

APPENDICES TO THE TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

APPENDIX A: ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

The following summarises the alignment of the Tourism and Economic Development Strategy focus areas formulation with key strategic documents from Council and the NSW Government.

A brief summary of the key areas of alignment are identified in the nominated documents follows.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council – Integrated Planning and Reporting framework documents including:

- Our place, Our future - Community Strategic Plan 2018-28
- Delivery Program 2018-19 to 2020-21
- Operational Plan 2018-19
- Resourcing Strategy – inclusive of the Long Term Financial Plan 2018-28, Workforce Management Plan and assets management planning documents.

Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan was developed by Council after community consultation to determine the priorities and aspirations of the Cootamundra-Gundagai community over the next 10 years and how those objectives will be achieved.

Summary of consultation undertaken in the creation of the Plan:

- Community Listening sessions
 - 109 people attended 12 workshops in the Community Listening Sessions
 - 1 all staff workshop attended by 87 staff members
- Council brand consultation
 - 200 people attended the community meetings and workshops on Council's brand
 - 600 respondents to the brand related survey
 - 200 school students engaged as part of the brand considerations
 - 160 people provided feedback on Council's logo
- Village consultation
 - 103 people attended the Village Strategy sessions
 - 4 schools were visited and 74 students commented
 - 92 submissions were received on the Village Strategy
- Disability Inclusion Access Plan
 - 24 people participated in the workshops to create the Plan
- Economic Development Strategy (phase 1)¹
 - 4 workshops attended by 50 community members

¹ Note, phase 2 consultations were undertaken as part of the finalisation of the Tourism and Economic Development Strategy that this document supports.

The Community Strategic Plan details four key directions and twelve objectives:

Key Directions	Objectives
1. A vibrant and supportive community: all members of the community are valued and connected	1.1 The community is inclusive and connected. 1.2 Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen social connections. 1.3 Community members are healthy and safe.
2. A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and “open for business”.	2.1 The local economy is strong and diverse. 2.2 Strategic land-use planning is co-ordinated and needs-based. 2.3 Tourism opportunities are actively promoted. 2.4 The local workforce is skilled and workplace ready.
3. Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us.	3.1 The natural environment is valued and protected. 3.2 The built environments are supported to enhance liveability.
4. Good governance: an actively engaged community and strong leadership team.	4.1 Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership. 4.2 Active participation and engagement in local decision-making. 4.3 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is a premier local government Council.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Delivery Program 2018-19 to 2020-21

The Program provides an overview of Council's proposed activities over the term of the Council. The principal activities are linked to the Community Strategic Plan directions and objectives.

Principal activities noted in the Delivery Plan that were aligned and significant in formulating the Tourism and Economic Development Strategy are:

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.1: Our community is inclusive and connected.

Strategy 1.1a: A range of programs, activities and events are delivered and promoted across the region to create opportunities for all members of our community to come together and strengthen community cohesion.

No.	Principal Activities
1.1a (1)	Deliver a range of programs, activities and events and ensure they are planned, promoted and executed in an efficient, inclusive and professional manner.
1.1a(2)	Work with our community to promote community spirit by assisting with the administration, organisation and promotion of events and community gatherings as required.
1.1a(3)	Encourage the development of initiatives to welcome new residents and make them aware of the opportunities which exist in the local government area.
1.1(a)4	Provide modern, vibrant and relevant library services, programs and activities to the community in conjunction with Riverina Regional Library (RRL).

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.1: Our community is inclusive and connected.

Strategy 1.1b: Cultural and arts facilities and services are promoted and supported.

No.	Principal Activities
1.1b(1)	Build and sustain partnerships with cultural and arts bodies, and the local arts community, to support activities and to secure funding for cultural and arts development in the local government area.
1.1b(2)	Provide assistance to art and cultural bodies to promote and develop programs and facilities.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.1: Our community is inclusive and connected.

Strategy 1.1c: Local groups, clubs, and volunteer organisations are recognised, promoted and supported.

No.	Principal Activities
1.1c(3)	Provide support and funding where possible to support a range of community groups to deliver positive outcomes for the local community.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.1: Our community is inclusive and connected.

Strategy 1.1e: Develop and implement a range of activities and initiatives which promote a culture of accessibility and inclusiveness.

No.	Principal Activities
1.1e(2)	Develop and implement a Youth Strategy which meets the needs of young people within our community.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.2: Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen our social connections

Strategy 1.2a: Maintain and enhance the amenity of our main streets and public spaces so that they are attractive, clean and people feel safe.

No.	Principal Activities
1.2a(1)	Enhance the amenity and appearance of our towns' main streets.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.2: Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen our social connections

Strategy 1.2b: Promote our sense of identity and enhance the attractiveness of our region by investing in town and village entrances.

No	Principal Activities
1.2b(1)	Improve the amenity of town and village entrances.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.2: Public spaces provide for a diversity of activity and strengthen our social connections

Strategy 1.2c: Encourage the wide-spread use of open spaces and community facilities by ensuring they are welcoming, accessible, maintained and managed for everyone to enjoy, and that they continue to meet the needs of our community.

No	Principal Activities
1.2c(5)	Investigate options to work in partnership and enter into joint venture arrangements to make better use of facilities within the local government area.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.3: Our community members are healthy and safe

Strategy 1.3a: A broad range of services are provided and supported to meet the needs of all members to promote personal health and well-being and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

No	Principal Activities
1.3a(2)	Promote a wide range of health and community services offered by various agencies in the local government area.
1.3a(4)	Promote programs which encourage healthy lifestyle choices and activities.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.3: Our community members are healthy and safe

Strategy 1.3b: Provide opportunities for the recreational and active use of parks, sporting facilities and swimming pools by ensuring they are promoted, accessible, safe, maintained and managed, and meet the needs of all age groups.

No	Principal Activities
1.3b(1)	Provide, maintain, renew and promote high quality sporting, swimming and active recreational facilities and programs for the community, active sporting associations and visitors.
1.3b(2)	Provide and maintain parks and gardens that are aesthetically pleasing, accessible and are available for passive recreational pursuits.
1.3b(3)	Construct a large-scale Adventure Playground in Gundagai.

Key Direction 1: A vibrant and supportive community: all members of our community are valued and connected

Objective 1.3: Our community members are healthy and safe

Strategy 1.3c: Work with key partners and members of our community to maintain low levels of local crime and deliver community safety.

No	Principal Activities
1.3c(1)	Work in partnership with local agencies to identify and advocate for opportunities to improve overall community safety.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1a: Develop and deliver strategies which support the economic sustainability of the Cootamundra-Gundagai region

No	Principal Activities
2.1a(1)	Develop and implement an integrated Tourism and Economic Development Strategy for the Cootamundra-Gundagai region.
2.1a(2)	Work in partnership with individuals, the private sector, other agencies and levels of government to deliver economic development initiatives.
2.1a(3)	Implement strategies which encourage the growth of the local population.
2.1a(4)	Actively seek and apply for funding opportunities which deliver additional income and contribute to community objectives.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1b: Develop and deliver strategies which support the economic sustainability of the Cootamundra-Gundagai region

No	Principal Activities
2.1b(1)	Work with land-owners, farmers and other agencies to advocate for the protection of the local agricultural sector through an effective land-use strategy.
2.1b(3)	Provide, maintain and upgrade as funding permits the Saleyards facility which allows the regular sale of animals from this and surrounding districts in a suitable environment.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1c: Ensure transportation networks link our local government area with other regional centres and cities and support economic, environmental and community needs.

No	Principal Activities
2.1c(1)	Work with key partners to explore and advocate for opportunities to better utilize and develop transportation and freight networks which meet our community needs.
2.1c(2)	Provide and maintain a safe and well maintained aerodrome for use by commercial and recreational aircraft and promote use by external users.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1d: Ensure communication and electronic technologies are accessible to all, meet the current and future needs of our community, and provide consistent and reliable coverage across the local government area

No	Principal Activities
2.1d(1)	Promote the development of efficient telecommunications technology for business, land owners, education and health needs.
2.1d(2)	Support and advocate for the installation of the National Broadband Network across the local government area.
2.1d(3)	Offer and promote free public Wi-Fi internet access in key public spaces across the local government area.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1e: Identify, promote and incentivise the strategic and innovative investment opportunities that exist in our region.

No	Principal Activities
2.1e(1)	Implement a range of initiatives which support and promote the sustainable development of the towns' Central Business Districts and industrial land.
2.1e(2)	Promote to the community and industry groups potential growth opportunities and development efficiencies.
2.1e(3)	Encourage growth in development and construction locally.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.1: The local economy is strong and diverse

Strategy 2.1f Develop and strengthen effective partnerships with, and between, locally-based organisations and business operators to enhance connectivity and working together.

No	Principal Activities
2.1f(1)	Work in partnership with agencies and other levels of government to support local businesses.
2.1f(2)	Work with key partners and local business owners, investors and employers to investigate, advocate for and promote opportunities for business development and networking.
2.1f(3)	Maintain a close liaison and continue to work with Regional Development Australia.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.2: Strategic land-use planning is co-ordinated and needs-based

Strategy 2.2a Develop integrated land-use strategies which meet the community's current and future needs.

No	Principal Activities
2.2a(1)	Develop a new, comprehensive Local Environmental Plan for the local government area.
2.2a(2)	Identify and address current and future land-use needs through integrated strategic planning and development.
2.2a(3)	Provide accurate and timely advice regarding existing and proposed development within the legislative scope of Council.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.2: Strategic land-use planning is co-ordinated and needs-based

Strategy 2.2b: Develop integrated land-use strategies which meet the community's current and future needs.

No	Principal Activities
2.2b(1)	Develop and operate development control plans to ensure compliance with appropriate legislation and to achieve the best possible planning and development outcomes for the community.
2.2b(2)	Ensure that a supply of industrial and residential land is available at all times to facilitate the orderly expansion of the local government area.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.3: Tourism opportunities are actively promoted

Strategy 2.3a: Develop and implement strategies which provide opportunities for increased tourism.

No	Principal Activities
2.3a(1)	Develop and implement an integrated Tourism and Economic Development Strategy for the Cootamundra-Gundagai region.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.3: Tourism opportunities are actively promoted

Strategy 2.3b: Actively promote the local government area and local programs, activities and events to attract visitors to the region

No	Principal Activities
2.3b(1)	Work co-operatively with key partners to identify opportunities and to further promote the local government area to tourists and visitors.
2.3b(2)	Work with the community to develop a marketing strategy for the local government area as a tourist destination.
2.3b(3)	Ensure local programs, activities and events are actively promoted via a range of mediums to attract and encourage visitors and tourists.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.3: Tourism opportunities are actively promoted

Strategy 2.3c: Invest in improvements to visitor amenity and experiences

No	Principal Activities
2.3c(1)	Provide and maintain Visitor Information Centres which meet the needs of tourists and visitors to our local government area.
2.3c(2)	Undertake a redevelopment of the Gundagai Visitor's Information Centre.
2.3c(3)	Provide a high quality accommodation facility at the Caravan Parks in Cootamundra and Gundagai for the use of visitors.
2.3c(4)	Undertake connection of water supply to the Dog on the Tuckerbox site.
2.3c(5)	Maintain and improve the tourism infrastructure, facilities and services in the local government area to make our area an attractive place to visit.

Key Direction 2: A prosperous and resilient economy: we are innovative and 'open for business'

Objective 2.4: Our local workforce is skilled and workplace ready

Strategy 2.4a: Develop and implement strategies which increase the knowledge, skills and health of our local workforce.

No	Principal Activities
2.4a(1)	Promote local employment and training opportunities within the Council organisation.
2.4a(2)	Work with various agencies to promote a range of programs, activities and opportunities which improve the health, well-being and employability of our community.

Key Direction 3: Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Objective 3.1: The natural environment is valued and protected

Strategy 3.1b: Investigate and implement renewable energy technologies to reduce our environmental footprint.

No	Principal Activities
3.1b(1)	Investigate, identify and promote opportunities that exist within the local government area for implementation of renewable energy technologies.

Key Direction 3: Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Objective 3.2: Our built environments support and enhance liveability

Strategy 3.2b: Ensure a variety of housing options are made available

No	Principal Activities
3.2b(1)	Ensure that planning and development controls are in place to promote and facilitate a variety of housing options for residents.

Key Direction 3: Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Objective 3.2: Our built environments support and enhance liveability

Strategy 3.2c: Deliver and maintain infrastructure to meet the current and future needs of our community

No	Principal Activities
3.2c(1)	Operate and maintain a water reticulation system capable of providing potable water to all connected premises with minimum disruption and maximum efficiency.
3.2c(3)	Investigate options for the connection of a water supply to Nangus Village, and consult with the community.

Key Direction 3: Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Objective 3.2: Our built environments support and enhance liveability

Strategy 3.2d: Develop and implement strategies to deliver safe and accessible local roads, bridges, footpaths and parking.

No	Principal Activities
3.2d(4)	Develop and implement asset management plans and strategies for all transport assets.

Key Direction 3: Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us

Objective 3.2: Our built environments support and enhance liveability

Strategy 3.2e: Supply local public transport networks to cater for the current and future needs of residents, businesses and visitors

No	Principal Activities
3.2e(1)	Provide, maintain and renew Council-controlled public transport infrastructure within the local government area.
3.2e(2)	Advocate for State and Federal departments to improve public transport networks to meet the needs of our community.

Key Direction 4: Good governance: An actively engaged community and strong leadership team

Objective 4.1: Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership

Strategy 4.1a: Council is representative of the community and works together to meet the needs of our local government area.

No	Principal Activities
4.1a(3)	Council's corporate plans are informed by community expectations and are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to meet the changing needs of our community members.

Key Direction 4: Good governance: An actively engaged community and strong leadership team

Objective 4.1: Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership

Strategy 4.1b: Strengthen strategic partnerships with the community, business and all levels of government.

No	Principal Activities
4.1b(3)	Participation in relevant REROC activities that will benefit the local government area.
4.1b(5)	Continue to foster and support the Youth Council.
4.1b(6)	Work in partnership with community members, businesses and all levels of government to deliver community priorities.

Key Direction 4: Good governance: An actively engaged community and strong leadership team

Objective 4.1: Decision-making is based on collaborative, transparent and accountable leadership

Strategy 4.1c: A clear strategic direction is outlined in Council's corporate plans and guides Council's decision-making and future planning.

No	Principal Activities
4.1c(1)	The development of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council's integrated suite of plans, including the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and resourcing plans, provide a clear strategic direction and drives the organisation's activities
4.1c(3)	Determine development applications in an efficient and effective manner based on merit
4.1c(4)	Develop a Place Plan which incorporates the Economic Development, Open Space Recreation, Arts and Cultural and Disability Action Strategies

Operational Plan 2018-19

The Operational Plan provides the budget and operating initiatives for items listed in the Delivery Plan. The Tourism and Economic Development initiatives provide greater detail of the activities planned for 2018/19 and are listed in the operational plan as:

- *Focus resources where a competitive advantage (cost, difference or focus) exists to maximise return.*
- *Support local business with promotion and training.*
- *Encourage a positive business culture by creating partnerships.*
- *Apply consistent effort on key priorities to encourage and identify investment opportunities.*
- *Actively support and promote a proactive planning environment which facilitates sustainable and socially responsible business development.*
- *Continue the strong focus on lobbying for new infrastructure and infrastructure renewal.*
- *Promote and support a range of activities, programs and community groups which improve visitor experience.*

Key Objectives are noted as:

- *Provide facilities and services within our towns and villages that make them attractive places to live and conduct business.*
- *Work with regional and broader business and industry to develop and service our visitor economy as a key contributor to local economic sustainability.*
- *Engage with Federal and State Government in supporting local business and local infrastructure.*
- *Facilitate, advocate and work with business, government, community,*
- *key stakeholders and groups to enhance our local economy.*

Projects are noted as:

Tourism and Economic Development Strategy

- Council have undertaken some initial work on the Economic Development Strategy including some community consultation. Council will now work to create a comprehensive Tourism & Economic Development Strategy covering the whole local government area.

Gundagai Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment

- The redevelopment of the Gundagai Visitor Centre will include removal of the internal visitor toilets, building a theatrette space and upgrading the premises to enable greater accessibility for visitors.

Cootamundra Tourism Website and Event Newsletters

- Using the established models developed in Gundagai, Council will work to develop a standalone Cootamundra tourism website and both hard copy and email event newsletters.

New Residents Pack

- Council will develop a new resident's folder with general information on the Council area and services, which is able to be supplemented with additional information on the relevant preferred residential locality.

Develop integrated Calendar of Events

- Create and maintain a Calendar of Events of activities, programs and community events across the local government area and promote them to encourage community and visitor participation.

Implementation of the Gundagai Gaol Masterplan

- Begin implementation of the recommendations of the Gundagai Gaol Masterplan.

Main Street interpretative signage at Gundagai

Increase visitor and community awareness of sites of historical interest along Sheridan Street, Gundagai through the installation of interpretive signs.

Placemaking Plan

- Placemaking is a multi-pronged approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking draws on a local community's assets, inspiration and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. The intention of the Council Placemaking Plan is to document a culture for our newly created Council area by giving an aspirational goal of the kind of place we want to live and creating action plans for the different aspects that need to change in order to realise that goal.

Key Performance Measures are noted as:

- *Growth in the number of businesses operating locally.*
- *Sustained growth in the size of the local economy including the visitor economy.*
- *Increased investment in infrastructure.*
- *Increased population.*
- *Increased community participation in tourism and economic development committees and/or groups.*

NSW Government Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment's Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 establishes a framework to grow the region's cities and local centres, supports the protection of high-value environmental assets and makes developing a strong, diverse and competitive economy central to building prosperity and resilience in the region.

The plan will guide the land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years.

The plan's vision is to continue to leverage the regions strategic location by strengthening and supporting regional cities and infrastructure delivery. The Plan identifies four main goals and directions for each of these goals to deliver the plan, listed below.

Goal 1: A growing and diverse economy

- *Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land.*
- *Promote and grow the agribusiness sector.*
- *Expand advanced and value-added manufacturing.*
- *Promote business activities in industrial and commercial areas.*
- *Support the growth of the health and aged care sectors.*
- *Promote the expansion of education and training opportunities.*
- *Promote tourism opportunities.*
- *Enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities.*
- *Support the forestry industry.*
- *Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities.*
- *Promote the diversification of energy supplies through renewable energy generation.*
- *Sustainably manage mineral resources.*

Goal 2: A healthy environment with pristine waterways

- *Manage and conserve water resources for the environment.*
- *Manage land use along the river corridors.*
- *Protect and manage the region's many environmental assets.*
- *Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change.*

Goal 3: Efficient transport and infrastructure networks

- *Transform the region into the eastern seaboard's freight and logistics hub.*
- *Enhance road and rail freight links.*
- *Support and protect ongoing access to air travel.*
- *Identify and protect future transport corridors.*
- *Align and protect utility infrastructure investment.*

Goal 4: Strong, connected and healthy communities

- *Promote the growth of regional cities and local centres.*
- *Build resilience in towns and villages.*
- *Create a connected and competitive environment for cross-border communities.*
- *Build housing capacity to meet demand.*
- *Provide greater housing choice.*
- *Manage rural residential development.*
- *Deliver healthy built environments and improved urban design.*
- *Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage.*

Destination NSW Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2018

The Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan will guide and assist Destination Riverina Murray to stimulate growth in the region's visitor economy.

The key outcomes of the Destination Management Plan include:

- Strategic development themes which provide a framework for the identification of development opportunities across the region.
- Priority projects that will be a catalyst for driving increased visitation to the region
- A suite of destination development opportunities.
- Consideration of strategic cross-border projects which will have an impact on both sides of the river.
- A number of regional positioning projects which aim to strengthen the Riverina Murray region.

The Strategic Development themes include:

- Major centre development.
- Nature-based tourism.
- Rivers and waterways.
- Food and agritourism.
- Major touring routes.
- Sports and recreation.
- Festivals and events.

- Accommodation.
- Infrastructure and servicing.

Projects listed for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA and the Eastern Riverina sub-region in the Destination Management Plan include:

Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA

- Gundagai Rail Trail
- South Gundagai Café and Canoe Hire
- Kimo Estate Eco-huts
- Lanigan Abbey Estate

Eastern Riverina sub-region

- Canola Trail Signage
- NSW Silo Art Trail
- Riverina Agritourism Trail

South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022

The South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy sets out a long-term economic vision and associated strategy for the region's economic development for the five local government area comprising Bland Shire Council, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Hilltops Council, Temora Shire Council and Weddin Shire Council. It builds on the endowments and economic strengths and specialisations of the region to guide investment over the next four years.

The Strategy for the region builds upon the opportunities presented by its endowments and specialisation, and also aims to address some of the key risks identified in the region. The vision and strategies of the plan are:

Vision

The South West Slopes Region will be a thriving community of choice, working together to leverage its endowments and core competencies in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and tourism to achieve sustainable growth.

Strategies

- Support and grow Agriculture, Food Production and Mining sectors.
- Improve utilities, energy and telecommunications to grow the agricultural, food processing and mining industries, as well as business start-ups throughout the region.
- Drive economic growth in the region's core sectors by upskilling the workforce and facilitating innovation.
- Continue to develop and grow the visitor economy.
- Enhance the liveability and grow the population of the South West Slopes Region.

Specific actions for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA mentioned in the Strategy include:

- Develop the Cootamundra Turner's Lane Industrial precinct.
- Development of an indigenous cultural and interpretation Centre at the Gundagai Old Mill Art and Cultural Centre.
- Develop the Gundagai Rail Trail.

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council - Villages Strategy 2018

The purpose of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Villages Strategy 2018 is to provide clear, strategic indicators for the development of the villages of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Government Area over the next 30+ years.

The Strategy aims to inform residential and economic growth whilst being flexible and responsive to opportunities.

The Strategy is based on extensive community consultation and planning analysis to provide a blueprint for village planning and associated projects. This process has focused on identifying community direction with opportunities for growth, be that population and/or economic.

Actions to achieve these outcomes are listed and a works schedule has been created to assist in the delivery of these actions.

Key, regionwide actions identified in the strategy relating to environment, connections, economic opportunity, and planning principles are:

Environment

- *Develop a village chapter in the Development Control Plan which promotes a passive environmental design in dwellings.*
- *Create a street tree master plan for all villages and rural communities.*
- *All village subdivision is to have a minimum vegetation requirement to enhance existing flora and fauna habitat.*
- *Stormwater networks will be designed to incorporate water sensitive urban design principles.*

Connections

- *Develop a costed route plan for a rail trail Coolac-Gundagai-Tumblong.*
- *Survey Murrumbidgee walking and riding trail and identify enabling works.*

Economic opportunity

- *Dedicate an individual page to each village on the Council's website.*
- *Create a single brochure which covers the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Government Area promoting economic opportunities and experiences in the villages and towns.*
- *Review Contributions Plans to identify opportunities for funding for village works which will also provide opportunity for works in kind arrangements for developments in the villages.*

Planning principles

- *Create a how to guide for developing in villages.*
- *Implement zoning changes proposed for the villages no later than 2020.*

Gundagai Shire Visitor Information Services Report – Prepared for Gundagai Shire Council March 2013 by Tilma Management

The Gundagai Shire Visitor Information Services Report provided a review of the Gundagai Visitor Information Centre (VIC) and its operations including staff, day-to-day operations, ambience and appeal, and industry liaison. The report then makes a series of key recommendations, detailed below.

Future opportunities and recommendations

- *Develop an overarching strategic plan for the development for Gundagai as a visitor destination.*
- *That travel services operations, including coach, rail, and holiday bookings, be removed from the VIC. It was found that Travel Centre operations are currently generating 25% of all revenue and at the same time are consuming approximately 80% of staff hours.*
- *Renovations should be undertaken to improve signage, displays, fit out and furniture of the VIC.*
- *A local awareness campaign should be run to promote the VIC.*
- *Income generation strategies at the VIC should be expanded.*
- *The VIC could act as an event hub, assisting with promotion, ticket sales, and information during events.*
- *A restructuring of staff and a clear and effective organisational structure be implemented.*
- *Implement a brochure policy to ensure appropriate and relevant brochures only are displayed.*
- *Consider the establishment of an industry supported Local Tourism Organisation.*
- *Consider offering additional Council services at the VIC to reduce costs.*
- *Introduce a volunteer program at the VIC.*
- *Review the need to operate as a level 1 VIC and consider operating as a level 2 VIC to reduce operating hours and overhead costs.*

Economic Development Strategy – Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council - May 2017 prepared by Crowe Howarth

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council prepared the draft Economic Development Strategy in 2017, however it was not adopted by Council.

The purpose of the Strategy was to support the ongoing growth and sustainability of communities within the Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council it is important to have strong economic foundations.

The Strategy was informed by community input, desktop research into successful economic development in regional communities and a review of the most recent socio-economic data available.

The Strategy identified five strategic initiatives to support economic development in the Cootamundra-Gundagai Region. An implementation plan was also outlined to achieve these strategic initiatives through key activities. These strategic initiatives and key activities are listed below.

Strategic initiative one: Grow the economy through existing and new businesses

Key Activities

- *Establish a Business Council to drive economic initiatives.*
- *Ensure a responsive Council staff and systems.*
- *Model innovative business practices at Council.*
- *Develop information packs to support business operations and investment.*
- *Undertake strategic planning to support future commercial and industry needs.*
- *Work with education providers to support a small business “showcase”.*

Strategic initiative two: Marketing and promotion as a great place to live and invest

Key Activities

- *Develop and implement a digital marketing strategy to promote the community.*
- *Identify and incentivise a targeted population for relocation to the region.*

Strategic initiative three: Product development to become a “destination”

Key Activities

- *Product development.*
- *Identify and address gaps in tourism servicing.*
- *Partner with tourism providers.*

Strategic initiative four: Drive agricultural enterprises

Key Activities

- *Ensure the planning scheme allows for smaller, more intensive agricultural enterprises.*
- *Consider opportunities to support young farmers establish agricultural enterprises.*
- *Support farmers (and broader businesses) in accessing export opportunities.*
- *Assess gaps in service industries to support agricultural businesses.*

Strategic initiative five: Work with government to encourage economic infrastructure investment

Key Activities

- *Identify key initiatives that require further funding from partners.*
- *Advocate for funding to support infrastructure development.*

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council – Rural Lands Issues Paper: Agricultural Tourism 2018

The Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Rural Lands Issue Paper on Agricultural Tourism 2018 provides direction for the management of rural lands of the area.

In the Rural Lands Issues Paper the document provides opportunities on agritourism to the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council these include:

- Location and accessibility.
- Natural Resources and landscape.
- Community support for agritourism.
- Increasing the range of accommodation options.
- An inviting region for business.
- Diversity of tourism products.
- No local small-scale mixed-species abattoir.
- No local produce store in Cootamundra or Gundagai.
- Development of markets in Cootamundra and Gundagai.
- Support for farmers to develop agritourism enterprises.
- On-Farming learning experiences.
- Domestic visitor market.
- International visitor market.
- Development of a producer list.
- Local planning.

The research and discussion with farmers revealed that there are few agritourism businesses in the Council area. For this reason, initiatives aimed at increasing agritourism in the region were recommended to focus on:

- Promotion, support and business development for existing agritourism businesses.
- Support and assistance for farmers to start agritourism businesses.
- Providing appropriate land use zoning, infrastructure and transport links to support the development of agritourism.
- Attracting more tourists to make agritourism a more profitable and sustainable enterprise.

NSW Government – The Premier's Priorities

The Premier's Priorities lists 12 of the Premier's personal priorities aimed at keeping the NSW economy strong, creating jobs, delivering world class services, protecting the vulnerable and ensuring that all NSW citizens and communities share the state's success.

The 12 Premier Priorities that highlight this document are:

- Creating jobs.
- Protecting our kids.
- Tackling childhood obesity.
- Delivering infrastructure.
- Keeping our environment clean.

- Making housing more affordable.
- Improving education results.
- Driving public sector diversity.
- Improving government services.
- Improving service levels in hospitals.
- Reducing domestic violence reoffending.
- Reducing youth homelessness.

NSW Government – A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW – July 2018

The NSW Government's 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW outlines principles for accelerating economic growth in key industry sectors such as agribusiness, tertiary education and health care, while taking full advantage of trade and tourism opportunities with Asia to ensure regional NSW continues to play a critical role in the Australian economy.

The document outlines the state of the regional NSW economy, main global trends and principles for achieving economic growth in regional NSW over the next 20 years.

The 20-year vision is an extension of the Regional Development Framework, which launched 3 core objectives:

- Amenity – Providing quality services and infrastructure in Regional NSW.
- Growth - Aligning effort to support growing Regional centres.
- Potential – Identifying and activating economic potential.

The 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW identifies 7 key principles for regional economic development:

- *Improved travel between regional centres and from cities and international gateways.*
- *Freight networks that will increase the competitiveness of key regional sectors.*
- *Affordable, reliable and fast internet to support people and business.*
- *Reliable accessible water and energy.*
- *A skilled labour force for current and future needs of the regions.*
- *Recognising each region's strengths and underlying endowments.*
- *Regulation and planning to promote commercial opportunities.*

The 20-Year Economic Vision lists the key priorities for the NSW government. These priorities will complement the initiatives already committed and recommended under other government strategies and long-term plans, such as the Future Transport Strategy 2056, NSW State Infrastructure Strategy and regional economic development (REDS) plans, which are already aligned with this vision. These priorities are:

- *Leverage existing infrastructure and other technologies.*
- *Make regional travel faster and easier.*
- *Improve freight networks.*
- *Manage vital energy and water resources sustainably.*
- *Provide clear skills pathways.*
- *Boost regional NSW's knowledge economy and excellence in innovation.*
- *Draw in more domestic and international tourists.*
- *Attract more domestic and international students.*
- *Provide an attractive environment for businesses.*
- *Grow vibrant places to live and work.*

APPENDIX B: ECONOMIC AND TOURISM PROFILE COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

The Cootamundra- Gundagai Regional Council Local Government Area LGA) is profiled in this section of the report. This component should be read in conjunction with the South West Slopes Regional Economic Development strategy and the Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina profile information previously developed. This profile provides current information and updates as available on key economic and social profile issues. Details tables, charts and analysis follows.

Broad issues identified in the profiling exercise include: :

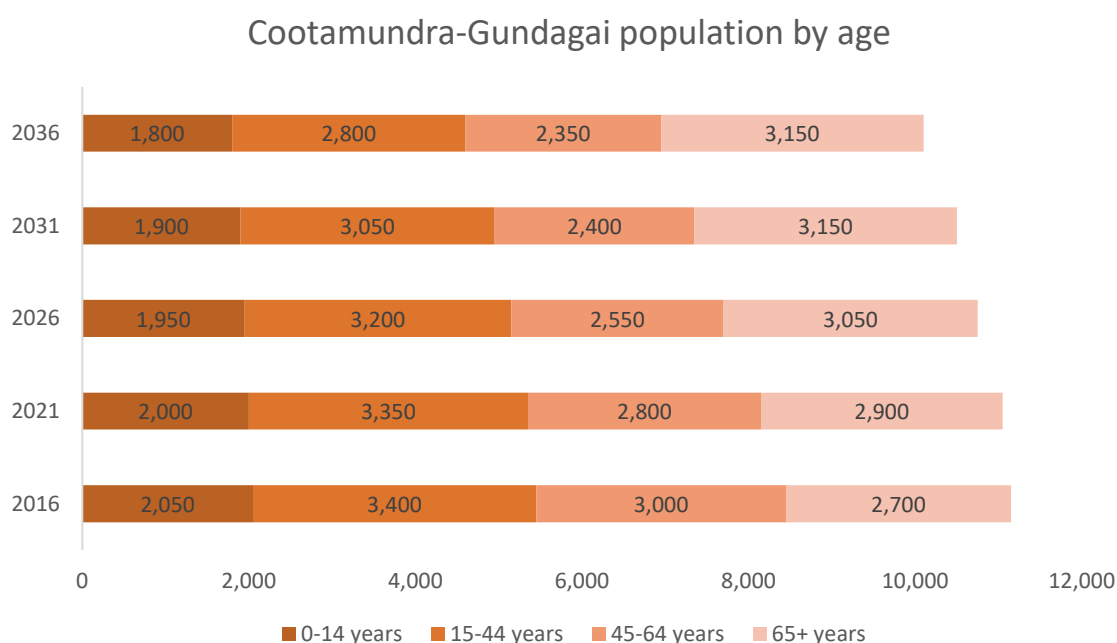
- A declining and ageing population – the projections identified that the 0-14 years cohort will drop from 2,050 in 2016 to 1,800 in 2036 while the 65+ age cohort will increase from 2,700 to 3,150 in the corresponding time frame.
- Workers earn lower salaries than the regional Riverina worker and NSW worker – average salaries from the 2016 Census of \$37,489 are lower than the Riverina (\$41,416) and NSW levels (\$45,819). 59% of workers in Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA were identified to be earning under \$1,000 per week. Consideration of cost of living savings are suggested as a means of illustrating the savings to be had if relocating to the region or remaining local.
- There has been some movement in employment in economic sectors between the 2011 and 2016 census periods but Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Manufacturing and Health Care and Social Assistance remained the largest sectors. Gundagai showed some strength in the Accommodation and Food Services sector.
- Diversity in the employment base was noted in the South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.
- The visitor economy was assessed pulling from a range of resources. Visitor Information Centres in Gundagai and Cootamundra are offered but use different delivery approaches. More detail is provided in the Visitor Services Strategy in a later appendix. There is scope to increase the visitor economy for the region when the results were considered in a regional context and against other council tourism services.
- Visiting friends and relatives was identified in the South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy as the main reason for staying locally. This raises two issues:
 - a. The expenditure levels are lower than the Riverina and NSW levels due to minimal accommodation spend
 - b. There is an enhanced need to ensure locals are well briefed on the events and facilities on offer to attend with their visitors.
 - c. Visiting friends and relatives market segment was identified in the South West Slopes Regional Economic Development Strategy as needing to offer good quality food and drinks and good access to cultural and arts assets.²
- There is a need to consider the impact of access routes into the region given the reliance on the Newell Highway and Hume Highway for major freight and tourist routes.
- Maximising the location of the region relative to Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra was identified as an opportunity. Canberra Airport's access to international markets was also noted as an opportunity.

² Supporting Analysis document, p28

Population

The population figure estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA is 11,244 as of June 2017.³ This population is projected to decline based on a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of -0.54 percent from 11,250 in 2016 to 10,100 in 2036.⁴ This is lower than both the NSW population CAGR of 1.25% for the same period, and Riverina-Murray Planning Region population CAGR of 0.20%.

The chart below shows in 2016, 57% of Cootamundra-Gundagai's population were working age (15-64 years old) while 24% were over 65 years of age. By 2036, it is projected that 51% of Cootamundra-Gundagai's population will be working age and 31 percent will be 65 or over.



Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, state and local government area population projections, 2016

Compared to NSW and the Riverina-Murray planning region, the Cootamundra-Gundagai has a lower concentration of working age population, and a higher percentage of people aged over 65. In 2016, 65 percent of NSW's population were working age, while 16% were over 65. It is projected that by 2036, 61% of the NSW population will be working age, with 21% over 65. For the Riverina-Murray Planning Region in 2016, 63% of the population were of working age and 17% were over 65. By 2036, it is projected that 57% of the Riverina-Murray Planning Region will be working aged, and that 26% will be over 65.

³ ABS, Release No. 3218.0 Regional Population Growth Australia.

⁴ Based on statistics from NSW Department of Planning and Environment population projections 2016.

Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA Population

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036
Working age population	6,400	6,150	5,750	5,450	5,150
Working age %	57%	56%	53%	52%	51%
65+ years %	24%	26%	28%	30%	31%
Under 15 %	18%	18%	18%	18%	18%

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, state and local government area population projections, 2016

Riverina-Murray Planning Region Population

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036
Working age population	167,750	169,000	167,400	163,750	160,450
Working age %	63%	62%	60%	58%	57%
65+ years	17%	19%	21%	24%	26%
Under 15	20%	19%	19%	18%	18%

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, state and local government area population projections, 2016

NSW Population

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036
Working age population	5,044,600	5,279,850	5,506,450	5,765,700	6,051,900
Working age %	65%	64%	62%	61%	61%
65+ years	16%	17%	19%	20%	21%
Under 15	19%	19%	19%	19%	18%

Source: NSW Department of Planning and Environment, state and local government area population projections, 2016

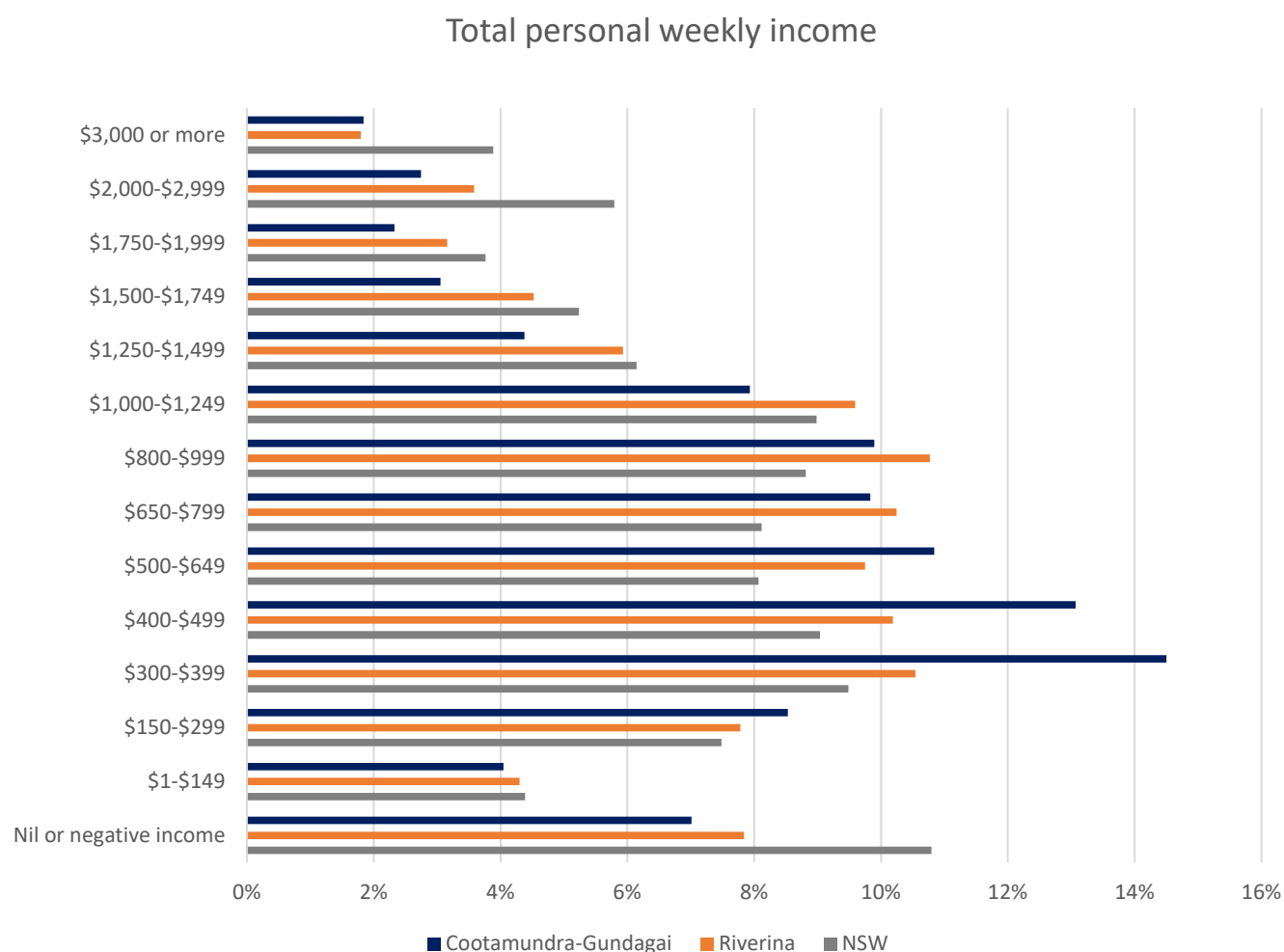
Together these statistics reveal a population that is in decline and aging with a shrinking working age population and growing number of retirees which will impact the economy of Cootamundra-Gundagai in the future. The percentage of people of working age is projected to fall for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, the Riverina-Murray, and NSW, and the percentage of the population aged 65 and over is projected to increase for the three regions. However, the decline in working age population and increased percentage of people aged 65 or over is more pronounced in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, both at present and into the future.

Income

2016 ABS Census data shows Cootamundra-Gundagai has an average annual income of \$37,489.

This is low compared the Riverina average of \$41,416 and the NSW average of \$45,819.

59% of people aged 15 years or older in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA made less than \$650 per week compared to 50% for the Riverina and 51 percent for NSW while only 10 percent of people aged 15 years or older in Cootamundra-Gundagai made over \$1,500 compared to 13% for the Riverina and 19% for NSW. The graph below shows weekly earnings for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA compared to the Riverina and NSW.



Source: ABS Census, 2016

Employment by industry and location quotients

In 2016 there were 4,129 people employed in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.⁵ At the SA2 level, 2,669 people were employed in Cootamundra and 1,440 in Gundagai.⁶

⁵ ABS Census 2016.

⁶ Ibid. Note that totals may not add due to data perturbation for privacy concerns.

Employment by industry statistics were taken from the 2016 Census for the Cootamundra and Gundagai areas (level 2 Statistical Areas (SA2)), Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA and Riverina area (level 4 Statistical Area (SA4)) percentage of total employment per sector for each area are shown below.

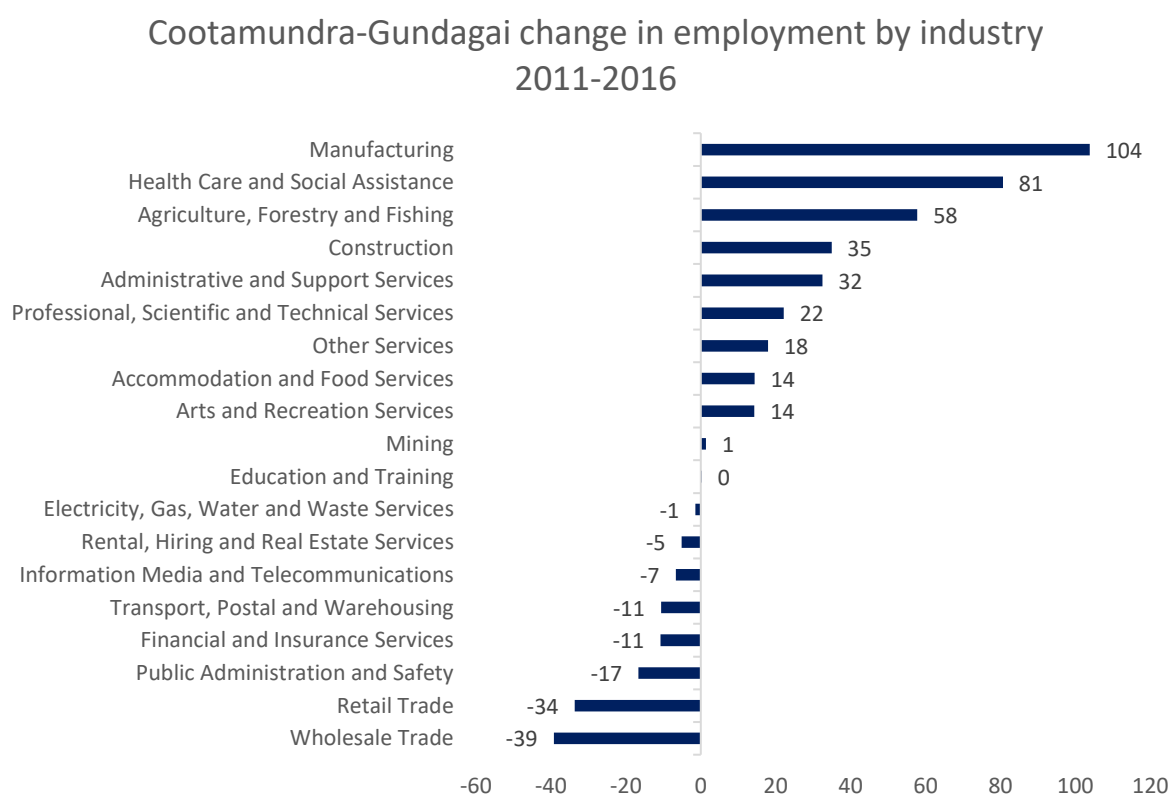
	Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA	Cootamundra (SA2)	Gundagai (SA2)	Riverina (SA4)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	16%	14%	22%	12%
Manufacturing	14%	13%	14%	11%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11%	12%	10%	13%
Retail Trade	10%	10%	9%	11%
Accommodation and Food Services	9%	6%	14%	7%
Education and Training	8%	8%	8%	9%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	6%	8%	3%	4%
Public Administration and Safety	5%	6%	5%	9%
Construction	5%	5%	5%	6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4%	5%	2%	3%
Other Services	3%	4%	3%	4%
Administrative and Support Services	2%	2%	2%	3%
Wholesale Trade	2%	2%	2%	2%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1%	1%	1%	2%
Financial and Insurance Services	1%	1%	1%	2%
Arts and Recreation Services	1%	1%	1%	1%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1%	1%	0%	1%
Mining	0%	0%	0%	0%
Information Media and Telecommunications	0%	0%	0%	1%

Source: ABS Census, 2016

The three biggest employing industries for Cootamundra are Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance. For Gundagai, the three largest employing industries were Agriculture Forestry and Fishing, Manufacturing, and Accommodation and Food Services.

Overall the employment composition of Cootamundra and Gundagai is relatively similar, with a greater concentration of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and a noticeably larger Accommodation and Food Services industry in Gundagai. The three largest sectors in terms of employment for the LGA overall mirror Cootamundra, which are Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Manufacturing, and Health Care and Social Assistance. These industries are also the three largest in terms of employment for the Riverina, and employment composition is roughly similar between the Riverina and Cootamundra-Gundagai.

Using Census data from 2011 and 2016, changes in the number of people employed in each industry sector was determined for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA as shown below.



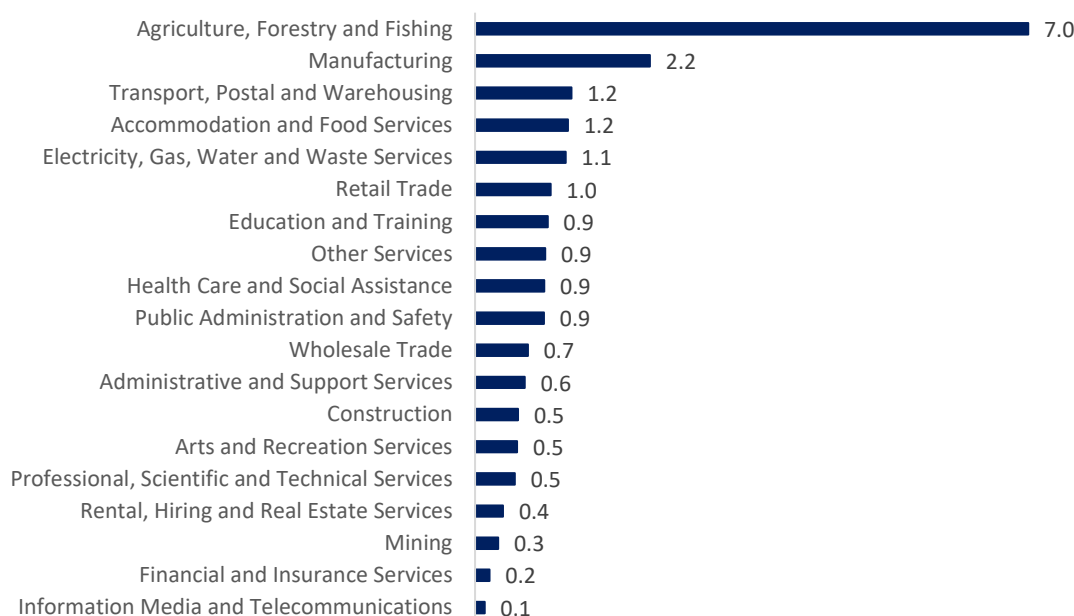
Source: ABS Census, 2011 and 2016. Data for 2011 was calculated from the sum of Cootamundra and Gundagai LGAs.

The largest increase in employment over the 5 year period was in the Manufacturing sector, with 104 additional people employed in the sector. Health Care and Social Assistance and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sectors also experienced significant employment growth. The Wholesale Trade sector experienced the biggest decline in employment with 39 fewer jobs in 2016 than 2011, closely followed by the Retail Trade sector. Overall there were 256 more people employed in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA in 2016 than in 2011.

Using data from the 2016 ABS Census, analysis using the location quotient methodology was undertaken for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA and the Riverina SA4 for comparison. Location quotients measure the concentration of employment in an industry sector for a region, relative to the concentration of employment in the industry for NSW. A location quotient is calculated by comparing employment in an industry sector as a percentage of total employment for a region to employment in an industry sector as a percentage of total employment for NSW.

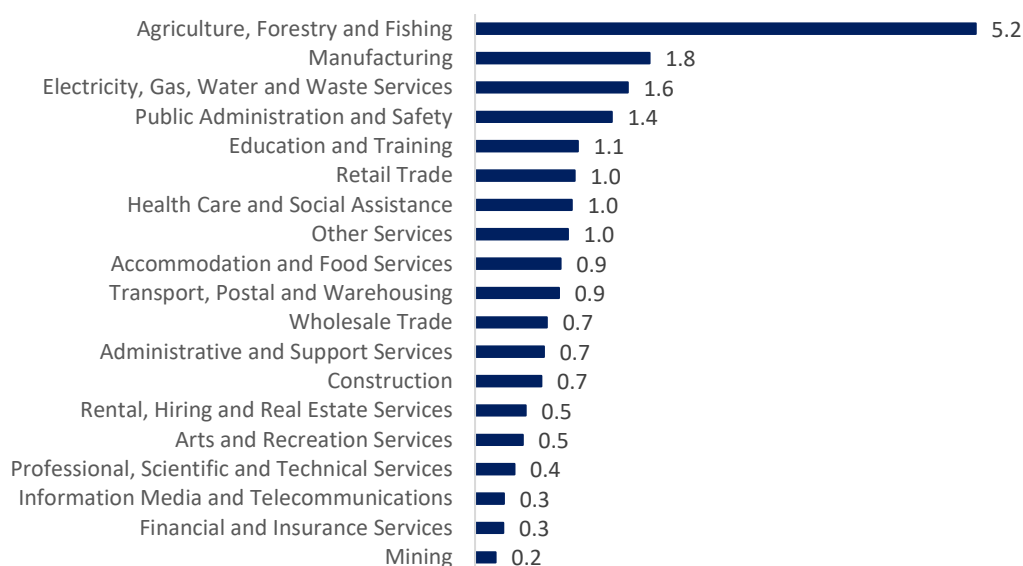
The resulting value is a ratio comparing the proportion of employment in an industry sector of a region to the proportion of employment in that sector in NSW. Sectors with a score above one have a concentration of employment higher than the NSW average and a score of 1.5 or above suggests local competitive advantage.⁷ Location quotients for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA and the Riverina SA4 are displayed below.

Cootamundra-Gundagai



Source: ABS Census, 2016

Riverina



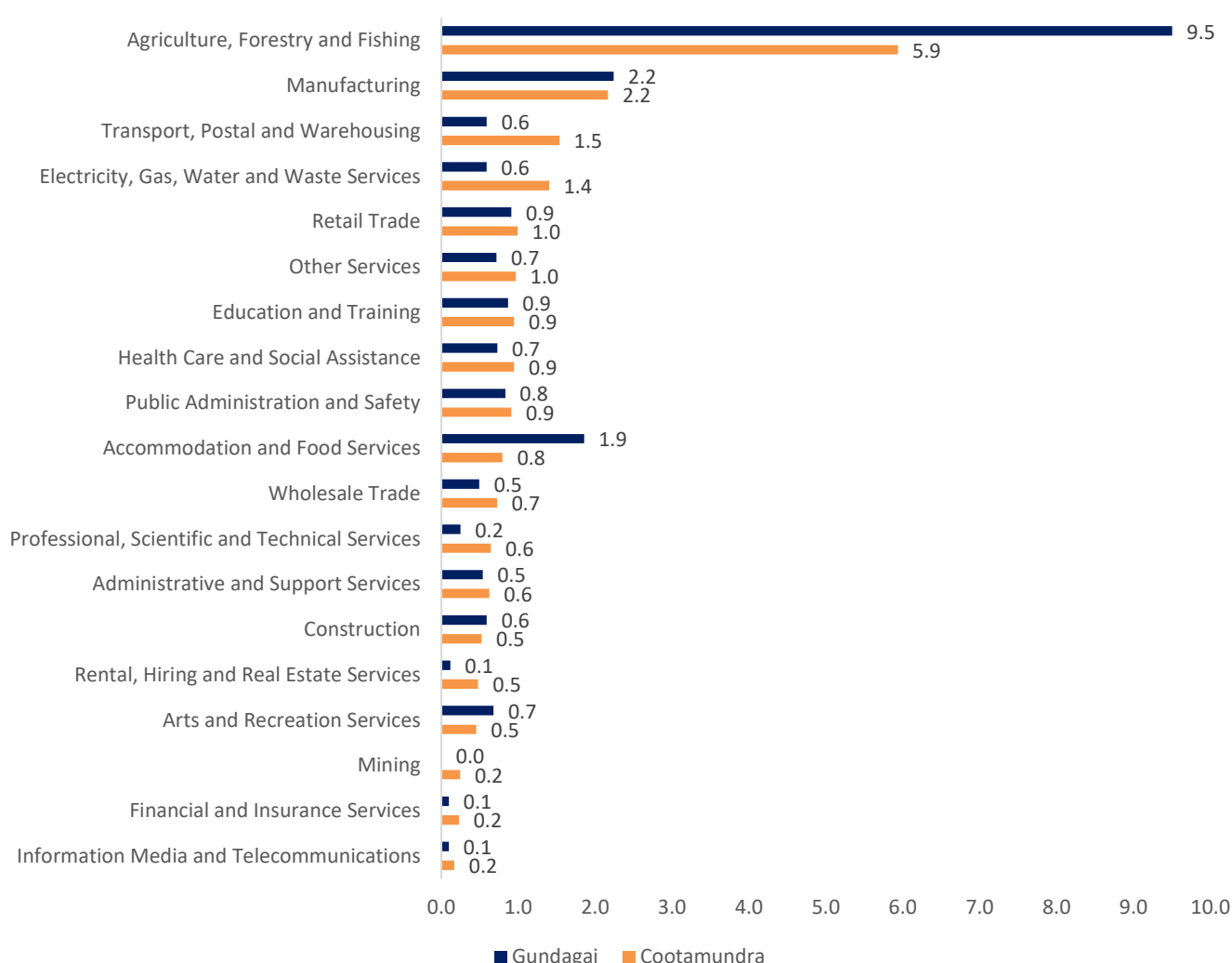
Source: ABS Census, 2016

⁷ Economy ID, Blog Article 25 March 2014. Accessed 23 January 2019

The location quotient analysis suggests that Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing and Manufacturing are important key sectors for Cootamundra-Gundagai and that there is a low concentration in employment in the Information Media and Telecommunications, Mining, and most of the Services Industries relative to NSW.

This is consistent with the industry of employment concentration of the Riverina, although the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA has even greater concentration in the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing and Manufacturing industries. While employment concentration in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector is very high for the Riverina, it is so for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.

Location quotient data was also analysed at the SA2 level for Cootamundra and Gundagai to understand how employment concentration varies in each town. This data is displayed below.



Source: ABS Census, 2016

As was found in the previous comparison of the percentage breakdown of employment by industry for Cootamundra and Gundagai, there was a large concentration of employment in the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing industry sector, especially in Gundagai. Gundagai also has a noticeably larger

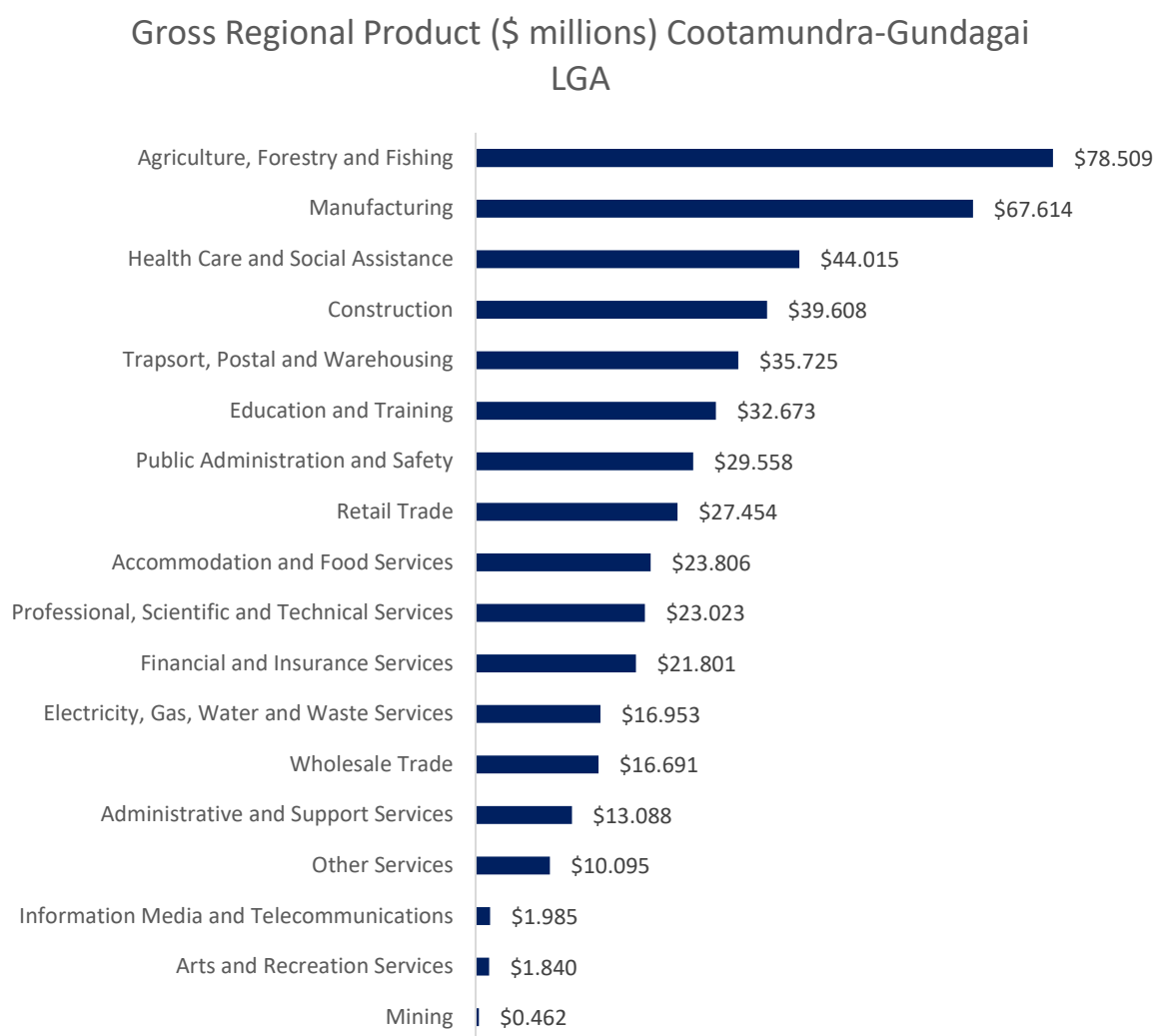
Accommodation and Food Services industry compare to Cootamundra. There was also a similar concentration of employment in the Manufacturing industry sector although it should be noted that the data is from 2016 and the meat manufacturing facility in Cootamundra has since shut down. However, Cootamundra held greater employment concentration in a range of other industry sectors, notably the Transport, Postal and Warehousing, Electricity, Gas and Waste Services, and the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry sectors.

The data suggests that Cootamundra has a more diversified economy, whilst Gundagai is more specialised.

Gross Regional Product by industry

The contribution to Gross Regional Product (GRP) for each industry in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA has been calculated and is displayed below.

GRP is the local equivalent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is the amount the value of an article is increased at each step of its production exclusive of its initial cost. Also known as value added, the ABS defines GDP as “the total market value of goods and services produced in Australia within a given period after deducting the cost of goods and services used up in the process of production, but before deducting allowances for the consumption of fixed capital”.⁸



Source: Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Profile, June 2018.

The total GRP for Cootamundra-Gundagai was estimated by RDA Riverina as \$484.9 million. This represents 5% of the Riverina's GRP and 0.1 percent of Gross State Product (GSP) for NSW.⁹

⁸ ABS Release No. 1345.0, Key Economic Indicators, 2018.

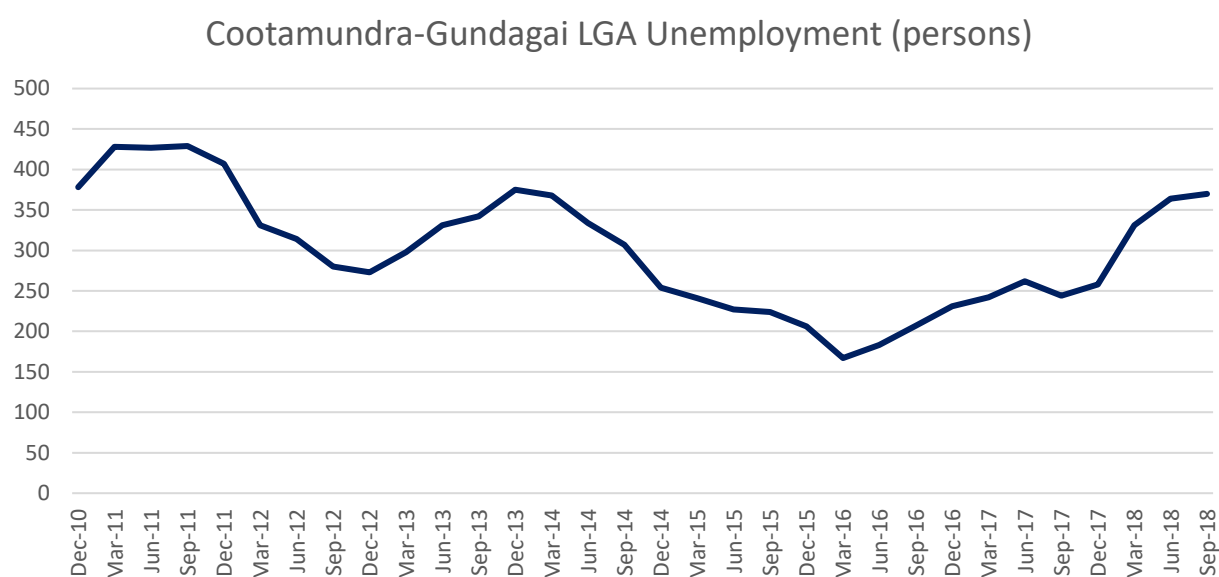
⁹ Regional Development Australia Riverina, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Profile, June 2018.

The biggest contribution to GRP for Cootamundra-Gundagai came from the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry sector which contributed \$78.509 million (16.2% of GRP). This was followed by the Manufacturing industry sector which accounted for \$67.614 million (13.9% of GRP).

Unemployment and labour force statistics

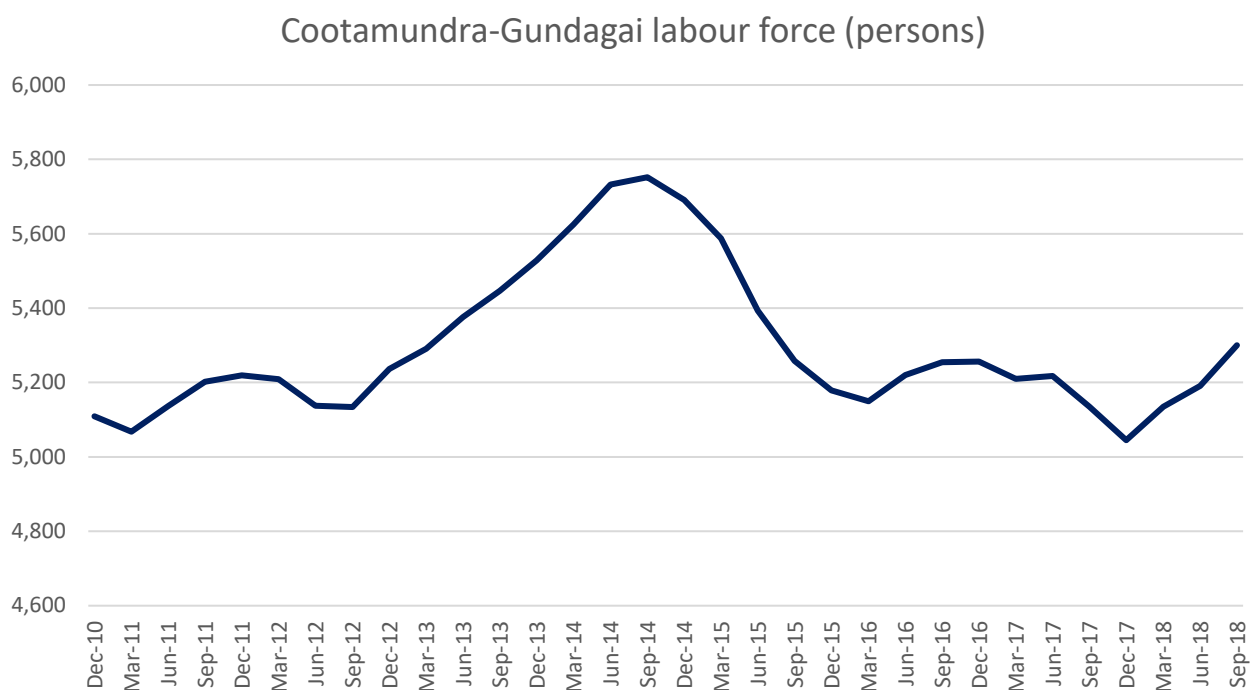
The most recent labour force statistics for Cootamundra-Gundagai show a labour force of 5,300 people with 370 people unemployed and an unemployment rate of 7 percent for the 2018 September quarter.¹⁰

Trending information from labour force and unemployment statistics from December 2010 to September 2018 are displayed below. Chart three shows a comparison of trends for the LGA against the Riverina and NSW results.

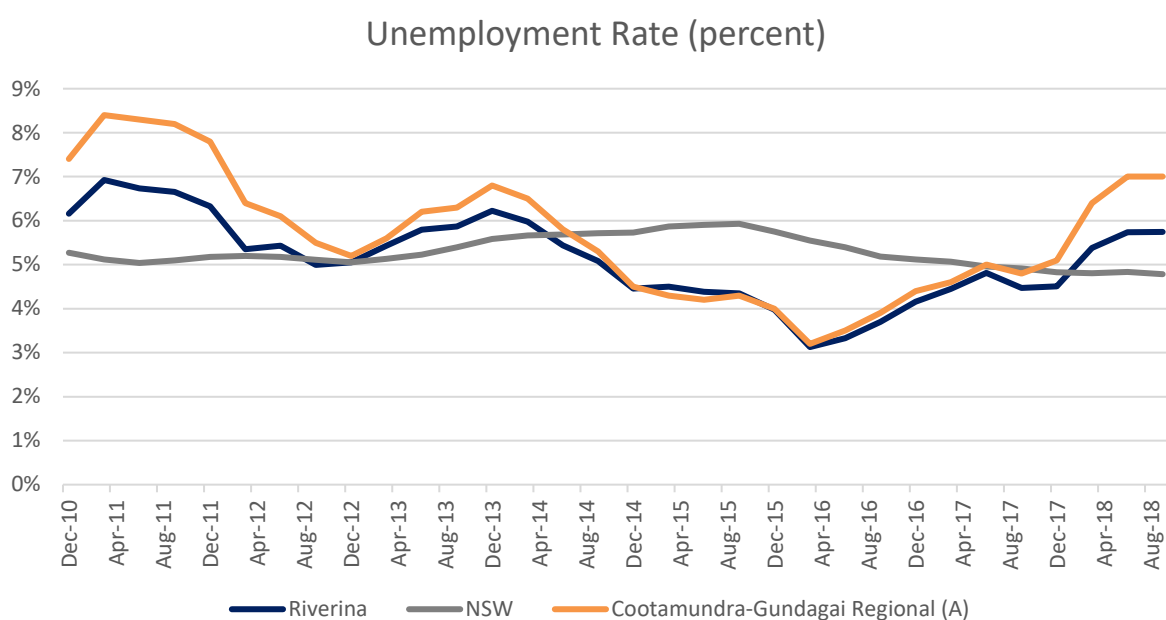


Source: Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Businesses, small area labour markets, September quarter 2018

¹⁰ Australian Department Jobs and Small Business, Small area labour markets, September 2018



Source: Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Businesses, small area labour markets, September quarter 2018



Source: Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Businesses, small area labour markets, September quarter 2018

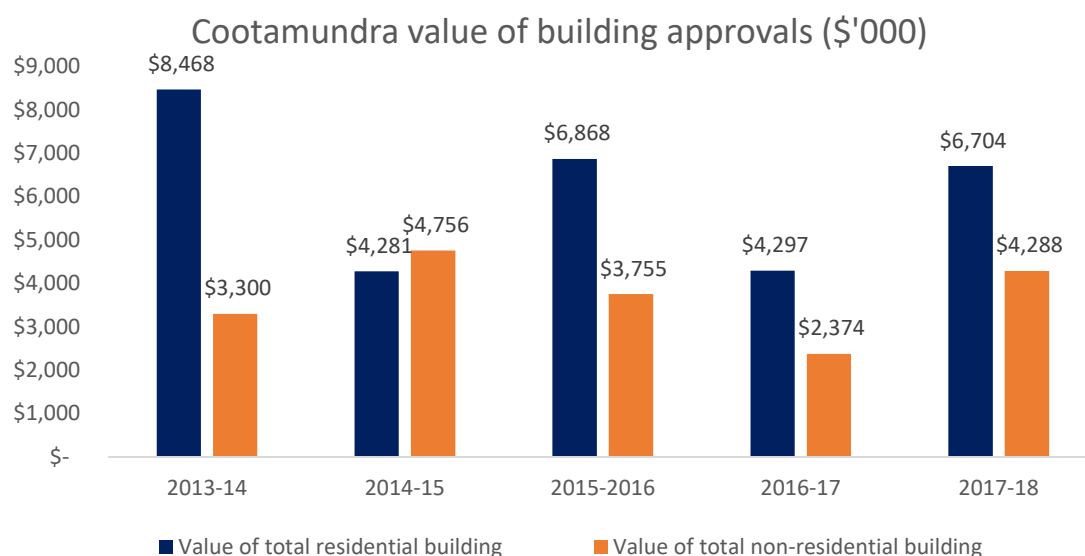
From the graph, the unemployment rate for Cootamundra-Gundagai follows the trend of the Riverina very closely although usually the unemployment rate for Cootamundra-Gundagai is higher than the Riverina. The unemployment rate trend for Cootamundra-Gundagai and the Riverina is more volatile

than that of NSW and has been increasing since March 2016. This may be due to a large concentration of employment in the agricultural sector for the region reacting to the impacts of the drought, particularly given the greater concentration in agricultural employment in the LGA relative to the Riverina and NSW levels.

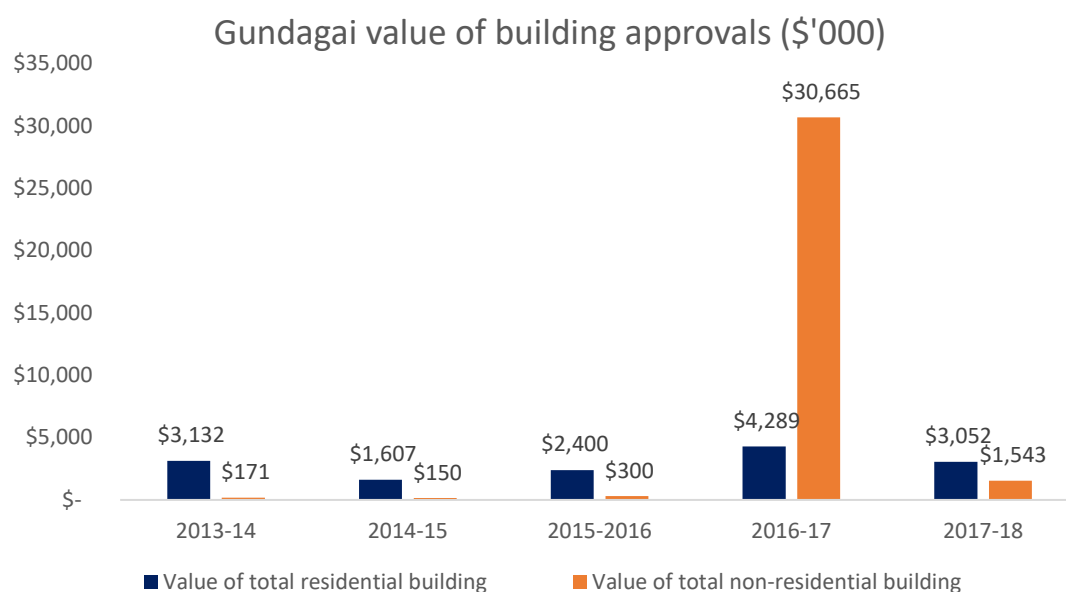
Building and dwelling approvals

ABS data was used to analyse trends in total value of residential and non-residential building approval value for Cootamundra and Gundagai (SA2 level) the Riverina area (SA4) and NSW.

Data was gathered from the 2013-14 to 2017-18 financial years to give a 5-year trend in building approval value.

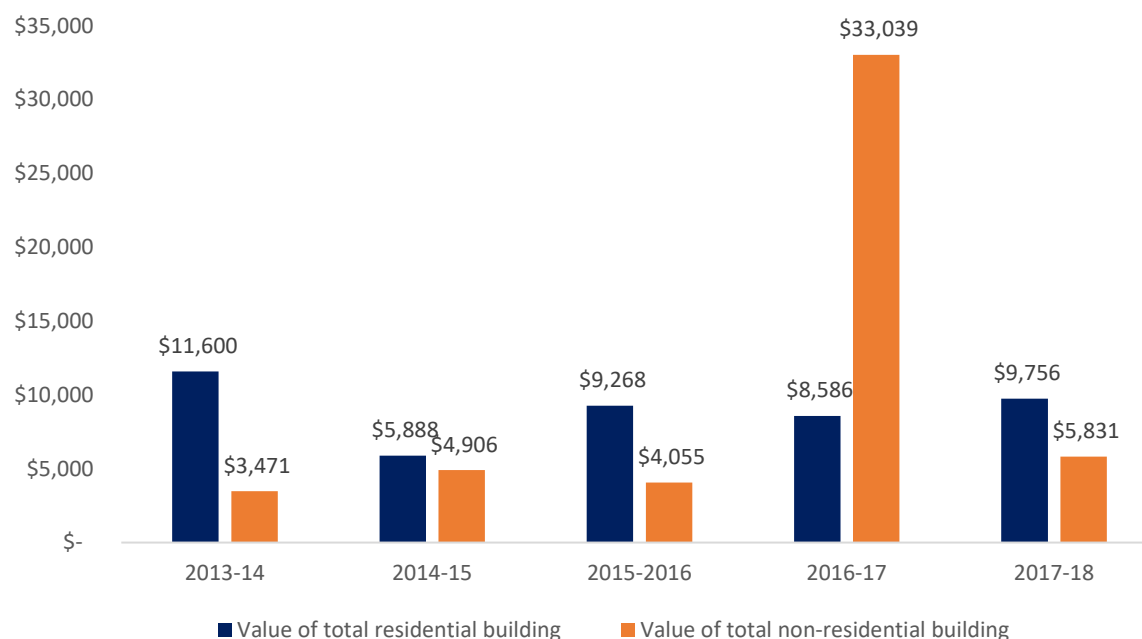


Source: ABS Release No. 8371.0, Building Approvals, Australia, 2013-14 to 2018-19



Source: ABS Release No. 8371.0, Building Approvals, Australia, 2013-14 to 2018-19

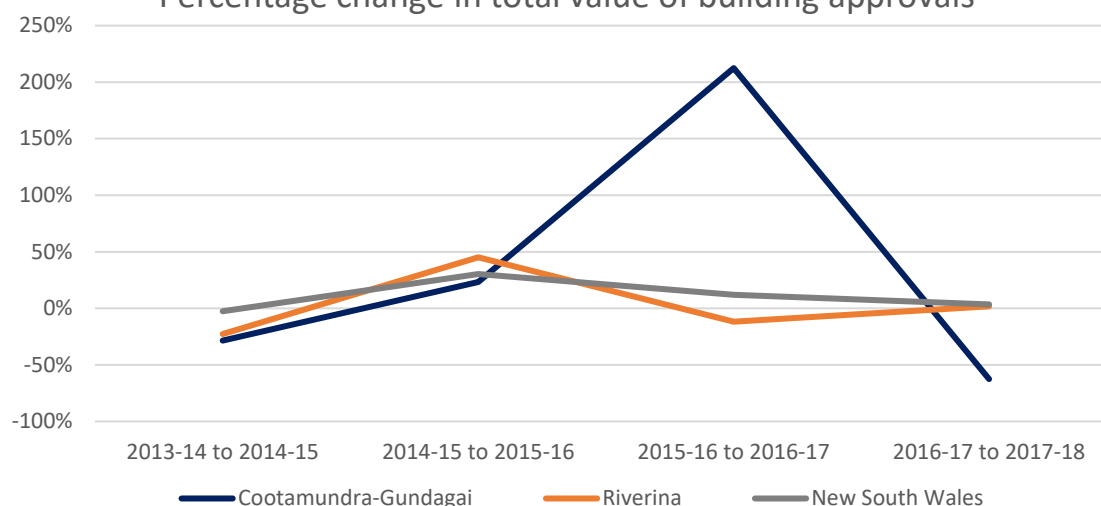
Cootamundra and Gundagai value of building approvals (\$'000)



Source: ABS cat. 8371.0, Building Approvals, Australia, 2013-14 to 2018-19. Data is summed from Cootamundra and Gundagai SA2s.

The substantial amount of non-residential building approvals in Gundagai in 2016-17 relative to other years is attributed to a \$30 million expansion of the abattoir in 2016.¹¹ Apart from this expenditure, there are no clearly discernible trends in the value of building approvals for Cootamundra or Gundagai.

Percentage change in total value of building approvals



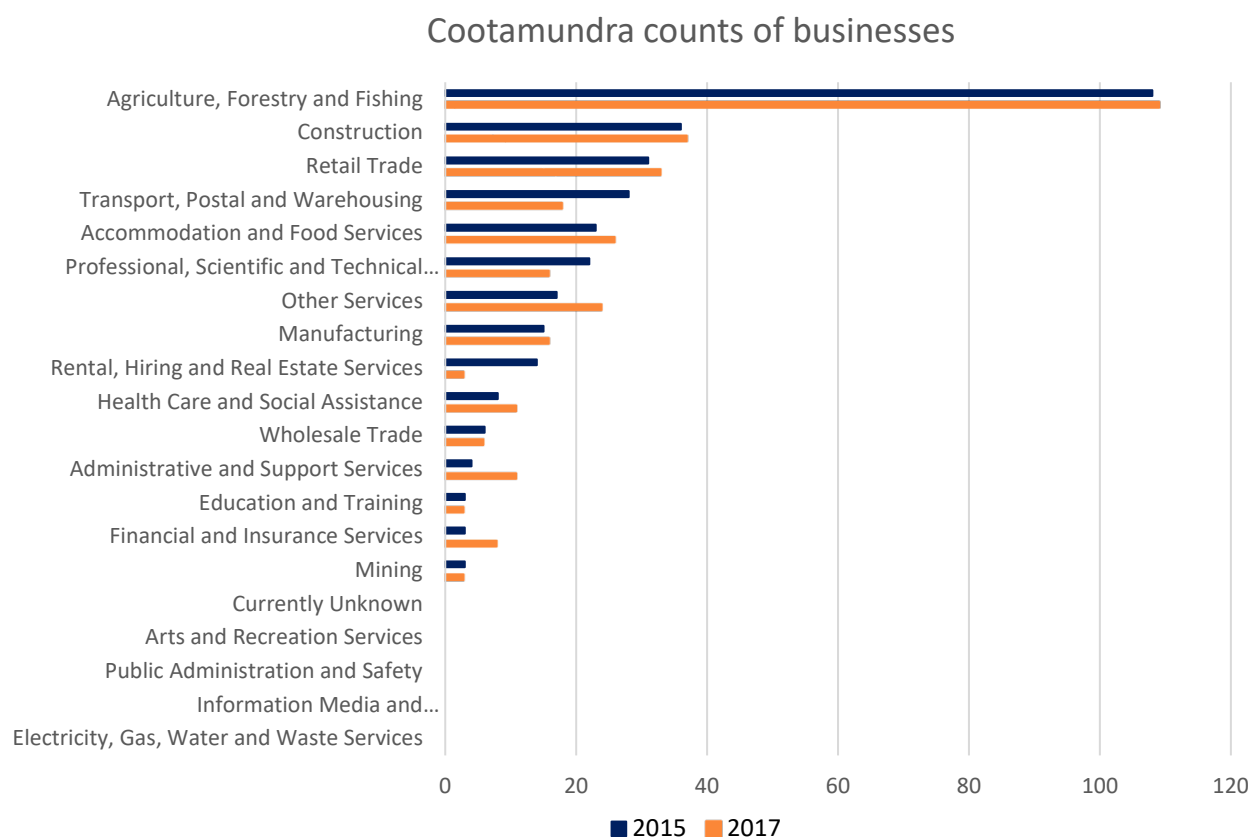
¹¹See <https://gmpgundagai.com.au/about/>

Source: Calculated by WRI from ABS cat. 8371.0, Building Approvals, Australia, 2013-14 to 2018-19. Data for Cootamundra-Gundagai is summed from Cootamundra and Gundagai SA2s.

When the percentage change in the total value of building approvals is analysed year on year, there is a greater amount of volatility in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA compared to the Riverina and to NSW. The source of this volatility can be attributed to the abnormal increase in building approval value in 2016-17 from the \$30 million abattoir expansion and subsequent fall in building approval values in the proceeding year. Apart from this there is no discernible variation relative to the Riverina or NSW in this indicator.

Business counts

Business count data was taken for Cootamundra and Gundagai from the ABS from June 2015-2017. Only employing businesses were included in the analysis.



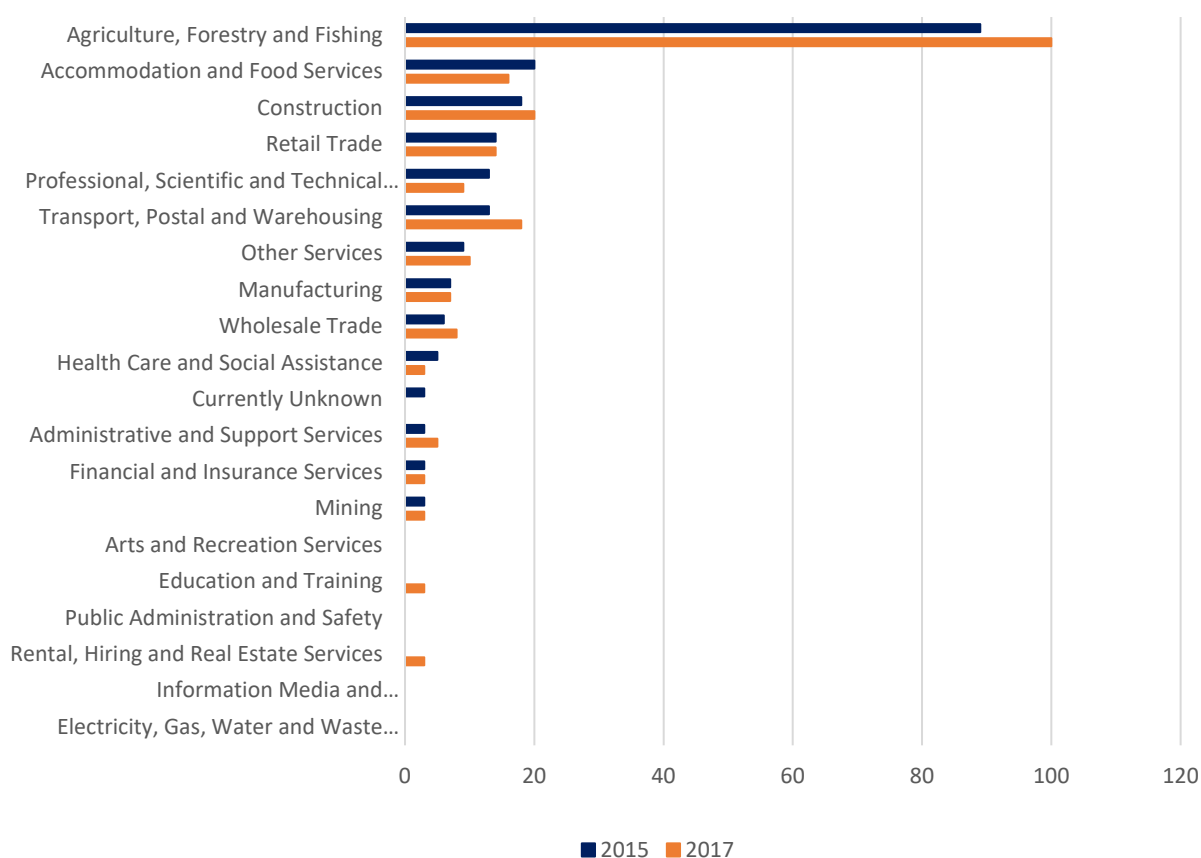
Source: ABS cat. 8165.0, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, Jun 2013 to Jun 2017

For Cootamundra, the largest number of employing businesses were in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Construction, and Retail Trade industries for both 2015 and 2017. The number of these businesses increased slightly between 2015 and 2017. Other industries with increasing business counts included Accommodation and Food Services, Other Services, Administrative and Support Services and Financial and Insurance Services.

Manufacturing grew marginally over the period.

Sectors where business numbers declined included Transport, Postal and Warehousing, Professional Scientific and Technical services. The Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services businesses number notably fell significantly.

Gundagai counts of businesses



Source: ABS cat. 8165.0, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, Jun 2013 to Jun 2017

In Gundagai, the largest number of employing businesses were in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Accommodation and Food Services, and Construction industries for 2015. In 2017, the largest number of employing businesses were in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Construction, and Transport Postal and Warehousing industries. The number of businesses in the Transport, Postal and Warehousing industry, Wholesale Trade and Administration and Support Services. Two new sectors, Education and Training and Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services, were notable entries into the profile of the business sector in the period analysed.

The number of businesses in the Accommodation and Food Services industry decreased. There was also a moderate decrease in the number of businesses in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry.

Tourism profile

Using statistics from the ABS, Tourism Research Australia, and the Visitor Information centres (VICs) in Cootamundra and Gundagai, the following tourism profile has been developed to understand the tourism economy in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA. An overview of visitation statistics for the Riverina SA4 is presented first to show the wider tourism market into which the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA fits. Data for visitation, accommodation, and visitor location of origin is then provided for Cootamundra-Gundagai, with comparisons made to the Riverina where appropriate.

Riverina region tourism profile

An overview of tourism in the Riverina is provided using data from Tourism Research Australia's Tourism Region Profile for the Riverina Tourism Region for September 2018.

	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic day
Visitors ('000)	26	1,163	1,764
Nights ('000)	636	2,948	-
Spend (\$m)	25	479	234
Average spend per night (\$)	40	162	133

Source: Destination NSW, Travel to Riverina Snapshot, September 2018.

The data shows that most visitors to the Riverina Tourism Region are domestic day visitors, followed by domestic overnight visitors, with a small number of international visitors. The spend per night for domestic overnight visitors is \$162. Domestic day visitors spend an average of \$133 per trip.

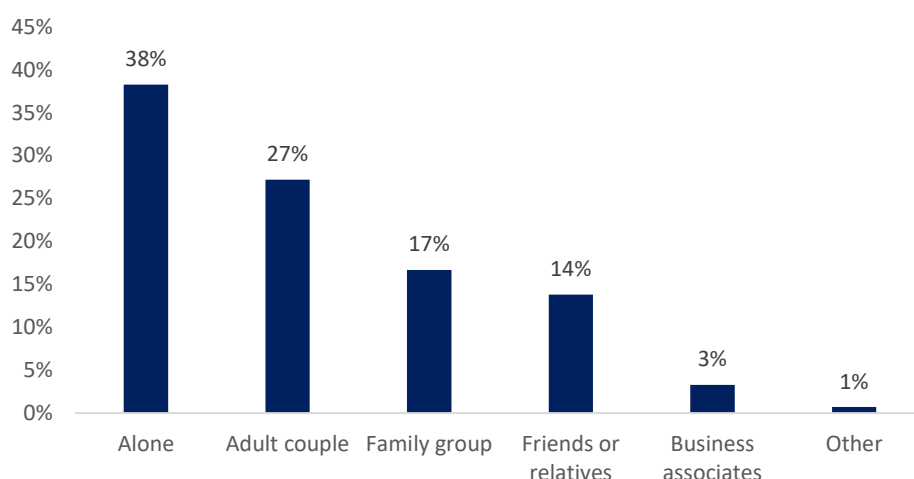
Riverina area visitors by place of residence and mode of transport are shown below:

Transport (visitors '000)	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic day	TOTAL
Drive	15	827	1,271	2,113
Other	7	np	np	np

Source: Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Region Profiles, 2015. np means the estimate is unreliable and cannot be published

The data suggests that nearly all visitors to the Riverina in 2015 travelled by road transportation. Given their proximity to highways, Cootamundra and Gundagai are well situated to capture this visitation.

Riverina domestic overnight visitors travel party

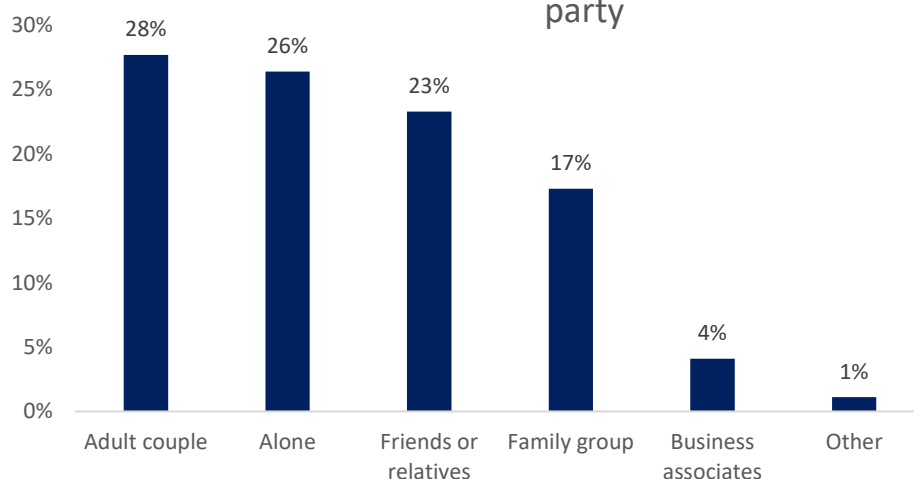


Source: Destination NSW, Travel to Riverina Snapshot, September 2018.

The data above shows most domestic overnight visitors travel unaccompanied or as an adult couple, although family groups and friends/relatives travelling together are still a significant portion of visitors. The solo traveller rate is high for the Riverina region.

Compared to Regional NSW, the Riverina had a greater concentration of visitors travelling alone, a lower concentration of domestic overnight visitors travelling as friends or relatives, and similar concentrations for other travel party types.

Regional NSW domestic overnight visitors travel party



Source: Destination NSW, Travel to Regional NSW Snapshot, June 2018.

Cootamundra-Gundagai tourism statistics

2017 data from Tourism Research Australia detailing visitation and expenditure statistics for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA are displayed below. These have been compared to tourism statistics for NSW and the Riverina Tourism Region.

Tourism Statistics Cootamundra—Gundagai LGA	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic Day	Total
Visitors ('000)	2	127	np	np
Nights ('000)	30	253	-	283
Average stay (nights)	16	2	-	2
Spend (\$m)	1	33	np	np
Average spend per night (\$)	35	131	-	121

Source: Tourism Research Australia, Local Government Area Profiles, 2017. Data is based on a four year average from 2014 to 2017. Np means the data is unreliable and can not be published.

Tourism Statistics Riverina	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic day	Total ¹²
Visitors ('000)	26	1,163	1,764	2953
Nights ('000)	636	2,948	-	3584
Average stay (nights) ¹³	24	3	-	3
Spend (\$m)	25	479	234	738
Average spend per night (\$)	40	162	133	141

Source: Destination NSW, Travel to Riverina Snapshot, September 2018.

Tourism Statistics NSW	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic Day	Total
Visitors ('000)	4,158	31,575	57,942	93,676
Nights ('000)	94,407	100,104	-	194,511
Average stay (nights)	23	3	-	5
Spend (\$m)	10,423	18,644	6,120	35,187
Average spend per night (\$) ¹⁴	110	186	-	149

Tourism Research Australia, Local Government Area Profiles, 2017. Data is based on a four year average from 2014 to 2017

These statistics show that the average length of stay and average spend per night for both international and domestic overnight visitors to Cootamundra-Gundagai at \$121 is lower than the NSW average of \$181 and the Riverina average of \$133.

¹² Numbers in total column have been calculated and are not in the publication.

¹³ Numbers in average stay (nights) row have been calculated and are not in the publication.

¹⁴ These values have been calculated by WRI from Tourism Research Australia data

The average length of stay and average spend per night for international visitors to Cootamundra-Gundagai is significantly lower than the Riverina.

Average length of stay in nights for both domestic overnight and international visitors in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA is lower than that of the Riverina Tourism Region and NSW. The average spend per visitor night is also lower in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA than both the Riverina Tourism Region and NSW. This suggests there is room to improve visitor stay length and expenditure in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.

Tourism Research Australia also publishes the number of tourism businesses within an LGA. For Cootamundra-Gundagai there were a total of 129 tourism businesses most of which employed between 1 and 4 people in 2017. The employment distribution is shown below:

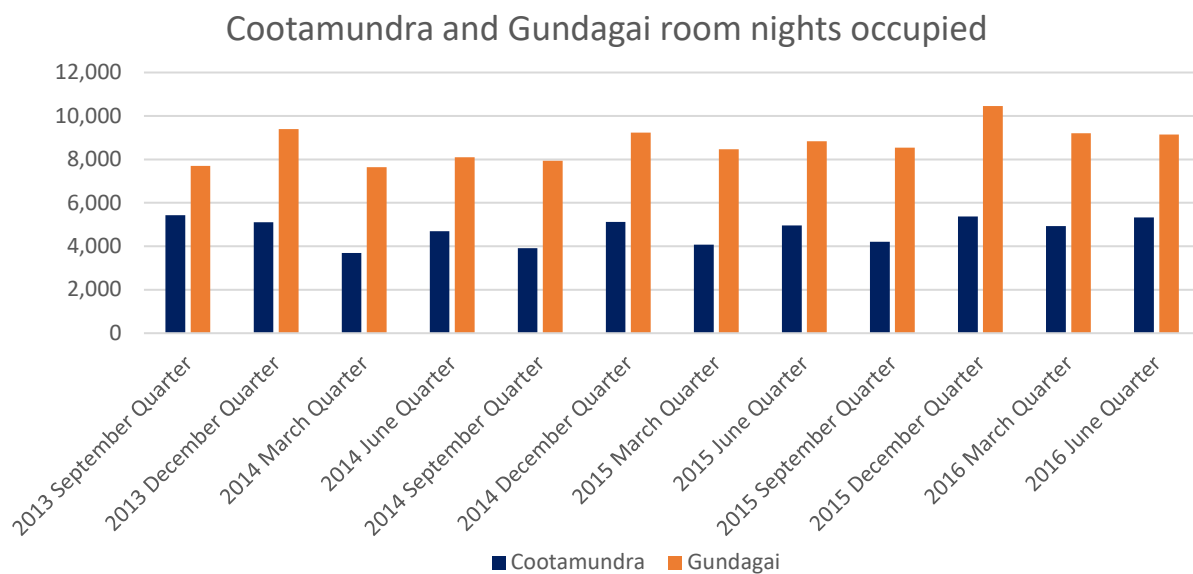
Tourism businesses	Number
Non-employing	34
1 to 4 employees	50
5 to 19 employees	35
20 or more employees	3
Total	129

Source: Tourism Research Australia, Local Government Area Profiles, 2017. For the purposes of confidentiality, Tourism Businesses data has been perturbed, therefore data may not match totals.

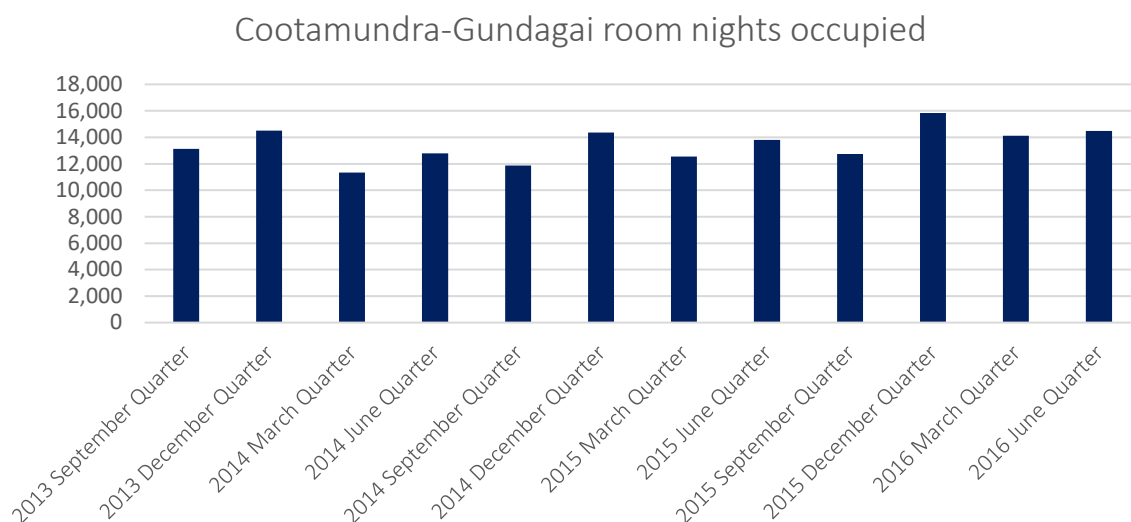
Tourist accommodation

The ABS publishes data for takings from accommodation and room occupancy rates for motels, hotels and serviced apartments with 15 or more rooms each quarter. ABS data from 2013 to 2016 for tourism accommodation in Cootamundra and Gundagai has been analysed and compared to the Riverina Tourism Region. The Riverina Tourism Region was chosen instead of the Riverina area as determined by ABS (SA4) because it excludes the Snowy Valleys LGA, which given its unique national park tourism assets may capture a tourism market which is not representative of tourists who visit Cootamundra-Gundagai or the rest of the Riverina.

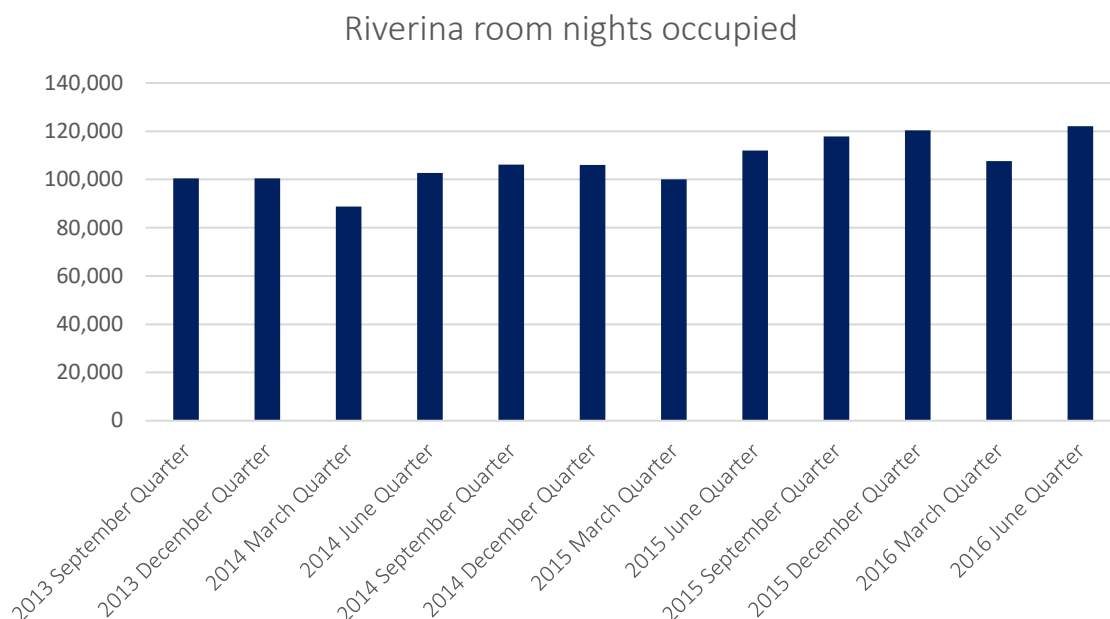
The accommodation metrics captured were room nights occupied, which measures the total number of nights visitors booked rooms for in the quarter, and room occupancy rate which is a percentage measurement of room nights occupied against total room nights available for the quarter.



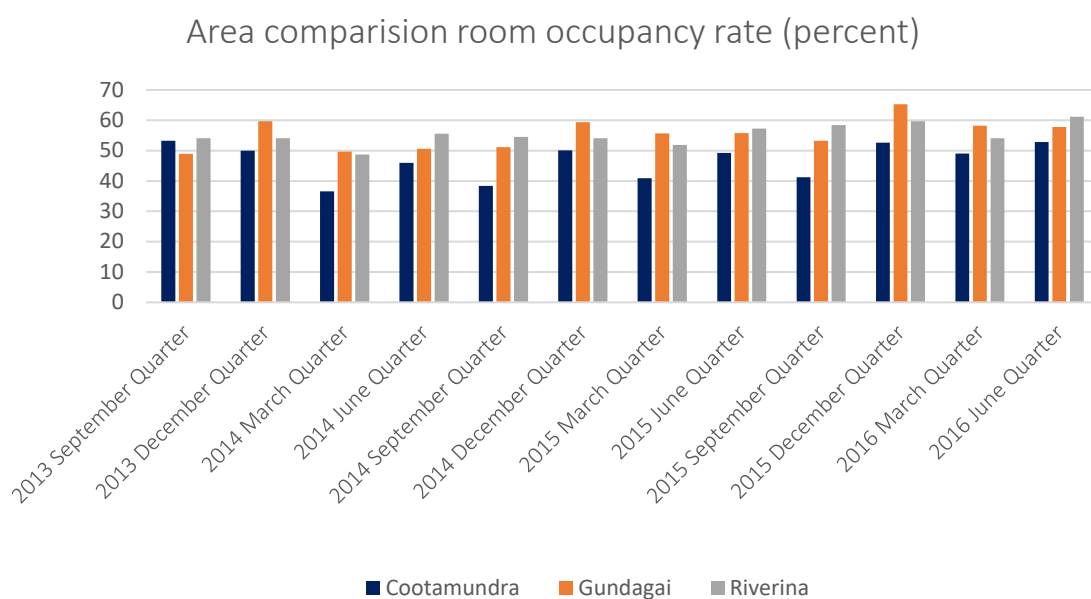
Source: ABS cat. 8635.0, Tourist Accommodation, NSW, 2013-14 to 2015-16



Source: ABS cat. 8635.0, Tourist Accommodation, NSW, 2013-14 to 2015-16. Data is summed from Cootamundra and Gundagai SA2s



Source: ABS cat. 8635.0, Tourist Accommodation, NSW, 2013-14 to 2015-16



ABS cat. 8635.0, Tourist Accommodation, NSW, 2013-14 to 2015-16

The data shows that Cootamundra has a consistently lower rate of room nights occupied than Gundagai, and a lower room occupancy rate, apart from the September 2013 quarter.

Gundagai's room occupancy rate seems to be similar to that of the Riverina Tourism Area with some quarters (noticeably December and March quarters on occasion) slightly higher.

Room nights occupied and room occupancy rate have both remained fairly stable in the Riverina from the 2013 September quarter to 2016 with an occupancy rate between 49 – 61%.

This suggests opportunity to improve the accommodation sectors in both towns, with possibly greater opportunity in Cootamundra as an opportunity.

Visitor Information Centre statistics

Statistics from the Cootamundra and Gundagai Visitor Information Centres (VICs) were gathered to better understand VIC visitation rates and where visitors to the LGA were coming from.

Visitation rates from 12 month periods were determined for the Cootamundra and Gundagai VICs. A larger proportion of those coming into the VICs are locals booking coach travel and their visitation has been excluded to enable a count of tourists. These were divided by the total LGA visitation rate to give a percentage of visitors to the LGA who used the VIC. Postcode data was used to breakdown the percentage of visitors to the VIC by each state to estimate the composition of visitation to each LGA.

VIC location	Cootamundra	Gundagai
Annual VIC visitation	1,211	16,781 ¹⁵
Annual LGA visitation ¹⁶	129,000	
VIC visitation as a percentage of LGA visitation	1%	13%

Source: Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council VICs

State	Visitor postcode data Cootamundra VIC ¹⁷	Visitor postcode data Gundagai VIC
VIC	24%	58%
NSW/ACT	43%	31%
QLD	13%	5%
SA	4%	3%
WA	4%	2%
TAS	7%	1%
NT	2%	0%

Source: Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council VICs

Gundagai VIC receives a much higher visitation rate than the Cootamundra VIC.

Together, the VICs were visited by 14% of all visitors to the LGA, with 13% attending the Gundagai VIC but just 1% attending the Cootamundra VIC. This is a obvious opportunity to consider how to grow attendance at Cootamundra.

In the process of preparing the Tourism and Economic Development Strategy, analysis of 7 VICs was undertaken which highlighted that the attendance at the Cootamundra-Gundagai combined VICs of all tourists to the areas was mid range in terms of the percentage of visitors in the other 5 locations analysed. The range of visitor attendance at the other locations VICs ranged between 3% and 23% of visitors to other locations. Looking at Cootamundra and Gundagai separately, there is an opportunity

¹⁵ A number of assumptions and adjustments were made in determining VIC visitation rates to provide the most accurate and realistic statistics possible due to the quality of data provided.

¹⁶ Tourism Research Australia, Local Government Area Profiles, 2017. Data is based on a four year average from 2014 to 2017

¹⁷ Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding issues.

to improve the attendance at the Cootamundra VIC to lift it to comparable levels of overall area visitation.

The origin of visitors to each VIC differs significantly. More than half of all visitors to the Gundagai VIC came from Victoria, with NSW/ACT being the next highest response at 31%. Only 11 percent came from a state other than NSW/ACT or Victoria. For the Cootamundra VIC, 43% of visitors came from NSW/ACT, 24% from Victoria and 30% from another state or territory.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY, FORUMS AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

Survey

A survey of business was undertaken in late 2018 using an online survey instrument to augment community comments collected by Council in a variety of other consultation processes, including the preparation of previous work on Economic Development Strategy 2017 and in the preparation of the Council's Our Place, our Future Community Strategic Plan 2018-28.

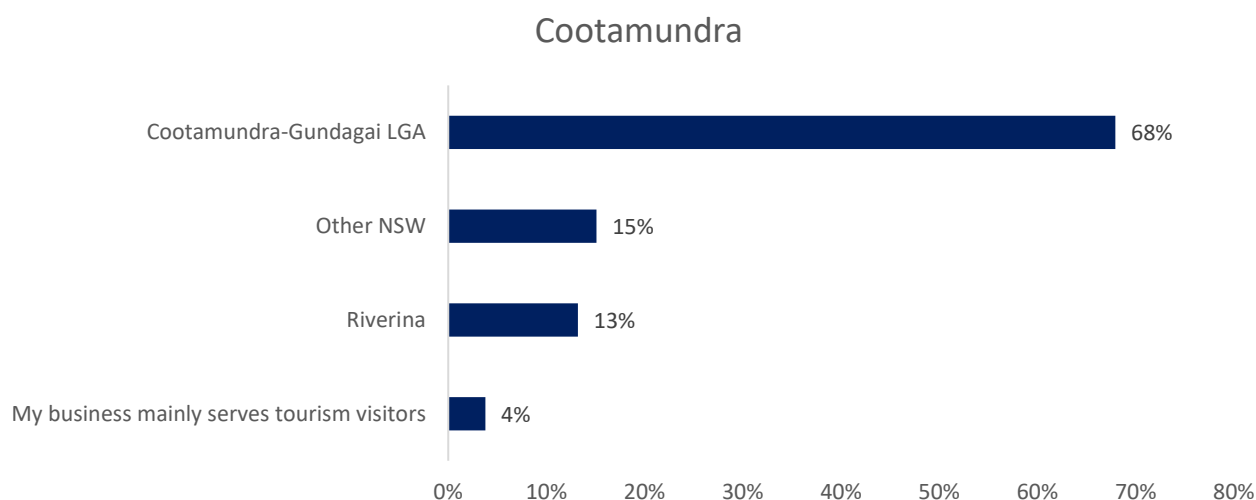
There were 92 responses to the survey. Some specific questions were asked of tourism businesses in addition to those asked of all businesses.

It should be noted that for some questions in the survey, particularly those related to tourism businesses and skills shortages, there was a low response rate which do not give a statistically valid representation.

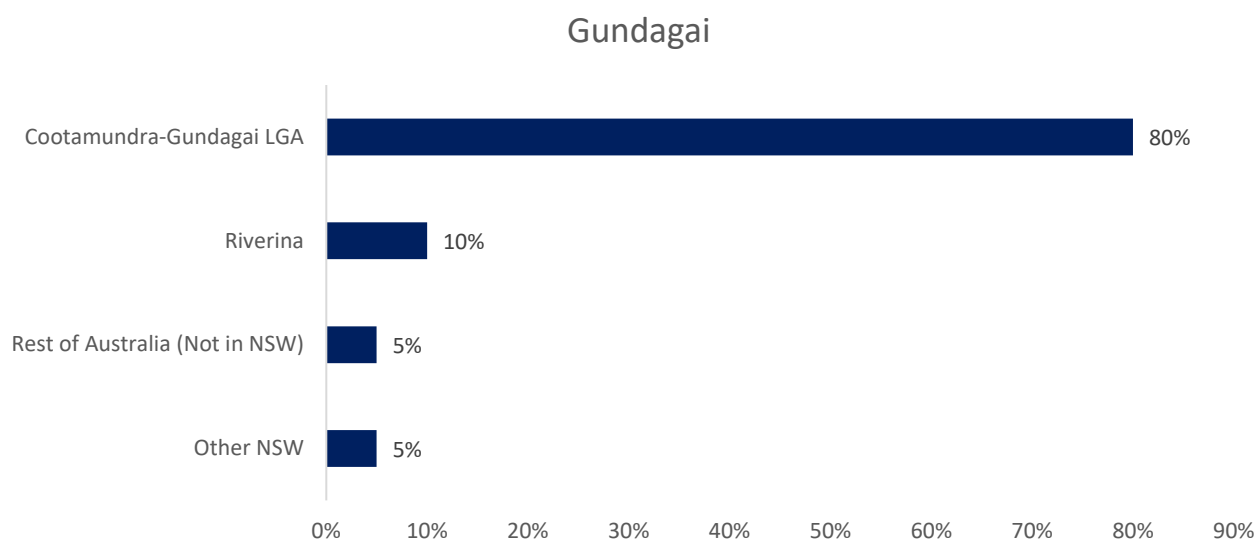
However, insights can be gained from the responses to questions. Additional investigation to better understand tourism operator issues may be beneficial.

Survey response analysis

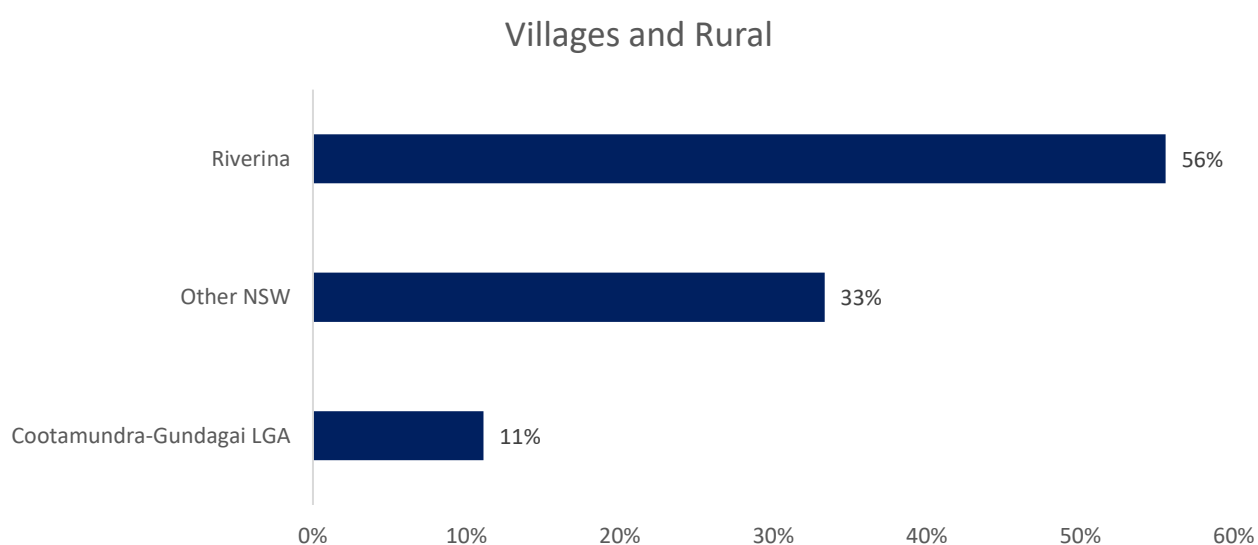
Where are the majority of your customers based?



When asked where the majority of their customers are based, 68 percent of Cootamundra respondent businesses are supplying the majority of the services/products to local businesses. This suggests a lower level of sales to external regions, bringing money into the LGA.

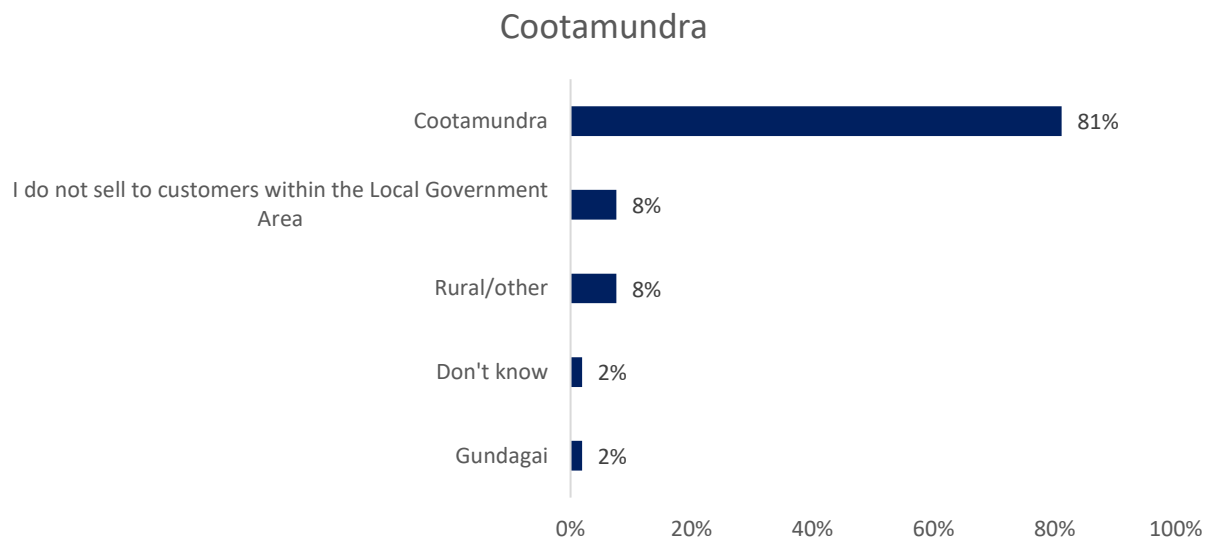


In Gundagai, 80 percent of respondent businesses are supplying the majority of the services/products to local businesses. This is higher than Cootamundra and is consistent with a smaller industrial sector.

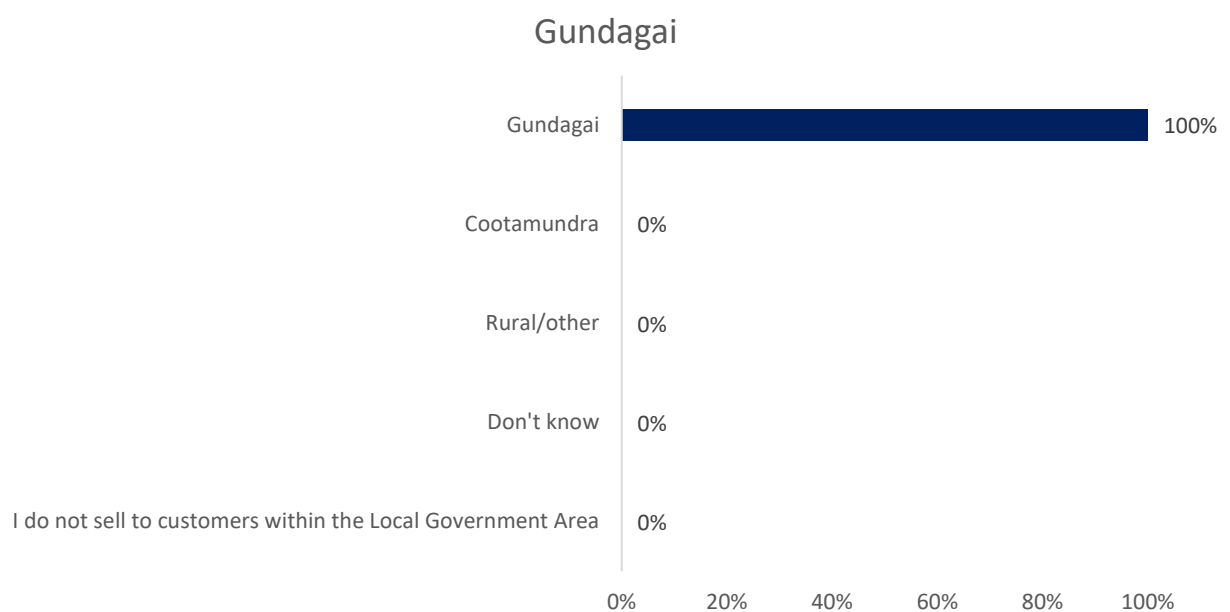


Consistent with its agricultural focus, village and rural businesses sell a low proportion of their produce locally, with the Riverina region the largest market for this produce.

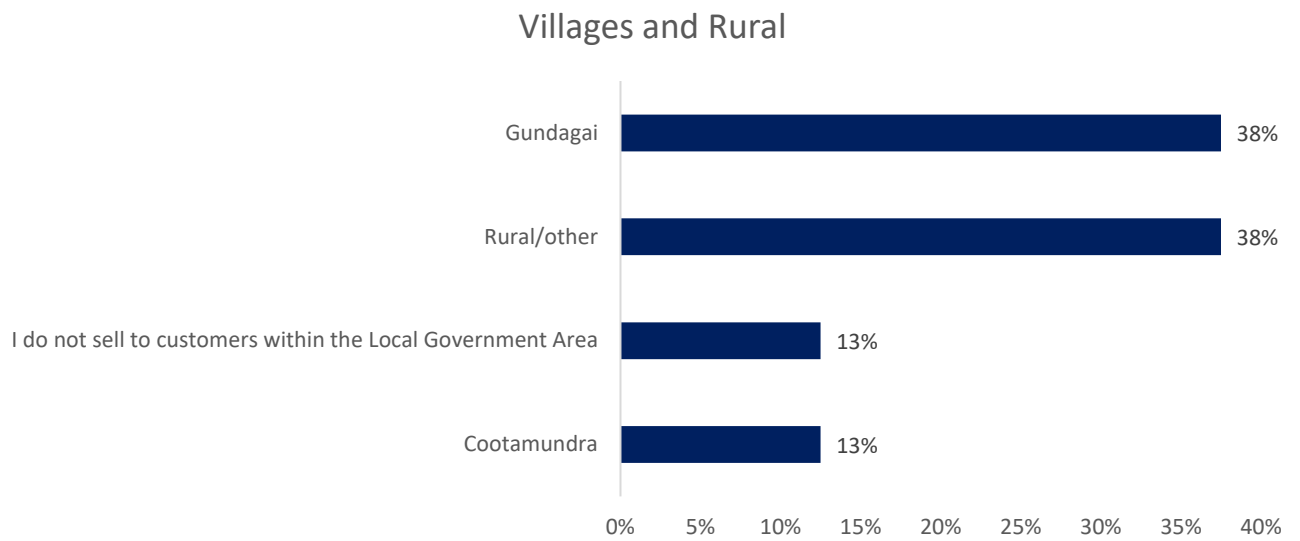
If you serve customers from within the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, where are the majority of these customers based?



Cootamundra businesses are serving an 81% majority of Cootamundra businesses.

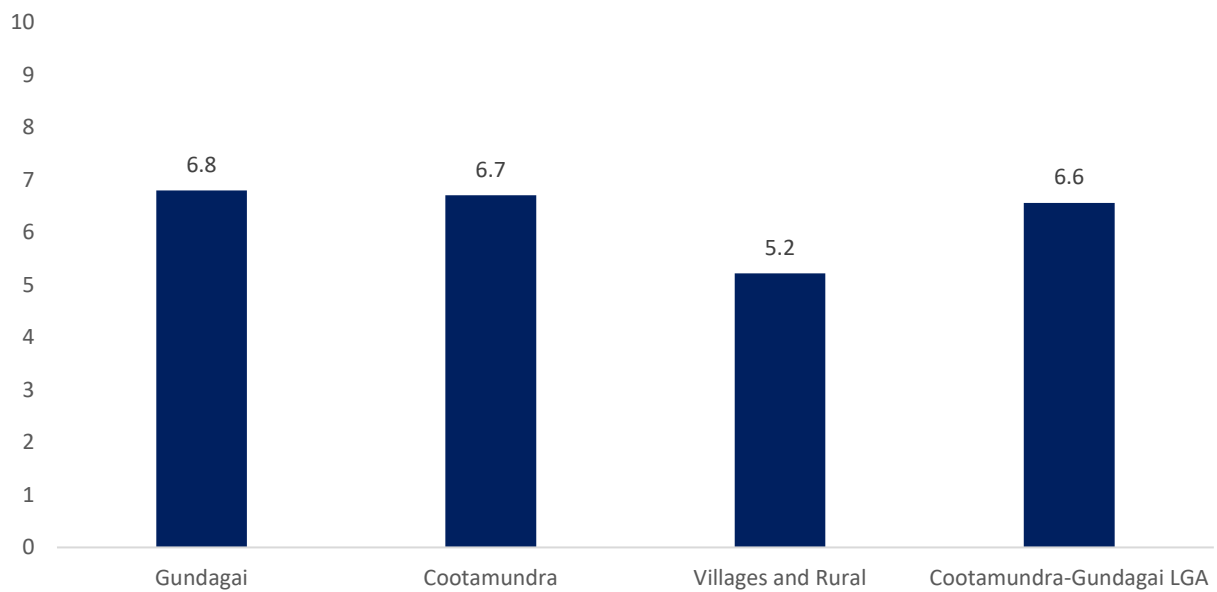


100% of Gundagai business respondents advised that the majority of their customers were based in Gundagai. This illustrates a high level of connectedness between the communities. While this offers the benefit of a support economic backbone, it also exposes the region if there are a number of large employers who could move or reduce volumes which would have significant flow on impacts.



Village and rural businesses advised that the majority of their customers based in the LGA are split fairly evenly across the LGA.

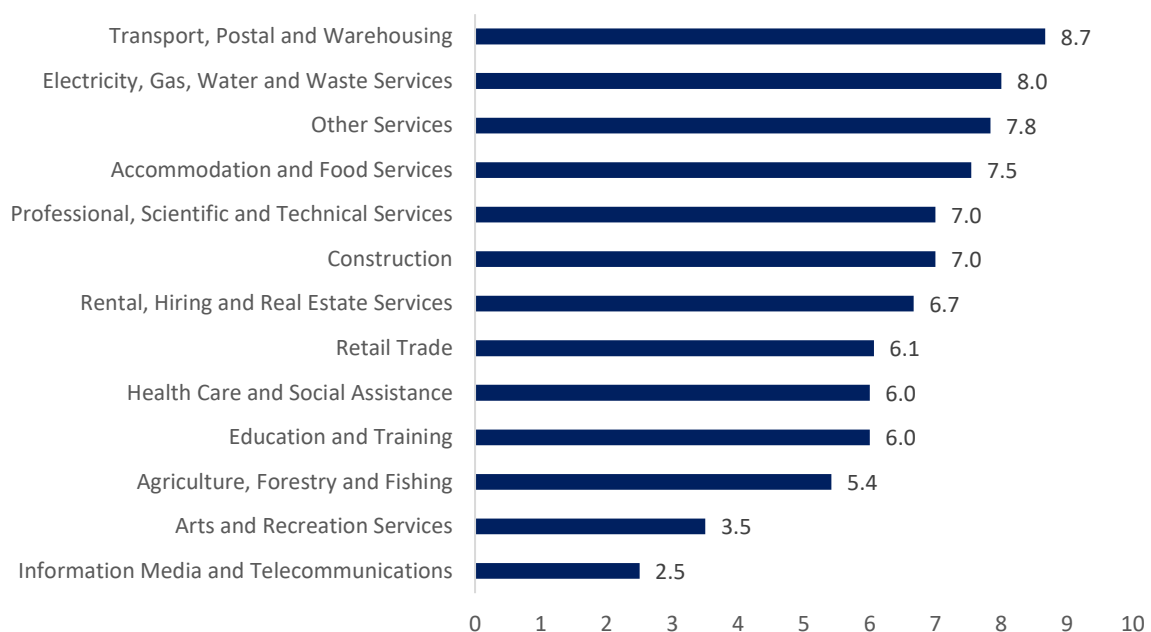
How would you rate your business outlook?



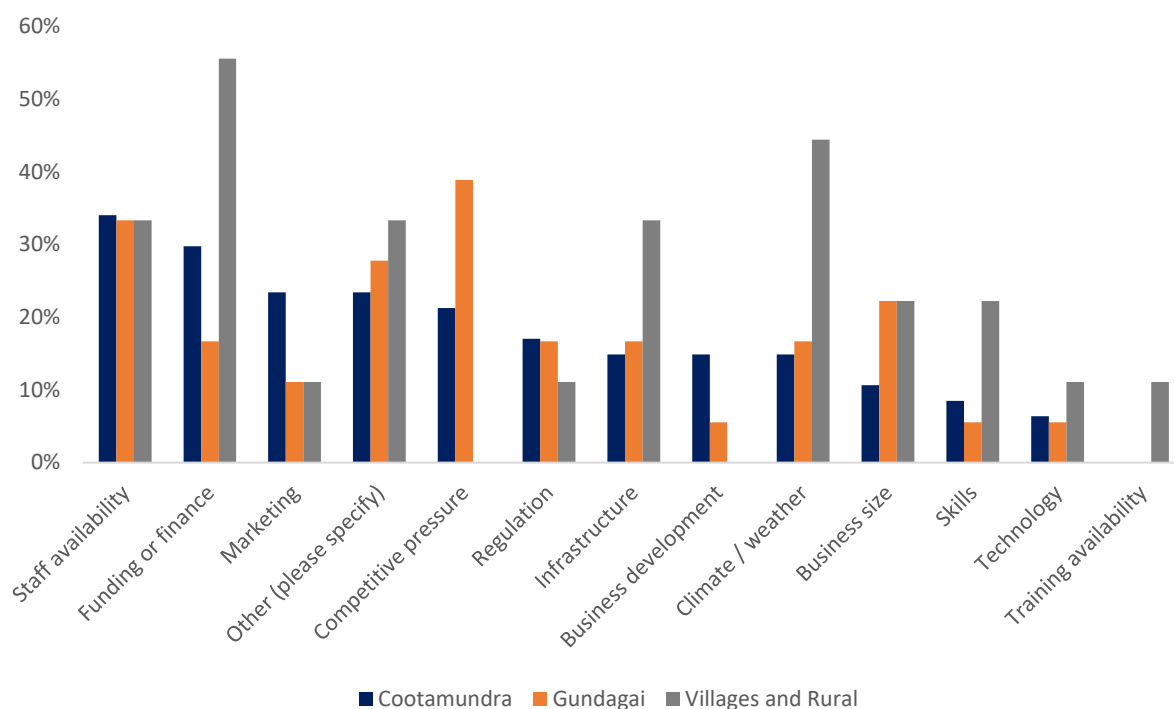
Business outlook across the region is fairly even, although villages and rural businesses are less optimistic about their business outlook.

When business outlook is segmented by industry, it is clear that outlook is impacted by sectoral issues. Agriculture as one of the major employment areas is relatively pessimistic about its outlook, most likely impacted by drought conditions.

On the positive side, there are a large number of sectors that have a positive outlook, offering a sustainability assessment to the local economic outlook.



What, if any, are the current barriers to growing your business?



When asked about barriers to growing their business, respondents across Cootamundra and Gundagai had relatively similar responses.

Gundagai businesses highlighted competitive pressure as a bigger issue and their Cootamundra counterparts had a higher response for funding/finance and marketing.

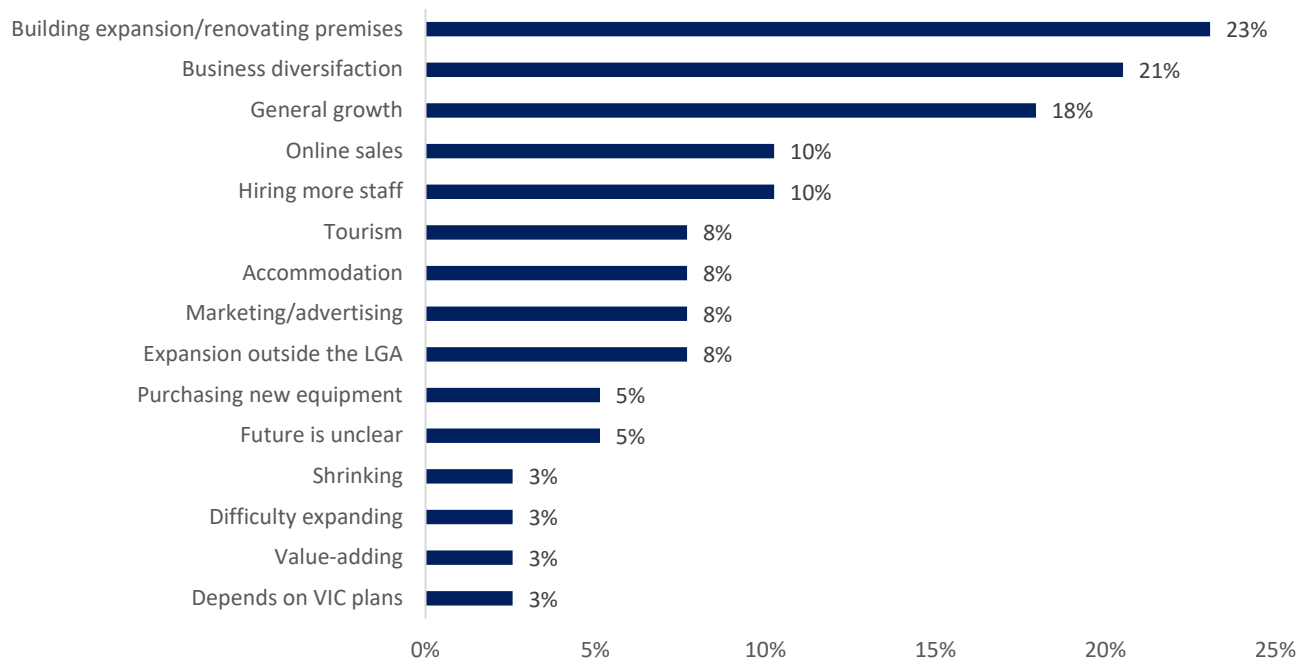
Village and rural respondents highlighted significantly different issues, citing funding/finance, infrastructure and climate as the main barriers.

Other barriers identified by businesses included:

- Lack of Council support
- Declining demand/population
- Lack of labour supply
- Production/wage costs
- Inadequate Internet/mobile
- Inadequate VIC services
- Competition from new service centre
- Competition from online shopping
- Lack of support for local business
- Government regulation/red tape

Opportunities for future expansion

Businesses identified opportunities to expand their businesses. This feedback was analysed thematically and has been provided below. Building expansion/renovating premises, Business diversification and General business growth were the 3 top opportunities. This suggests that Council could work with these businesses to support future potential development applications via pre Development Application lodgement and could assist with facilitation of capacity building skills to achieve growth opportunities.

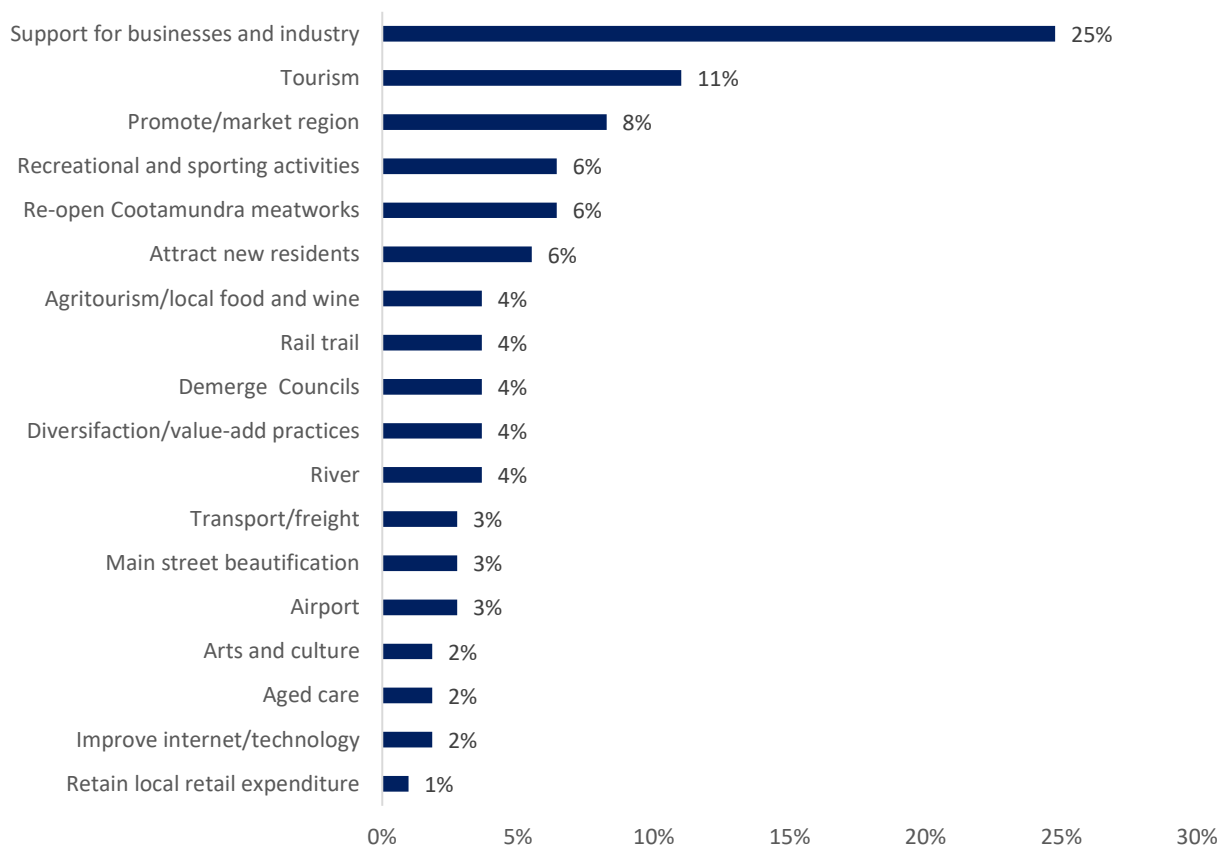


What do you feel are the opportunities for the Cootamundra-Gundagai region to expand its economy?

When asked about opportunities to expand the LGA economy, respondent answers were analysed thematically and are provided below.

The top response included a range of feedback that generally supported the attraction and retention of industry, without providing specific detail. Further testing of the business community could add detail here.

Developing tourism and marketing/branding exercises were the next two most popular responses.



Rating of key infrastructure

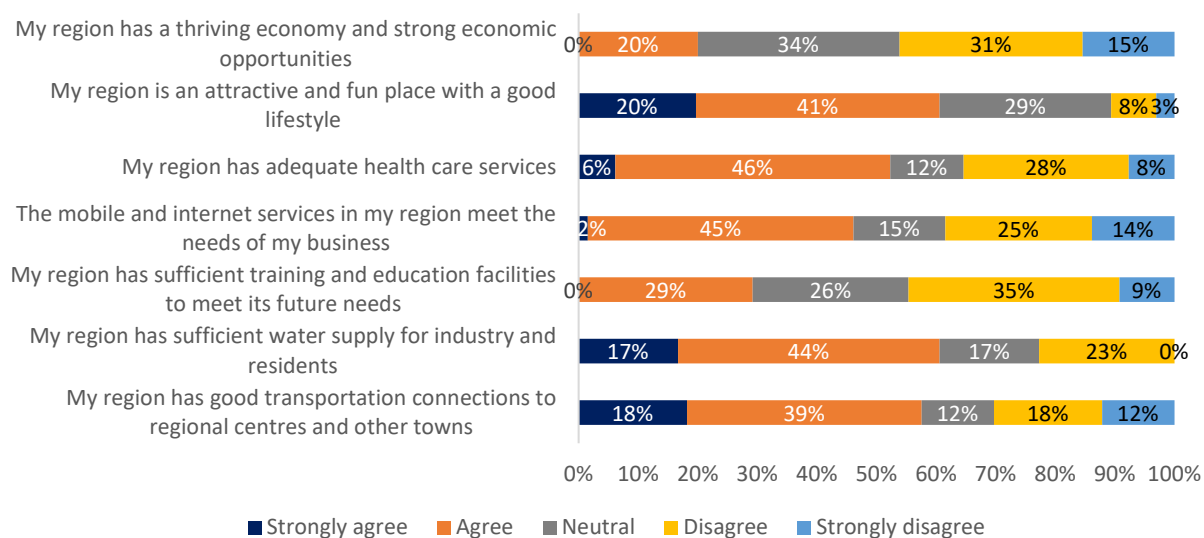
Respondents were asked to rate key infrastructure in the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA. The region rated relatively poorly in the responses labelled a thriving economy and strong economic opportunities and training/education facilities.

The response relating to rating the attractiveness, fun and lifestyle question was 61% favourable. But 29% of respondents are neutral and 11% who are negative on this issue suggests an opportunity that this element of liveability could be reviewed in the LGA. The majority of respondents also agreed that there was sufficient water supply (61% agreed or strongly agreed), that transportation infrastructure was good (57% agreed or strongly agreed) and that the region has adequate health care services (52% agreed or strongly agreed). However, there are substantial portions of respondents who were neutral or disagreed with these statements suggesting that there is potential for improvements.

When asked if the region had sufficient training and education facilities, 44% of respondents disagreed and 26% were neutral. This suggests that training and education facilities may be an issue within the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA and this area should be reviewed.

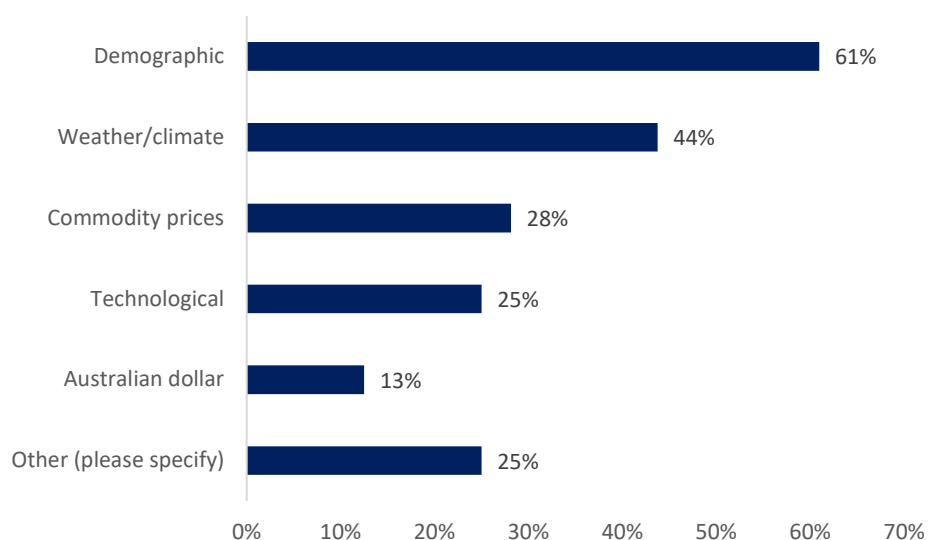
Only 20% of respondents agreed with the statement “My region has a thriving economy and strong economic opportunities” suggesting that the LGA’s economy is another area for review.

The response rating internet and mobile services in the LGA was also mixed, with just 47% of respondents agreeing that mobile and internet services in the LGA meet the needs of their business. Improvements in telecommunications infrastructure may be required.



What are the main external risks to the Cootamundra-Gundagai region economy?

Demographics issues (including concerns about the declining population and the need for young people to move to the area) was seen by respondents as the largest risk to the local economy.

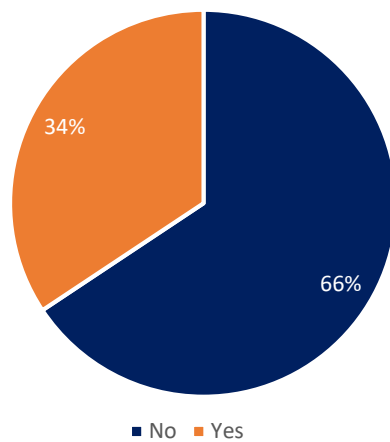


Other responses included:

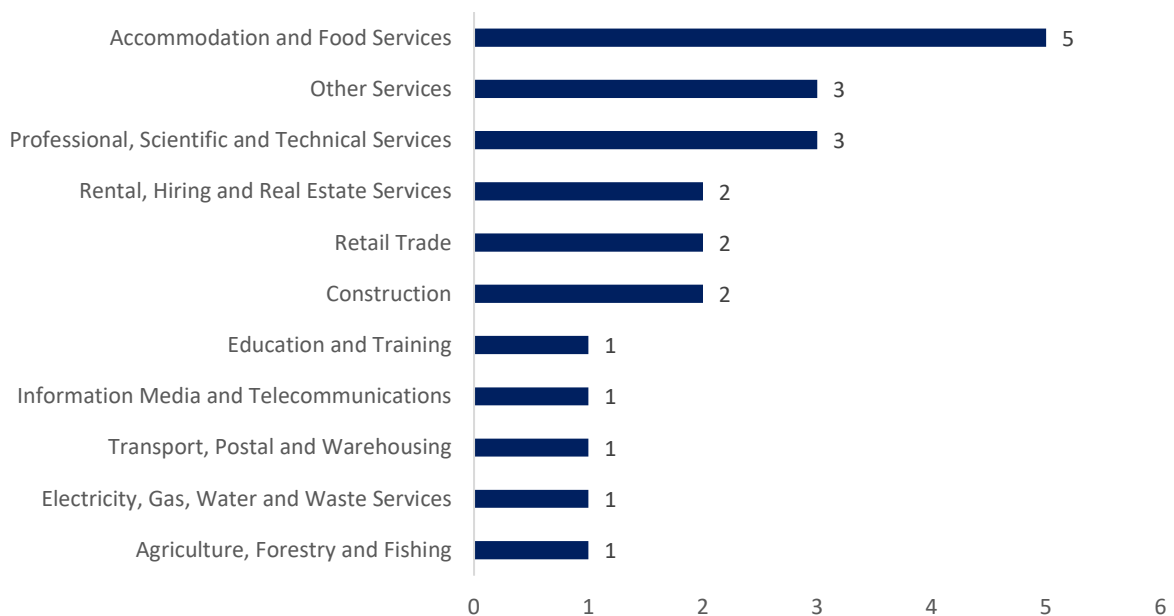
- Lack of support.
- Competitive pressures.
- Lack of industry and threats to existing industry.
- Disconnect with the Local community due to council resources moving to Cootamundra.
- Lack of jobs.
- Lack of water and infrastructure.
- Limited NBN.
- Lack of good political leadership at all levels.
- We need to encourage small business, help with relocation of businesses from larger centres, in turn this will increase the employment prospects and other associated benefits.

Is your business having any difficulty in finding and recruiting specific skilled staff?

When asked if they were having difficulty in finding and recruiting staff, 34% of respondents businesses advised that they were challenged in this area.



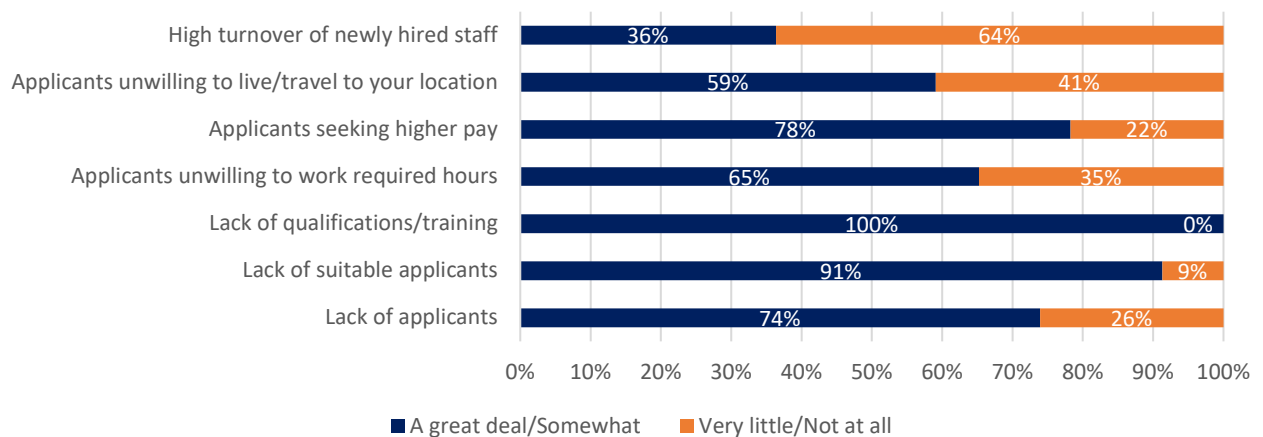
Of the respondents who indicated they were having difficulty in finding and recruiting specific skilled staff, most were in the Accommodation and Food Services sector, followed by Other Services then and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry sectors.



When recruiting for your business, do the following issues impact on recruitment process?

Respondents who advised that they are experiencing difficulty in finding and recruiting staff were asked to rate key difficulties. By grouping responses, certain insights are apparent. A lack of qualifications, lack of applicants, lack of suitable applicants and high pay expectations are causing employers difficulties in recruiting.

Given the high current unemployment rate, this suggests that the LGA may have both education/training issues and a lack of willing workers. It should be noted that a major employer in Gundagai has expressed difficulties in accessing any workers, even when free training is provided.



Please list your top three skills shortages in order of difficulty to recruit

Respondent skill shortages have been organised by industry sector below.

Accommodation and Food Services

- Chefs
- Coffee maker
- Staff willing to work weekends
- Hospitality staff
- Experienced front of house/ floor mar
- Cafe assistant
- Trades
- Skilled staff
- IT

Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services

- Real Estate agents
- professionals with local knowledge
- Chefs
- Retail

Education and Training

- Disabled employees
- Disability support staff
- Teacher

Electricity, Gas, Water, and Waste Services

- Nursing
- Allied health
- Trades e.g. builders

Other Services

- Hair dressers
- Veterinarians
- Beauty
- Vet Nurses
- Cleaners

Retail Trade

- Basic Maths
- Junior staff
- Spelling
- Managers

Information Media and Telecommunications

- Security
- Information technology

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing

- Machinery operators
- Fruit pickers
- Shearers

Professional, Scientific and

Technical Services

- Butcher
- Technical staff
- Engineers
- Specialist

Construction

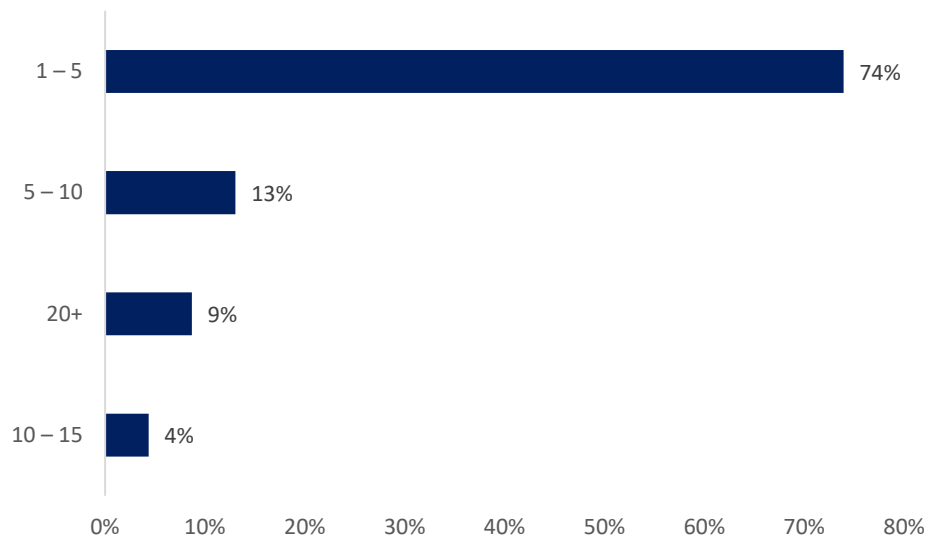
- Tradesmen
- Welders
- Labourers

and Transport, Postal, and Warehousing

- Truck drivers

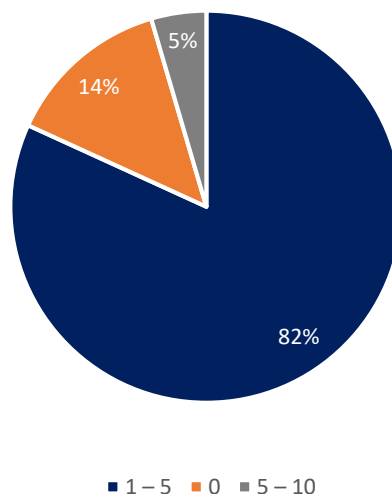
How many Full Time Equivalent staff currently work at your business?

The majority of respondents who advised that they are experiencing difficulty in finding and recruiting staff employed 1 – 5 people on a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) basis.



How many additional Full Time Equivalent staff would you hire right now if the right skills were available?

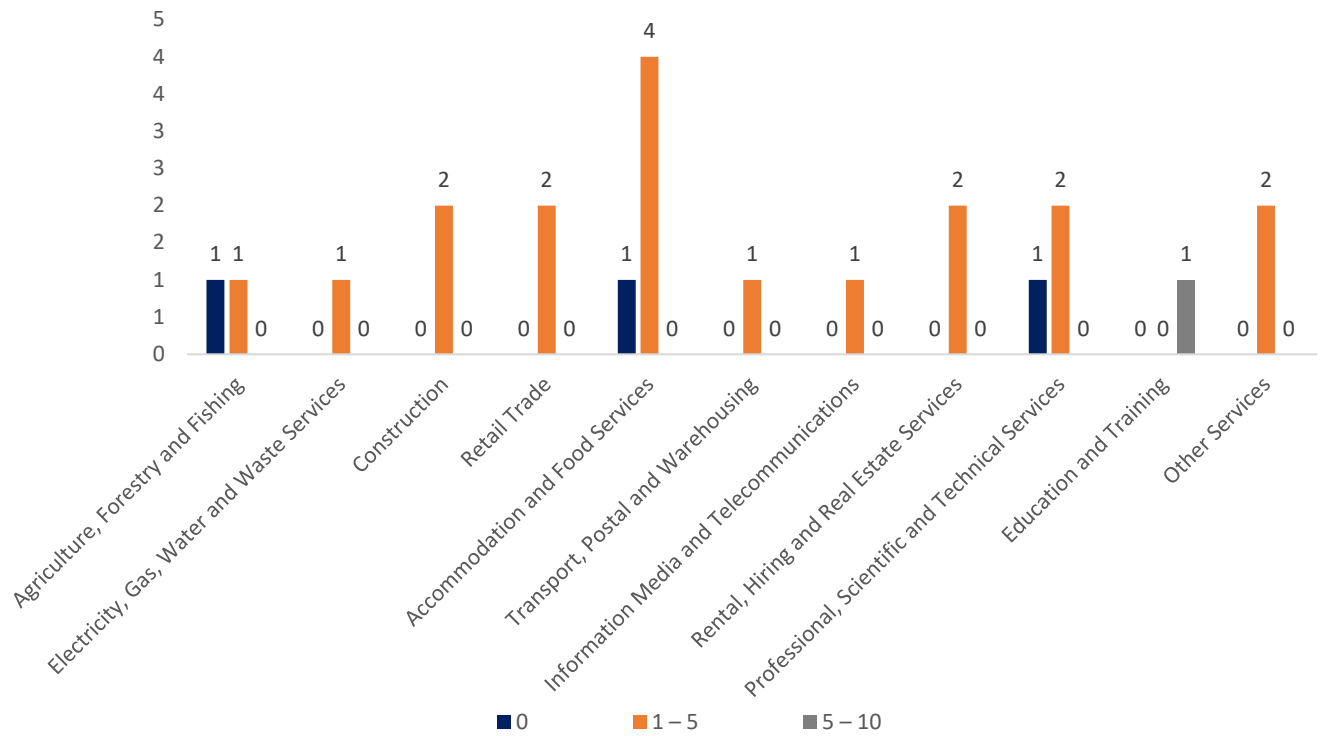
Respondents who advised that they are experiencing difficulty in finding and recruiting staff, were asked how many additional FTE staff they would employ right now if available.



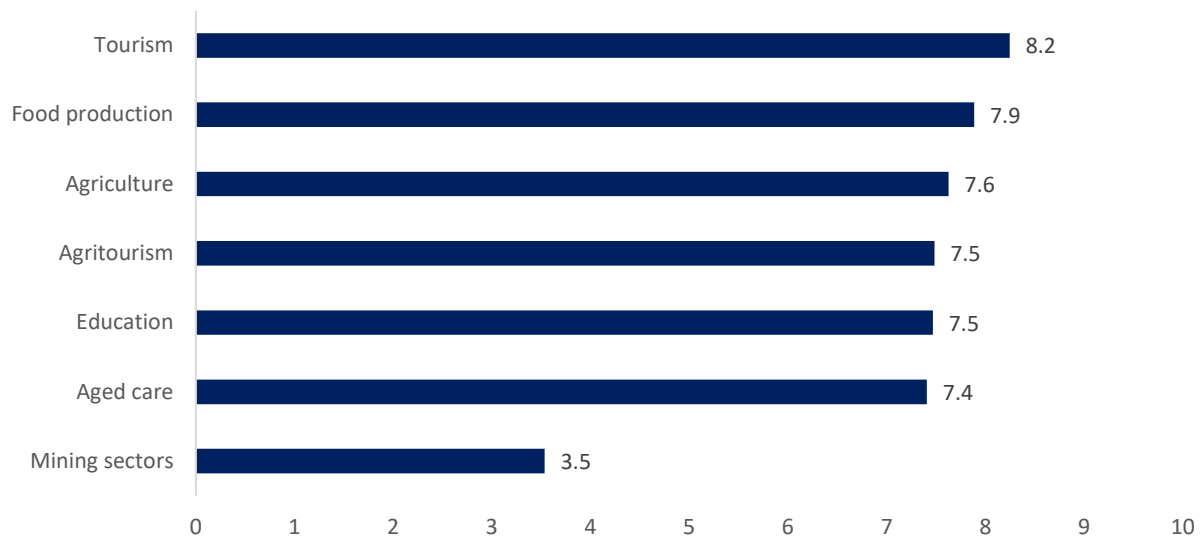
Of these, 82% would employ 1 – 5 additional staff. A small number of businesses would employ 5 – 10. This suggests that skills and a lack of suitable applicants is actively holding back economic development in the LGA.

When analysed by industry, the largest skills shortage appears to be in the Accommodation and Food services, with 4 business managers indicating that they would hire between 1-5 additional

staff. This is followed by the Education and Training industry sector, with 1 business manager indicating they would hire between 5-10 additional staff.



Support for a strategic focus on certain industries in the Cootamundra-Gundagai Tourism and Economic Development Strategy



Survey respondents were asked to rank their support for a strategic focus on certain industries identified across the Council and NSW Government strategic planning documents. Tourism, food production, agriculture and agritourism are related industries that all ranked at the upper end of the scale.

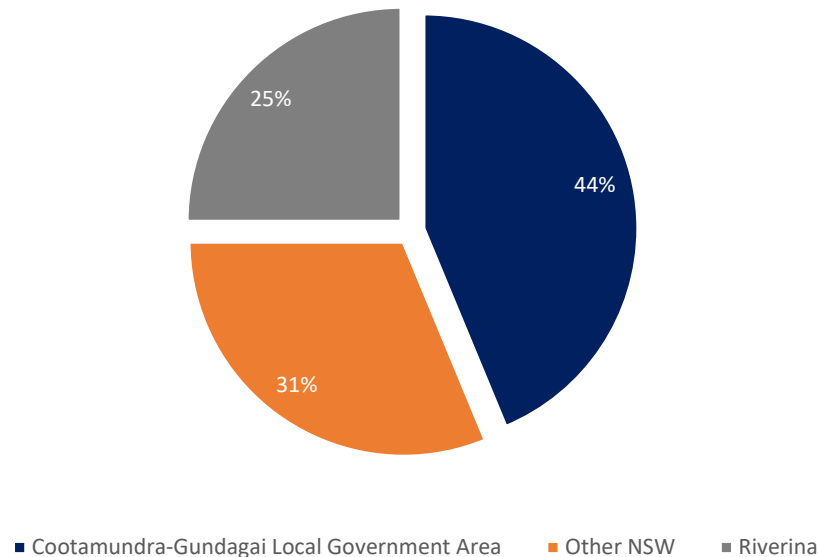
Other industries for strategic development provided by respondents included:

- Arts/culture
- Disability support services
- Boutique retail
- Sports
- Warehousing/logistics
- Develop and support what industry we already have
- Freight and transport
- Professional services
- Tree change, the benefits of country living, health and wellness
- Encourage new industry to town
- Business
- Industry
- Tourism around retreats- particularly for women

Tourism Businesses

Survey respondents that primarily rely on serving visitors to the region were asked a number of additional questions to provide further insights into the visitor economy in the LGA.

Where do you make the majority of your tourism business purchases?

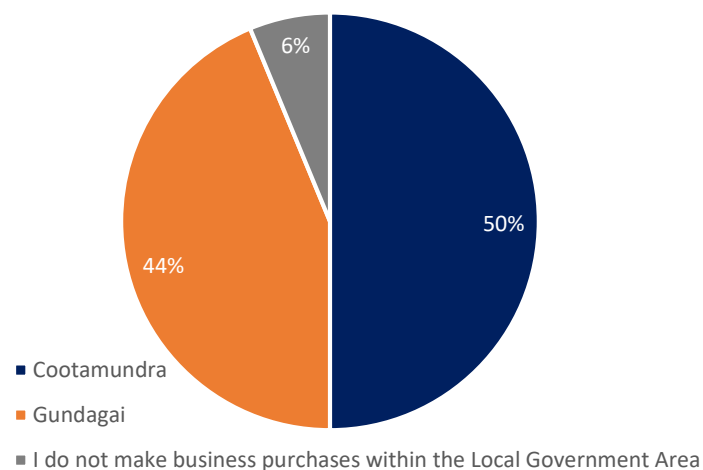


Tourism businesses in Cootamundra make majority of their purchases within the LGA and nearly all of their purchases either in the LGA or the Riverina.

In contrast, just over 2 thirds of tourism businesses in Gundagai make most of their purchases from locations in NSW outside the Riverina.

There were a small number of respondents and the data should not be used without clarifying the small sample size impacts.

If you make tourism business purchases from within the Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Government Area, where do you make the majority of these purchases?



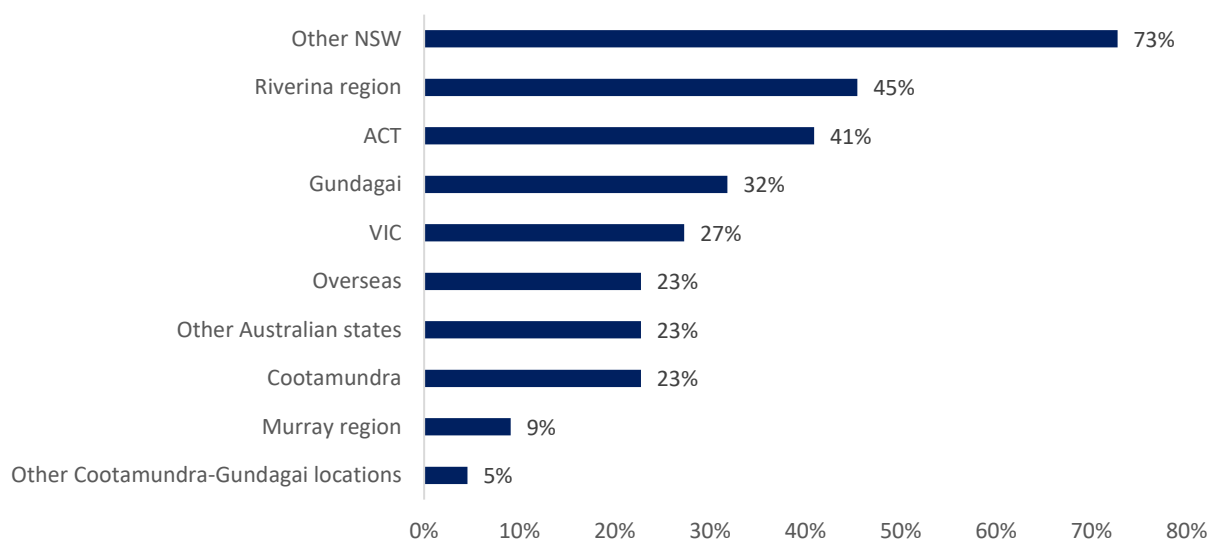
For those that do make tourism business purchases insider the LGA, 50% of these were made in Cootamundra. 65% of survey respondents were based in Cootamundra suggesting that some level of Cootamundra expenditure in Gundagai.

When the data is analysed by the location of the tourism businesses, nearly all tourism businesses in Cootamundra make most of their purchases from within the LGA from Cootamundra, and nearly all businesses in Gundagai make most of their purchases from within the LGA from Gundagai.

There were a small number of respondents and the data should not be used without clarifying the small sample size impacts.

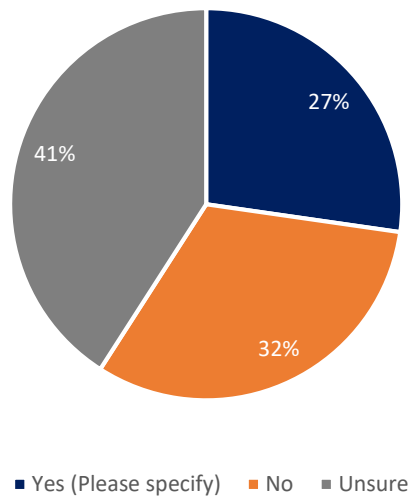
What are the top 3 regions where your clientele come from?

Other NSW was the leading point of origin for visitors to the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA. This was followed by the Riverina and the ACT.



Is your business reliant on specific local infrastructure? (for example, Visitor Information Centre, specific roads or venues)

Most tourism businesses are not reliant on specific local infrastructure.

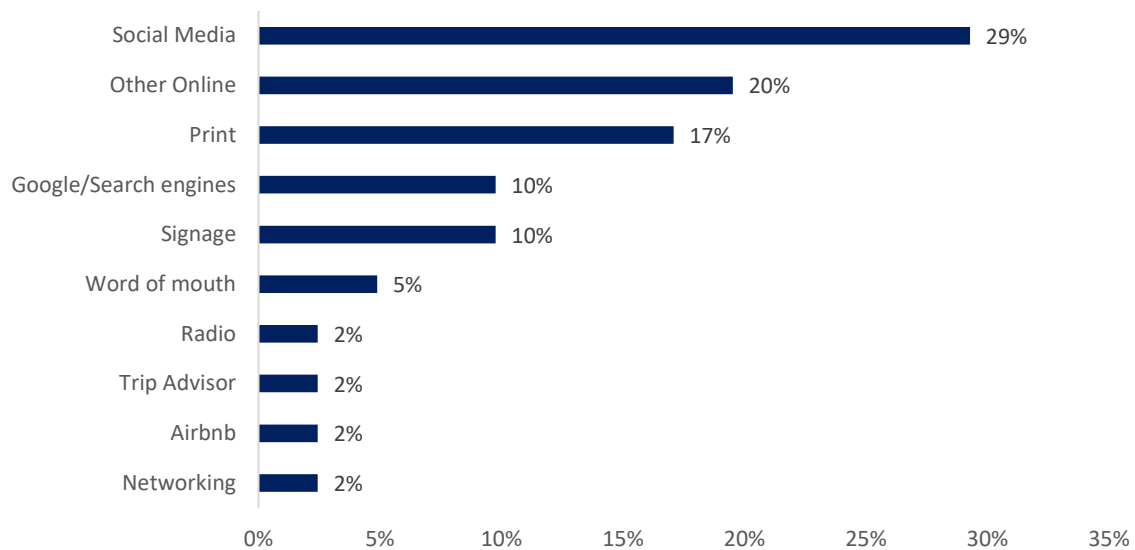


Six respondents advised that they were reliant on local infrastructure, including:

- Main Street
- RV Free Parking
- Yarri sculpture
- Visitor Information Centre
- Local roads and signage
- Annie Pyers Drive

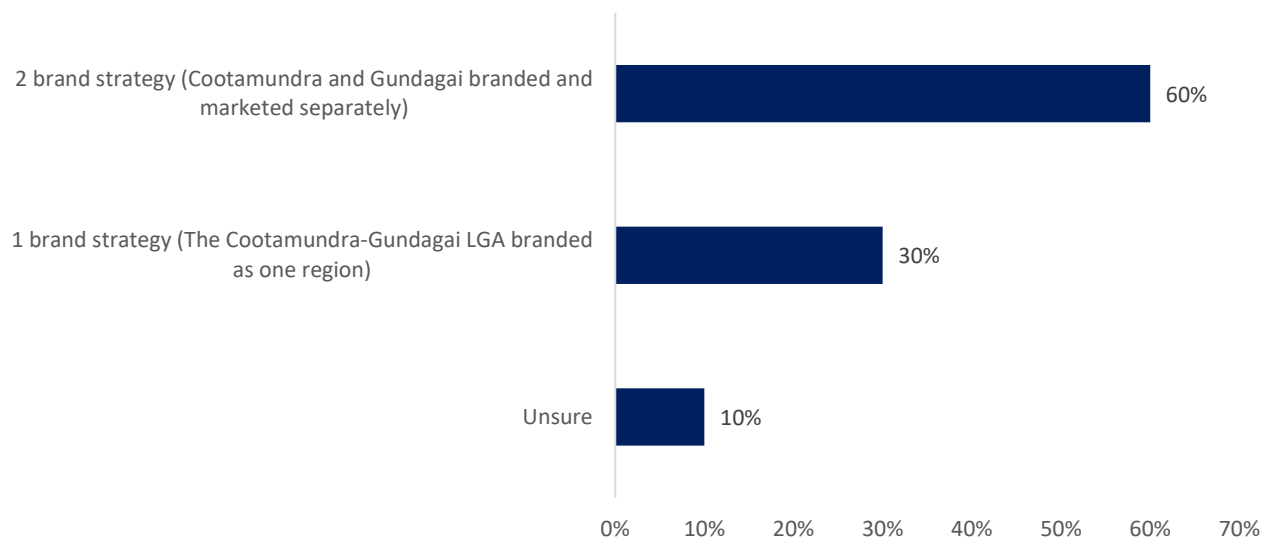
Please list your top three successful marketing strategies

Social media, other online and print marketing strategies were highlighted by respondents as the most successful means of reaching new clients.



What is the best branding strategy to promote the Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Government Area?

The majority of survey respondents prefer a two-brand strategy to promote Cootamundra and Gundagai separately.



When asked to nominate potential ideas to promote/brand/market their region, respondents provided similar ideas and imagery across the regions.

Cootamundra brand:

- Country lifestyle
- Agriculture and local produce
- Antiques and collectibles hub
- Sport, Donald Bradman
- Railways
- Local history

Gundagai brand:

- Country lifestyle
- Murrumbidgee River
- History and folklore
- Local produce and hospitality
- Scenery

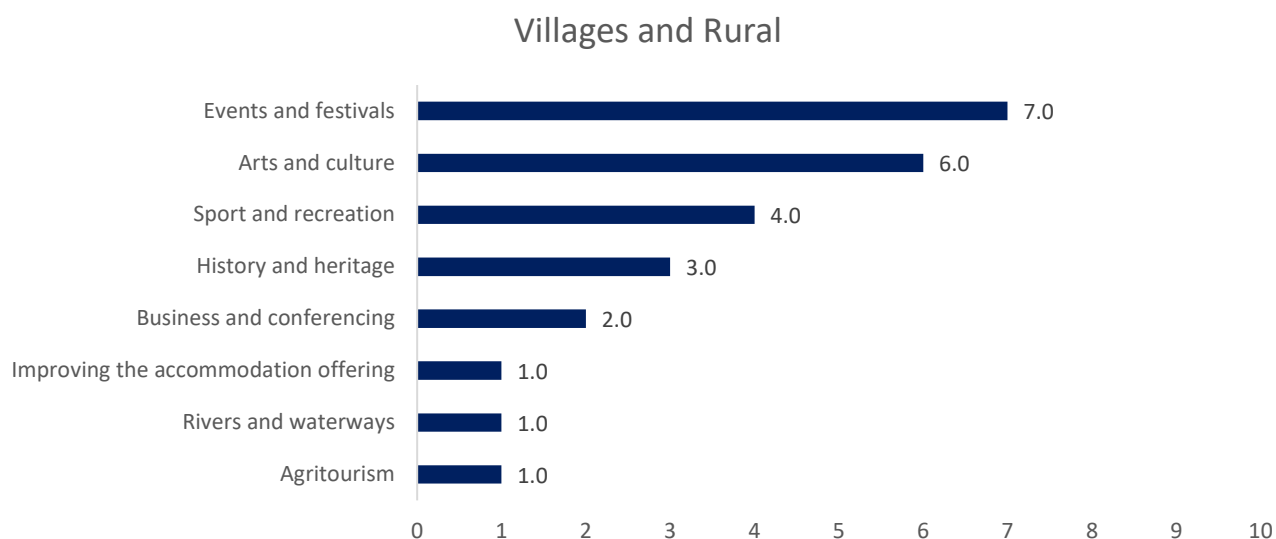
Combined Cootamundra-Gundagai brand:

- Country lifestyle
- Local history
- Agriculture
- Scenery

Rate your preference of themes and actions for developing the Cootamundra-Gundagai tourism economy

Drawing from various regional strategic documents, respondents were asked to rate their preference for themes and actions to develop the local tourism sector. This feedback has been split out by geographical region to inform deliberations in a two-brand strategy. It is important to reiterate for this question that the following question feedback is based on a low number of responses and is not statistically significant.





Are there any specific tourism issues that need to be covered in the Strategy?

When asked for open ended feedback on specific issues that need to be covered in a tourism strategy, general feedback was provided on the following themes:

- Improved signage
- Improved accommodation options
- Improved hospitality quality and opening hours
- Heritage/cultural assets
- River access/activities
- Events
- Better promotion of region

Please rate the following Big Ideas from the Cootamundra-Gundagai Community Strategic Plan out of 10

When asked to rate the Big Ideas from the Cootamundra-Gundagai CSP relating to economic development, tourism survey respondents favoured longer opening hours, better signage and marketing and promotion activities.



APPENDIX D: SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS FROM WORKSHOPS WITH COOTAMUNDRA AND GUNDAGAI TOURISM ACTION COMMITTEES

Note these are verbatim notes of comments made at the workshops

Cootamundra Tourism Committee

Comments on past strategies

- Agricultural businesses have had an interest in agritourism.
- Captains Walk has a successful attendance rate.
- Several tourism group strategies, but nothing really eventuated.
- Tourism groups have increased visitation in Cootamundra with families staying for 3 nights and more overnight stays in the BnB.
- Volleyball event is very popular, but it isn't very well known.
- Regional Shire Councils have done a "country change" expo detailing positives of living Cootamundra to visitors but this has had limited engagement and success.

Current state of tourism

- Not much in Cootamundra to attract visitors to stop.
- Nominated reasons for stopping - Rest or coffee, to see Bradman's birthplace, to visit friends and family.
- Cootamundra gets overflow accommodation from visitors attending events in other towns such as Temora.
- Google maps skip Cootamundra, potentially diverting highway traffic.
- There are plentiful motels/hotels and some farm stays around Cootamundra.
- There are few places for visitors to eat and most cafes are shut on Sundays. A need for more food options was identified.
- Overall, it was agreed that Cootamundra is not so appealing to visitors.
- There is some poor maintenance in the main street of town and there are some vacant buildings.
- Town lacks a cohesive welcome.
- There is increasing interest from visitors in farm stays.
- Some events are well attended, others are declining. Sporting events are generally successful.
- Event goers are not being capitalised on effectively.

Branding/marketing

- There is a need to establish a regional agricultural brand.
- Currently Cootamundra and Gundagai are branded separately with a strong Gundagai brand.
- There is a perception that tourism in Gundagai has had more effort and money invested into it.

- It was believed that a branding strategy should connect the two towns, keep the areas distinct but emphasise connections between Cootamundra and Gundagai.
- Infrastructure and agritourism should be developed.
- Council should drive the marketing of the region.
- There is a need for more Council tourism staff.
- There is a need for greater digital marketing. Some businesses do not understand or are resistant to digital marketing.
- The visit Cootamundra site is under development.

Future strategy

- It was believed that the villages should have a major role in tourism, but many villages lacked drawcards and it was noted that it would take entrepreneurs to provide the impetus for tourism in the villages. Infrastructure requirements for villages were also mentioned.
- Storytelling festival to link Cootamundra, Gundagai and Villages.
- Silo art was mentioned.
- Rejuvenation of Wattle festival.
- Road and signage improvement.
- Perception that Cootamundra needs a new standalone VIC.
- Link the towns via the railway.
- Aboriginal connections link the towns together.
- Offer intensive farming and top-quality produce such as food bowl events.
- Wattle botanical garden.

Gundagai Tourism Committee

Comments on past strategies

- Numerous successes, driven by community groups such as the TAC
- Recent signage and main street upgrade have been successful. Main street opening event was successful, and the main street upgrade has revitalized businesses. Improved town beautification.
- Showground and racecourse noted as tourism assets, potential for these to hold larger events. Racecourse and showground committee a good example of an effective community group.
- Committees viewed as essential to promoting tourism.
- Main points of previous strategy are still relevant.

Current state of tourism

- Gundagai is very accessible both to and from other towns. Great location for overnight stays.
- Current key tourism market still consistent with what was listed in previous strategy.

- History, heritage, and convenience nominated as reasons for why visitors would stop in Gundagai.
- Gundagai has a good reputation for visitors.
- Highway traffic is a source of visitors.
- Strong volume of events held in Gundagai, large number of weddings.
- Lack of venue space, there is a need for greater accommodation.
- There is a need for more food options, but sustainability of running a restaurant in Gundagai was questioned.

Branding/marketing

- Emphasised that Cootamundra and Gundagai are distinct towns with different tourism markets.
- Preference for a 2-brand strategy with some room for links or synergy between towns.
- Mentioned that overnight and daytrip visits will not visit both Cootamundra and Gundagai. Visitors to Gundagai are more likely to visit Tumut and Snowy Valleys LGA.
- The Gundagai tourism strategy is more advanced than Cootamundra's, and there was a few of going backwards if the strategies were combined.
- Basic level of internet marketing needs to be increased so more tourists are aware of what is to offer in the towns
- Supported the marketing theme of Gundagai as a river crossing town.

Future strategy

- Future strategy should be consistent with the old strategy, but with additions.
- Greater focus on international tourism for the future.
- Need to incorporate the Murrumbidgee River, identified as a tourism opportunity.
- Rail trail was mentioned to link the towns and villages.
- Potential access to the river through the rail trail between villages
- It was mentioned that the consistency of message for the highway signage could be improved.
- The main focus should be on the Cootamundra and Gundagai towns rather than the villages. Council could look at providing infrastructure such as waste collection points and RV friendly sites in the villages and assist with event promotion.

APPENDIX E: PREVIOUS CONSULTATION BY COUNCIL

Previous consultation undertaken by Council was also considered.

Council undertook consultation in the preparation of the draft Cootamundra-Gundagai Economic Development Strategy prepared in 2017.

Insights from the consultation were as follows:

Strengths of the region
Economic
Productive agricultural land with good rainfall and access to water leading to a strong agribusiness sector with good support infrastructure for agricultural enterprises
Good freight and logistics access across the local government area
Strong retail business sector providing products and services to the community
Good utility infrastructure (reticulated water, gas, NBN) in major towns
Gundagai tourism product has been developed on the back of its well-known name / brand
Business confidence is strong as demonstrated by recent expansion of large employer businesses
Good visitor support services available to support increased visitation
Social
Safe, affordable and liveable towns and villages
Access to excellent recreational facilities including golf, bowling, sporting fields and pools
Excellent cultural and recreational opportunities for adults, youth and children (including Arts Centre, creative and sporting groups)
A range of diverse lifestyle opportunities exist to support a diversity of living styles including town block sizes, rural living and farm living available
A welcoming community that has an appetite for diversity
Excellent community facilities and services: medical (including availability of specialists), regional universities in close proximity, aged care
Active volunteers and an engaged community
Environment
Significant natural beauty (including the Murrumbidgee River) with great amenity
Heritage buildings
General
Central location to a number of large cities – Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne
Access to international visitors and freight due to proximity to Canberra International Airport
Good proximity to popular places associated with recreational pursuits (snowfields, dams etc)

Barriers within the region
Economic
Lack of affordable land to support farming start-ups
Small mixed lot farms have been subsumed into large scale operations reducing employment and population, especially in outlying villages
Labour is hard to access for some skill sets and businesses, especially if the work is physically demanding. One major employer is experiencing significant difficulties in attracting and retaining workers
Land is tightly held and is hard to get access to small parcels of land (and approval for an associated home) for agricultural use (less than 100 acres)
Lack of understanding as to whether there is adequate land appropriately zoned to support new business and industry initiatives
Government funding to support infrastructure development is hard to access
Key roads require upgrade to support heavy vehicle movements
Village utility infrastructure (i.e. reticulated water, NBN) is limited thus impacting opportunities in these areas
Social
Heavy reliance on Council to advocate and support initiatives – these may not get sufficient support from private businesses
Limited public transport options between villages and towns
Communities can be change averse and resist approaching issues innovatively and creatively
General
Legislative requirements mean initiatives take a long time to get approval
Appearance of some town entries is poor thus discouraging pass-through traffic from entering
A lack of strategic vision and planning for the community. A grand plan is not evident and Council's approach is generally reactive
Council can be perceived as a "blocker" and more "can't do" than "can do"

Opportunities	
Sector	Opportunity
Agriculture and food processing	Improved accessibility to affordable land for emerging farmers
	Intensive farming on smaller lots, including niche farming
	Export preparedness
Tourism, retail and hospitality	Product development
	Marketing and promotion of region
	Access to international visitors
	Improved accessibility to natural resources for tourism purposes
	Long term community and business capacity building to support visitor servicing
Transport and logistics	Improved public transport linkages between towns and villages
	Improvement of road and rail infrastructure to support product and heavy vehicle movements across the local government area
General	Co-investment in facilities to support small business establishment
	Business mentoring to support start-ups and growing businesses
	Enhancement of liveability in communities through the provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure
	Provide access to a ready workforce
	Growth of small businesses, including online businesses
	Creation of LEP planning zones that can support current and emerging business needs
	Development of long-term relationships with large industries in order to encourage relocation into the region
	Professional, streamlined, accessible Council services