

COOTA2050

A friendly, sustainable and well serviced community of the future.



Cootamundra 2050 Strategy

Drafted 2019

Adopted 20##

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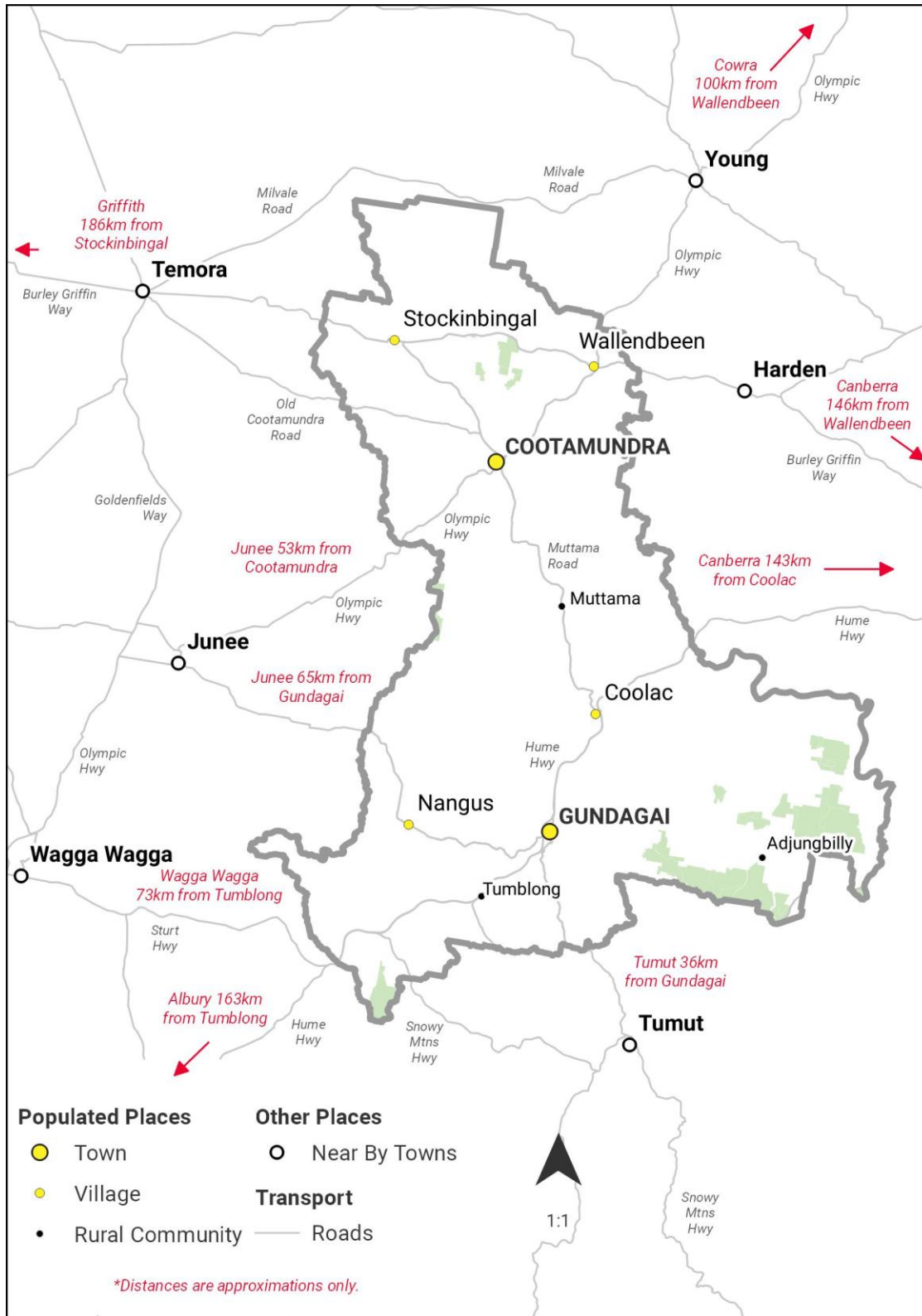
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Executive Summary

In Summary: Cootamundra 2050

- Cootamundra is a town of just under 6,000 people, located on the northern fringes of the Riverina food growing area in southern New South Wales. The Sydney to Melbourne railway corridor passes through the town, with connecting coach services from Griffith and other regional centres connecting Cootamundra.
- Much like many regional areas, Cootamundra has experienced urban decline and lack of renewal alongside the onset of structural population decline; Cootamundra has, a greater percentage of middle aged and elderly making up the population.
- Engaging with the community for the Cootamundra 2050 strategy revealed a real thirst for change, creation of a vision and implementation of a plan to see Cootamundra grow and tackle a range of existing and future challenges.
- The Cootamundra 2050 strategy examines in depth a range of issues and opportunities under six broad headings referencing global issues facing Australia and the impacts and opportunities for Cootamundra:
 - Demographics,
 - Trust
 - Social cohesion
 - Rise of Asia
 - Technological change
 - Climate change and environment
- Based on the issues and opportunities identified, Cootamundra 2050 proposes three goals for Cootamundra to work toward from now until 2050 being:
 - Cultural Hub
 - Centre for medical Excellence
 - Inland Port
- Recommendations and actions from this strategy will be tabulated as an appendix with the responsible agency and/or department clearly identified alongside an adopted timeframe in order to achieve the three goals to achieve a friendly, sustainable and well serviced community of the future.



Foreword

The people of Cootamundra are the most important asset of Cootamundra Town. They are the foundation of the town as well as the custodians of the trust and confidence of past and future generations. This duty has not been misplaced with Cootamundrians stepping up and actively engaging with Council as a part of Cootamundra 2050. This strategy is ambitious and bold, due largely to the determined and daring vision presented to Council by the community.

Key values citizens want for Cootamundra 2050 are for Cootamundra to be:

- Friendly,
- Community,
- Well serviced,
- Vibrant, and
- Sustainable.

By planning for the future, Council can partner with the people of Cootamundra to deliver the physical infrastructure and services they need to be the friendly, sustainable and well serviced community they envision. This time of reflection and planning is the opportunity for Cootamundra to be a more liveable, sustainable and preposterous town. In order to achieve this, we need to be realistic and have some tough conversations. Urban sprawl has to be contained to ensure that our delivery of infrastructure is done in a way which is equitable and cost effective to all. Every person in our community needs to have equitable access to education, recreation and other social opportunities without physical, financial and social barriers dividing us and leaving some behind. Some of these problems are issues Council alone cannot solve, however with a vision and agreed goals we will be better able to coordinate and partner with stakeholders to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Planning for the future is ambitious, sticking to the plan will be hard at times, but the benefits of doing so will become apparent as Cootamundra begins to reflect the community's aspirations.



Abb McAlister
Mayor



Phil McMurray
Acting General Manager



Introduction

Cootamundra has been home to the Wiradjuri people for over 60,000 years. The original inhabitants maintained and cared for the land. After Europeans came to Australia, it was not long until the establishment of pastoral runs and the discovery of gold at Muttama brought European settlers to the district. The settlement of Cootamundra was established up along the main road (what is now the Olympic Highway) and eventually the railway bringing a high speed connection to Sydney and Melbourne. These connections, cemented Cootamundra as a major regional town and population centre that service the surrounding agricultural area as well as a strong value add agricultural industry. Town development was rapid as local wealth spurred the construction of a number of government and community buildings which were spectacular and opulent when compared to neighbouring towns.

Today, Cootamundra is a big deal, just ask anyone who lives here. But while the pride and spirit is strong, it is clear that the town has been suffering from inertia and has lost some lustre with vacant shops and derelict houses dotting the tree lined streets as development opportunities have passed by and children more and more often leave and do not return. Cootamundra's decision to take ownership of its direction and actively engage in the planning process towards 2050 is to be commended with approximately ten percent of the population detailing their thoughts, ideas and aspirations through surveys, submissions and meetings with Council.

As ambitious as 2050 sounds, it is realistic to plan for the long term when implementing a visionary plan which looks at land use, development, infrastructure, community facilities and services. The simple need to plan things properly to ensure longevity of investment and limiting wastage necessitates a long lead time. The benefit Cootamundra has, is that it has beautiful bones and is laid out in a more or less sensible way which allows for growth and servicing in a cost effective and logical manner.

While this strategy looks at Cootamundra as a locality, it's context in the State, Country and World context needs to be considered as there are a number of challenges which it has no ability to shape but can only respond. That response can be harnessed as an opportunity and responded to in line with the community's vision and values. This strategy is organised under the six global challenges facing Australia over the next decades. It is imperative that Cootamundra be contextualised within this framework in order to best understand how to take advantage of opportunities afforded and tackle constraints and problems on a local level to ensure maximum impact.

Cootamundra faces a choice of either slowly declining and becoming increasingly exposed to shock events, such as when its abattoir ceased operations and many lost their primary source of income or the increasing likelihood of flash inundation flood events which can cause irreparable or costly damage to property, or it can adopt a visionary approach to the future, focusing on

creating a resilient community which is able to not only absorb losses, but build on them for a better tomorrow.

Strategic Framework

The need for a Cootamundra Town Strategy was identified as being required for the formulation of the new Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and the Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Strategic Planning Statement. As a part of creating the Cootamundra LEP 2013, the then Cootamundra Shire Council undertook some strategic work which looked at existing land uses, particularly industrial land and residential land. The subsequent LEP reflected this strategic work, however there was never any work done to plan Cootamundra into the future. Recent changes to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 and Department of Planning guidelines have emphasised the need for strategic planning, in particular long term planning via the Local Strategic Planning Statements. As a merged Council, a single theme or vision for the entire Local Government Area would be unwieldy and not implementable. Because of this, Council is proposing to break their local strategic planning statement into four sub areas to better address the diverse needs of our community being:

- The villages,
- Rural lands,
- Cootamundra, and
- Gundagai.

The Cootamundra 2050 strategy will serve as the background document which will inform the Cootamundra area component of the Local Strategic Planning Statement, the Cootamundra-Gundagai LEP and the Cootamundra-Gundagai DCP. Good strategic planning is not done in isolation, and in order to ensure the greatest success of this strategic, it has been formulated in line with other strategic plans and considerations.

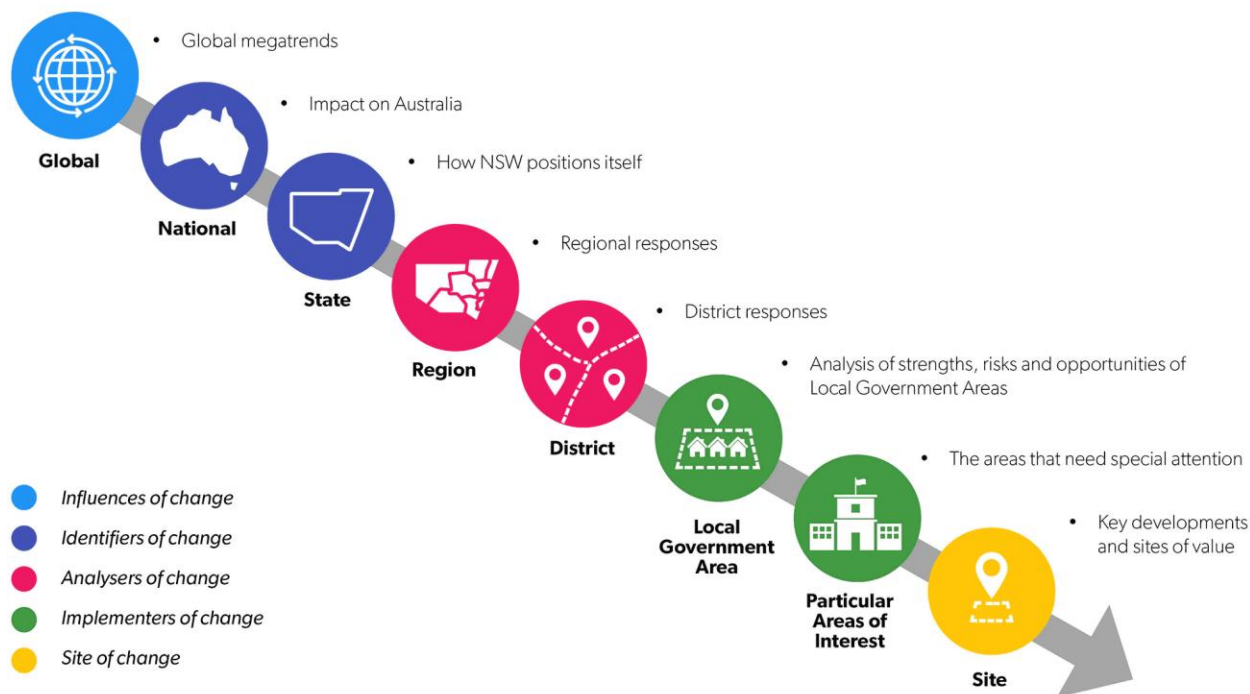


Figure 1: Strategic planning context - from the NSW Department of Planning website

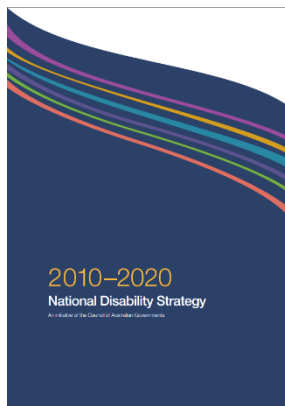
Australian National Outlook 2019

The Australian National Outlook was established by the CSIRO as a public private partnership to examine the future of Australia against a global and local context. The outlook charts key global and Australian challenges and opportunities to provide an either/or scenario of what is likely to occur if we continue as we are and what could be possible if we implement certain changes now and in the future.

The National Outlook forms the framework of this document to contextualise actions and issues relevant to Cootamundra in a national and internal perspective to better explore Cootamundra's future potential.



National Disability Strategy



The National Disability Strategy is a ten year plan for improving the lives of Australians living with a disability, their carers, their friends and family. Particularly relevant to the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy is the advocacy of inclusion within the community both physically and socially in order for those with a disability to “fulfil their potential as equal citizens”.

Principles and considerations around the built form have been informative when considering design and development standards recommended by this strategy and any future projects.

Australia's Ageing Population

This report was prepared by the Australian Parliamentary Budget Office and is of relevance to the Cootamundra 2050 strategy as it explores the drivers of the aging population and the budgetary impact of this trend. Understanding the budgetary pressure areas such as health and aged care assists Council in making recommendations for supportive infrastructure and services which may alleviate some of the burden associated with an ageing population.



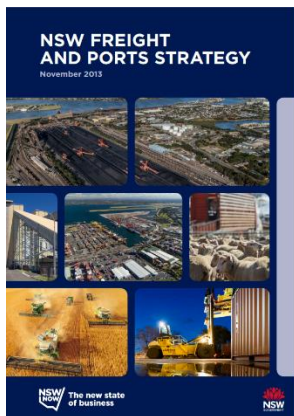
NSW 2021

The NSW State Plan is a 10 year plan to guide policy and budget decision making. NSW 2021 works in conjunction with the NSW Budget to deliver identified community priorities. It sets goals and measurable targets outlining immediate actions that will help achieve these goals. These goals reflect the Government's commitment to whole of State growth and delivery of projects, to improve opportunities and quality of life for people in regional and metropolitan NSW.



The Plan indirectly guides residential development through infrastructure planning. Major infrastructure plans have been used to inform, justify and support recommendations of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy.

NSW Freight and Ports Strategy



The NSW Freight and Ports Strategy supports the goals of NSW 2021 and is a central planning document for NSW strategic freight infrastructure.

There is a focus within the strategy to expand the network capacity of regional areas and ports. As the Cootamundra 2050 strategy proposes, the unique position of Cootamundra as a conduit between the Sydney – Melbourne Rail line and the Inland Rail means that there is a real opportunity here for improved network efficiency and freight industry. Coupled with availability of flat land adjacent to the railway corridor, Cootamundra may offer an opportunity unrivalled across the State for the identified problem of the estimated tripling of container traffic through our ports by 2030 by becoming an inland port.

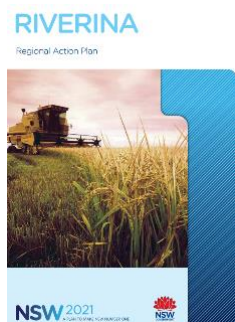
Riverina-Murray Regional Plan

The Riverina-Murray Regional Plan looks broadly at the Riverina Region, with specific emphasis on the cities and towns of the region as key to the future 27% increase in population by 2036.

In terms of development, the Regional Plan provides good planning outcomes which influence recommendations for local environmental plan changes and broader strategic goals for the region.



Riverina Regional Action Plan 2021



The Riverina Regional Action Plan identifies the immediate actions the NSW Government will prioritise in the Riverina. These actions aim to compliment both long term strategies developed for NSW and existing regional strategies.

These priorities inform a number of directions and recommendations of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy.

Community Strategic Plan: Our Place, Our Future 2018-28

The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework for local councils was developed to help Councils strengthen community participation in decision making, provide corporate strategic emphasis and reduce duplication of work. As a part of this Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, Council is required to prepare a community strategic plan.

The community strategic plan is a ten year document with high level objectives. It is developed by the community and articulates the vision of “A vibrant region attracting people, investment and business through innovation, diversity and community spirit.”



The formulation of the community strategic plan is based on the principles of equity, access, participation and rights. The plan takes a holistic view of our community by addressing social, economic, environment and civic leadership issues. It is a whole of community document that identifies responsibilities and partnerships to enable various levels of Government to work together in delivering on the concerns identified by the community.

The key direction of “Sustainable natural and built environments: we connect with the places and spaces around us” speaks directly to the role and purpose of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy and demonstrates the connection between the community strategic plan and this strategy.

Directions by the Minister for Consideration (9.1 Directions)

Employment & Resources

Business & Industrial Zones

Cootamundra 2050 is consistent with this direction and proposes to increase usage of industrial land taking advantage of existing infrastructure.

Rural Zones

This strategy does not seek to rezone any rural zones to residential, business, industrial, village or tourist zone at this stage. It is acknowledged that rezonings may be required or justified by recommendations of this strategy, accordingly this document provides the strategic context for such changes and it is believed that such rezonings would be of minor significant and therefore comply with this direction.

Rural Lands

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the CGRC Rural Lands Strategy 2019. The Cootamundra 2050 Strategy is consistent with the purpose and intent of this direction and any resulting planning proposal from any recommendations of this strategy would be supportive of the direction.

Environment & Heritage

Environmental Protection Zones

The Strategy is consistent with this direction as it does not recommend diminishing any environmental protection zones nor impact the function of such areas.

Heritage Conservation

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it seeks further recognition of heritage, heritage items, aboriginal and other cultural heritage.

Housing, Infrastructure & Urban Development

Residential Zones

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it seeks to broaden housing choice, make more effective use of existing and future services, promote infill development as well as reducing sprawl by instigating an urban containment line.

Home Occupations

This strategy is consistent with permitting home occupations to be carried out in dwelling houses without the need for development consent.

Integrated Land Use & Transport

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it promotes greater employment opportunities and increases in services in industrial areas and identified tourism “hotspots”. A key goal of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy sees Cootamundra leverage off of the Inland Rail through provision of an inland port.

Shooting Ranges

This strategy includes land which is used as a shooting range. It does not propose any further development within the trajectory of the range or the possible impact areas.

Hazard & Risk

Acid Sulfate Soils

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it does not propose development on land identified as containing acid sulfate soils.

Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it does not propose development on land identified as unstable or in a mine subsidence area.

Flood Prone Land

The strategy is largely consistent with this direction as it does not seek to rezone or repurpose land which is mapped as being flood prone. It does however encourage further evaluation and research of possible alternate uses for flood prone land. Noting that any development proposed in a flood prone area would need to comply with the controls of the relevant LEP and DCP, any inconsistency with this direction would be negligible. Proposed controls in the LEP and DCP have been influenced by Flood Study work currently being undertaken.

Planning for Bushfire Protection

Noting that review of the bushfire mapping for the local government area will be undertaken in the near future, the strategy does propose land uses and potential rezoning of sites which are mapped as being bushfire prone, however any planning proposal around these sites would need to adequately address this direction.

Regional Planning

Implementation of Regional Plans

The strategy has been formulated and influenced by the Riverina-Murray Regional Plan and a number of actions and work items are directly supported by the regional plan.

Local Plan Making

Approval and Referral Requirements

The strategy is consistent with this direction as it does not include recommendations of provisions which would require the concurrence, consultation or referral of development applications to a Minister or public authority.

Reserving Land for Public Purposes

The strategy does identify a number of sites as needing to be reserved for future public purposes. Where possible this has been limited to Crown Land sites which could be repurposed to fit an alternate community use. Any planning proposal which seeks to implement these reservations would need to comply with the requirements of local planning direction and seek appropriate sign off from the relevant representative/s.

Site Specific Provisions

The strategy does propose some site specific works, however the current zoning in most instances would be flexible enough to allow for such development to be undertaken. Should rezoning or other amendments be required to the instrument the process of the planning proposal will evaluate the proposal against this direction.

What Cootamundra said

Council undertook extensive community engagement with the Cootamundra community throughout June 2019 to capture not only how Cootamundrians were feeling about their town currently, but what opportunities they saw for the town in the future. A key outcome of the engagement was to a vision for Cootamundra to work towards.

Numerically, engagement was highly successful with almost ten percent of Cootamundra town either completing and returning a survey or making a general submission. Council staff applied a saturation approach to gathering feedback by standing on streets to hand out surveys, running information sessions, posting links continuously on Facebook and direct emailing organisations the survey. The final result of 493 returned surveys and 12 submissions has created a very solid data set for staff to work with when putting together this strategy.

Surprisingly, the overwhelming mood of respondents was one of future optimism but significant past apathy towards the Council and Cootamundra in general, for example the question which asked “In your time here, has Cootamundra changed?” 48 percent of respondents said that it had not, however the 52 percent that said that it had and then elaborated by saying that it was “for the worst”. Having reached a very large cross section of the community and a number of different demographics, it is logical to summarise that Cootamundrians have not been happy with how their community has developed over previous decades, however their willingness to engage with the process and plan for the future shows that they remain optimistic for the future.

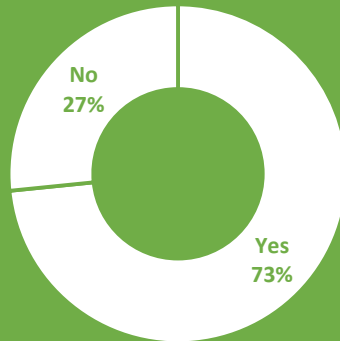


Figure 2: Community engagement to get people talking about Cootamundra 2050

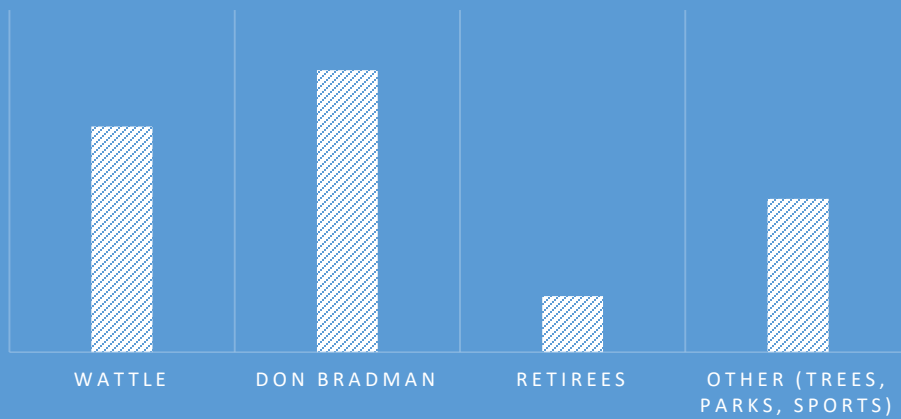


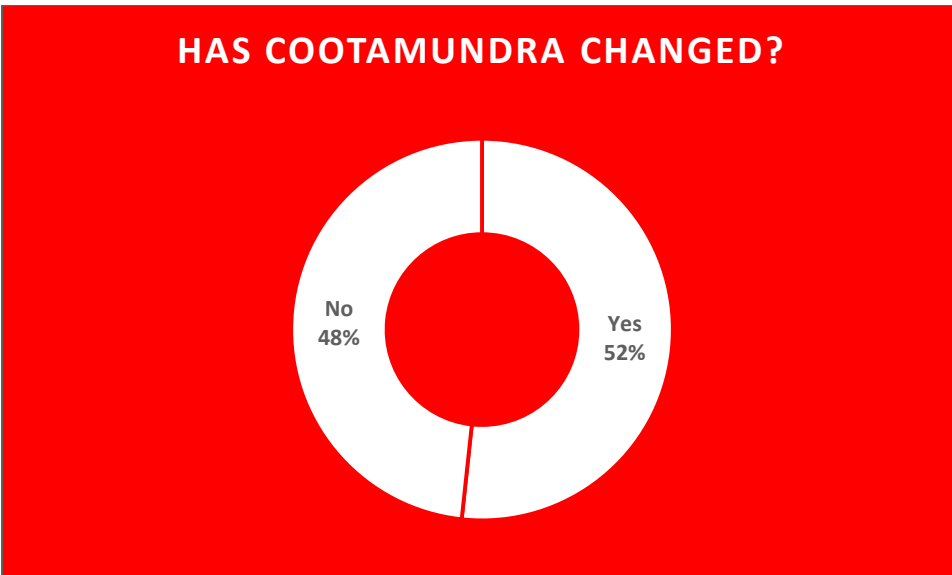
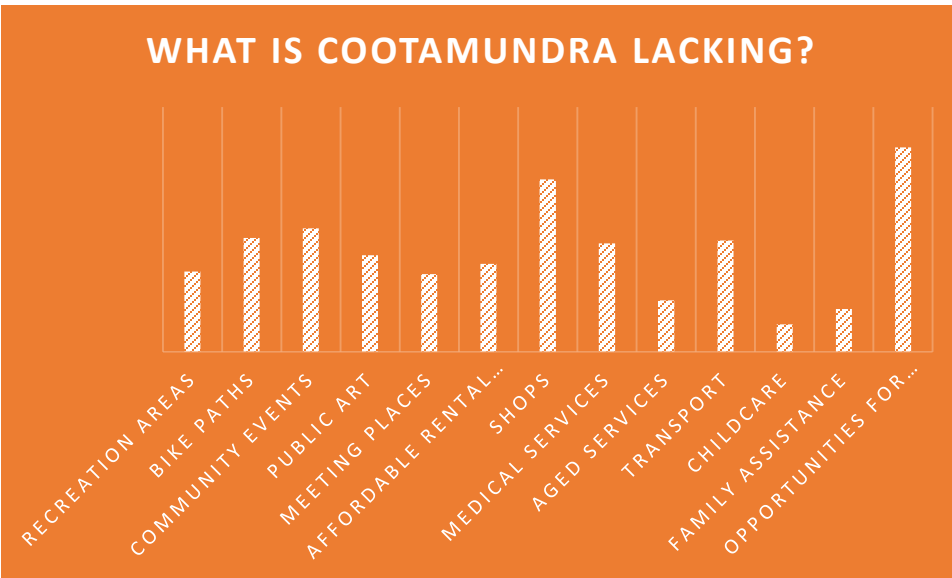


IS COOTAMUNDRA PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY?

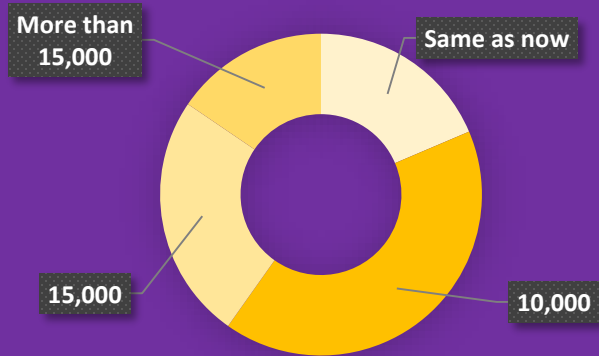


WHAT IS COOTAMUNDRA RENOWNED FOR?





In 2050, Cootamundra should have a population of...



IN 2050, COOTAMUNDRA WILL BE...



Demographics

Demographics covers a wide range of topics including population and physical infrastructure. A thorough understanding of demographics allows Council the ability to better understand their core market and thereby provide a better level of service. Understanding how the demographics of an area are impacted and influenced by a number of internal and external factors is key for predicting how an organisation can best react to reduce costs and increase services. Understanding demographics can turn a challenge into an opportunity.

Population

Cootamundra as a defined urban centre recorded a population of 5,669 people in 2016. This demonstrates marginal growth from the 2011 census which recorded the population as 5,579.

In 2016, the Department of Planning released statistics for the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Government Area (LGA) which predicts that the LGA is currently experiencing a population peak, but will ultimately contract by 1,150 people by 2036. This modelling is based on the current age structure which is structurally weighted towards the elderly and no economic stimulus of business activity to retain youth and encourage young families to come and live in the LGA. It is a prediction of our LGA should nothing happen to stimulate economic and population growth. Cootamundra is not expected to be immune to the overall general population decline of CGRC.

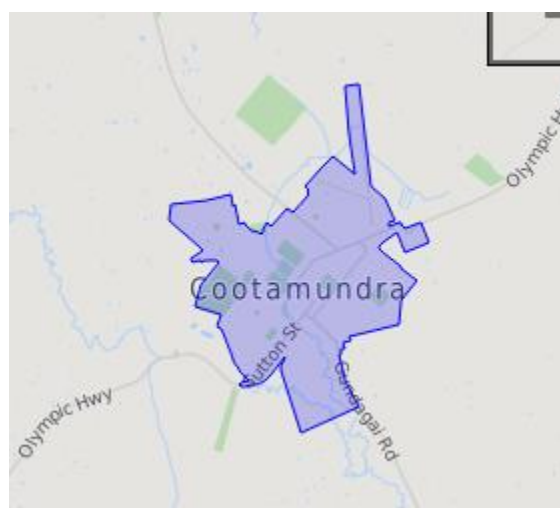


Figure 3: Extent of the urban centre from the Australian Bureau of Statistics

Community engagement revealed a desire for overall growth with 41 percent of respondents wanting a population of 10,000 by 2050, 24.7 percent wanting 15,000 and 15.5 percent wanting more than 15,000. Only 18.6 percent were happy to see population remain at the current size. With targeted economic development and stimulus, Cootamundra could achieve a population of 10,000 by 2050 at a growth rate of 1.5 percent while achieving 15,000 would be difficult with yearly growth required to be approximately 3 percent, particularly when considering the challenge to overcome the structural aging within the population.

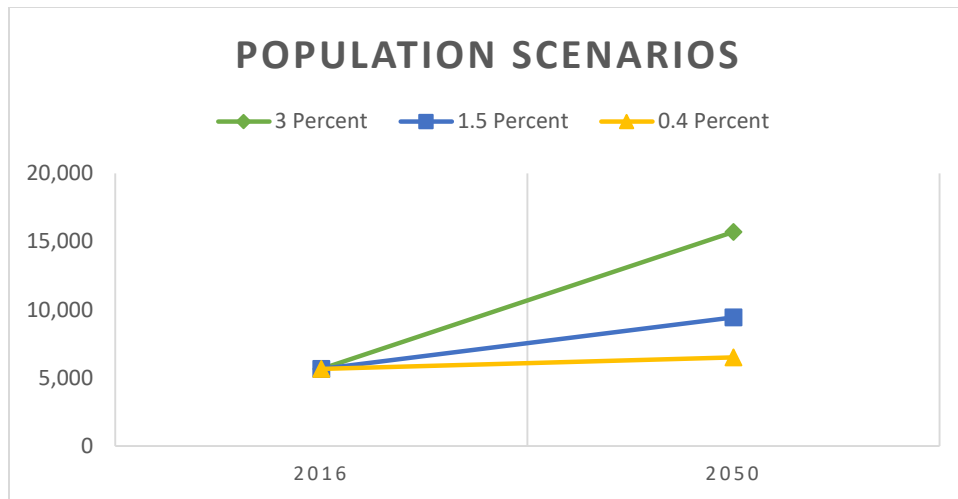


Figure 4: Population projections



Aging

An aging population is a reality Australia has historically avoided through migration. Migrants tend to be on average younger than the general population and boost birth rates which slows the pace of ageing in the population. In a community like Cootamundra which has struggled to attract young migrants the positivity of migration has not been felt. This is compounded by the trend of youth leaving Cootamundra, people having less children and the success Cootamundra has had in attracting an older migrants from farms and other larger centres.

Cootamundra has almost doubled the percentage of the population which is aged 65 and over since 2001. In 2001 15.8 percent of the Cootamundra population was aged 65 and over, but by 2016 this had increased to 30.5 percent. No other urban centre in the Riverina can rival Cootamundra for percentage of the population which is made up of the 65 years and older demographic. While overall the population has increased since 2001, the number of youth and adults have declined. Should nothing be done to retain younger people and attract more families to Cootamundra, the town faces the reality of a sharp population decline by 2030 as forecasted by modelling by the Department of Planning.

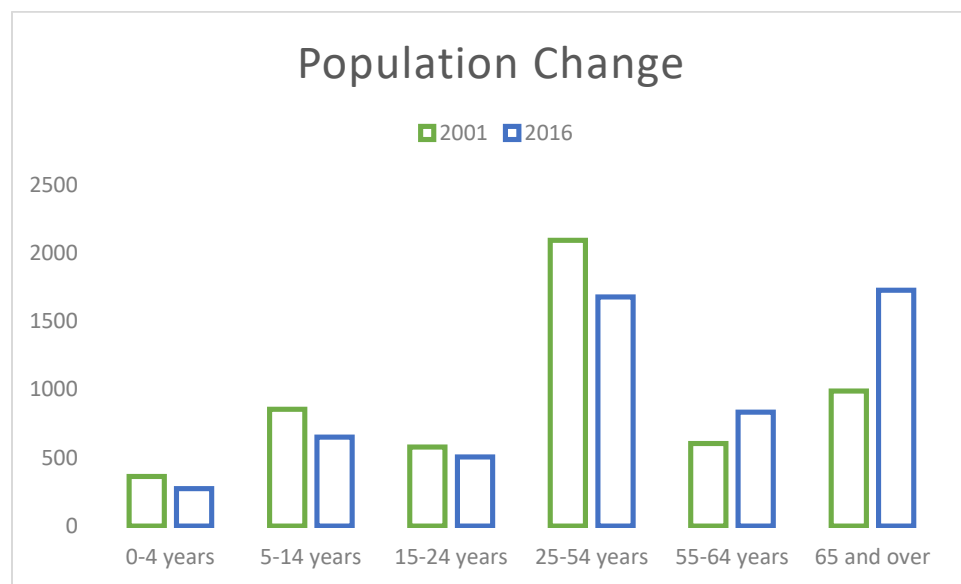


Figure 5: Population group change 2001-2016 censuses

Cootamundra faces the issue of stabilising an ageing population which has been artificially inflated with migration of 65 year and older people. To achieve population growth not only does Cootamundra need to be proactive in attracting new families to town, but it needs to compete with the rest of Australia while doing so. Employment and lifestyle opportunities are key to the success of driving population growth which should be a combination of luring children back to town and targeting skill deficits in the community such as health and aged care workers.

Urban Containment

Infrastructure provision covers everything from sewer, water, electricity, internet to footpaths and parks. A growing population needs to be serviced by the local authority (Council or otherwise) as per the Local Government Act 1993 and other relevant legislation. The spread of the population and age of the population needs to be considered in service provision, for example an area which is expected to become more aged or have a large youth component should provide greater access and provision to shared pathways and ability for transport providers to provide services in the town.

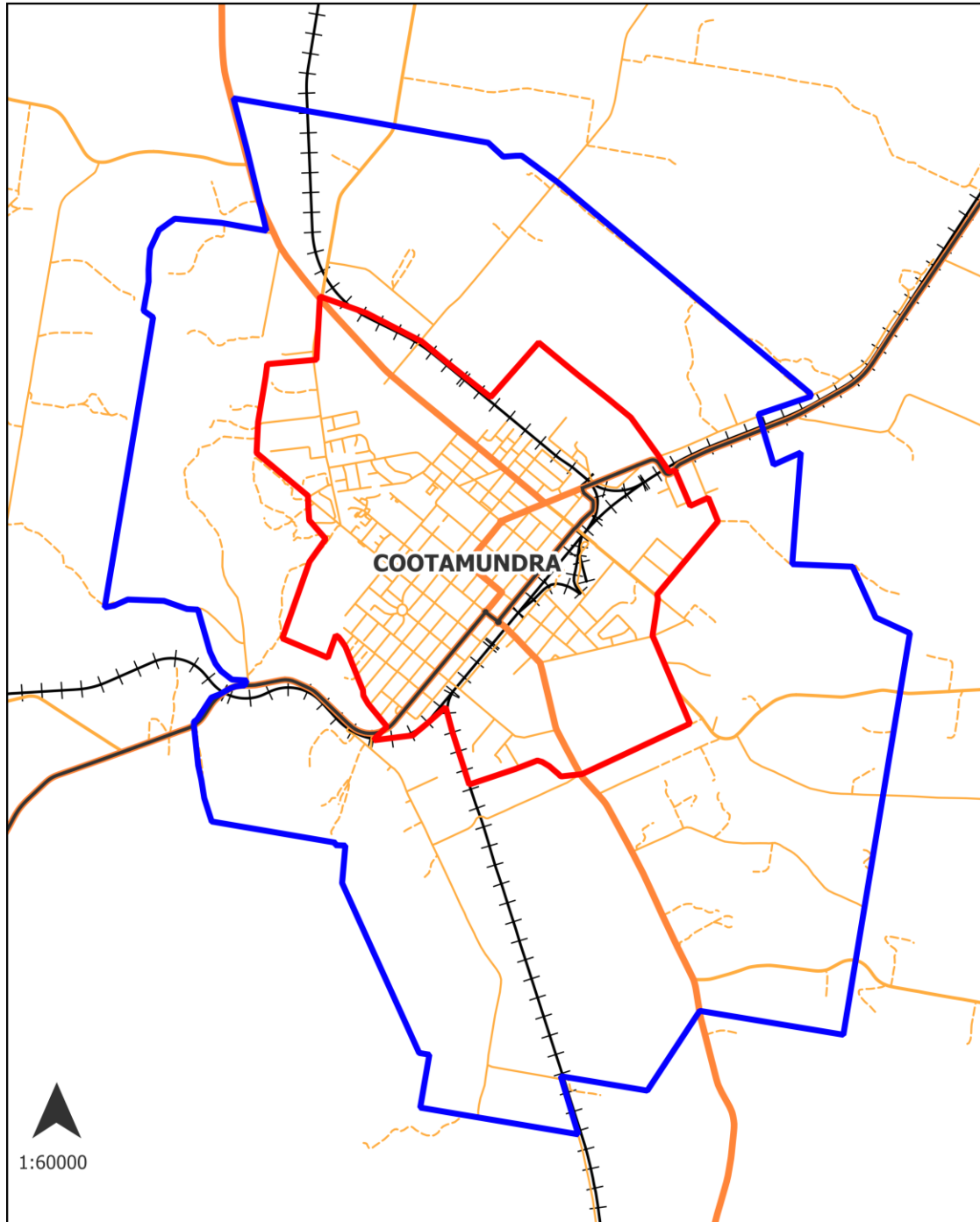
The cost of infrastructure provision is allocated at an average cost across the community through rates or individual service transactions. Like most towns, the current system in Cootamundra operates on an average basis. For example, there is no differentiation between a new water connections in the central business district versus one on the urban periphery, despite the connection in the centre of town costing much less overall. Distance serves as a multiplier of the cost of infrastructure. By instigating an urban containment line, Council commits to allowing and encouraging densification and thereby lower infrastructure provision costs while also increasing the base number of people able to pay for such services. Proposed urban containment for Cootamundra sees a two tiered system with all services to be provided to those within the urban containment area and water where appropriate to those in the buffer area.



Urban Containment Lines

 Peri Urban

 Urban



Trust

Trust matters. People need to feel comfortable, safe and respected in their existing environment before we can expect them to “give back” whether that be through their employment, volunteering, support or participation.

Cootamundra has a deficit in trust for local institutions, including the Council. The past needs to be acknowledged and the feelings that people have about decisions made and opportunities foregone need to be reconciled with their desires for the future. By being open to Council, state agencies and other local actors’ attempts to rebuild trust, Cootamundra can embark on a process to realise those lost opportunities and create Cootamundra 2050.

Trust is essential to the success of Cootamundra 2050, as consensus is needed to work towards articulated goals as well as deal with unexpected challenges and opportunities.

Council

Levels of trust in institutions such as Council by the general public are usually low with government and media generally thought of poorly by both the informed and general population.¹ Cootamundra 2050 is ambitious not least because it proposes a concentrated effort to grow the population, but also the number of service and infrastructure programs which need to be delivered to serve the current and future population. Council is required to be the leader and sometimes manager of this process, knowing that Council’s actions are dictated by a long term, rational plan will assist the community in trusting in the actions of Council in order to achieve the vision of Cootamundra 2050.

Aside from service delivery and physical works, Council must continue to be the local regulator of planning, building and health. This includes educating the community about matters relating to building safety and public health. Council also has obligations to enforce legislation around a raft of issues, often this enforcement is viewed negatively, however the alternative is allowing risk in the planning, building and health space which would have wide ranging consequences from serious injury and death to higher insurance premiums and cost of living.

State Government

The process of Council amalgamations eroded a significant amount of trust in the State Government, however this has been tempered in recent times with significant investment from the State in community projects and facilitation of essential infrastructure upgrades such as the water main replacement program (delivered via the Council).

The willingness of the State to act on recommendations of the Villages Strategy 2018 has demonstrated to the community that they are willing and committed to listen to community desires as well as fund long

¹ Edelman (2019) 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer global report. Edelman.

term infrastructure upgrades provided it is part of a plan. The goals of Cootamundra 2050 are ambitious and require the State to be an active and contributing stakeholder. It is the desire of Council that the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy be endorsed by the Department of Planning.

Business

Business within Cootamundra is generally viewed apathetically based on responses from community engagement with opportunities for employment and shops ranked highest for what Cootamundra is lacking. Lack of shopping variety and poor hours of operation contributed overwhelmingly to the vast majority of people who felt that the town was “dead”. Exasperation at local employment opportunities tended to be accompanied by the view that more must be done to encourage new business to come to town and for existing businesses to expand. Bunnings, Aldi and other large retailers were proposed as a panacea to employment woes, however reliance on a single or large employer to dominate the market can be fraught with danger should that business experience turbulence, as experienced when the abattoir scaled back activities due to a change in contract opportunities. Furthermore, the reality is that Cootamundra is too close to Wagga Wagga with too small of a catchment to attract large retailers, however it could capture the destination market by providing a variety of shops and trade services in a single location; capitalising on Cootamundra’s position of spoke in the wheel to surrounding towns.

Partnering with the Cootamundra Development Corporation to provide education and training to existing businesses around how to better tailor their hours to meet peak demand, such as Saturday sport as well as creating a central hub which not only advertises all the businesses and services of Cootamundra but providing booking services such as through an app would assist some businesses. Similarly the promotion of local events and attractions would also assist to create a destination culture. Opportunities to provide a different experience such as late night shopping on a Friday once a month encourages businesses to stay open and encourage customers to travel from other towns. Creating a festival or market to coincide with this would succeed in generating hype and advertising. Exploring points of difference and uniqueness is another way to create a destination culture.



Social cohesion

Social cohesion is ensuring that as a community we are able to come together and work for the betterment of the town holistically. Social angst through low wages, unemployment, disabilities can breed isolation and disconnect which is the opposite of the friendly community Cootamundra is striving for as indicated by the feedback of the community engagement.

Cootamundra nominated “Friendly” as a key value for the town in 2050 and yet felt that the community currently lacked community events and meeting places. A lack of community events and meeting places hinder any attempt to foster community spirit and development as a “friendly” place. No matter the situation, every person in Cootamundra should have access to education and play spaces as well as sites to connect to technology, study and recreate which are not subject to financial and social barriers.

Encouraging new business and existing businesses to expand is imperative to nurturing the ambitious population of goal of 10,000 by 2050. Increased employment opportunities feeds a continuous cycle of housing renewal and choice which will in turn spur developers to consider housing variety to better cater for the market with greater access to accessible and affordable dwellings.

Employment

Employment is a dominating factor in people’s life. A job can be the realisation of a life’s passion, it can be a continuous learning experience or it can simply be a means of paying the bills. Regardless, the importance of employment and employment opportunities are considerations in land use and land use planning. Barriers to employment through education and skills training as well as physical access through transport and financial barriers are concerns which can be addressed through holistic community planning. Providing a range of areas for businesses and services to operate which are well connected to residential areas, education facilities and recreation spaces encourage high uptake of land and promote a bustling, vibrant community.

Cootamundra suffered a massive blow to employment in early 2017 when abattoir operations were halted and over 200 staff laid off. Thankfully, most workers were able to secure other employment opportunities within Cootamundra, Young or Junee. This was an educational experience in that it demonstrated the risk associated with having only one large employer in the town. To be a more resilient economy, Cootamundra needs to be a locality which facilitates large industries such as meat processing and freight handling, but also smaller technical operations and services. Land use has to be flexible to allow new opportunities to develop as well as allowing existing operation to evolve to market conditions.

Opportunities exist in the provision and practice of health services, from education and training to facilities. Cootamundra has the largest percentage of those aged over 65 in the Riverina and could use this as a spark for opportunity to grow a service industry and the population overall with a ability to target education for shortage areas (see figure 6) and then encourage migration to the community appropriately qualified physiotherapists and seniors carers (see figure 7).

Figure 7 shows the mismatch between job listings and vacancies, showing that jobs which are regularly shared gather more applicants and tend to be highly skilled as opposed to jobs with a lower share rate but a higher ratio of applicants. These highly skilled positions attract overseas job seekers, as Australian with these skills tend to either be gainfully employed or be seeking employment overseas. If Cootamundra was to aim to develop health care services and education, then it makes sense to target skilled migrants who can fill related fields such as physiotherapist and elder care assistant.

Rank	Growing share	Shrinking share
1	Fitter	Server
2	Forklift operator	Chef
3	Registered nurse	Cleaner
4	Occupational therapist	Barista
5	Full stack developer	Payroll officer
6	Electrician	Recruitment consultant
7	Disability support worker	Sales representative
8	Diesel mechanic	Team member
9	Physiotherapist	Sales consultant
10	Boilermaker	Accounts payable clerk

Figure 6: (Comparing job postings in Dec 2014 with Dec 2018) Source: Indeed

Rank	Resume share > posting share	Posting share > resume share
1	Customer service representative	Business development manager
2	Cleaner	Physiotherapist
3	Server	Occupational therapist

Rank	Resume share > posting share	Posting share > resume share
4	Kitchen team member	Project manager
5	Sales assistant	Fitter
6	Labourer	Classroom teacher
7	Packer	Store manager
8	Retail sales associate	Recruitment consultant
9	Crew member	Elder care assistant
10	Barista	Business analyst

Figure 7: (Comparing job seeker resumes with job posting in Dec 2018) Source: Indeed



Education

Cootamundra has a number of educational facilities:

- Cootamundra Public School (K – 6)
- EA Southie Public School (k – 6)
- Sacred Heart Catholic School (k – 10)
- Cootamundra Public High School (7 – 12)
- Elouera Special School (K – 12)
- TAFE

Primary and secondary schooling follows a state and national curriculum and so, aside from socioeconomic factors impacting opportunities of students, there is not a lot of scope for improvement in this area. Despite this, Council needs to ensure that community facilities such as the Cootamundra Memorial Library evolve to meet the educational and passive recreational needs of the community. Establishment of a dedicated youth space at the library and embellishment of recreation areas to cater to all ages in Cootamundra will assist to develop positive study habits, recreation and fine motor skills.

Post-secondary education is available through the Cootamundra TAFE which offers a range of on campus and online courses. Opportunities to develop a residential area for TAFE students to cater for intensive fast track courses which could make Cootamundra a destination for education and training – for example an offering of pathology collection, ageing support and early childhood education and care which could be undertaken fulltime, intensively would be attractive to school leavers in between completion of the Higher School Certificate and university studies or as a course for middle aged carer changers.

Housing

Cootamundra has a mix of dwelling types. While the market is dominated by detached dwellings, there are a number of unit, multi unit and duplex dwellings across the town. Since the early 2000s, new dwellings have predominately been detached, averaging 3-4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. This sort of development caters to young families and retirees, however the deficit in new dwelling stock for the two bedroom and below market has led to a market floor for rental accommodation in Cootamundra of \$200 per week. Rental affordability was identified as a key problem facing Cootamundra during community consultation and Council is aware of a number of informal housing arrangements and homelessness within Cootamundra.

Performance based development should be encouraged by removing minimum lot sizes from the R3 – Medium Density Zone provided compliance with the Development Control Plan is achieved to foster and encourage innovative design for alternate and affordable housing.

Homelessness has been identified by the State Government as an increasingly prevalent issue outside of metropolitan NSW. It is important to remember that homelessness is unique and situational dependant and accordingly the solution is individual and requires the holistic actions of government, community services, health, education and justice to prevent and deal with homelessness. The State's Homelessness Strategy estimates that around 40 percent of people sleeping rough occurs in regional and remote Australia, with many instances occurring when those who travel to town to attend an appointment or access services have difficulty securing overnight accommodation.

Transitions in life such as relationship breakdown, discharge from hospital or release from gaol can result in stress and uncertainty which contributes to the risk of homelessness.

Domestic violence is pervasive throughout Australian society. Cootamundra is serviced by a number of charities and the Murrumbidgee Health Local Health District services victims of domestic violence through the Cootamundra Medical Centre, however anecdotally community members are often reluctant to take up these services due to stigma and being a small community (everyone knows everyone). A more comprehensive strategy and response to situations of domestic violence needs to be pursued in Cootamundra in conjunction with police, health and local government.

Cootamundra is within close proximity to Junee Correctional Facility. Occasionally, newly released inmates walk or hitchhike to Cootamundra, coordination with justice representatives to better prepare inmates for release would reduce these occurrences of homelessness.

A diversity of housing needs to be aimed for to better cater for the whole community rather than the default "young families" model being pursued.

Housing Supply

Assuming an average household size of 2.1 people per household (as per census return of 2016), and a current vacancy rate of 307 unoccupied dwellings or 11.6 percent, then Cootamundra technically is able to house approximately 645 additional people using existing dwelling stocks. Achieving a zero vacancy rate is impossible, and so construction is likely to be stimulated by any increase in population.

Looking at the scenarios for population growth and assuming a 2.1 per person household, Cootamundra will need:

	Additional dwellings over 31 years	Average per year
0.4 Percent Growth Rate (as is)	86	2.8
1.5 Percent Growth Rate	1,487	48.0
3 Percent Growth Rate	4,470	144

Cootamundra currently has enough Greenfield general residential land zoned for 734 new detached dwellings, guaranteeing at least 15 years' worth of land for greenfield residential development. However there are plenty of opportunities for larger lots to subdivide further, acreage lots and medium density



development so it is likely that the land supply will be sustained with no action required for at least 15 – 20 years. To better monitor and manage the delivery of land at opportune times, it is recommended the Council undertake a land monitor report analysing development, trends, consumption and demand for housing in Cootamundra by 2030.

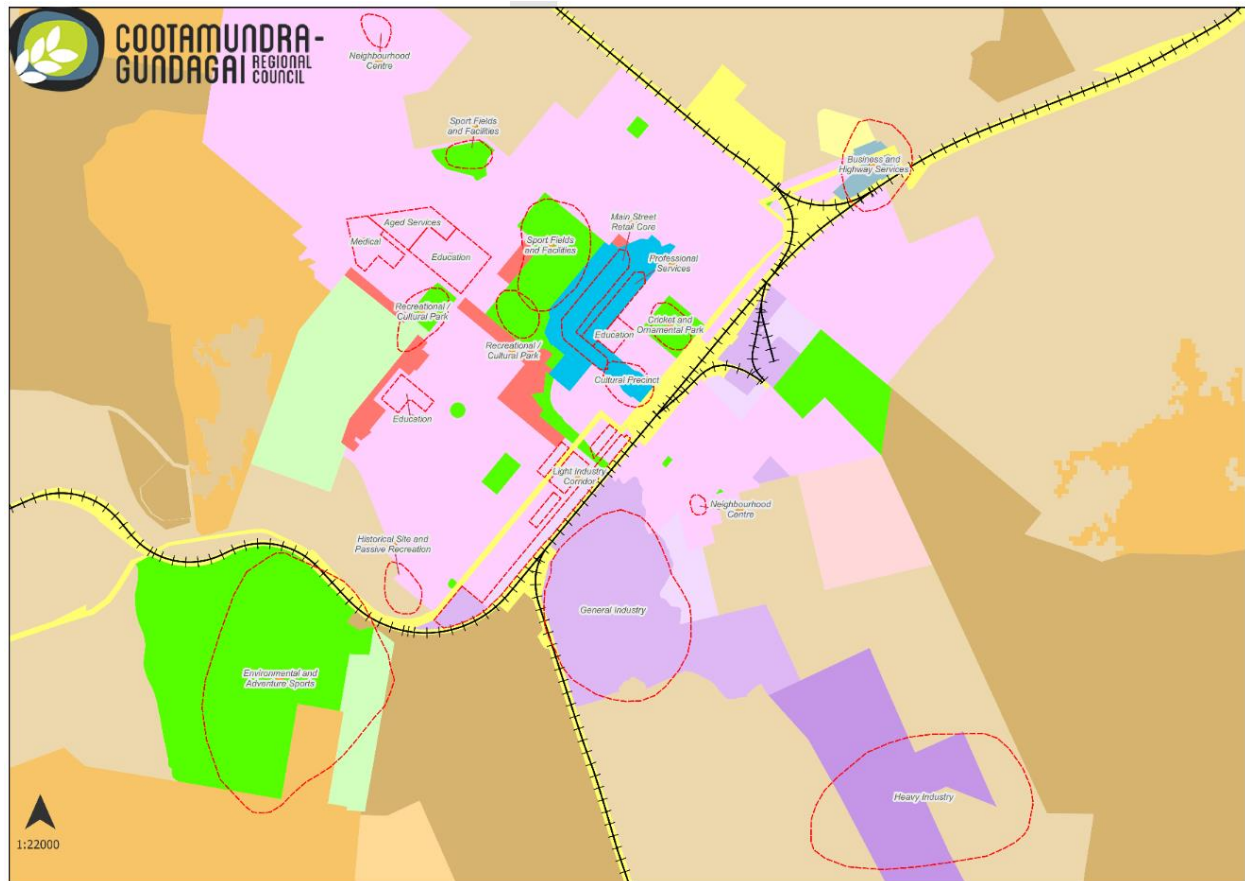


Recreation

Sporting facilities and recreation areas were noted as being synonymous with Cootamundra for most people during community engagement. Cootamundra is an active community with a number of sporting clubs ranging from team sports to individual pursuits such as cycling and gardening.

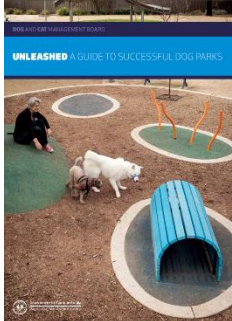
Physical connections between houses, recreation areas, employment centres and shops are fragmented and disjointed across Cootamundra. Aside from the contribution shared paths and footpaths make to the recreational assets of the town, the benefits of having a comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle paths include improving community cohesion and reducing physical and social barriers for participation by being able to walk and cycle everywhere.

Council needs to develop a pedestrian and cycleway mobility plan which connects the hotspots of the community (see map). This plan needs to comprehensively examine the existing network and suggest linkages to create a complete network over a delivery period of ten years. Consideration should also be given to incorporating these linkages with art, trees, gardens and other cultural outcomes to encourage use of the network and a focus on the route being a destination in itself.





Dog Parks



Dog parks are important for reducing antisocial dog behaviour in the community and offering exercise and socialisation opportunities for pets and owners. They offer an economic incentive for travellers to stop and run their dogs where a quality facility is located. The South Australian Government's Dog and Cat Management Board recognised the need to encourage quality design and infrastructure for animals and produced "Unleashed: A Guide to Successful Dog Parks" in 2013.

Cootamundra has a number of dog off leash areas as well as a fenced dog park on Hurley Street. Open, unleashed areas often serve as way points along a regular dog walking route, whereas fenced parks are a destination for those who are time poor or have mobility issues. As shown in figure 8, fenced parks are destinations which are often driven to and so consideration of car parking is necessary for such sites. The park on Hurley Street has parallel parking available and three fenced areas which are mowed regularly. Two bubblers are located within the fenced area, with dog drinking facilities at the base of these bubblers. A number of medium growth native trees provide shade to the site, but overall the site lacks opportunities for training and mental stimulation of dogs. It is recommended that Council invest in developing the dog park on Hurley Street as the premier dog park of the Riverina to cater to Cootamundra and surrounding towns as a destination as well as providing an additional reason for travellers with pets to plan their route via Cootamundra.



Figure 8: How people get to a dog park: source Government of South Australia Dog and Cat Management Board

Cemetery

The Cootamundra Cemetery is located on the northern periphery of town. The Cootamundra Cemetery has a monumental and lawn section as well as a columbarium wall and garden section. It has capacity to expand and is well serviced with daily maintenance undertaken by Council's regulatory team.

Access to the Cootamundra Cemetery is problematic, with the only entry and exit point off the Olympic Highway in the bend adjacent to the railway overpass. This is a transition area with the speed limit decreasing from 100 kilometres per hour to 50 kilometres within 300m of this entry and limited visibility (only 100m) of oncoming northbound traffic. To improve the safety of those visiting the cemetery, it is recommended that Council extend Bradman Street, creating a new formal entry and exit point for the cemetery and close the access point on the Olympic Highway.

Further enhancement of the cemetery should be programed with improved signage and reflection areas around the site. Creation of a landscape master plan which looks at the capacity to provide informal function or ceremony areas should be investigated.

Internment of animals and animal cremation could also be explored by Council as a point of difference for the town particularly along surplus land on Rinkin Street. Providing an animal crematorium facility would also provide a regional service and income stream for Council.

Community Garden

Establishment of a community garden has been a proposal put to Council many times over the years, not only as a space for gardeners to come together but as an educational facility where workshops can be run and people can socialise. Council envisions a community garden as not only social infrastructure, but as a way to educate and provide experience for local food businesses and the general public to better manage kitchen scraps and coffee waste and demonstrate urban farming techniques which comply with local ordinances and animal keeping regulations.

A community garden also contributes to the overall social landscape of Cootamundra, providing a touchpoint to welcome new residents and to merge the cultural space with the practical space. Exploring

alternate gardens from food and flower production to aquaponics and sensory gardens offer opportunities for a wider range of people to develop a respect for gardening.

A community garden has been funded in the grounds of the Cootamundra Baptist Church in Thompson Street. Ideally, this is the first of a number of community gardens catering to different community needs.



Figure 9: Bourke Street Community Garden in Woolloomooloo: source City of Sydney Council

Arts

Arts is an umbrella term under social cohesion looking at opportunities to create, escape and submerge yourself in imagination and creative skill. Organically, Cootamundra has developed a small, but dedicated artistic community with the Cootamundra Arts Centre and Cootamundra Amateur Dramatic Arts Society Inc playing a prominent role in promoting the arts.

The Cootamundra Arts Centre is located in the former Massey Harris farm machinery agency and Shepherd Woolskins factory on Wallendoon Street and is an example of adaptive reuse of a heritage item. The Arts Centre offers a community gathering point to express yourself and to learn new skills. The growth and development of this facility has heavily contributed to the vision of Cootamundra being a cultural hub. Cootamundra Amateur Dramatic Arts Society Inc has been operational since the 1940s and provides an opportunity for dramatic performance and creative expression.

Cootamundra currently has a deficit of public art, with only the Captains Walk blurring the lines between culture, sport and art. Development of a public art committee and budget allocation would have numerous benefits including improving community pride, cohesion, creating points of interest and contributing to a tourism economy and should be a priority for Council.



Figure 10: Captain's Walk

Library

Cootamundra is serviced as a part of the Riverina Regional Library network through the Cootamundra War Memorial Library on Wallendoon Street. It offers a number of services beyond books and computer access including storytime and baby bounce for early education, chess club and classes in technology use. It also provides community services such as access to a Justice of the Peace and meeting rooms for community use.

Free Wi-Fi is available at the library and this extends to the park and garden area immediately adjacent to the library. Engagement with youth reveals that the free Wi-Fi is very popular and a desire for enhanced facilities such as a gamer lounge facility and “chill out” zone would be well received.

Heritage

Heritage refers not only to built structures but to places of cultural significance. Heritage as a broad term encapsulates where we have been, experiences, values, beliefs and aspirations. Protection of heritage is important not only culturally, but conservation, presentation and education about heritage can offer economic benefits through tourism, telling a story about place as well as providing opportunities for adaptive reuse of buildings and places.

A matter of priority should be the appointment of a heritage advisor or employment of a heritage officer as a part of the development team to further many key projects and actions related to heritage and realise the economic and cultural benefits of preserving and presenting heritage.

Aboriginal Places

Cootamundra currently has no Aboriginal Places listed under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, however it is believed that there are places of significance within Cootamundra which need to be protected. It is recommended that Council prioritise undertaking an Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Places Study for Cootamundra to better understand how to deal with and respect indigenous heritage as the First People and original inhabitants of the land.

State Heritage

There are four items listed under the Heritage Act 1977 in Cootamundra:

Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Home

The statement of significance for heritage listing indicates that the Home is considered an item of State significance as it is physical evidence of Government Policy and practice of a certain era. The site affords contemporary Australia a physical means to comprehend the pain and suffering of past assimilation practices.

Further exploration and consideration of the site as a part of the Aboriginal story of Cootamundra should be explored through an Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Places Study.

Cootamundra Railway Station and yard group

The Cootamundra Railway Station is unique in that it is a designated first class station building with ornate lacework, cast iron columns, ornate awning and tower over the entrance.

The ancillary platform is barren and overgrown, which alongside the general detritus of railway yards contributes to a sad impression of neglect and decline. Refurbishment of the ancillary platform via resealing of the surface and irrigated garden beds should be requested by Council of the land managers.

The railway curtilage envelopes a greater area than just the station buildings and options for subdividing off redundant land such as the former tennis courts and shopfront on Hovell Street should be encouraged to reduce conflict between the State Heritage requirements of the site and potential development opportunities.

Cootamundra West Railway Station group

The Cootamundra West Railway Station is perhaps Australia's best example of a station which was redundant almost as soon as it was built. It is an impressive railway building of the Edwardian period and is significant not just architecturally but also as a part of the national railway narrative of connecting the country to Canberra – a project which was never fulfilled due to the depression and World Wars.

Unfortunately the building has been poorly managed and vandalised. Obligations under the Heritage Act 1977 have not been complied with and remediation and restoration of the site is a priority before any consideration of what the site can be used for should be discussed.

Cootamundra World War II Fuel Depot Site (former No. 3 AIFD)

While inland fuel depots were not uncommon as a part of the strategic reserve of Australia during World War II, this particular site is significant as it is one of the last remaining intact facilities with the potential to improve knowledge and understanding of mid-century storage of aviation fuel.

The site is on the southern entry into town and is visible to passing motorists. The location of the site offers potential to connect the Cootamundra Township with recreation facilities in Pioneer Park via a bike path through the Fuel Depot Site and a boardwalk/bridge structure across Cootamundry Creek.

Complementing the use of the site for recreational and educational purposes would be the establishment of a Wattle Arboretum which has been proposed by community interest groups.

Local Heritage

There are 116 items listed in the Cootamundra Local Environmental Plan 2013. This includes items identified and protected as state heritage items under the Heritage Act 1977 and items in Stockinbingal and Wallendbeen. The list of heritage items in the Cootamundra LEP is based primarily off the research done as a part of the Cootamundra Shire Community Based Heritage Study 2010 completed by Black Mountain Projects Pty Ltd.

Cootamundra District Hospital (former)

The Cootamundra District Hospital was built in 1909 and opened in 1910. In 1981 the Mercy Hospital (known as the Sacred Heart) amalgamated with the Cootamundra District Hospital and hospital services were moved to the Mercy Hospital Site being a newer building.

The heritage listing notes that the formal garden and driveway are significant aspects of the heritage value of the site. The gardens and frontage of the hospital are currently in a state of disrepair. It is recommended that Council, as the land manager reinstate the gardens and restore the frontage of the building, not least because of the heritage value of the site, but also as a point of interest for tourism and economic development of Cootamundra.

Restoration of the gardens would present a complete package of a federation era public building and ornamental garden which would be unique in the State and contribute to a strong case for the site to be listed under the Heritage Act 1977 as an item of State significance.

Cootamundra Town Hall

The Cootamundra Town Hall is the original hall which was constructed and opened in 1901 as ancillary to the Cootamundra Municipal Council offices and administration building which was opened in 1892. The subsidiary hall, referred to as the “civic hall” was opened in 1948.

The Heritage Study from 2010 incorrectly states that the former town hall has “disappeared”, when in reality, the council offices and administration was demolished, with the current structure opened in 1971. What is the “Cootamundra Town Hall” remained and is simply hidden behind panelling.

The opulence and decorative features of the Cootamundra Town Hall include stain glass windows, ornate columns and structural arches. At the time, the hall was “acknowledged to be one of the most complete and best finished out of Sydney.”²

A full heritage assessment would determine whether the Hall is an item of local heritage or whether the unique features of stained glass, arches and columns in regional Australia would make it worthy of State recognition.

² “Cootamundra Town Hall”, Evening News - Sydney, NSW, Thursday 22 August 1901 Page 6.



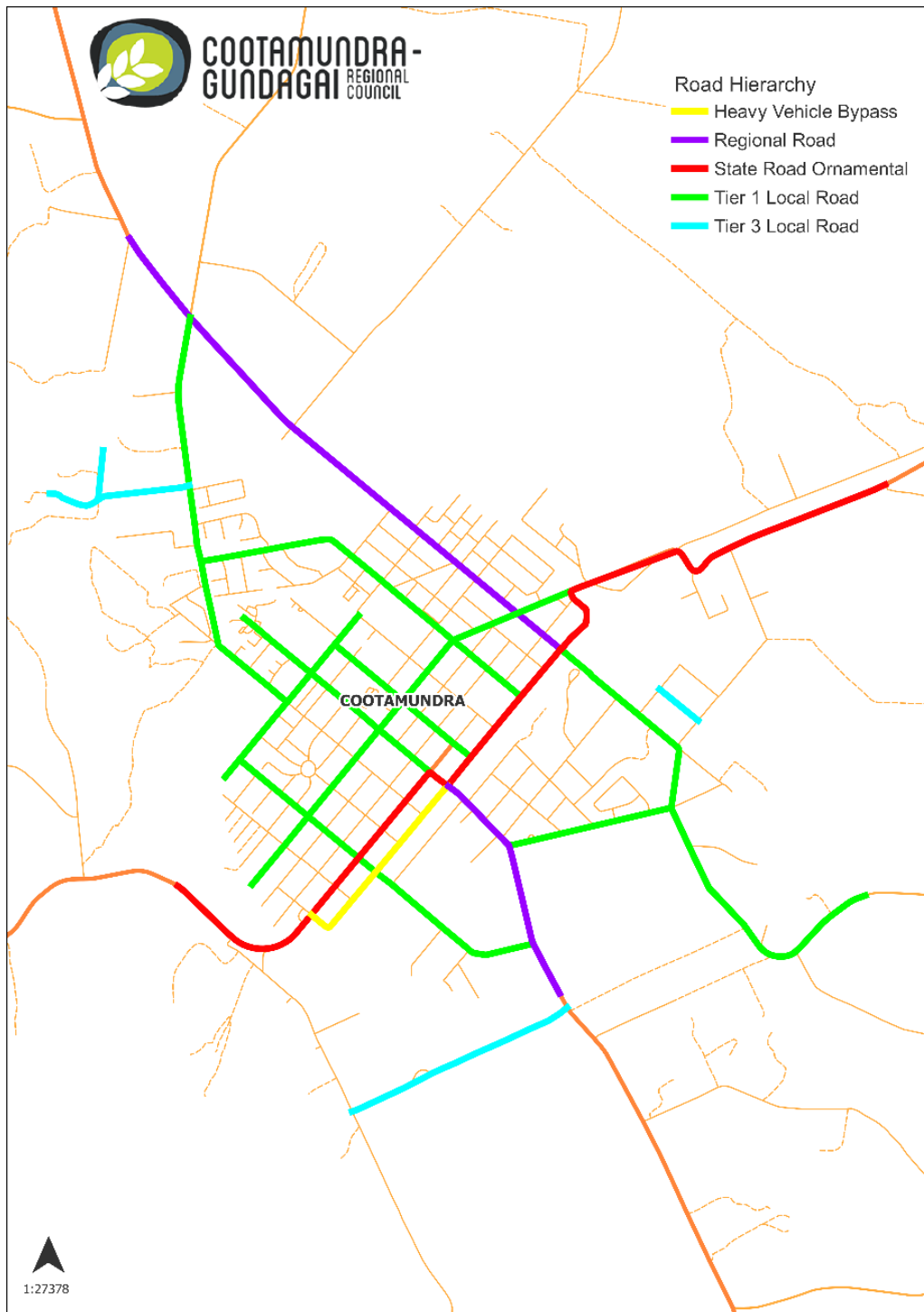
Figure 11: Ball in 1920, photo taken from the stage looking out onto the audience, showing windows, columns and arches of the Hall



Figure 12: The stain glass windows are still intact, just hidden behind panelling from the inside.

Road Hierarchy

To improve mobility around Cootamundra's road network it is necessary that Council establish a road hierarchy which gives precedence for the State and Regional Roads, but then facilitates efficient movement for locals across town. The following map is proposed as the road hierarchy for Cootamundra to allow for efficient movement across town and reduce confusion around give ways and improve instinctive adherence to road rules.



Car Parking

Provision of car parking depends on development. Development such as houses and units have a non-negotiable car parking requirement based on occupancy and the long stay nature of parking. Development related to commercial and industrial development have car parking requirements which can be restrictive as they take up site space which could otherwise be used by the activity being undertaken on the site.

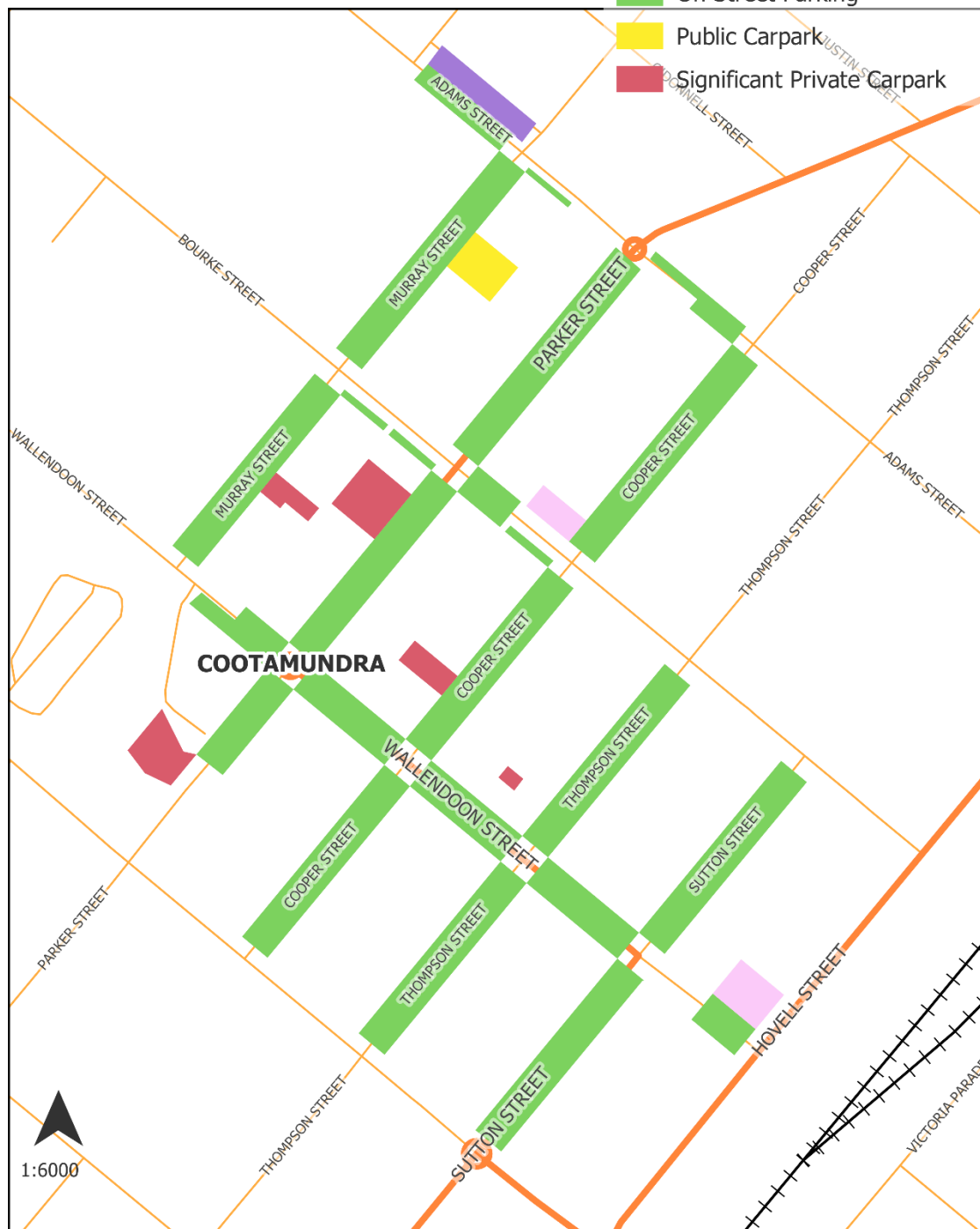
Such is the impact of car parking, development in a regional town could quickly become unviable by the need to provide onsite car parking. Aside from the barrier this poses for regional investment, car parking considered at the development stage makes it difficult to adaptively reuse a site, particularly if the car parking requirement is increased by this new use. Practicality should be applied to car parking standards such as an automatic 50 percent discount for development which would ordinarily operate or have a peak trade period outside of core business hours, for example restaurants and gyms.

A survey of car parking across Cootamundra (see car parking maps) reveals a surplus of on street and other parking, including future car parking opportunities. In order to assist developers maximise their use of site and investment in Cootamundra a system for voluntary planning agreements to be entered into in lieu of providing car parking onsite to contribute towards car parking located offsite. This could be formalised through the development and adoption of a car parking policy.

Consideration of provision of electric car recharge points in public car parks and major activity hot spots need to be planned and considered. Signage to improve tourism movement for dump spots for caravans and parking sites also needs to be improved.

Parking

- Carparking to be Acquired
- Carparking to be Constructed
- On Street Parking
- Public Carpark
- Significant Private Carpark



Rise of Asia

According to the CSIRO's National Outlook, "by 2030, the Asia-Pacific region will be home to 65% of the world's middle class" meaning that there is an expanding export market for value add commodities right on our doorstep. Not only that but the NSW Freight and Ports Strategy expects that by 2031 container traffic in NSW will have tripled from 2011 levels. Aside from freight handling, the Rise of Asia offers opportunity to the Cootamundra community as a tourism destination provided it can offer a unique experience which appeals to coach and destination tourism operators.

Freight and logistics

Cootamundra is positioned on the Sydney – Melbourne railway line and on the Olympic Highway. Cootamundra is the northern gateway to the Riverina, however produce and other commodities are sorted and freighted from existing facilities in Wagga Wagga and Griffith. Cootamundra has the capacity and space to provide a rapid port facility to sort containers working for the entire freight market – imports, exports and interstate movements via rail. Providing this facility will assist in the expected tripling of container tasks within the freight network expected by 2031.

Surrounding agricultural producers and value add industries are able to access the freight network via road connections to the Riverina Intermodal Freight and Logistics Hub at Bomen and future intermodal capabilities at Stockinbingal. Cootamundra acting as an additional intermodal facility only succeeds in causing congestion and slowing the Sydney-Melbourne railway line. Focusing on the freight network generally by developing as an inland port, Cootamundra would not only be supporting local freight industries, but also providing a secondary site to existing port facilities in Sydney which faces significant constraints to growth. This proposal is further explored as a goal of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy under "Focus Areas".



Tourism

Cootamundra is located two hours from Canberra, four hours from Sydney and five and a half hours from Melbourne by road. Passenger transport is supported via Country Link's Southern XPT service which connects Cootamundra to Sydney and Melbourne with two trains per day each way.

Destination NSW has placed significant focus on capturing the Chinese tourist market for its growth potential in NSW. Until relatively recently, this market has seen growth in Sydney and the north coast of NSW. Creation of Destination Riverina Murray and the subsequent destination management plan identifies that Chinese visitors only make up two percent of total tourist numbers in the region. The expansion of Canberra Airport to now receive international flights means that the region has an opportunity to grow this tourist market.

Grey Nomads are a key market with 28 percent of visitors being over 60 years and 20 percent of overnight visitors staying in a caravan park or camping ground. Experiences are a key driver of this group's behaviour and so it would be logical to market the "Cootamundra Experience" to attract overnight and day trippers. This requires a concentrated effort to market and sell Cootamundra by creating a range of cultural and artistic points of interest.



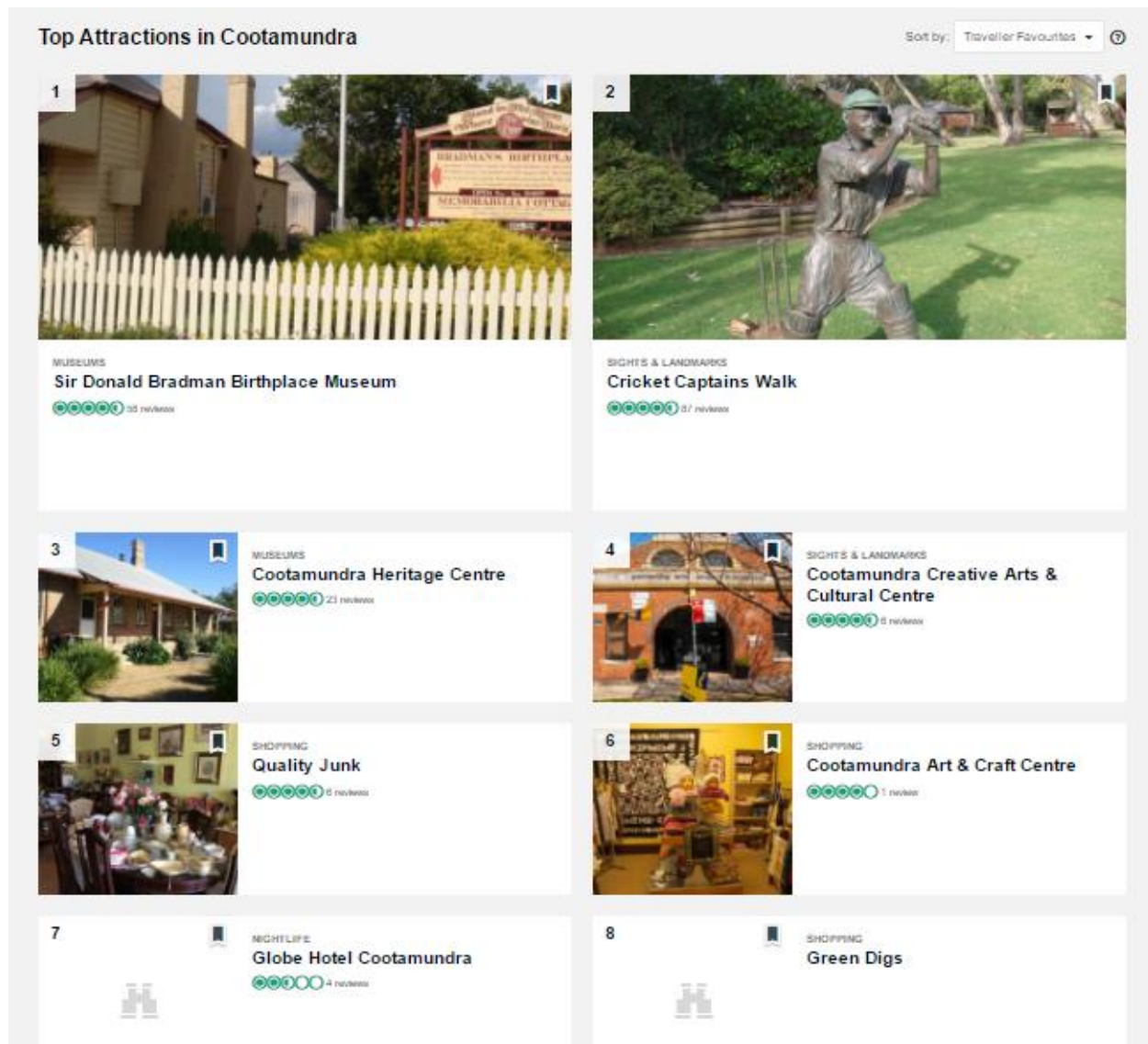


Figure 13: Screenshot from www.tripadvisor.com.au July 2019

Council and the Tourism Action Committee need to work together to create a standalone visitor information facility (outside of a museum setting) to act as a staging point for tourists to undertake their visit of Cootamundra whether that be a shopping, sporting, historical and/or artistic experience.

Educational tourism opportunities through culture and arts needs to be developed to target not only tourism but to encourage weekend getaways and group events from other large population centres like Canberra.

Cootamundra is largely ignored by the Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan except to be mentioned under the subregional driver of Eastern Riverina Sport for its cricket heritage. Obviously Council and the Tourism Action Committee need to make Cootamundra a stronger presence in the region (it is the largest town outside of Wagga Wagga), however this lack



of attention also allows for Cootamundra to innovate and present its own definition of what it is and why people should visit.

Specific benefits of tourism through cultural and educational experiences are explored and emphasised by the future theme of promoting Cootamundra as a cultural hub of regional Australia.

Technological change

Technological change is inevitable and indeed Cootamundra has already experienced significant technological change since it was gazetted in 1861 from a horse and cart town on a highway to a rapid connection to Sydney and Melbourne via the railway, not to mention the growth and decline of local manufacturing and agricultural value add industries.

Australia has gone from being a largely agrarian society, to manufacturing workforce and then service economy. Australia faces the next frontier with advances in artificial intelligence, automation and advancement in biotechnology requiring a highly skilled, technologically proficient workforce to fill the jobs of the future. If Cootamundra wants to take full advantage of the technological changes of the future, education and training needs to be focused alongside community support in the area of technology.

Technology

The market largely dictates innovation in manufacturing and retail. While the general population feeds this, as a limited segment of this, Cootamundra has limited power to affect real change in this area. Focusing on challenges facing Cootamundra such as the over represented aged population and regional locality, could offer Cootamundra the opportunity to innovate and become a health and education hub. By striving to facilitate best practice medical care with complimentary education which focuses on supportive technologies such as robotics in nursing care to offer the elderly more independence and dignity as they become less mobile. Cootamundra is well placed to take advantage of such opportunities.

Accepting the inevitable reality of electric vehicles, does not mean that the burden is on Council to provide recharge stations or points, rather there is opportunity for Council to designate some parking areas as having electric recharge facilities which are privately run. Ensuring that Cootamundra has adequate power allocation and physical space in our community spaces will need to be carefully planned. Coordination with Essential infrastructure providers, Roads and Maritime Services and Council is required to ensure private operators do not overlook Cootamundra for electric car infrastructure.



Figure 14: Using robotics to run basic diagnostic tests: source www.theconversation.com and electric car recharge points: source ABC

Connectivity

Health

The future of health is explored by the CSIRO through their “Future of Health” report, detailing the reality of the high technology medical industry; a large part of which will be the use of virtual technology to connect patients with medical professions across short and long distances. This connectivity is not just between patients and carers, but also between professionals who will be able to offer a better level of care by seeking a second opinion or being able to stay abreast of industry trends and practices irrespective of distance and locality.

The ability of Cootamundrians to emphasis and connect with regional and remote people compared to those in metropolitan areas cannot be underestimated. This is particularly so when focusing on combating mental health issues unique to the landscape such as stress from climate change and extreme weather events as well as isolation.

Coordinating mental health triage and care from Cootamundra via the internet whether that be over Skype or other means is a logical ancillary activity which can be undertaken by the health services in this community, provided that the technology and infrastructure allows for this. The benefits to the patient and the health system include reduced costs to both parties, flexible appointment times and timely access to care.



For this system to succeed three factors need to be addressed:

1. Hard infrastructure such as fibre optic network cables and physical spaces for health professionals to conduct meetings need to be planned and allowed for;
2. Education needs to be provided, so that patients feel comfortable with the technology; and
3. Trust that privacy and data will be respected.

Place of Work

High technology industries and services allow people to work not only more autonomously, but also remotely. Changing aspirations in life, particularly among millennials is seeing a drive towards a more robust and customisable work life balance. Aspirations such as joining the FIRE (financial independence, retire early) movement has been spurred by online communities and easy access to information and online discussions. Places like Cootamundra with lower property buy costs in compared to metropolitan areas allow for a high technology worker to work remotely meaning that there is potentially a new generation of people who could be enticed to move to Cootamundra, provided that infrastructure is at a level capable of meeting expectations.

It is not anticipated that there will be a demand for remote office space in Cootamundra, however conference facilities and rapid connections to transport hubs will need to be considered in order to attract professionals and their families to the area.

Climate change and environment

Climate change is a threat to existing economic, environmental and social systems worldwide. In Australia, temperatures and weather events have increased in severity and deviate more and more from known records. Taking action at a local level to reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to changing weather will contribute to global efforts to thwart a 4 degree warming average from pre industrial levels by 2100.

Regardless of how any one individual feels about the validity of “climate change” as a concept, most would agree that being proactive and taking early action for mitigation and adaption could also be a social and economic opportunity.

Green Infrastructure

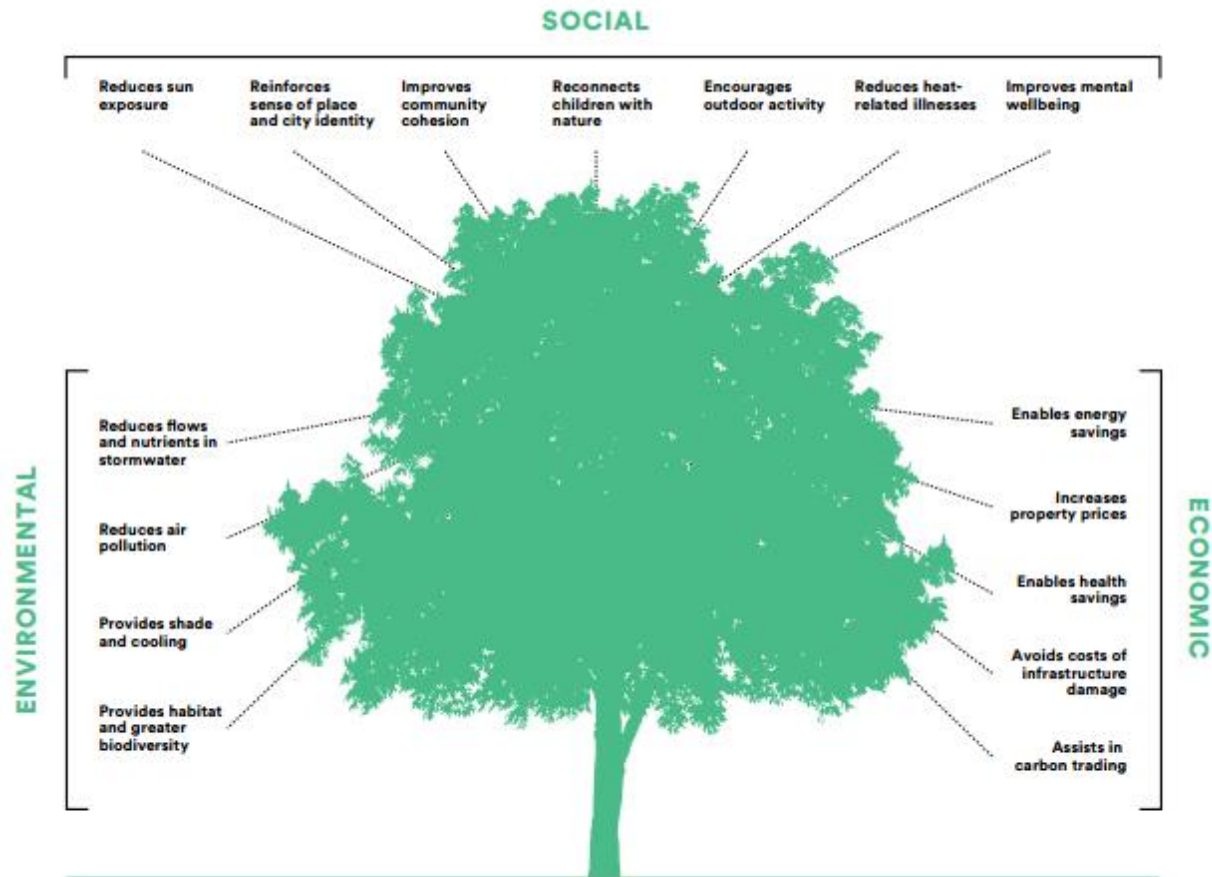
Green infrastructure is the system of green spaces, natural systems and semi-natural systems including parks, rivers, bushland and private gardens that are planned, designed and managed to support a good quality of life in an urban environment. Green infrastructure is well recognised as having a net positive impact on property value uplift and many respondents to the Cootamundra 2050 survey noted that a renowned feature of Cootamundra were the street trees and parklands. This should be enhanced and supported, with particular focus on growing the tree canopy of Cootamundra.



Figure 15: The Government Architect NSW has published a range of draft resources to promote better urban design and planning outcomes.

The role of a tree canopy includes, climate mitigation, reduction of urban heat, improved health and wellbeing of people and improved urban ecology. An urban tree canopy plan should be developed which sets a benchmark target for canopy cover by 2050, by identifying deficit canopy areas and establishing priority planting precincts. Importantly, sites for urban trees need to consider the future potential canopy size and space available. Often tree canopies are diminished by the need to cut back around buildings and powerlines, which not only detracts from the function of the trees but compromises the aesthetic of the tree. Practical thinking needs to be adopted when considering the interplay between built form and green infrastructure, where unavoidable a tree should be removed, but such a removal should also be compensated through a greater net return of new plantings.

Space for a large tree to grow in a backyard can also be at a premium. To improve this, it is recommended that the front setback for dwellings be reduced to 2.5m to move dwellings forward and increase private open space.



Summary of the broad array of benefits offered by urban trees

Adapted from the Woodland Trust, UK.

Figure 16: Benefits of urban trees: source Government Architect NSW Draft Urban Tree Canopy Guide

Water

Water consumption per capita has contracted since the millennium drought with many people continuing easy water saving habits, the installation of native gardens and more water efficient appliances replacing older units over time. Nevertheless, water consumption reduction is an important initiative to continue to improve upon with water being the key component to eth viability for a liveable city, with plants, animals and humans dependant on water.

Cootamundra is currently going through a process of water main and line upgrades to ensure the quality of drinking water is at an acceptable level and to replace aged and broken assets. However the supply and storage of water for Cootamundra needs to be examined through a potable water supply and storage management plan. This should be coordinated with Public Health, Goldenfields Water County Council and Council. Without a coordinated plan, Cootamundra faces a catastrophe with only a maximum of two days of water supply.

Water efficiency and savings could be achieved in the short term by finalising the smart metering system which has been rolled out across Cootamundra. Council (or another body) needs to fund the final component of this to allow residents to access their water usage in real time. It is estimated that having a water tracking service such as MyH2O will reduce water consumption by 5-20 percent just because people can respond to leaks in a timely manner and better understand how they consume water.

Another water efficiency measure which should be explored is the WaterFix program which Sydney Water has successfully been running for almost 20 years. The WaterFix program involves residents calling up for a free inspection of their premises by an accredited Sydney Water plumber. The plumber checks the house for leaks and potential water saving opportunities. They will detail any repair work which needs to take place and suggest water saving methods/devices. The service is then available for Sydney Water to undertake rectification work or you can engage your own plumber. WaterFix is particularly useful in targeting households with budget constraints as they are able to offer a special rate for devices and repairs, apply the cost to your bill (no upfront payment) and should the cost amount to greater than \$200 it will be allocated to you in instalments over consecutive bills.

Stormwater

The stormwater network across Cootamundra needs to be better connected and focus on natural filtration through water sensitive urban design and terminating in either Muttama Creek or Cootamundra Creek.

Water sensitive urban design can easily be implemented in areas across town which lack kerb and guttering. Not only would such a system improve the stormwater capture system and improve water quality, it would also improve visual amenity of these area. Priority areas include those within 400m of Parker Street such as the Wallendoon Street side of Clarke Oval.

Allowing for people to establish raingardens within their front verge should be encouraged by Council creating and adopting a policy which residents can easily follow to establish a raingarden which does not interfere with the proper function and purpose of the footpath and road.



Figure 17: Water sensitive urban design: source City of Melbourne and YourHome.gov.au



Figure 18: Raingardens are spaces which allow for water of between 200mm to 500mm to settle for a short period after intensive rainfall before draining into the stormwater network. Generally a mesh or filter material is used to ensure that soil remains and does not enter the stormwater network: source Melbourne Water.

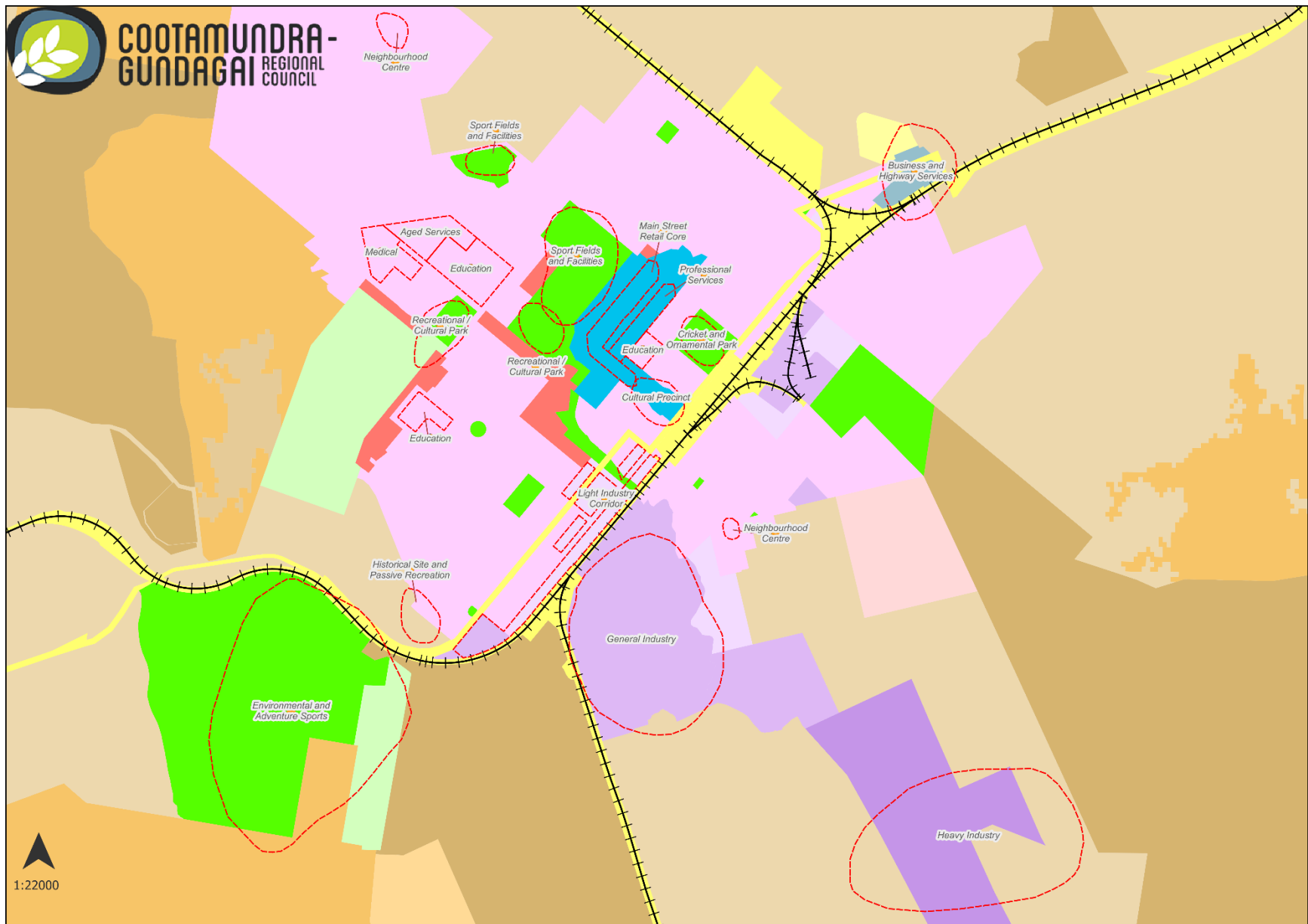
Flooding

Across Cootamundra, inundation can cause localised flooding which cuts the town in half. Flooding from Muttama Creek can also isolate and disrupt north-south movement across town. Flood mitigation planning is currently being undertaken, however ensuring the heavy vehicle route along Hovell Street is flood proof is a priority to minimise disruption to freight movements.

Focus Areas

Based on the feedback received from the Cootamundra community it is clear that social aspects of the community, citizenship and economic stimulus needs to be focused on to achieve Cootamundra 2050 vision of a friendly, sustainable and well serviced community of the future. Examining issues and feedback through the lens of future challenges to Australia, it is important to capture the opportunities presented by creating some future goals and aspirations. It is proposed that Cootamundra pursues three distinct goals to realise Cootamundra of 2050.

The identified “hotpots” and activity areas in the following map are integral to realising the goals for 2050 as they identify what infrastructure and facilities Cootamundra already has and how they can be enhanced to stimulate growth and foster future development opportunities.



Cultural hub

The concept of creating and designating Cootamundra as a cultural hub addresses many aspiration and concerns raised by the community. Arts and culture contribute to the economy by improving the health and wellbeing of residents, promoting tourism, industry, employment and education opportunities. Participation in artist and cultural activities lead to enhanced educational performance, increased employment and reductions in crime. Art and culture improves people's social networks and promotes positive mental health outcomes by increasing connectedness and a sense of community.

Curiosity needs to be encouraged, with opportunities to explore and discover something new. The urban environment needs to be one which surprises and delivers the unexpected. People should be provoked to imagine and dream by their environment.

The benefits of arts and culture work to directly address what Cootamundra is lacking today – community events, public art, meeting places and opportunities for employment. As well as targeting aspirations of being a vibrant, bustling, artistic, cultural, friendly and must visit community. As a society we face so many challenges over the next few decades, fostering creativity within the community through cultural values and learning serves as the basis for the innovation required to turn constraints into opportunities.



Figure 19: Cootamundra - a cultural (t)hub

Public Art

Cootamundra lacks public art and while the expense of art instalments can be prohibitive when certain streets lack footpaths or when considering the lack of a hydrotherapy pool. Nonetheless, the benefit of public art installations have been proven time and time again to create points of interest and generate tourism as well as foster community pride.

Individual art installations can generate short stays, however trails such as the Parkes Public Art Trail or the Silo Art Trails create exploration of a route and offer innumerable benefits to the surrounding businesses as people explore to discover the area and ascertain where the creativity springs from. As demonstrated by Sheffield in Tasmania, the lure of culture and interest through the “Town of Murals” tagline has lead it to being the preferred staging point for many people to stay before exploring nearby Cradle Mountain. Cootamundra could position itself as the preferred place to stay in the northern Riverina from which visitors could take day trips to the Temora Air Show, Junee Liquorice and Chocolate Factory, Coolamon Cheese Factory and so on, particularly if art displays in Cootamundra were best viewed at certain types of day – that is, a combination of light art to draw an evening crowd alongside the day viewing of art.

Art can be organic and sparks of artistic expression can be seen in our LGA on the corner of Kilrush and Old Gundagai Road and the Hay Minions on Muttama Road. The revitalisation of Sheridan Street in Gundagai also has a number of art installations as well as cultural points. The City of Sydney has designated street art as exempt development provided it has land owner's consent, is not advertising, does not discriminate and is not located on a heritage item or heritage area (although consent to place art in these

areas can be sought through the development process). This policy has allowed street art to organically appear, which alongside Council's coordinated public art funding is transforming Sydney into an engaging and artistic hub.

Encouraging artistic expression would be fostered by Council by allowing for art to be exempt in certain areas. The establishment of a Public Art Committee with a yearly endowment to commission major art pieces and works across Cootamundra is another opportunity where Council could actively support public art. Developers should also be invited to consider a public art donation as an offer of material public benefit in lieu of developer contributions.



Figure 20: Dairy cows by Miina Akkijyrkka - source Miina Akkijyrkka



Figure 21: Making trees the focus of light - source Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney during Vivid Sydney

Placemaking

Placemaking combines all areas of planning, design and ongoing maintenance to create a vision or “vibe” around a certain space. Cootamundra has a number of places which could be enhanced to better respond to community need as well as providing points of interest for visitors and places for Cootamundrians to relax and enjoy. These sites should be explored through master planning to contribute towards the goal of “cultural hub”. Some areas that could be considered are:

Parker Street – retail and commercial

Murray Street – sporting and sporting culture

Wallendoon Street (Sutton Street to Muttama Creek) – Café and services precinct

Wallendoon Street (between Hovell Street and the Old TAFE Building) – Arts Precinct

Jack Maslin Drive – Airport precinct, playing to a “wheels” theme with drag racing, motor bikes and trains.

Jubilee Park – Community Park, possible site for animal displays and shows

Albert Park – Ornamental Park

Ampol Site (Cootamundra World War II Fuel Depot Site) – historical ruins and structures. Potential site for wattle arboretum and connecting bike path between town and Pioneer Park.



Figure 22: Playing to the theme of sporting precinct a mural could be considered on the rear wall of the Woolworths

Champion local heritage and history

Local heritage and history contribute to a sense of identity and self. Overwhelmingly, community feedback associated Cootamundra with “Don Bradman” and “Wattle”.

Tourism and nostalgia around Don Bradman is well developed in Cootamundra with the Captain’s Walk, Bradman’s Birthplace museum, Albert Park and so on.

Wattle is a difficult theme beyond colour scheme – which through the merger of Cootamundra and Gundagai Shire’s has been erased from Parker Street. Reinvigoration of wattle in conjunction with community events such as the Wattle Time Fair should be a feature of sculptural and mural art to remind visitors and Cootamundrians alike of the importance of wattle to the national psyche. Installation of a wattle arboretum at the Ampol Site on the southern entrance to town should be encouraged as a botanical meeting place for locals to relax and learn about the wattle, but also as another point of interest in Cootamundra.



Figure 23: the current Commonwealth Coat of Arms is enveloped in flowering wattle

All heritage items should be promoted and protected not least because they tell a story of who we are, celebrate achievements and serve as lessons learnt. A heritage walking trail should be produced with future development of an app which provides a self-guided tour of Cootamundra. Restoration of the former District Hospital and reinstatement of the gardens should be prioritised as opportunities exist to achieve State Heritage Listing by presenting the former District Hospital as a “package” of building and original gardens. In addition to this, other impressive heritage structures such as the Cootamundra West Railway Station, Cootamundra could develop as a destination for wedding and event photography.

Hours of Operation

Diversity of shops and opportunities for employment were identified as current deficits and future necessities for Cootamundra. Creating the conditions for retail and commercial activity is complex and involves many stakeholders. While the hours of business operation were raised as a barrier to why people do not shop local, businesses at the same time did not feel that there was enough patronage to justify late hours or extended weekend trading. Despite being the largest inland city in New South Wales, Wagga Wagga struggles to promote a bustling late night shopping culture and many shops are shut on a Sunday or operate for limited hours across the weekend. Cootamundra, being approximately one tenth of the size of Wagga Wagga is simply not able to support full weekend and late night shopping trade.

An opportunity exists to provide a different experience such as late night shopping on a Friday once a month which would encourage businesses to stay open and motivate customers to travel from other towns such as Young, Temora, Junee and Gundagai. Holding a produce market to coincide with this would succeed in generating hype and advertising the opportunity to shop in Cootamundra one Friday a month.

Revitalisation of Parker and Wallendoon Streets through master planning is a necessity for encouraging businesses and shop owners to take pride in their buildings and consider renovations, facelifts and longer trading hours. Utilisation of the footpath is currently compromised due to reverse angle car parking which for safety reasons does not allow for structures, table and chairs along the outside strip of the footpath and limits the amount of café and restaurant space available for outdoor dining. Coupled with poorly maintained awnings which would struggle to support plastic awning drapes and strip heaters for winter, means that most businesses have only placed out token tables and chairs against the building line. If consideration was given to how parking is facilitated in the main street through master planning, then businesses could more than double their on street dining offering. This would lead to additional employment opportunities as businesses now have more tables or rack/temporary display space for the cost of an annual licence and would contribute to creating a bustling and vibrant atmosphere.

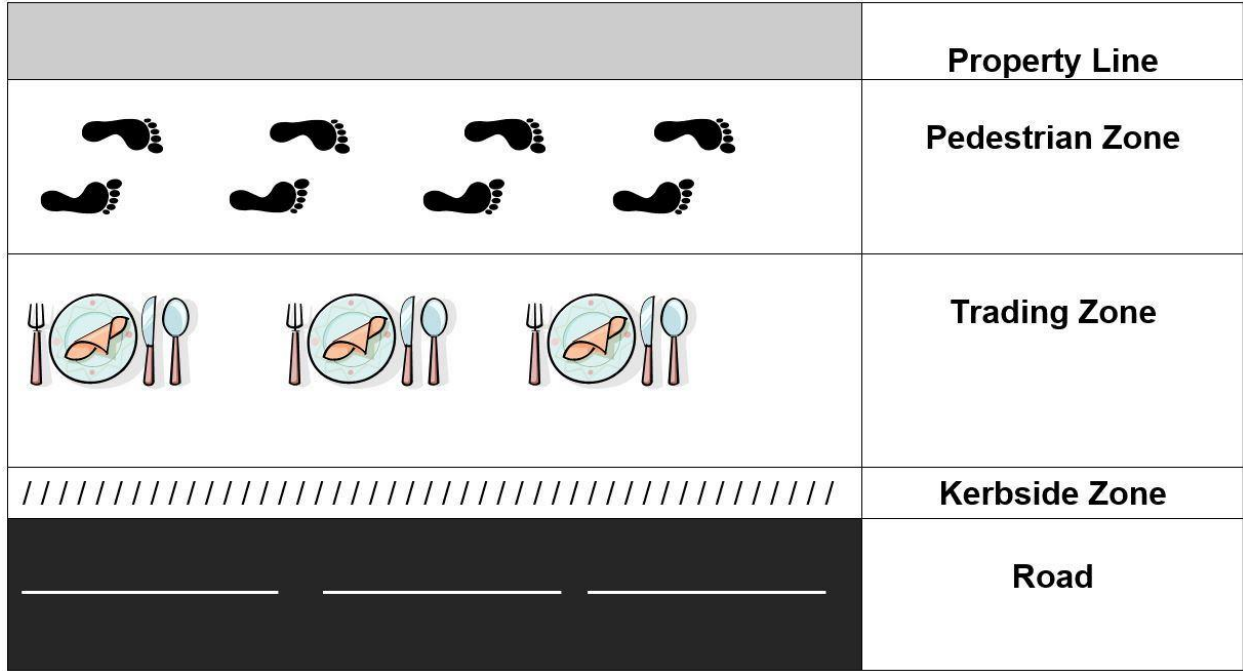


Figure 24: The ideal layout of on street dining - source Baw Baw Shire Council. Cootamundra's footpaths would be able to accommodate tables along the property line also.

Cootamundra Digital Portal

Utilising technology to create an online booking app for Cootamundra businesses will assist people to better plan their local shopping and service experience around their availability and the operating hours of local businesses. Additionally, having a booking platform will cater for visiting parents during sporting events who could potentially be getting a haircut, a manicure, getting the car serviced and so on while their child/ren play sport in Cootamundra. Such an app could be funded as a public – private partnership to assist in regional and town development and coordinated through the Cootamundra Development Corporation.

Centre of medical excellence

If all things remain the same, Cootamundra is likely to enter into severe population decline with a third of the population being over 65 and the increasing decline of all other age groups in the community (the over 65 aged group has grown from 989 people – 18% in 2001 to 1728 people – 30.5% in 2016). Growing the population is going to be tough, which in turn means less people to justify and pay for services and infrastructure.

National data trends emphasis an aging population as a given, but Cootamundra faces this on an unprecedented scale (no other town in the Riverina beats Cootamundra's percentage of over 65 year olds). This challenge could be the potential spark to create an opportunity for growth and development of a medical industry focused on training frontline medical staff such as nurses, pathologists, medical administrators, care assistants and so on. This would complement the Rural Medical School to be located in Wagga Wagga which will facilitate doctor training from initial education to training and accreditation.

Education and Training

Creating a hub for education and training of frontline medical staff will not only benefit Cootamundra by providing pathways for education and employment for youth and career changers, it will also help to address national and regional shortages in specialised medical staff. If Council, the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and education providers such as TAFE work together to provide a complete package such as residential schools for nursing and intensive summer courses for pathology collection, enrolled nursing, nutrition, allied health practice management, indigenous health, pharmacy support and so on Cootamundra could become a destination education hub easily accessible from Sydney and Melbourne via the train.



Figure 25: Cootamundra has a long history of medical training, with the former District Hospital a renowned educational hospital

Assisted Ageing

Leveraging off improved educational opportunities, further investment and partnership with research entities could position Cootamundra as a community which specialises in ageing with dignity. A combination of technology with aged care facilities to provide greater autonomy to residents and fully integrated neighbourhood which present no physical barriers to movement devices such as electric scooters, walking frames and the like would be the aspiration. Sufficient neighbourhood amenities such as ambulant toilets, adult change facilities, a hydrotherapy pool and quality meeting places would also assist in delaying rapid degeneration from social isolation.

In order to achieve this vision, Cootamundra needs to be developed in a manner which has physical connections across the community to allow for people of all abilities to access services. Consideration of the Heart Foundation's "Healthy by Design" principles need to be applied with better signage, lighting, shelter and fencing (including fencing of playgrounds) instigated in conjunction with creating more walkable and active neighbourhoods.

Encouragement and training of local businesses to become dementia friendly as well as retrofitting neighbourhoods with dementia markers which allow people's subconscious to instinctively orientate where they are, allowing people to maintain a level of independence for longer. This can be as simple as planting certain trees along certain road corridors, colour coding street signs, placing distance markers in the pavement and installing public art.

Opportunities for people to connect to animals is particularly important for the aged, however their circumstances may not necessarily allow for them to keep a companion animal. Not only should seating facilities be developed in the dog park on Hurley Street for dog owners, but attention of people coming to watch the dogs should be considered also. Developing an animal space in Jubilee Park like many regional towns is another opportunity which could be explored and complements the goal of cultural hub.

Housing

Consideration of the residential chapter of the Development Control Plan needs to include adaptive building design which does not necessarily designate a development as being specifically for less abled people or aged people but rather should achieve benchmarks which would allow for ageing in place to occur. To encourage this, explorations on incentives such as reduced 7.12 contributions could be considered.

Consideration of door frame widths, ramps, floating sinks and level showers do not just cater for those who are confined to a wheelchair. Using a pram, sustaining a sporting injury and so on, can easily turn the average home into a complex obstacle course to navigate in and out of.

Mum and dad developers as well as professional developers need to be sold on the additional benefits of considering flexible design. Aside from the financial gain of having a greater audience in which to sell a property, the reality of considering these design elements during the initial concept stage means that the build is not made more expensive by these considerations.

Inland port

Cootamundra is uniquely located on the Sydney-Melbourne Railway Line, with the Lake Cargelligo Railway Line branching from Cootamundra and framing the northern fringes of the town. The Inland Rail which will connect Brisbane and Melbourne will run through Stockinbingal – approximately 20 kilometres from Cootamundra. The rail corridor of the Lake Cargelligo Railway Line between Cootamundra and Stockinbingal offers opportunities amongst relatively flat, undeveloped land which could facilitate the development of an inland port serving to transfer rail freight between the Inland Rail and the Sydney-Melbourne Line. Additionally, an inland port in Cootamundra could serve as a sorting facility for imports to Australia with space becoming an ever increasing pressure in Sydney, port Kembla and Newcastle. Containers could indiscriminately be loaded straight from ships to rail and taken to Cootamundra to be sorted and redirected onto the Sydney-Melbourne Line, Inland Rail or road. The Olympic Highway runs through Cootamundra and connection to the Hume Highway (30 minutes), Sturt Highway (1 hour) and the Newell Highway (1.5 hours) are nearby. Cootamundra offers a low capital investment site with the existing rail infrastructure and undeveloped land by either utilising the former Tumut Branch Line or land to the north-west along the Lake Cargelligo Railway Line.

Cootamundra has a number of advantages over other potential sites such as Parkes which is constrained by a significant number of low clearance constraints along the existing route from Sydney and Narromine lacks the rapid connection from Sydney afforded to Cootamundra.

In order for an inland port in Cootamundra to become a reality the concept needs to be represented consistently by Council to State and Federal agencies, logistic operators and other stakeholders. Investment in an inland port in Cootamundra supports regional development, places strategic logistic assets inland and reduces congestion of the rail network which in turn promotes the use of rail over road transport.



Implementation

Implementation of the Cootamundra 2050 Strategy is organised according to the identified goals of this strategy and holistic actions:

Cultural Hub				
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Need</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
1.1. Increase public art within Cootamundra	Cootamundra currently has a deficit of public art	Establish an ongoing budget allocation for public art	Ongoing	An art is continuously funded and installed in Cootamundra
		Allow public art to be exempt development in certain areas	Ongoing	List public art under Schedule 2 of the CGRC LEP
		Establish a Arts and Cultural Committee	Ongoing	Council has a mechanism which determines how money is spent on art and conducts assessment of artist proposals
1.2. Establish precincts across Cootamundra	There is no policy response or mechanism to undertake and foster placemaking. In order to provide for the whole community planning of public spaces needs to be undertaken to ensure funding is spent without wastage and to maximise output.	Create a master plan for Parker Street	Short term	Create a retail and commercial space
		Create a master plan for Murray Street/Sports Precinct	Medium term	Create a sporting precinct
		Create a master plan for Wallendoon Street (Sutton Street to Muttama Creek)	Medium term	Create a café and service business precinct
		Create a master plan for Wallendoon Street (Between Hovell Street and the Old TAFE Building)	Short term	Create an arts precinct
		Create a master plan for Airport precinct	Medium term	Create a precinct which caters to the “wheels” theme
		Create a master plan for Jubilee Park	Medium term	Create a community park with opportunities for discovery, fun and education
		Create a master plan for Albert Park	Long term	Protect heritage aspects of the park and celebrate cricketing culture

		Create a master plan for the Ampol Site	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and provide an educational experience around the fuel depot • create a linking path between town and Pioneer park • establish a wattle arboretum
1.3. Champion local heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cootamundra associates itself with many historical themes including “Don Bradman” • Cootamundra has lost a number of heritage buildings over the years 	Reinstate colour scheme of wattle around the town	Medium – Long term	Establish the wattle motif as being synonymous with Cootamundra to assist marketing, tourism and pride of place
		Conduct heritage assessment of buildings around the town	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Schedule 5 of CGRC LEP to reflect changes • Include a chapter in the CGRC DCP which directly deals with heritage items and the heritage conservation area • Protect buildings such as the Town Hall which are not currently listed • Get the former District Hospital and Gardens listed as an item of State Heritage
		Create a heritage walking trail	Medium term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking trail to be digitised and used for education and tourism purposes • Plaques be placed in the footpath in front of significant heritage items and “lost” heritage items
		Undertake an Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Places Study	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure places of significance are recognised and protected • Improve knowledge and understanding of Cootamundra’s Aboriginal traditions, history and stories

1.4. Hours of Operation	Despite a desire to shop local, conflicts between employment and opening hours means that many have to either shop online or in another town.	Focus on one night a month (potentially a Friday) as being designated "late night shopping"	Ongoing	Cootamundra's late night shopping becomes an event which locals and neighbouring towns people actively participate in
		Establish a monthly producers market which coincides with late night shopping	Ongoing	In order to better meet the needs of local consumers who wish to support local producers and provide an outlet for small enterprises to remain viable
1.5. Create a Cootamundra App	There is no central digital platform where people can access and book services with local businesses	Create an app and/or website which allows for people to book services and buy items	Short term	There is a central location for local businesses to advertise and sell their products and services. This will also assist some businesses which are

Centre of Medical Excellence				
Objective	Need	Actions	Timeframe	Outcomes
2.1. Create a hub for education and training of frontline medical staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a national and regional shortage of frontline medical staff Cootamundra lacks opportunities for youth employment and post-secondary education 	Encourage training establishments to provide frontline and support medical training.	Ongoing	TAFE and other educational facilities provide a greater variety of frontline and assistant medical training and education.
		A health services and education working group be established	Ongoing	A cross organisational committee is established which provides recommendations on health and education, providing guidance in much the same way as the Traffic Committee operates today
2.2. Create a community which allows people to	Social isolation and lack of services exacerbate existing medical	Create a walkable, accessible neighbourhood	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement controls in the CGRC DCP which requires performance standards related to walkability for residential subdivision

age with dignity	conditions and contribute to premature reliance on fully assisted living			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include projects which promote walkability in contributions plans • Create a pedestrian action management plan for the provision and maintenance of footpaths and shared paths
		Improve access to medical services	Ongoing	Use political avenues to advocate for greater allocation of State funding of medical services such as physiotherapy, obstetrics, general practice, geriatric care, maternity care and paediatric care.
		Consider “healthier by design” and dementia friendly neighbourhoods in Council and infrastructure policy	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement controls in CGRC DCP • Revise infrastructure servicing plans to consider better design outcomes
		Improve children’s parks and dog park to allow for elderly patrons to visit	Ongoing	Provide areas to rest, shelter and fence all parks.
		Improve signage and distance markers around town	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a sign audit of Cootamundra • Create a signage policy
2.3. Improve housing choice and availability	New houses in Cootamundra cater primarily to young families and do not consider less abled individuals or change in circumstance in design	Create a guide for flexible, cost effective design of housing	Short term	Implement controls in the CGRC DCP for flexible design outcomes
		Allow modifications of houses to be exempt where appropriate	Short term	List certain additions and alterations under Schedule 2 of the CGRC LEP
		Promote good design outcomes by creating an excellence in development award	Ongoing	Fund an award stream through the Cootamundra Business Awards
		Allow for site responsive design outcomes	Short term	Remove minimum lot size from the R3 – Medium Density Residential Zone and implement corresponding design standard of built development in the DCP

Inland Port				
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Need</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
3.1. Secure Cootamundra as an inland port	To convince government and investors of the viability of this project a comprehensive business plan needs to be created	Create a working group for the inland port	Short term	A cross council, community and government agency committee is established to promote and further the case for Cootamundra as an inland port site
		Create a business case for the inland port	Short term	Produce a business plan which explains and supports the case for Cootamundra to be the location of an inland port
		Actively promote Cootamundra as the locality for an inland port with all levels of government	Ongoing	Every conversation directors, general managers and councillors have with government should include promotion of Cootamundra as the site for an inland port

Holistic Actions				
<i>Objective</i>	<i>Need</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
4.1. Obtain and share the most up to date and current data trends relating to Cootamundra.	A number of Council documents and plans rely on historical and forecast population and behavioural trends.	Engage the services of a data collection service to provide Council with accurate and up to date information.	Short Term	Budgeting and infrastructure planning is cost effective and needs based
4.2. Urban containment	To reduce urban sprawl and stabilise the cost of infrastructure provision and maintenance	Implement an urban containment line which dictates zoning and minimum lot sizes	Short term	Implement zoning outcomes in the CGRC LEP which reflect the urban containment line for Cootamundra
4.3. Conduct compliance action for	To ensure adherence with state	Conduct an audit of existing planning, building and health	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cootamundra is compliant with legislation.

outstanding issues in planning, building and health related to public safety	legislative requirements and to safeguard the community's health and safety	compliance requirements and rectify any deficits in action		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community is educated about best practice in planning, building and health
4.4. Tourist and Visitor Information Services be available at a centralised location	Many visitors to Cootamundra are unaware that Tourist and Visitor Centre services exist	Occupy a premises on Parker or Wallendoon Street to serve as the Tourist and Visitor Information Centre	Short Term	Tourist and visitor information services are more centrally located and result in greater service delivery
4.5. A dedicated economic and tourism development officer is allocated to Cootamundra	Cootamundra is not afforded the same level of service within Council as Gundagai in regards to economic development and tourism	Council designate an economic and tourism development officer for Cootamundra in the organisational structure	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a single point of contact for the community and council staff to liaise with regarding economic and tourism development Economic and tourism development opportunities are harnessed and encouraged in Cootamundra
4.6. Create opportunities for existing businesses and new enterprises to thrive in Cootamundra	Certain LEP and DCP controls can stifle development opportunities	CGRC LEP be drafted with consideration of strategic work undertake	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zones are open where practical in the CGRC LEP A range of zoning is implemented across Cootamundra to ensure there is a place for most development
4.7. Monitor land development and availability of land	Council does not have data which can inform planning proposals and subdivision	A land monitor be produced every five years	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An independent land monitor can be used by Council to inform zoning, development controls and land releases A land monitor can serve as an advertisement of land availability in Cootamundra

4.8. Provide recreation and open space opportunities which are accessible and targeted to the community's needs	Certain areas in Cootamundra have limited access to recreation and open space opportunities due to physical, financial and social barriers	Council draft and adopt a recreation and open spaces strategy	Short term	Parks and open space are provided at a certain rate and standard across the community
		Council draft and adopt a pedestrian action management plan	Short term	The pedestrian network is evaluated to understand current assets, constraints and maintenance needs
		Council draft and adopt a bike path plan	Short term	The bike network is evaluated to understand current assets, constraints and maintenance needs
		Council develop a community garden and verge garden policy	Short term	Community gardens and use of verges for gardening are allowed for and supported where appropriate
4.9. Cootamundra becomes a regional hub for dog training and exercise facilities	Existing dog infrastructure is not developed enough to serve the community holistically or serve as a regional attractor	Council improve facilities and infrastructure at the dog park on Hurley Street	Short – medium term	Cootamundra has quality facilities for exercising and training dogs
4.10. Entry to the cemetery off the Olympic Highway is closed	Traffic safety issues arise from the current entry and exit point	An alternate entry and exit point is created by extending Bradman Street and connecting through to Rankin Street	Medium term	Patrons can visit the cemetery safely by vehicle and a pedestrian and bike option is also available
4.11. Provision of companion animal internment facilities	There is no location for the community to legally intern companion animals	A pet cemetery be designated along Rankin Street	Medium term	There is a designated community space for the internment and remembrance of companion animals
		A business case for an animal crematorium is developed	Medium term	A local option is available for cremating companion animals
4.12. A dedicated youth space is	Evolving needs of youth such as connection	A business case for a youth space in the Library is developed	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have an independent space in which they can access

created in the Library	to the internet and other technology for education and recreation is not being met in a manner which is equitable	which can be used to apply for funding through Council's budget, community and grant opportunities.		technology for education and training purposes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth have a space in which they can recreate using technology • Cootamundra has a facility which can facilitate electronic game competitions of a regional and rural scale
4.13. A road hierarchy is adopted and reflected physically on the streets and roads	Current give way and road hierarchy is confusing to locals and visitors and results in unnecessary traffic incidents	A road hierarchy is agreed to and adopted by Council	Short term	Signage is updated to reflect the adopted road hierarchy Decisions around the maintenance and works of roads is guided by the road hierarchy
4.14. A car parking plan is adopted and budgeted for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current parking arrangement limit the use of footpaths • Requirement to provide onsite parking stifles development • There is no plan for future growth and public car parks • Caravans and coaches have limited parking options 	A car parking plan is created which plans for the provision of car parking now and into the future, is a policy document to guide the provision of car parking spaces for development and explains how contributions are to be collected in lieu of onsite parking	Short term	Car parking is provided in a logical and equitable manner which maximises development potential of Cootamundra

4.15. Electric car recharge points are planned for and space allocated on road reserves and car parks	There are limited opportunities for the market to provide electric car recharge points due to space and electrical requirements	Sites which are appropriate for electric car recharge points are designed through consultation with Essential Energy	Short term	Opportunities exist for the market to provide electric car recharge opportunities
		Allow electric car recharge points to be exempt development	Ongoing	Electric car recharge points are listed under Schedule 2 of the CGRC LEP as exempt development in the Cootamundra CBD
4.16. Wi-Fi is available in all public spaces	To ensure Cootamundra is positioned to meet the needs of evolving technology and meet community expectations	A digital services strategy is developed by Council	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that provision of digital services meets community needs and expectations Provide opportunities for innovation and flexibility in public spaces
4.17. Tree canopy is mapped and monitored	Council has limited data around the provision and deficit areas of the urban tree canopy	A tree canopy strategy is developed which establishes a target for canopy coverage and treatment of trees	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has a target related to the urban tree canopy A vegetation chapter is included in the CGRC DCP Front setbacks are set to a minimum of 2.5m to allow for larger rear yards and more opportunities for trees
4.18. Minimise domestic water consumption	Water is a limited commodity which is essential for life	A water policy is created which establishes projects and programs such as WaterFix and Smart Metering to reduce domestic water consumption	Short term	Domestic water usage is reduced year on year
4.19. Encourage native and water wise gardens	Native gardens are drought tolerant and require limited water	A fact sheet about native and water wise plants which are suited to	Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community is better educated and aware of plants which are suited to Cootamundra

		Cootamundra is created		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in water consumption for gardens
4.20. Storm water is detained to service street trees, verges and gardens	Flooding and inundation issues currently promote the rapid removal of water from the urban space	A stormwater management plan is created	Short term	Stormwater infrastructure provision and maintenance is budgeted for
		Water sensitive urban design is retrofitted in the urban landscape and is a performance criteria for commercial and industrial development	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water sensitive urban design is included as a performance criteria against commercial and industrial development Infrastructure provision and maintenance considers the opportunity to implement water sensitive urban design
4.21. A flood proof heavy vehicle route is available	The designated heavy vehicle route along Hovell Street is regularly closed due to flooding and inundation	A bridge be placed crossing Muttama Creek on Hovell Street	Short term	A flood proof heavy vehicle route is available to traverse Cootamundra from north to south

