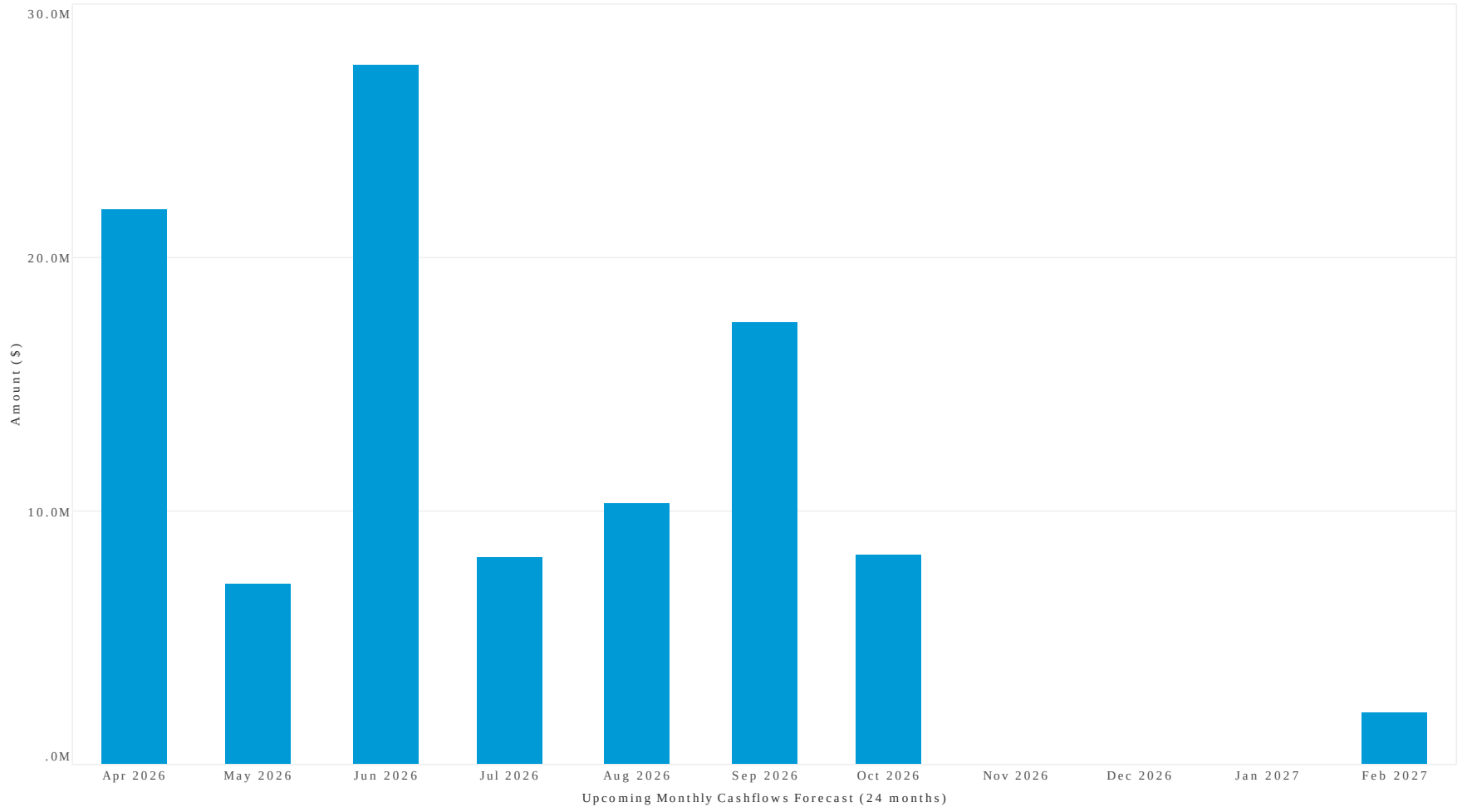
PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Cashflows Report - March 2026



PRUDENTIAL
INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

Lismore City Council
Cashflows Report - March 2026



PRUDENTIAL INVESTMENT SERVICES CORP

COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER: 10.9.2

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND POLICY

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Document #: ED26/7818	Document Title: Telecommunications Facilities on Council Owned Land Policy	
Version #: 1.0	Developed By: Corporate Sustainability	Council Approval Date:

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND POLICY

1 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

a) enable the provision of up-to-date telecommunication facilities on Council owned or controlled land
b) ensure telecommunications facilities proposed on Council land are appropriate for the proposed location, having regard to environmental, visual amenity, land use, and any current or future use of the land by Council
c) establish assessment criteria for Council to consider prior to issuing Owner's Consent for the development of telecommunications facilities on Council owned or controlled land

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all parties involved in the planning, development and establishment of lease or licence agreements for telecommunications facilities on land owned or controlled by Council.

3 Low Impact Facility Planning Laws

3.1 Exemption from State Planning Laws

Carriers licensed under the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth) have certain powers to install and maintain telecommunications facilities. Under this legislation, telecommunications carriers may install certain facilities classified as Low-Impact Facilities without requiring approval under some state and territory planning laws.

Facilities that qualify as low-impact facilities are defined in the Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018. Where a facility meets this definition, carriers may be exempt from certain state and territory laws relating to matters such as planning approval for:

- inspection of land
- installation of certain telecommunications facilities
- maintenance of telecommunications facilities

When exercising these powers, carriers must comply with the requirements of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* and the Telecommunications Code of Practice 2018, which establishes requirements for matters such as notification, consultation, installation practices and restoration of land.

The exemption from state and territory planning laws does not apply to the ongoing operation of telecommunications facilities. Facilities must continue to comply with applicable laws relating to matters such as noise, environmental protection and public safety.

3.2 Policy Process for Low Impact Facilities

Where a proposed telecommunications facility qualifies as a Low-Impact Facility under the Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018, a development application under state planning legislation will generally not be required.

In these circumstances, Owner's Consent will also not be required.

However, where a telecommunications carrier seeks to install a Low-Impact Facility on Council owned or controlled land, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this Policy prior to Council issuing an Approval to Grant Tenure.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND POLICY

4 Development Application Process

4.1 Owners Consent

a) applicants must meet the requirements of this Policy before Council may issue Owner's Consent for the lodgement of a development application for a telecommunications facility on Council owned or controlled land

b) owner's Consent may be issued following a resolution of Council or under delegated authority in accordance with Council's adopted delegations

4.2 Council's role as Planning Authority

Any Owner's Consent issued under this Policy will only permit the applicant to lodge a development application over Council owned or controlled land. The granting of Owner's Consent does not imply support for the proposed development and does not fetter Council's statutory role as the consent authority under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Assessment of any development application will be undertaken independently by Council's Planning and Regulation Division in accordance with relevant legislation and planning instruments.

5 Policy

Prior to issuing Owners Consent to a Telecommunication Facility, the applicant must provide the following information to Council:

a) plans of the proposed development including a site plan, elevations and long-range and short-range photomontages for telecommunications towers and other transmitting devices fitted to existing Council infrastructure or towers. Details should also be provided of any landscaping proposed to soften or screen the facility when viewed from surrounding residences or public places

b) details demonstrating compliance with the consultation requirements of the Telecommunications Code of Practice 2018, including engagement with surrounding residents and neighbours. This may include public meetings, surveys, door-knocking, letterbox drops or other consultation methods

c) details of the classification of the Council land as Operational Land or Community Land under the *Local Government Act 1993*

d) justification for the suitability of the proposed site, including whether opportunities for infrastructure sharing and co-location with existing facilities have been considered

e) details of alternative sites that have been investigated on both public and private land and the reasons why those sites were considered unsuitable

f) details of any vegetation clearing or habitat removal required for the proposed facility and any proposed mitigation measures

g) details demonstrating the need for the facility, including a demand analysis of the area proposed to be serviced by the telecommunications infrastructure

h) details demonstrating consistency with any adopted Plan of Management applicable to Council land classified as Community Land

i) evidence demonstrating that the proposed installation will comply with the ACMA regulatory requirements for electromagnetic energy (EME) and relevant safety standards

j) any lease or licence entered into by Council for the proposed facility must ensure that:

   i. any lease or licence granted by Council for the occupation of Council owned or controlled land for telecommunications infrastructure will be on commercial terms determined by the General Manager, including the payment of market rent or other consideration as determined by the General Manager

   ii. Council will not incur any costs associated with the installation, operation, maintenance or site access for the telecommunications facility. All such costs must be met by the telecommunications carrier

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND POLICY

iii. at the expiration or termination of the lease or licence, the telecommunications carrier is responsible for removal of the infrastructure and restoration of the site to its original condition, unless otherwise agreed by Council

6 Related Legislation

a) *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
b) *Local Government Regulation 2021*
c) State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
d) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
e) *Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)*
f) Telecommunications Code of Practice 2018
g) Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018
h) *Telecommunications Regulations 2021 (Cth)*

7 Review

This Policy will be reviewed two years after adoption and every four years thereafter, or earlier if required due to legislative or regulatory changes.

Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control			
Trim Ref	Version	Summary of Changes / Consultation	Date
ED26/7818	1.0	Policy creation	

ACQUISITION & DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER: 11.4.2

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ACQUISITION & DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

1 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

a) ensure Council has open and accountable processes in place for the acquisition and disposal of land assets
b) ensure best value is achieved in Council property dealings
c) prevent or address any actual or perceived conflicts of interest ensuring fairness and equality

2 Scope

To define the criteria which Lismore City Council must consider prior to acquiring or divesting of land and outlining the processes to be undertaken to ensure the policy's objectives are realised.

This policy applies to all acquisition and disposal of Council lands, easements, and includes interests in land.

3 Land Aquisitions

3.1 General

Council can acquire land:

a) for the purpose of exercising its functions under the *Roads Act 1993* (for roads purposes) and the *Local Government Act 1993* (for all other purposes)
b) subject to classifying the land under the *Local Government Act 1993*
c) by a resolution of the council only as it is a non-delegable power
d) if acquiring land compulsorily in accordance with the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation Act) 1991* with Ministerial consent

3.2 Methods of Acquisition

Acquisition by Agreement and Value

Acquisition by agreement is always Council's preferred process to acquire land or an interest in land.

Subject to any legal requirements for an agreed acquisition, if Council identifies land or interests in land that is required to facilitate functions of Council, but the land is not available for public sale, Council may approach the landowner to try and negotiate the purchase.

Where a property Council wants to acquire is not listed on the open market, if required Council will obtain a valuation report for a basis for negotiation.

Council will work with the relevant landowner to reach an agreement satisfactory to both parties.

Acquisition by Compulsory Process

If agreement to the acquisition of land or an interest in land cannot be made with the landowner, Council may compulsorily acquire land or an interest in the land.

The acquisition process is governed by the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991*. Council must also ensure they are in compliance with the Property Acquisition Standards, the Minimum Requirements – Minimum Negotiation Period for Acquisition of Land, and the Minimum Requirements – Owner-Initiated Acquisition in Cases of Hardship.

These rules deal with issues like the time for negotiation and compensation.

ACQUISITION & DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

4 Land Disposal

4.1 Disposal Criteria

In deciding to sell land, Council will consider the following matters that are relevant to the proposed sale:

a) whether Council can lawfully sell the land
b) existing usage
c) potential future use
d) the likely sale price
e) the cost of retaining the land
f) the public interest

4.2 Disposal Method

Where Council wants to sell land (including surplus areas of public road) the sale shall be by competitive process via Council's preferred method - be it public auction, tender or expression of interest - unless the circumstances warrant sale by direct negotiation, such as strategic sale opportunities.

The Council may, through a negotiated process, gift or heavily discount land to a community-based, not-for-profit organisation if the organisation demonstrates that their intended use of the property will provide substantial benefits to the broader community. The decision to gift land will be contingent upon the organisation's ability to deliver on its proposed plans and ensure that the land is used in a manner consistent with the intended community benefits.

Council may dispose of land by direct negotiation under the following circumstances:

a) where the sale cost will be more than the sale price
b) where there is only one identifiable purchaser
c) where Council is bound by a contractual obligation
d) where the proposed purchaser is a government agency
e) where a public marketing process to sell the land has previously occurred but failed to secure an acceptable sale
f) in response to a proposal which achieves specific policy goals of Council
g) any other extenuating circumstances

Where land is being sold by direct negotiation, a probity plan will be developed to cover the following matters:

a) obtaining best value for money
b) demonstrating accountability and transparency
c) dealing with conflict of interest
d) where Council sell property subject to a development application, that application will be assessed in accordance with Council's Conflict of Interest Policy – Council Related Development Applications

ACQUISITION & DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

4.3 Valuations

When Council acquires or disposes of (vacant or improved) land, at least one formal market valuation must be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced valuer.

Valuation instructions must clearly identify:

a) the purpose of the valuation (acquisition or disposal)
b) the primary basis of the valuation considered most appropriate in the circumstances - there may be multiple bases of valuations required
c) that the valuation be retained in a secure folder within Council's records management system
d) that the valuation includes details of sales evidence and adjustments, valuation rationale and methodology, a valuation range (for negotiations) and comments on marketability, most appropriate method of disposal and opportunities to add value

In addition, the valuer must make a written statement that they have no actual or perceived conflict of interest in undertaking the valuation.

If a contract, deed or agreement documenting the transaction has not been entered into within 12 months from the date of the original valuation, or at any other time there is a material movement in the marketplace that may affect value, the valuation must be updated.

When the value of the land to be acquired or divested is likely to exceed $2 million, two valuations may be sought. The requirement for a valuation may be varied where, in the informed opinion of the General Manager such an action is impractical.

An internal review of the two valuations is to be carried out by officers and reported to the General Manager, with specific attention to the valuation rationale, method of valuation, calculations and sales evidence used. After such review, the valuation is to be considered in the setting of an asking price for sale, reserve price for auction or benchmark for negotiations, tender or expression of interest or acquisition.

When two valuations have been provided and differ by 10 per cent or less, averaging is the preferred method for considering the price. Differences in valuations of more than 10 per cent require an assessment of the differences and more detailed justification of the price.

5 Closed Roads

The *Roads Act 1993* regulates the closing and sale of Council roads.

An application for the full or part closure and disposal of a road may be initiated by Council or by an individual. In the latter case, Council is still responsible for following the *Roads Act 1993* requirements for road closure.

If preliminary investigations find that it is a formed road then Council may proceed with the road closure process. If the road is unformed on closing, the title may revert to the Crown who would then negotiate the transfer of the land with the applicant.

Notification identifying the road proposed to be closed is sent to adjoining land owners, notifiable authorities and advertised on Councils website with a 28 day submission period.

ACQUISITION & DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

Council may acquire land for the purposes of road widening and road reconstruction as per the *Roads Act 1993*. Land swap agreements may also be negotiated, and these should be treated in the same way as a land acquisition and/or sale by Council. The Council resolution which authorises the land swap must include justification for the land swap and details of the outcome of due diligence investigations, and an independent valuation where appropriate.

A Council Road Purchase Application form needs to be completed and submitted for individual-initiated closures and disposals. All costs associated with the disposal of land, including Council's reasonable legal costs, will be borne by the purchaser.

For closure of classified roads, the approval of Transport for NSW must be obtained prior to the matter being referred to Council for consideration.

6 Related Legislation

Lismore City Council's dealings in land are more regulated than if Council was a private landowner.

Some of the legislation and policies regulating Council's land dealings include:

Local Government Act 1993
Valuation of Land Act 1916
Real Property Act 1900
Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991
Roads Act 1993
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
Independent Commission Against Corruption, Guidelines for Managing Risks in Direct Negotiation
Office of Local Government, Land Acquisition Information Guide

Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control			
Trim Ref	Version	Summary of Changes / Consultation	Date
ED26/7821	1.0	Policy creation	

COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER: 8.9.1

NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

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NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

Introduction

Lismore City Council's Naming of Infrastructure and Places Policy is derived from the Geographical Names Board Place Naming Policy. All formed roads, including private roads that are generally open to the public or to services shall be named in accordance with the NSW Addressing Policy and User Manual.

1 Objectives

The objective of this policy is to provide concise and informative guidelines on the naming of public and private roads, places and infrastructure within the Lismore City Council local government area.

This policy is meant to ensure our community's diversity is honoured, the environment is respected, and the stories we tell through place and road names are inclusive and representative of all people.

Policy

2 Naming considerations

In the naming of infrastructure, roads, streets and places the following guidelines must be observed:

2.1 Uniqueness

All lease agreements will take the form of a conventional commercial lease and as such will include the following features:

a) name duplication within a local government area is to be avoided. If possible, duplication of names in proximity to adjacent local government areas should also be avoided. Similarity in road names within these areas is strongly discouraged
b) however, roads crossing council boundaries should have a single and unique name

2.2 Sources

Preferred categories for road names:

a) local Aboriginal names – history and language
b) local history themes
c) thematic names such as local flora and fauna
d) landscape/amenity
e) commemorative – person, place or event

Road-naming requires equal representation across all categories ensuring that no single group is overrepresented, fostering a balanced reflection of our community's diversity. This approach promotes inclusivity, honours underrepresented groups and strengthens the connection to our natural environment.

Names should be appropriate to the physical, historical or cultural character of the area concerned, with the origin of each name clearly stated and subsequently recorded.

The local Aboriginal community must be consulted when choosing Aboriginal names or using words from relevant Aboriginal languages.

2.3 Propriety

a) names of living persons should not be used. Requirement for equal representation across genders. A person must have been deceased for at least 12 months before an application to commemoratively name a road after them is deemed acceptable

NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

b) names which are characterised as follows are to be avoided:

i. offensive or likely to give offence
ii. incongruous - out of place
iii. commercial or company

2.4 Communication

a) names should be easy to read, spell and pronounce to assist both service providers and the public. An exception to this is the use of Aboriginal names which may at first appear complex but will, over time become more familiar and accepted by the community
b) unduly long names and names composed of three or more words, including the road type, should be avoided. Road names should be limited to less than 25 characters which includes any spaces and the road type
c) when commemorating a person only one of the person's names shall be used eg. a given name or surname

2.5 Spelling

a) where it is intended that a road have the same name as a place or feature with an approved geographical name, then particular care should be taken to ensure that the correct spelling is adopted
b) where names have been changed or corrupted by long established local usage, it is not usually advisable to attempt to restore the original form
c) spelling which is sanctioned by general usage should be adopted
d) generally, road names proposed or approved should not contain abbreviations e.g. The "Creek" in "Wallaby Creek Road" must not be abbreviated. The exception being St should always be used in place of Saint

2.6 Form

a) the apostrophe mark ' must be omitted in the possessive case e.g. Johnson's Road should be Johnsons Road
b) it is further preferable to deter a possessive S unless the euphony becomes harsh e.g. Johnson Road
c) the use of hyphens, slashes and other diacritical marks should be avoided if possible.
d) the use of numbers and roman numerals in a road name should be discouraged, when numbers are applied to a name it should be in alpha rather than numeric form
e) no spaces should be embedded in words within the road name, single spaces only are allowed between words and no spaces are allowed to surround hyphens

2.7 Road Type

Proposals for road names should include an appropriate road suffix. Road type suffixes are grouped into three categories, Cul-de-sac, Open ended and Pedestrian Only.
Road types in the singular or plural forms e.g. GARDEN or VIEWS etc, to those included in these lists are strongly discouraged except in presently existing cases.

Road types should not be abbreviated when being proposed, advertised and gazetted. It is acceptable to use Road Type Codes on mail, road signs and maps.

2.8 Prefixes

Road name prefixes should not be used. A notional prefix that relates directly to a locality name may be included as part of a road name e.g. Lower Plenty Road where Lower Plenty is a gazetted locality.

NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

3 Naming Proposal Categories

3.1 Road Naming (Public and Private)

When naming is required:

a) development of a new public road/s in a subdivision
b) development of new private road/s in a subdivision
c) unformed road that is to be formed
d) unnamed roads that are to be used for addressing purposes.

For new public road/s the name proposal is to come from the developer, unless the developer requests Council to source a name. New roads in developments are encouraged to be named and approved for use as early as possible to ensure early allocation of addresses for property services.

Responsibilities

a) the Geographical Names Board of NSW has a role in the road naming process to set policy and processes for all road naming proposals in NSW. They also compile, maintain and publish a list of road names as per the *NSW Geographical Names Act 1996*
b) the NSW Address Policy and User Manual applies to all roads in NSW, regardless of custodianship and maintenance agreements
c) Council is the Road Naming Authority under the *Roads Act 1993* and *Roads Regulation 2018* for all local and regional roads
d) under the NSW Address Policy and User Manual, Council is responsible for all State Roads, Crown Roads, Private Roads, Right of Ways/easements for addressing purposes
e) all roads are to be named in accordance with the NSW Address Policy and User Manual. This includes a notice in the NSW Government Gazette
f) all road name proposals are submitted via NSW Place and Road Naming Proposal System as part of the approval process with the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales
g) all name proposals are to provide background information for the proposed name/s.
h) all new public/private roads in a subdivision are subject to Council's Fees and Charges

3.2 Parks and Reserves

When naming required:

a) a new public park or reserve
b) park reserve in a new subdivision
c) unnamed parks or reserves needing to be uniquely identified
d) change in ownership of an existing unnamed park or reserve

Names may come from Council, Council Staff or members of the community.

Responsibilities

a) the Geographical Names Board of NSW has a role in the parks and reserves naming process to set policy and processes for all proposals in NSW. They also compile, maintain and publish a list of parks and reserve names in the Geographical Names Board of NSW Names Register
b) the naming of parks and reserves is not covered by legislation
c) Council will name parks and reserves which it owns or manages in accordance

NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

with the Geographical Names Board of NSW Place Naming Policy and this Policy. This includes notice in the NSW Government Gazette

d) should be noted that changing an existing name can cause significant confusion to the community
e) all name proposals are to provide background information for the proposed name/s

3.3 Council Buildings, Facilities and Infrastructure (including bridges)

Council may assign names to buildings, facilities and infrastructure where the asset functions as a recognisable public place or requires formal identification for community use, asset management, emergency response or wayfinding purposes, including:

a) new or redeveloped Council-owned or Council-managed buildings and facilities (e.g. community centres, libraries, halls, aquatic centres, depots)
b) public infrastructure and built features of community or navigational significance (e.g. bridges, lookouts, wharves and similar structures)
c) unnamed Council assets requiring unique identification

Name proposals may be submitted by Council staff, councillors or members of the community.

Responsibilities

a) the Geographical Names Board of NSW Place Naming Policy provides best-practice guidance for the naming of places, built features and infrastructure across NSW
b) Council will apply the principles of the GNB Place Naming Policy when naming buildings, facilities and infrastructure where appropriate
c) the naming of buildings and facilities is not subject to specific legislative requirements; however, Council may refer significant place names to the GNB for registration where considered beneficial
d) Council will ensure that proposed names support public safety, emergency response, wayfinding, community recognition and effective asset management
e) changing an existing name should only occur where there is a demonstrated public benefit, noting the potential for community confusion
f) all name proposals must include relevant background information and justification

Bridge and Road Infrastructure Naming

a) the naming of bridges and structures on roads does not have a formal legislative basis under the GNB Place Naming Policy; however, the GNB recommends that road naming procedures be applied where practicable
b) Transport for NSW (TfNSW) is responsible for the naming of bridges and structures located on freeways
c) Council may initiate naming proposals for bridges on local, regional and state roads (excluding freeways), with TfNSW responsible for approval or rejection
d) TfNSW will generally support naming proposals where:

i. there is broad community support
ii. Aboriginal names have endorsement from relevant local Aboriginal groups
iii. consideration has been given to National and State commemorative initiatives
iv. the name aligns with GNB place naming criteria
v. signage and name plaques comply with TfNSW requirements

NAMING OF INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACES POLICY

4 Public Consultation

Public consultation is to occur for all naming proposals. Depending on the feature to be named, consultation should be in accordance with the following:

a) *NSW Geographical Names Act 1966*
b) *NSW Roads Act 1993*
c) *NSW Roads Regulation 2018*
d) NSW Address Policy and User Manual
e) Geographical Names Board of NSW Place Naming Policy

5 Costs

The applicant shall be required to lodge a Council Road Naming and Renaming Application form and pay the relevant fee as specified in Council's published Schedule of Fees and Charges.

6 Maintenance of Road Surface/Formation/Signage

The naming of roads not owned by Council (Crown roads, private roads, rights of way or roads within facilities such as retirement complexes, nursing homes, hospitals, universities etc) does not imply Council's acceptance of responsibility for the maintenance of that road or the street/road name sign.

7 Related Legislation

NSW Geographical Names Act 1966
NSW Local Government Act 1993
NSW Roads Act 1993
NSW Roads Regulation 2008
NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
NSW Address Policy and User Manual 2021

Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control			
Trim Ref	Version	Summary of Changes / Consultation	Date
	1.0	Policy created	15/12/1998
ED10/15881	2.0	Reviewed with no changes	08/2003
ED16/27310	3.0	Updated to new template	09/2016
ED16/27310	4.0	Reviewed by Council	10/03/2026

RURAL CONNECTIONS TO THE NIMBIN WATER SUPPLY POLICY

COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER: 6.1.7

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Document #: ED16/27487	Document Title: Rural Connections to the Nimbin Water Supply Policy
Version #: 2.0	Developed By: Water Waste & Open Spaces Council Approval Date:

RURAL CONNECTIONS TO THE NIMBIN WATER SUPPLY POLICY

Background

Historically, Council has allowed numerous properties to connect to a raw water trunk main laid within the road reserve of Gungas and Tuntable Falls Road, Nimbin. Over time, this has included allowing rural residential subdivisions to be serviced from branches from this main.

Due to operational difficulties associated with connections to this trunk main, in recent decades Council staff have applied a moratorium on any additional connections to this trunk main, or its branches. This has led to an anomaly where some properties are unable to connect to the water supply, even though neighbouring properties are already connected. Council has been taking a staged approach to rolling out upgrades to the Nimbin rural water supply network, with the goal of providing filtered drinking water throughout the Nimbin rural water supply network. A pump system has been installed at the D. E. Williams Dam to support this objective, however, permanent treatment and storage solutions are also required before filtered water can be supplied in the Nimbin rural water supply network. Until then, further connections to the Nimbin rural water supply network will continue to be limited by the system's special operational constraints.

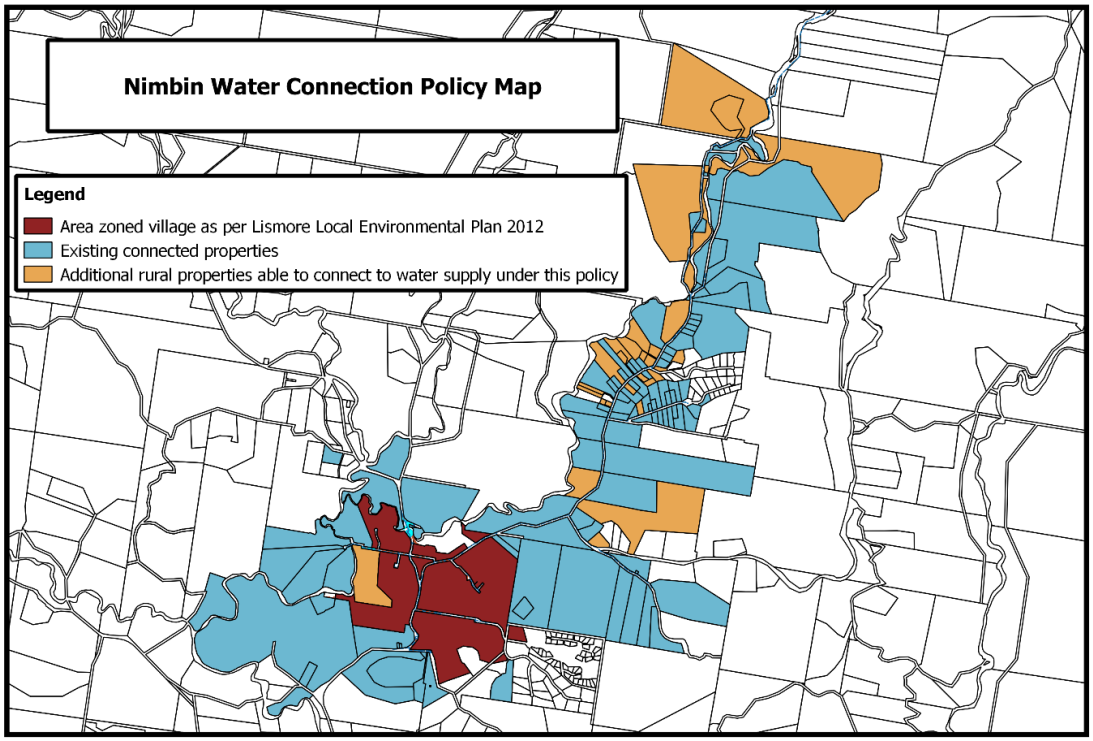
The current Nimbin water supply has a finite capacity. The secure yield of the water supply is currently undergoing a comprehensive review, with previous studies having indicated that the system is approaching its maximum capacity. While further augmentation of the water supply may be possible in the future, it is considered appropriate that the current reserve capacity of the water supply be primarily used to service growth within the zoned village, rather than any further expansion of the rural water supply network.

Policy

a) Existing properties that have direct frontage to an existing water main that forms part of the Nimbin rural water supply network shall be able to connect to, or remain connected to, the Nimbin water supply.
b) The above provision does not apply to properties on Gungas Road, located north of 396 Gungas Road.
c) Should a property that is connected, or is able to connect, to the Nimbin rural water supply network be subdivided; no additional connections to the water supply shall be permitted as a result of this subdivision.
d) While this policy remains in force, there shall be no further expansion to the area currently served by the Nimbin rural water supply network.
e) Council will not levy water availability charges from rural properties that are able to connect to the Nimbin water supply, but that remain unconnected.
f) Properties that connect to the water supply shall be levied connection fees, water availability charges and water consumption charges in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges and Revenue Policy.
g) Connection of additional properties to the Nimbin rural water supply network will only be allowed once filtered drinking water is available throughout the Nimbin rural water supply network.

The plan below shows those properties that have an existing connection to the Nimbin rural water supply network, and those additional properties able to make a connection under this policy.

RURAL CONNECTIONS TO THE NIMBIN WATER SUPPLY POLICY



Definitions

'Existing property' means a property created prior to 9 February 2016.

'Nimbin rural water supply network' refers to infrastructure that forms part of the Nimbin water supply that, as of [date], is located outside the village of Nimbin and upstream of the D. E. Williams Dam.

'Village of Nimbin' refers to the area of Nimbin zoned RU5 Village in the Lismore Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control			
Trim Ref	Version	Summary of Changes / Consultation	Date
ED16/27487	1.0	Policy creation	14/06/2016
ED16/27487	2.0	Reviewed by Council	10/04/2026

POLICY MANUAL

Policy title:	**QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT**
Policy number:	**1.6.1**
Objective:	**To ensure Council's customers receive service and advice in a fair, reliable and efficient manner.**
Link to community vision/service:	**Civic Leadership/Management**
Program Area:	**Corporate Services**
Policy created: **e.g. 10/2/15**	**Council reviewed:** **12/08/03, 01/12/10**
Last reviewed by staff: **18/12/13**	**TRIM Ref:** **ED10/15842 & ED16/33017**

Lismore City Council exists to provide services and facilities that meet the requirements of our Community, Council, Customers and Suppliers while discharging obligations as determined by government legislation and regulatory authorities.

To ensure Council's customers receive service and advice in a fair, reliable and efficient manner, Council will adopt best practice methods and operate a quality system. This will feature:

- Delivering consistently high standards of customer service in accordance with our customer service charter;
- Adopting a 'right first time' attitude to each and every activity carried out by every staff member in Council;
- Building a sense of quality into management practices and systems;
- Demonstrating an ongoing commitment to identifying and introducing improvements to the way we work;
- Using a team approach to work.

The aim of this policy is to earn the respect and confidence of our customers by sharing the responsibility for Council's success today and in the future with every member of the staff and Council.

POLICY MANUAL

Policy title:	**CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PROPERTY OWNERS - STUDIES FOR REZONING POLICY**
Policy number:	**5.2.15**
Objective:	**To clarify conditions of contributions by property owners towards studies.**
Link to community vision/service:	**Natural Environment**
Program Area:	**Planning Services**
Policy created: **28/5/91**	**Council reviewed:** **5/9/95, 14/7/98, 11/9/07**
Last reviewed by staff: **11/9/07**	**TRIM Ref:** **ED10/15904 & ED16/26981**

That where contributions from property owners are sought/received towards studies for rezoning or D.C.P.'s etc., the property owner be advised that -

1. Council will commission the Study and manage the consultants during the conduct of the Study.

2. The consultant is to represent Council, and the consultant is expected to produce a report that facilitates the interests of the community and Council, not the property owners.

3. The study may reveal a contrary view to the intention of the property owner, and Council will act on the basis of the study's results.

4. There is no refund.

POLICY MANUAL

Policy title:	**TEMPORARY RESIDENTIAL OCCUPATION OF LAND POLICY**
Policy number:	**5.2.23**
Objective:	**To permit landowners to legally occupy their land for residential purposes while they have a permanent dwelling being erected upon their land.**
Link to community vision/service:	**Quality of Life**
Program Area:	**Building Services**
Policy created: 12/11/80	**Council reviewed:** 5/9/95, 14/7/98, 10/03/09
Last reviewed by staff: 10/03/09	**TRIM Ref:** ED10/15907 & ED16/33321

DEFINITIONS:
Urban land - all land with urban zoning and includes village zoned lands.
Rural land - includes all other land and may include land in urban areas which is remote from built up areas and having a rural character.

Council may approve, through the issue of a Temporary Residential Occupation Permit, the temporary residential occupation of rural and urban land in accordance with the following requirements.

A. Rural Land

1.
   a) The land must have an ability to obtain development consent for the erection of a dwelling on the land and Council must be satisfied that the issue of a consent is likely; and
   b) Where the land is a site on an approved multiple occupancy development with an active Development Consent, all infrastructure works and other relevant matters required by the Development Consent must be completed or be complied with.

2. Development Consent /or Construction Certificate and all ancillary approvals must be obtained within twelve (12) months from the date of issue of a Temporary Residential Occupation Permit. The dwelling must be completed to approved occupation stage on or before the expiry of the permit.

3. Bush fire safety measures required by any Multiple Occupancy Development Consent conditions must be complied with. Where bush fire safety measures are not addressed in the Multiple Occupancy Development Consent or the proposed site is not on a multiple occupancy, appropriate bush fire safety measures must be undertaken to comply with the recommendations of the local Fire Brigade Captain.

4. A Temporary Residential Occupation Permit be granted for a period of two (2) years from the date of issue. The Permit may be renewed for a further period not exceeding one (1) year where the General Manager is of the opinion that there is sufficient justification to do so.

5. All waste water generating facilities must be connected to:
   a) Council's reticulated sewerage where same is available; or
   b) An approved on site sewerage system where reticulated sewerage is not available, prior to any occupation of the temporary structure.

B. Urban Land

1. Development Consent and/or Construction Certificate for the erection of a permanent dwelling on the land must be issued by Council and work directly related to the approval must be physically commenced on site prior to the temporary occupation of the land commencing.

2. Only moveable dwellings (eg caravans); permanent shed like structures; or other permanent structures complying with Building Code of Australia requirements for human habitation may be used for temporary occupation in urban areas.

3. All waste water generating facilities must be connected to:
   a) Council's reticulated sewerage system where same is available; or
   b) An approved on site sewerage system where reticulated sewerage is not available.

4. A Temporary Residential Occupation Permit be granted for a period of one (1) year from the date of issue. The permit may be renewed for a further period not exceeding one (1) year where the General Manager is of the opinion that there is sufficient justification to do so.

C. General Requirements Relating to both Urban and Rural Land

1. The issue of a Temporary Residential Occupation Permit must be consistent with the intent of any planning or other regulatory requirements relating to the construction of a dwelling on the land.

2. Applications must be submitted on Council's approved form and all information provided.

3. A Temporary Residential Occupation Permit may only be issued to the owner of the land, who must also be the formal occupant of the temporary accommodation.

4. The Temporary Residential Occupation Permit is not transferable to any person except with written concurrence of Council.

5. Adequate cooking facilities; potable and other water supplies; laundry and clothes drying facilities; and sanitary facilities must be provided and be properly maintained.

6. A Temporary Residential Occupation Permit may be issued subject to conditions and the requirements of the permit must be complied with at all times.

7. A Temporary Residential Occupation Permit may be revoked by the General Manager if the occupation does not comply with all the requirements of the permit.

8. That the application fee be in accordance with Council's fees and charges. The fee is non-refundable following the issue of a permit. If the application is refused 50% of the fee is refundable.

9. Hardwired smoke alarms shall be installed by a licensed electrical contractor and certification thereof be submitted upon completion.

POLICY MANUAL

Policy title:	**STRATEGIC PLANNING STUDY GUIDELINES**
Policy number:	**5.3.1**
Objective:	**1. To ensure involvement by Councillors in the preparation of strategic land use planning studies.** **2. To facilitate informed communication between Councillors and their constituents.** **3. To provide greater support to strategic planning staff.**
Link to community vision/service:	**Leadership by Innovation**
Program Area:	**Planning Services**
Policy created: **28/5/96**	**Council reviewed:** **28/5/96, 10/4/01, 20/6/06**
Last reviewed by staff: **20/6/06**	**TRIM Ref:** **ED10/15911 & ED16/33286**

1. Significant strategic planning studies are defined as those costing over $20,000 and requiring the employment of consultants; or where Council resolves that a study/issue is deemed to be significant.

2. Significant studies will not be undertaken unless the need for the study is clearly defined and documented; this documentation should include an estimate of the cost, funding source, the use to which the information gained will be put; and the resources likely to be required to implement outcomes of the Study.

3. Should it appear that the resources required to implement the outcomes would not be available at the completion of the study then additional justification should explain why the study should proceed.

4. A reference group comprising a maximum of three Councillors and the staff member managing the project be established by Council to:
   a. Endorse the contents of the Study brief
   b. Endorse the choice of consultant to undertake the Study
   c. Consider and provide comment on progress reports and drafts of the Study
   d. Keep the relevant Policy Advisory Group and Council informed as to progress
   e. Determine the community consultation requirements for the Study.

5. Council may determine that the Reference Group should contain community representatives or experts in the particular issue to be studied.

6. Reference Group members are to participate in any workshops, public forums etc. to be held during any public exhibition of the study or draft study.

7. The Reference Group will co-ordinate an information workshop for Councillors before the final study is reported to Council.

POLICY MANUAL

Policy title:	**WATER SUPPLY BACKFLOW PREVENTION POLICY**
Policy number:	**6.2.1**
Objective:	**To provide a safe water supply for consumers.**
Link to community vision/service:	**Water Cycle Management**
Program Area:	**Operations**
Policy created: **14/12/93**	**Council reviewed:** **5/9/95, 11/9/07**
Last reviewed by staff: **11/9/07**	**TRIM Ref:** **ED10/15874 & ED16/33374**

Backflow prevention shall be provided and maintained on all services in accordance with AS 3500.



Wastewater Charging Policy

Version 9 November 2010

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Wastewater Charging Policy

This document should be read in conjunction with the Lismore City Council's Strategic Business Plan for Water Supply and Wastewater Services, Operational Plan and the Trade Waste Local Approvals Policy.

1. Objectives

The objectives of this charging policy can be summarised as:

(a) To recover the cost of providing the wastewater service.
(b) To have an understandable charging policy that is comprehensible to users and administratively feasible.
(c) To provide incentives to encourage water conservation and discourage system overload.
(d) To collect adequate revenue to cover the costs of collection and treatment.

2. Domestic Wastewater Usage Charges

2.1 Methodology for determining usage charges

The wastewater usage charge is calculated after taking into consideration operational and maintenance cost as well as the long-term capital works programs. For further information refer to Lismore City Council's Strategic Business Plan for Water Supply and Wastewater Services and its Operational Plan, which are reviewed regularly.

2.2 Units of measurement

Wastewater flow and strength is measured in terms of Equivalent Tenements (ET). A single domestic wastewater connection is assessed at 1 ET.

A flat is assessed at 70% of a single domestic connection.

The fixed service charge on an unconnected property has been assessed at 60% of a single domestic connection.

The annual Domestic Wastewater Usage Charges for the Lismore and Nimbin catchments are set out in the Operational Plan and are reviewed annually by Council.

3. Trade Waste (Non domestic) Wastewater Usage Charges

In accordance with Council's Trade Waste policy the following discharge categories are defined:

(a) Category 1
(b) Category 2 and
(c) Category 3

3.1 Methodology for determining non-domestic user charges

Council engaged CMPS&F Pty Limited to assist with the development of a scale of charges that could be levied on those users of the wastewater system that discharge liquid trade waste to it. The structure of the charges is in line with Council's "user pays" policy and complements the Water charging policy. Further information can be obtained from the report "Sewerage Services Charges dated 12 March 1997 – CMPS&F and Appendix E of "Water Supply Sewerage and Trade Waste Pricing Guidelines", Department of Land and Water Conservation (2002).

3.2 Category 1 Charges

If the waste is expected to be approximately of domestic sewage strength or less, no pre-treatment is required.

The number of ETs discharged from the premise will be calculated by taking the metered water consumption of the previous year, reducing it by a discharge to wastewater factor and converting this figure into units of 250Kl. The minimum charge shall be 1ET.

$$\text{No. of ETs} = \frac{\text{(water consumption-Kl) x Wastewater Usage Discharge Factor}}{\text{250Kl}}$$

Annual Wastewater Usage Charge = Number of ETs x Non-domestic ET charge.

Non-domestic ET charge = Domestic ET Charge + Administrative Charge.

The annual Non-domestic Wastewater Usage Charges for the Lismore and Nimbin catchments are set out in the Operational Plan and are reviewed annually by Council.

3.2.1 Exceptional Circumstances

In circumstances where the development of a given property does not match the categories of development listed within Appendix 1 to this policy, Council may determine alternative means of determining non-residential wastewater charges applicable to this property. Any alternative means of calculating wastewater charges determined under this clause must be authorised by Council's General Manager.

3.3 Category 2 Charges

Category 2 discharges are those properties where pre-treatment would be required to reduce the strength of the waste to the equivalent of domestic sewage.

3.3.1 With Pre-Treatment Installed

If the property has a *properly maintained* pre-treatment device installed, the discharge strength will be assumed to be equivalent to domestic waste.

The annual charge will be calculated as per Category 1 (3.2 or 3.2.1 above).

Random sampling would be undertaken to ensure that the discharge complies with Category 2 strength. If the waste is non-compliant, the following additional charges shall be imposed;

1) Inspection/ sampling/ testing fees as required and penalty charges as per 3.3.2.

3.3.2 Penalty Charges

If pre-treatment devices are required but have not been installed or the pre–treatment device is inadequate or is not properly managed, non-compliance penalty charges shall be imposed in order to recover additional cost of treatment.

This charge will be in accordance with Appendix E of "Water Supply Sewerage and Trade Waste Pricing Guidelines", Department of Land and Water Conservation (2002).

3.4 Trade Waste Category 3 Charges

Trade waste that does not fall into the either Category 1 or Category 2 is categorised as Category 3. Due to the high strength of the effluent, pre-treatment is required.

3.4.1 Calculation of unit Costs for Category 3 strength

a) Mass Charges

After taking into consideration the operation cost and capital costs, unit costs have been determined for the following parameters:

Volume	($/kl)
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	($/kg)
Suspended Solids (SS)	($/kg)
Oils and Grease (O&G)	($/kg)

Further information on the rationale behind these calculations are detailed in the CMPS&F report "Sewerage Services Charges" dated 12 March 1997.

b) Other Mass Charges

Also included are the following trade waste charges as shown in Appendix E of "Water Supply Sewerage and Trade Waste Pricing Guidelines", Department of Land and Water Conservation (2002):

pH	($/kg)
Phosphorus	($/kg)
Nitrogen	($/kg)

The respective charges are reviewed annually in line with CPI increases and are given in Council's Fees & Charges.

3.4.2 Units of measurement

Quantity and quality of treatment parameters are measured as required and the following charges are applicable:

3.4.3 Charges applicable to Category 3 customers

1) A charge based on the unit cost of treatment detailed in 3.4.1
2) Trade waste administrative charge, which includes the cost of sampling.

3.4.4 Category 3 Excess Mass Charges

When the discharge does not comply with the conditions specified in the Approval, the normal operating charges shall be increased by application of the following formulae:

(i) Up to the approved parameter limit *Parameter Charges*
(ii) Between approved parameter limit and two times that limit, 2 x *Parameter Charges*
(iii) Between two and three times the approved parameter limit, 3 x *Parameter Charges*
(iv) Between three and four times the approved parameter limit, 4 x *Parameter Charges*
(v) And so on…
(v) Plus additional inspection/sampling/testing fees if required.

3.4.5 Non-Industrial Component

The unmeasured non-industrial component of the property's discharge will be calculated by applying the appropriate discharge factor to the metered water consumption. The ETs so derived shall be charged as per the Domestic Usage Charge (Section 2).

4. Other Charges Applicable To Trade Waste Discharges

4.1 Trade Waste Application Fees

Category 1 Dischargers	Refer to Fees & Charges
Category 2 Dischargers	Refer to Fees & Charges
Category 3 Dischargers	Available on application

Capital (Headworks) Charges - May apply to new trade waste dischargers and shall be advised at Development Approvals stage.

4.2 Other Administrative charges - Detailed in the fees and charges

- Inspection/Sampling/Testing Fee
- Re-inspection Fee
- Trade waste Tracking Fee
- Non-compliance Penalties

APPENDIX 1

Trade Waste Wastewater Usage (Volume)

Discharge Factors

(Proportion of metered water consumption discharged to sewer)

Industry	Wastewater Usage Discharge Factor (%)
Bakers	95
Butchers	95
Cake Shops	95
Car Yards	95
Car Detailing	95
Clubs	95
Cold Stores	7
Concrete Batching Plants	2
City Halls	90
Combined Residential/Business	70
Dental Surgeries	95
Doctors' Rooms	95
Dye Houses	75
Fish Outlets	95
Funeral Directors	95
Guest Houses	90
General Stores	90

Wastewater Trade Waste Discharge Factors (Cont'd)

Industry	Wastewater Usage Discharge Factor (%)
Hairdressing Salons	95
Hotels	95
Hospitals	90
Industrial Laundries	95
Laundromats	92
Metal Processing	75
Nursing Homes	90
Nurseries (Garden)	15
Optical Services/Opticians	95
Printers	95
Panel Beating Shops	95
Photographers	95
Parks	15
Pools	15
Restaurants	95
Radiator Repairs	95
Retail Outlets	95
Service Stations	95
Sandwich Bars	95
Schools	90

Wastewater Trade Waste Discharge Factors (Cont'd)

Industry	Wastewater Usage Discharge Factor (%)
Take-Away Food Outlets	95
Truck Depots	95
Timber Yards	95
Vehicle Repairers	95
Veterinary Rooms	95
Vehicle Wash ('Robo' type)	95
Vehicle Wash ('Gerni' type)	95
Wreckers	95

Note: *1. Discharge factors for other industries shall be determined based on best available information.*

2. Where discharge is metered, actual volumes will be used to determine Wastewater ET load.

Source: (a) Sydney Water Board
(b) NSW Public Works
(c) Local Assessments