

GUNDAGAI HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND STRATEGY

November 2025



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GUNDAGAI REGIONAL
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Project Number

24341

Document Control

Revision No: 5
Date of Issue: 24/11/2025
Author: AM
Approved: DH

Acknowledgements

Habitat Planning acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gundagai Housing and Employment Land Strategy (“the Strategy”) is a forward-looking document designed to guide land use planning in Gundagai over the next 20 years.

The strategy balances current community needs with future growth opportunities, addressing housing, employment, environmental risks, and socio-economic trends. It builds on extensive demographic research, community feedback, and statutory frameworks to create a sustainable and inclusive vision for Gundagai.

The strategy is anchored in three foundational themes:

1. **Capacity and Preparedness:** Identifying land use opportunities, building community readiness, and mitigating environmental risks
2. **Simplification:** Streamlining planning processes by removing barriers to development and introducing tools like a Development Control Plan (DCP) to ensure consistent and high-quality outcomes.
3. **Diversity and Accessibility:** Reflecting the community’s changing demographics through diverse housing options and universal design principles to accommodate an aging population and smaller households.

Gundagai’s population has remained stable at around 2,200 residents, but its composition is shifting toward older age cohorts and smaller households. Key challenges include:

- A mismatch between housing stock (predominantly large, 3+ bedroom homes) and household needs (rising lone-person and smaller families).
- Increasing housing affordability pressures, with median house prices rising nearly 100% over the past decade.
- A growing rental market, with limited availability and longer tenancies.

The strategy emphasises infill development to maximize existing infrastructure and avoid sprawl, alongside targeted LEP amendments to support diverse housing types and employment lands.

- Gundagai’s land use framework is analysed and recommendations to enable community aspirations.
- **Residential Zones:** Proposed reductions in minimum lot sizes to encourage infill development and affordability.
- **Employment Zones:** Rezoning the MU1 Mixed Use Zone to E3 Productivity Support to foster light industrial growth near the Hume Highway.
- **Environmental Risks** are mapped, with recommendations to avoid high-risk zones and adopt resilient design standards.

Strategic Actions

1. **Development Control Plan (DCP):** Introduce a DCP to provide clear design guidelines, ensuring quality infill development and environmental sustainability.
2. **Key Investigation Sites:** Master plans for prioritized residential and industrial sites to guide future growth, including infrastructure planning.
3. **Affordable Housing:** Explore contribution schemes and pilot projects for social and affordable housing, addressing gaps for vulnerable groups.
4. **Universal Design:** Integrate accessibility features into housing to support aging residents and people with disabilities.

The strategy positions Gundagai to adapt to demographic changes, climate risks, and economic shifts while preserving its rural character. By focusing on infill development, diversified housing, and streamlined planning processes, it aims to create a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable community.

Implementation will require collaboration with state and federal agencies, developers, and residents to align funding, policies, and community aspirations.

This document serves as both a roadmap for Council and a catalyst for long-term investment, ensuring Gundagai remains a vibrant place to live and work.

1

INTRODUCTION



1.1. OVERVIEW

This Strategy links Council's visions for housing and employment land within the Gundagai township and importantly responds to Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) 20 year vision for land use planning for Gundagai.

The Strategy has been developed in accordance with the 'Local Housing Strategy Guideline: A step-by-step process for producing a local housing strategy' (2018) and the 'Employment Land Strategy Guidelines Discussion Paper' 2021, both prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Land Use strategies are forward looking documents that help to prioritise Council actions and funding as well as provide certainty for residents, tenants, business owners and workers alike.

From a policy perspective, The Cootamundra-Gundagai Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), a foundational local government strategy written in 2020, outlined the need for an updated Gundagai Housing and Employment Land Strategy.

With an eye to the following twenty years, the Strategy is underpinned by the earlier completed background report, community and stakeholder consultation. The recommendations in it balance Gundagai as is now, the changes it has been undergoing, the challenges it faces and a vision for residential and employment land use in the future.

The vision for future housing and employment lands in Gundagai in this Strategy has been developed based on previous community consultation and strategic planning work undertaken by Council.

From a policy perspective, the Cootamundra-Gundagai Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is a foundational planning document for Council. The LSPS outlined the need for an updated Strategy specific to Gundagai.

The Strategy includes consideration of demographic factors, local housing supply and demand, and local land-use opportunities and constraints. The Strategy details where additional housing can be provided and how Council will ensure appropriate infrastructure provision.

The Strategy will also ensure that employment lands are provided in appropriate locations which are accessible, reflective of the needs for Gundagai and enable new business and employment to be established efficiently.

This Strategy aims to be an enabling document. It seeks to provide the strategic foundations and practical pathways for legislative and policy improvements changes to implement the vision for Gundagai.



1.2. OBJECTIVES

Land use planning is one of the structures that underpins a thriving community. It encompasses strategic, regulatory and spatial frameworks for the way we interact with our living and built environment.

The objective of the Strategy is to build upon the recommendations of the Cootamundra-Gundagai and implement the relevant vision and directions for Housing and Employment Zoned land within the Gundagai area.

The Strategy will:

- Analyse residential land and housing diversity demand and supply and make recommendations to enable future opportunities
- Analyse development constraints and opportunities including growth drivers, hazards and biodiversity
- Consider infrastructure and servicing availability and requirements for future development
- Analyse Employment Zone land demand and supply analysis including industrial development types, trends and opportunities

This will be achieved by:

- Understanding and analysing the context of Gundagai's current planning framework.
- Identifying the key demographic themes to address.
- Identifying opportunities for future innovation and growth.
- Establishing the principles to guide a land use strategy and any future planning proposals.

1.3. POSITIONING AND CONTEXT

The Gundagai Land Use Strategy sits within a series of documents prepared by Council and can be contextualised with a 'line of sight'.

The outcomes of this Strategy are supported by and can be read in conjunction with the background report. As a high level document, it provides pathways forward to more detailed, qualitative work with a fine grained approach.

Gundagai Land Use Strategy Background Report

A comprehensive background report containing contextual demographic, social, economic and policy research relating to land use throughout Gundagai.

Gundagai Land Use Strategy

- Addresses the issues identified in the Background Report from a land use planning perspective
- Develops a clear set of principles, achievable strategies and actions to enable a vision for land use throughout Gundagai.
- Serves as the strategic basis for ongoing technical work, eventual planning proposals and LEP amendments.
- Identifies Key Investigation Sites to be comprehensively analysed in ongoing Strategic work.

Implementation of Recommendations

Fine grained analysis of key recommendations

Staged implementation through additional and aligned policies, plans, technical reports to support future planning proposals and LEP amendments.



2

ABOUT GUNDAGAI



2.3. EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Gundagai was gazetted in 1838, around 14 years after colonial exploration began in the area. It was the location of the crossing of the Murrumbidgee for people travelling between Sydney and Melbourne, a route set out by Hume and Hovell, though the location had been utilised by Sturt some years earlier.

Against the advice of the local Wiradjuri, the town was constructed on the flood plain between Morley's Creek and the Murrumbidgee River (Figure 2). It flooded several times, and culminating in 1852 Australia's deadliest flood (The Great Flood) destroyed the town and 80-100 people perished.

The town was moved further up Mount Parnassus, away from flood risk, where it exists today.

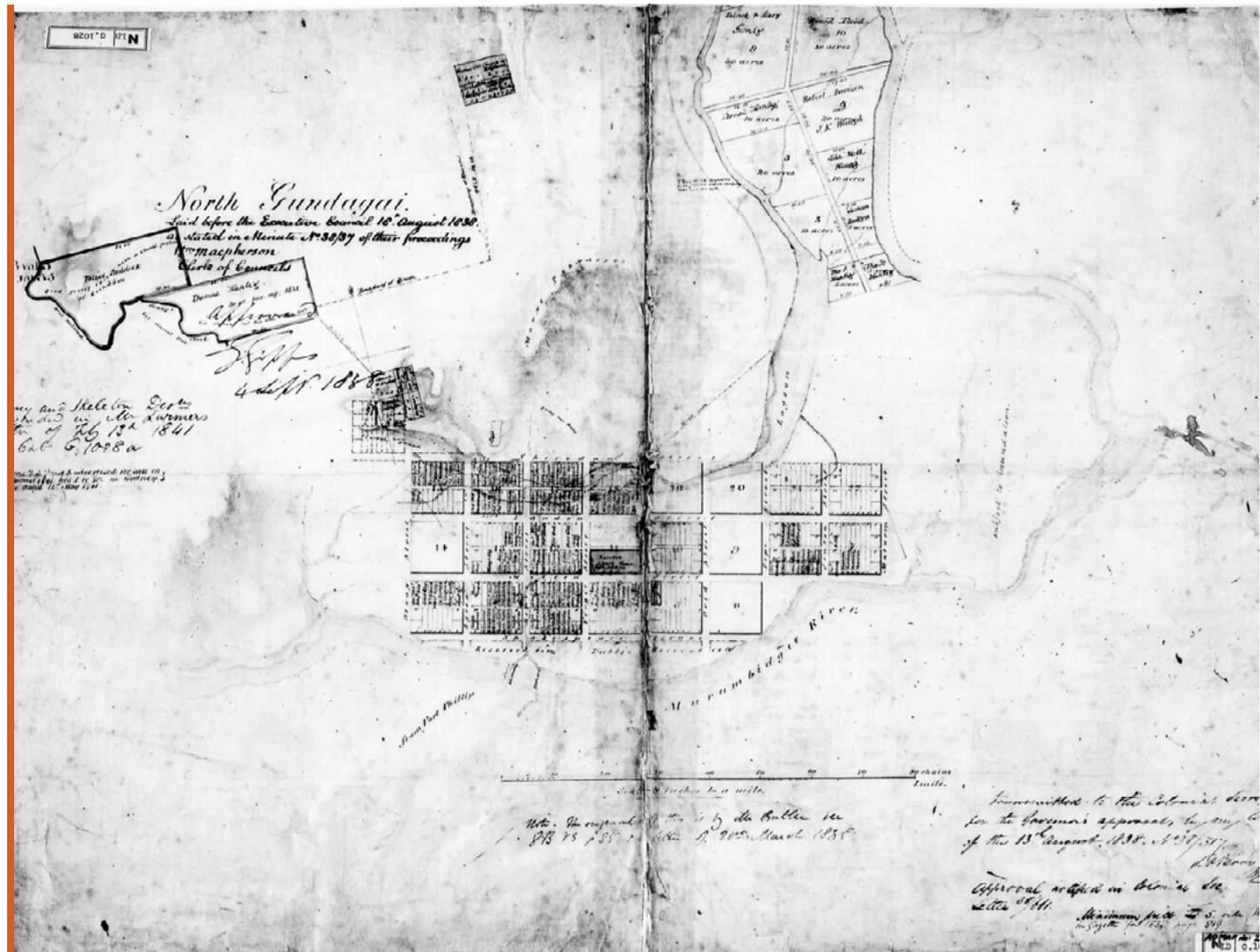


Figure 2 - Old Gundagai (original settlement)

2.4. KEY THEMES

The three foundational ideas upholding the Strategy encompass the results of the background research and community feedback process.

The themes will be comprehensively addressed in Section 6 of this document.

Strategic land use, encompassing where and how we live and work is complex topic and as such, an array of recommendations are made that each work towards the Strategy's themes and vision.



Capacity and Preparedness

- Identifying land use opportunities for diverse community aspirations
- Building community and infrastructure capacity, ensuring readiness for Gundagai future opportunities
- Understanding and mitigating environmental risk



Simplification

- Removing barriers to pave the way for preferred desired land use outcomes
- Enabling efficient land use and development outcomes, to take advantage of growth and investment opportunities



Diversity and Accessibility

- Reflect the diversity of the community in the types of housing and land uses available.
- Physical accessibility through universal design

2.5. STUDY AREA

The Strategy is focussed on the main urban area of Gundagai, and surrounding rural interfaces. Gundagai is the southernmost town in the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council Local Government Area.

The urban area is approximately 9 square kilometres in area, situated on either side of the Murrumbidgee River and surrounding Mount Parnassus, a large foothill to the north-east of the town and the Hume Highway.

Gundagai is located approximately 166 kilometres north west of Canberra, 374 kilometres south west of Sydney and 500 kilometres north of Melbourne.

The closest regional centre to Gundagai is Wagga Wagga, which is located 80 kilometres west. Gundagai also has a number of strategic links, notably with Tumut in the south and Cootamundra in the north.

It is strategically located on the major Hume Freeway Corridor, which is the most significant road transport corridor linking Sydney and Melbourne. The Hume Freeway is one of Australia's busiest freight routes, supporting over 37,000 vehicles daily, including approximately 6,000 heavy freight vehicles.



Figure 3 - Study Area

2.5.1 Riverina Murray Region

For the purposes of land use planning and administration, Regional NSW is split into nine planning regions. Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council is situated in the Riverina Murray region of NSW.

It includes the local government areas (LGAs) of Albury, Berrigan, Bland, Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

The Riverina Murray comprises diverse natural environments, bioregions and is defined by the extensive waterways and river systems, including the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers.

A diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a network of vibrant connected communities.

The Riverina Murray's environment – including major rivers, waterways and wetlands – are protected and managed for the ongoing enjoyment of residents and visitors. Adaptation and resilience to a changing climate and natural hazards has made the region a renowned leader in sustainable and equitable water management for industries, communities and the environment.

The region is connected, attractive, healthy, safe and prosperous. Regional places have a strong sense of community identity, resilience and respect for Country. People can access a range of jobs, housing, events, festivals, education, health, recreational and other community services, all within beautiful natural and rural environments. The region is a major freight and transport distribution hub with investment in essential infrastructure generating more efficient and higher capacity freight routes, better access to air and sea ports, competitive freight costs and higher regional productivity.



3

STATUTORY & STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT



3.1. THE GOVERNMENT IN CONTEXT

Local Government works most closely with members of the community in land use Strategy throughout Australia. When planning and advocating from a local level, it is important to recognize the three interrelated levels of government and their shared roles.

As a Local land use strategy, some actions (such as zoning or lot size minimums) will be most directly achieved via amendments to the LEP. Other broader policies such as taxation and social welfare are addressed at state and federal levels and will require strong advocacy to promote good regional land use outcomes.



The Federal Government's role includes:

- Policy and Funding Allocation
- Financial Assistance to states and territories
- Social housing programs and financial assistance
- Taxation policies
- National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.



The NSW State Government's role includes:

- Housing and land availability and supply
- Addressing homelessness and social housing
- Planning and Development legislation
- Major infrastructure provision and funding
- Regulatory protection (ie. tenancy laws and construction standards)
- State and regional strategy provision
- The State planning context is provided by way of legislation, policies, directions (both under the EP&A Act and at a more general level) as well as guidelines and practice notes.



Local government's role includes

- Urban planning and zoning, including the development, implementation and administration of Local Environmental Plans (LEP) and Development Control Plans (DCP).
- Local strategies (including housing, and community)
- Rate setting and infrastructure contributions
- Development assessment
- Cultural and built heritage
- Infrastructure provision
- Community engagement



At a state level, legislation and policies that guide land use include:

3.1.1. Legislation

- The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)
- The Crown Land Management Act 2016 (NSW)
- The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (the BC Act)
- The Local Land Services Act 2013 (LLS Act)
- Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (“the NPW Act”)
- Water Management Act 2000 (“the WMA Act”)
- Fisheries Management Act 1994
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (PEO Act)

3.1.2. Ministerial Directions

councils regarding the principles, aims, objectives or policies to be achieved or given effect to in the preparation of draft LEPs

Whilst it is not mandatory to address these directions during preparation of strategic documentation, it is considered appropriate to ensure that any recommendations made throughout the project have proper consideration for the directions.

Any relevant Ministerial Directions will be addressed in detail at the time of preparation of recommendations for land use changes in Leeton Shire.

3.1.3. NSW State Environmental Planning Policy

State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) are guidelines and controls relating to specific issues significant to the State. Commencing in March 2022, the 45 existing SEPPs were consolidated into 11 new “thematic” SEPPs. The following are applicable to the Leeton Shire.

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resources and Energy) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021

3.1.4. State Plans

- NSW State Plan 2011-2021
- A 20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW (2018)
- The NSW Government has prepared the Future Transport 2056 Plan (“the Transport Plan”)
- NSW Right To Farm Policy (2015)
- Better Placed
- The Urban Design Guide for Regional NSW
- Design Guide for Heritage
- Greener Places Guide
- Connecting With Country

3.1.5. Regional Plans

NSW is Cootamundra-Gundagai is covered by the Riverina-Murray Regional Plan 2041 ("the Regional Plan").

The Regional Plan is the overarching guide to land use planning in the area. Divided into three parts (Environment, Communities and Places, Economy), the Regional Plan contains 18 Objectives, related strategies and actions.

A breakdown of the Regional Plan's applicability is provided in the supporting background paper.



Riverina-Murray Regional Plan 2041

3.2. LOCAL STRATEGIC AND STATUTORY CONTEXT

Local land use planning in NSW is generally administered by Local Environmental Plans (LEPs) and supported by Development Control Plans (DCPs).



3.3. COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

As of 2018, all LGAs throughout NSW must prepare and endorse a Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The LSPS is a unifying strategic document that brings together the planning priorities and planned actions for a particular LGA. Importantly, the priorities and actions outlined in the CGRC LSPS help to shape the Strategy.

The LSPS sets out a 20 year vision for land use planning throughout CGRC-LGA. It seeks to balance the principles and objectives of the higher order regional strategies with local plans and provide a contextual future-driven approach to planning within the LGA.

A full analysis of the themes and relevant actions can be found in the supporting Background Paper. Those actions have land use requirements which this Strategy seeks to address.

LSPS Vision:

Opportunities through choice



Liveability

- Opportunities for a variety of housing choices
- Opportunities for to celebrate and protect heritage
- Opportunities for to express and engage with arts and culture



Sustainability

- Opportunities to protect and enhance agricultural land
- Opportunities to adapt to the changing climate
- Opportunities to be a leader in waste recover and contaminated land management



Productivity

- Opportunities to grow agricultural industries
- Opportunities to foster agritourism
- Opportunities to support the freight network



Technology

- Opportunities for future technologies
- Opportunities to be a centre of medical excellence
- Opportunities for micro manufacturing



Infrastructure and Planning

- Opportunities to promote active living
- Opportunities to create a flexible planning system
- Opportunities to provide access to quality water and sewer infrastructure

3.4. LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN

A Local Environmental Plan is a type of Environmental planning instrument (EPI) and a statutory plan. It is one of primary planning tools for a Local Government Area (LGA) which sets out the planning regulations as well as the criteria to assess any proposed development. It is written in a standardised format, common to all LGAs across New South Wales.

The LEP is an instrument where strategic intent is applied and is informed by a range of planning strategies and seeks to provide quantifiable criteria the whole community can understand and apply to their individual circumstances.

Gundagai Local Environmental Plan 2011 ("the LEP") was gazetted on 23 September 2011 and has not been merged with the Cootamundra LEP.

The LEP is based on the Standard Instrument Order 2006 and contains provisions that reflect the local nature of Gundagai, including controls for land use zoning and lot size, environmental and heritage protections.



3.5. LAND USE ZONING

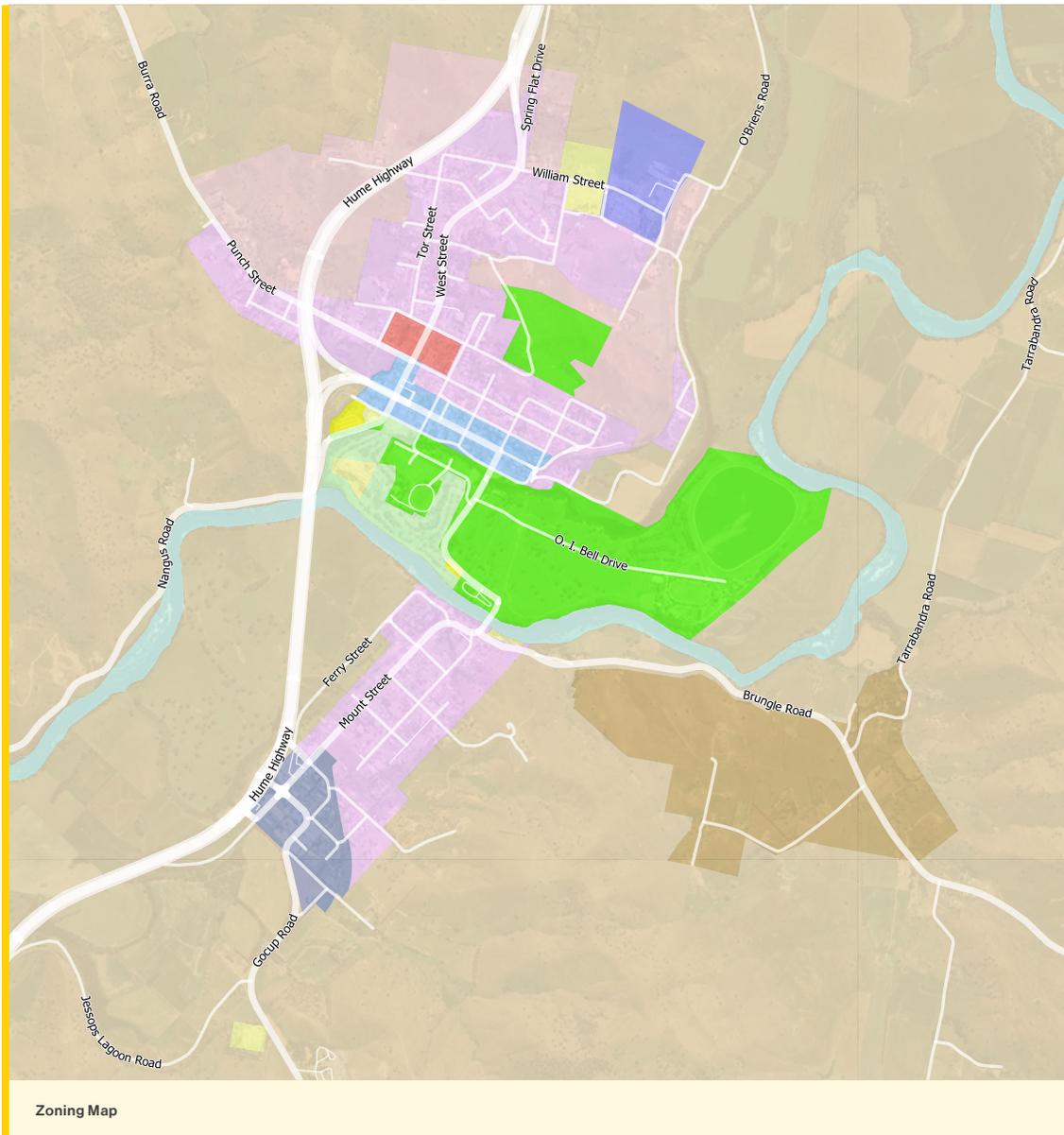
Land use zoning in New South Wales (NSW) is a regulatory framework that controls how land can be used and developed. It is primarily defined through the Gundagai LEP, which spatially organises land into different zones with specific permitted and prohibited uses, ensuring orderly development.

Zoning is crucial for sustainable urban growth, protecting community interests, and balancing economic, environmental, and social needs. It helps prevent land use conflicts, such as industrial activities near residential areas, and supports strategic planning goals, including housing supply, infrastructure provision, and environmental protection.

Effective zoning ensures efficient land use, safeguards heritage and environmental assets. It provides certainty for developers, businesses and residents. Additionally, it aligns local development with broader state and regional planning objectives, guiding future growth and seeking to improve community well-being.



Figure 4 - Zoning Matrix, Gundagai



Legend - Land Use Zone

- E1 - Local Centre
- MU1 - Mixed Use
- E4 - General Industrial
- R1 - General Residential
- R3 - Medium Density Residential
- R5 - Large Lot Residential
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RE2 - Private Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots
- SP1 - Special Activities
- SP3 - Tourist
- W1 - Natural Waterways

3.6. RESIDENTIAL ZONES

The residential areas throughout Gundagai are assigned a range of zones depending on the density and types of dwellings encouraged.

The three zones which are imposed in Gundagai at present, comprise the following:

- R1 General Residential Zone
- R3 Medium Density Residential Zone
- R5 Large Lot Residential Zone

The nature of residential zones in Gundagai typically reflect the intended density and housing form for a particular area. The R1 zone is applied to majority of the 'urban' township and is the default residential zone. The R3 zone is applied in locations where a greater density of housing or renewal is encouraged, being central areas of the township. The R5 zone is applied to peripheral urban areas where a larger lot size and character is encouraged. Unlike the R1 and R3 zone, the R5 zone represents areas where wastewater disposal and water supply infrastructure is provided on site.

One of the major attractions of regional and rural living is the desire to live on more spacious lots. That demand in Gundagai also needs to be balanced with the physical limitations of future growth caused by topography, flooding and alignment of road infrastructure. Likewise, it must also ensure that primary production areas are maintained and not further fragmented by urban use.



3.6.1. R1 General Residential Zone

Zone Objectives

- To provide for the housing needs of the community.
- To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.

3.6.2. R3 Medium Density Residential Zone

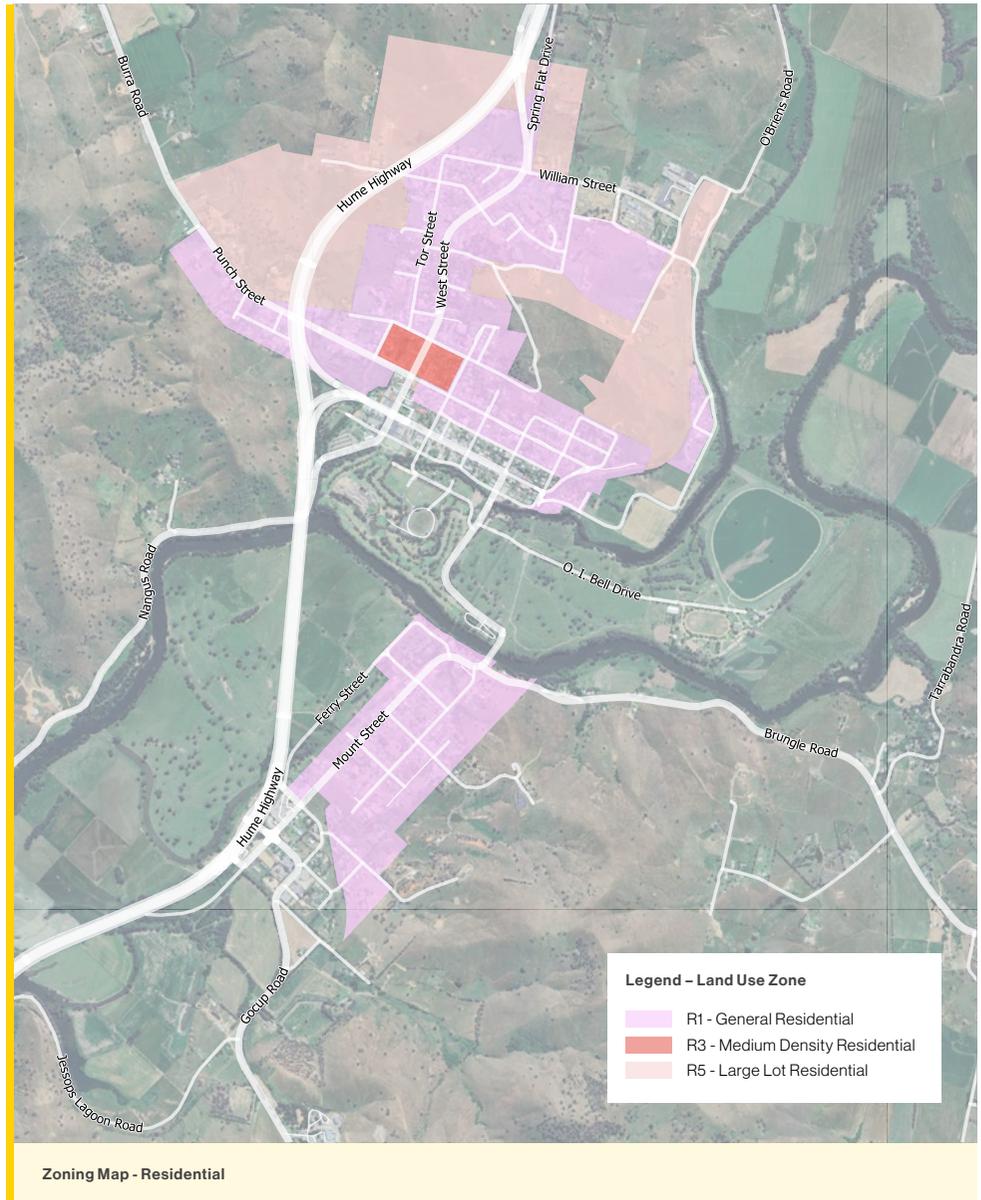
Zone Objectives

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a medium density residential environment.
- To provide a variety of housing types within a medium density residential environment.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.

3.6.3. R5 Large Lot Residential Zone

Zone Objectives

- To provide residential housing in a rural setting while preserving, and minimising impacts on, environmentally sensitive locations and scenic quality.
- To ensure that large residential lots do not hinder the proper and orderly development of urban areas in the future.
- To ensure that development in the area does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To ensure development has appropriate access to water for domestic consumption and bushfire protection.
- To encourage development that enhances local visual amenity.
- To encourage the protection and management of remnant native vegetation.



3.7. EMPLOYMENT ZONES

Employment Zones in NSW are land use zones designed to support business, industry, and job creation. These zones promote economic growth, ensure jobs, amenity and services are strategically located relative to residential zones. Industrial and Business zones have gone through a recent recategorization in NSW to form a broad range of Employment Zones which cover business and industrial uses. Employment Zones in NSW are land use zones designed to support business, and industry, and job creation. These zones promote economic growth, ensure jobs, amenity and services are strategically located relative to residential zones.

Employment Zones are generally categorised by the intensity of land use and the types of uses permissible in them.

In Gundagai, there are three employment zones in operation, being:

- MU1 Mixed Use Zone
- E1 Local Centre Zone
- E4 General Industrial Zone

The E4 General Industrial Zone is generally intended to accommodate a wide range of industrial and warehouse uses and includes 'general industry,' 'high technology industries,' 'industrial training facilities' and 'depots.' This zone is suitable where a council wishes to have a range of industrial land uses and other compatible land uses generally catered for in an industrial zone.

Industrial land should be suitably separated from other uses to avoid adversely affecting amenity. Conversely, industrial zones need to be protected from encroachment by other uses, such as housing, that may be vulnerable to the noise or hazards that come with industrial land use.

The E1 Local Centre Zone is used for the 'town centre', and covers Sheridan Street. Uses are skewed towards services, retail and amenity, with low impact on surrounding uses. Some housing is allowed as well, though in support of the other activities, rather than a primary use. In Gundagai, this includes 'shop-top housing'.

The MU1 Mixed Use Zone is located at the edge of South Gundagai and intended to support the area's proximity to the Hume Highway. While it encourages a mix of uses like the E1 Zone, it is generally not as geared towards high value urban design, vibrancy or heritage protection.

Each of the Employment Zones' applicability will be reviewed as part of this Strategy.

3.7.1. E1 Local Centre Zone

Zone Objectives

- To provide a range of retail, business and community uses that serve the needs of people who live in, work in or visit the area.
- To encourage investment in local commercial development that generates employment opportunities and economic growth.
- To enable residential development that contributes to a vibrant and active local centre and is consistent with the Council's strategic planning for residential development in the area.
- To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings.
- To promote the enhancement and conservation of heritage items.
- To ensure new development occurs in a way that does not compromise the values of existing heritage items.
- To encourage high quality urban design.

3.7.2. MU1 Mixed Use Zone

Zone Objectives

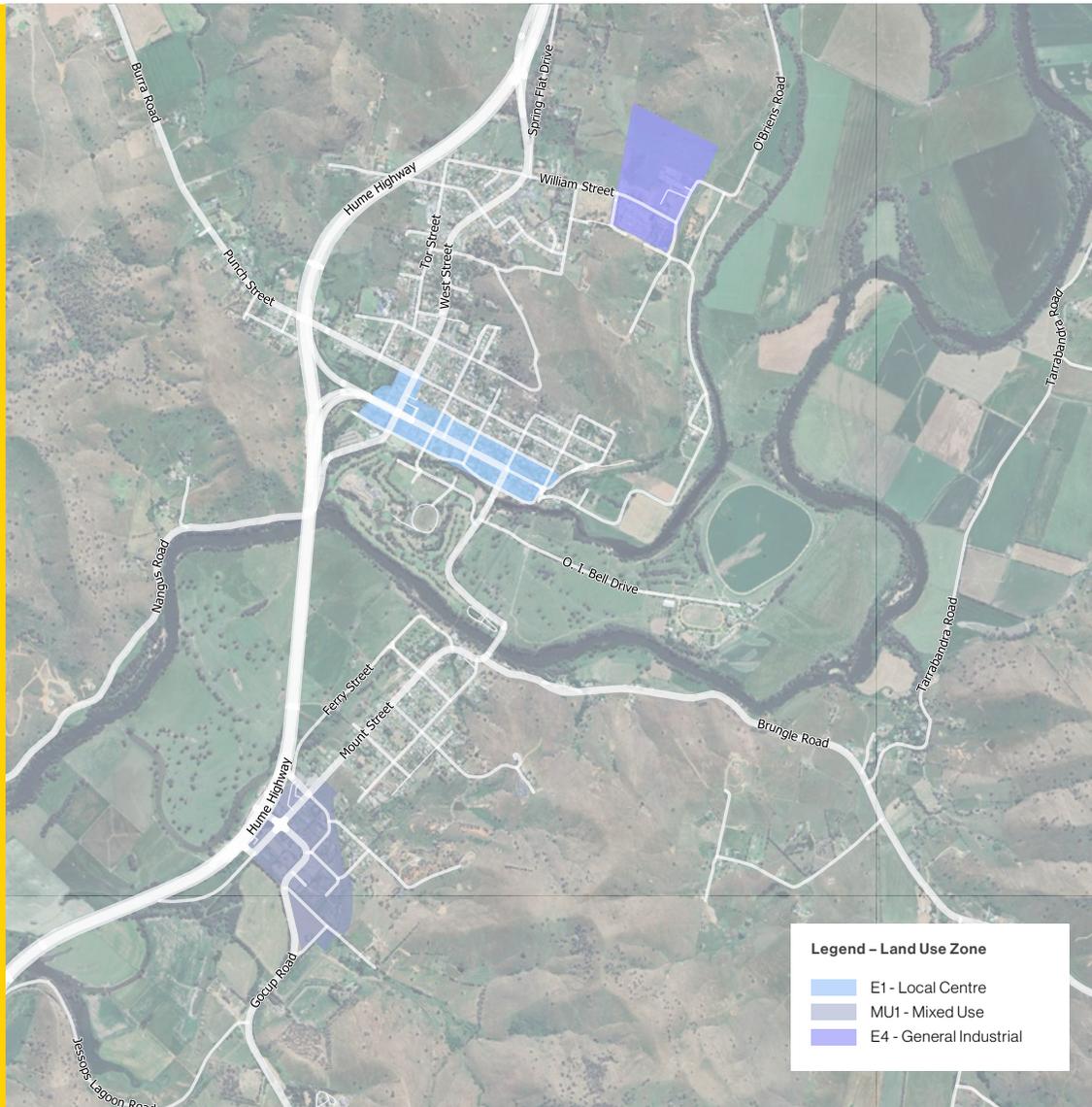
- To encourage a diversity of business, retail, office and light industrial land uses that generate employment opportunities.

- To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings.
- To promote appropriate development at South Gundagai having regard to its strategic relationship to the Hume Highway.

3.7.3. E4 General Industrial Zone

Zone Objectives

- To provide a range of industrial, warehouse, logistics and related land uses.
- To ensure the efficient and viable use of land for industrial uses.
- To minimise any adverse effect of industry on other land uses.
- To encourage employment opportunities.
- To enable limited non-industrial land uses that provide facilities and services to meet the needs of businesses and workers.



Zoning Map - Employment

3.8. RURAL ZONES

The Rural Zones area applied in areas where primary production is prioritised and protected. A number of rural zones allow flexibility in industry and employment that supports primary production. In limited circumstances, dwellings are permitted where it is essential for these to support primary production outcomes.

In Gundagai, there are two rural zones applied:

- RU1 Primary Production
- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots

The RU1 Primary Production zone represents the areas of the LGA which are intended for use as primary industry production, including extensive agriculture, intensive livestock and intensive plant agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, mining and extractive industries. The zone is aimed at utilising the natural resource base in a sustainable manner.

The RU1 zone is allocated to land where the principal function is primary production. The vast majority of this land is used for agriculture, which is also the largest economic driver in CGRC, underlining its importance for both land use and the local economy, employment.

The RU4 Primary Production Small Lot is generally intended to a productive zone where dwellings are allowed, though at a smaller scale than a RU1 Primary Production Zone. It is often used as a transitional zone between more urbanised areas and large scale agricultural production, hosting higher density and diversity of operations or hobby farm uses. Within Gundagai, the RU4 Zone is located at the eastern periphery of the town.

3.8.1. RU1 Primary Production Zone

Zone Objectives

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area.
- To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To encourage the efficient use and conservation of water resources.
- To protect significant scenic landscapes.
- To encourage development that does not adversely impact nearby agricultural activities.

- To protect, enhance and conserve the natural environment, including native vegetation, wetlands and wildlife habitat.
- To ensure development prevents or mitigates land degradation.

3.8.2. RU4 Primary Production Small Lots

Zone Objectives

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



Zoning Map - Rural

3.9. OTHER ZONES

The remaining zones used throughout Gundagai aren't as easily tied to residential or employment use and are categorised for supporting environmental, recreation, tourism and infrastructural purposes. The remaining zones applied throughout Gundagai are not as directly connected to residential or employment types and generally categorised for supporting environmental, recreation, tourism, and infrastructural purposes.

The remaining zones applied within Gundagai include:

- W1 Natural Waterways Zone
- SP1 Special Activities Zone
- SP3 Tourist Zone
- RE1 Public Recreation Zone
- RE2 Private Recreation Zone

The W1 waterway zone is applied throughout Gundagai is tied to the over the Murrumbidgee River alignment. It reflects the natural waterbody of the River and ensures it's ongoing protection.

The SP1 Special Activities Zone is reserved for special uses that are not otherwise provided for in any other zones, or where a site may have individual and natural characteristic or special purpose. Throughout Gundagai, the SP1 Zone covers water treatment and cemeteries.

The SP3 Tourist Zone covers the Gundagai Memorial Cairn (Site of Old Gundagai), Caravan and Tourist Park and the Dog on the Tuckerbox site, to the north of the township.

The RE1 Public Recreation zone covers much of Old Gundagai, which contains recreation areas, parks, showground and race course. This area typically does not contain dwellings or other habitable uses.

The RE2 Private Recreation zone is applied to areas which provide recreation functions and are owned or managed by private entities. In Gundagai, this zone covers the Gundagai Golf Course and Bowls Club.

3.9.1. W1 Natural Waterways Zone Zone Objectives

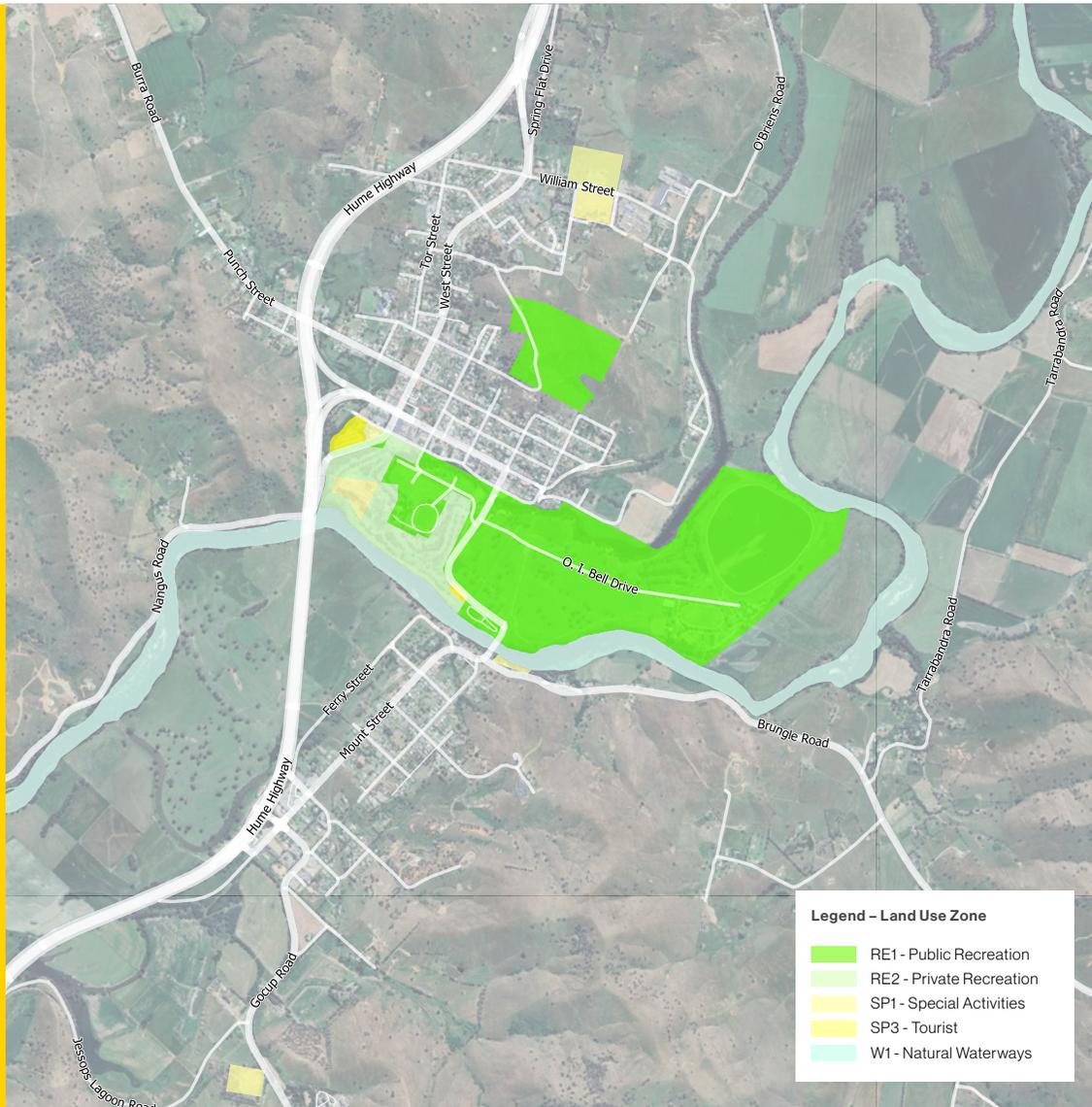
- To protect the ecological and scenic values of natural waterways.
- To prevent development that would have an adverse effect on the natural values of waterways in this zone.
- To provide for sustainable fishing industries and recreational fishing.
- 3.9.2. SP1 Special Activities Zone
- Zone Objectives
- To provide for special land uses that are not provided for in other zones.
- To provide for sites with special natural characteristics that are not provided for in other zones.
- To facilitate development that is in keeping with the special characteristics of the site or its existing or intended special use, and that minimises any adverse impacts on surrounding land.

3.9.3. SP3 Tourist Zone Zone Objectives

- To provide for a variety of tourist-oriented development and related uses.
- To recognise and promote the cultural significance of the "Dog on the Tuckerbox" installation at the Five Mile.
- 3.9.4. RE1 Public Recreation Zone
- Zone Objectives
- To enable land to be used for public open space or recreational purposes.
- To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.
- To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.

3.9.5. RE2 Private Recreation Zone Zone Objectives

- To enable land to be used for private open space or recreational purposes.
- To provide a range of recreational settings and activities and compatible land uses.
- To protect and enhance the natural environment for recreational purposes.



Zoning Map - Other

3.10. MINIMUM LOT SIZE

The minimum lot size is an additional control that can affect the density, allowable development and resulting character of an area. Access to reticulated sewerage and water systems should be considered when determining appropriate minimum lot sizes. Lot sizes can be varied within the zone depending on the servicing availability and other factors such as topography, native vegetation characteristics and surrounding agricultural land uses.

Though with different outcomes and effects, it applies to RU1 Primary Production lots, where there is a 40 hectare minimum down to a 500m² minimum in the R3 Medium Density Residential Zone.

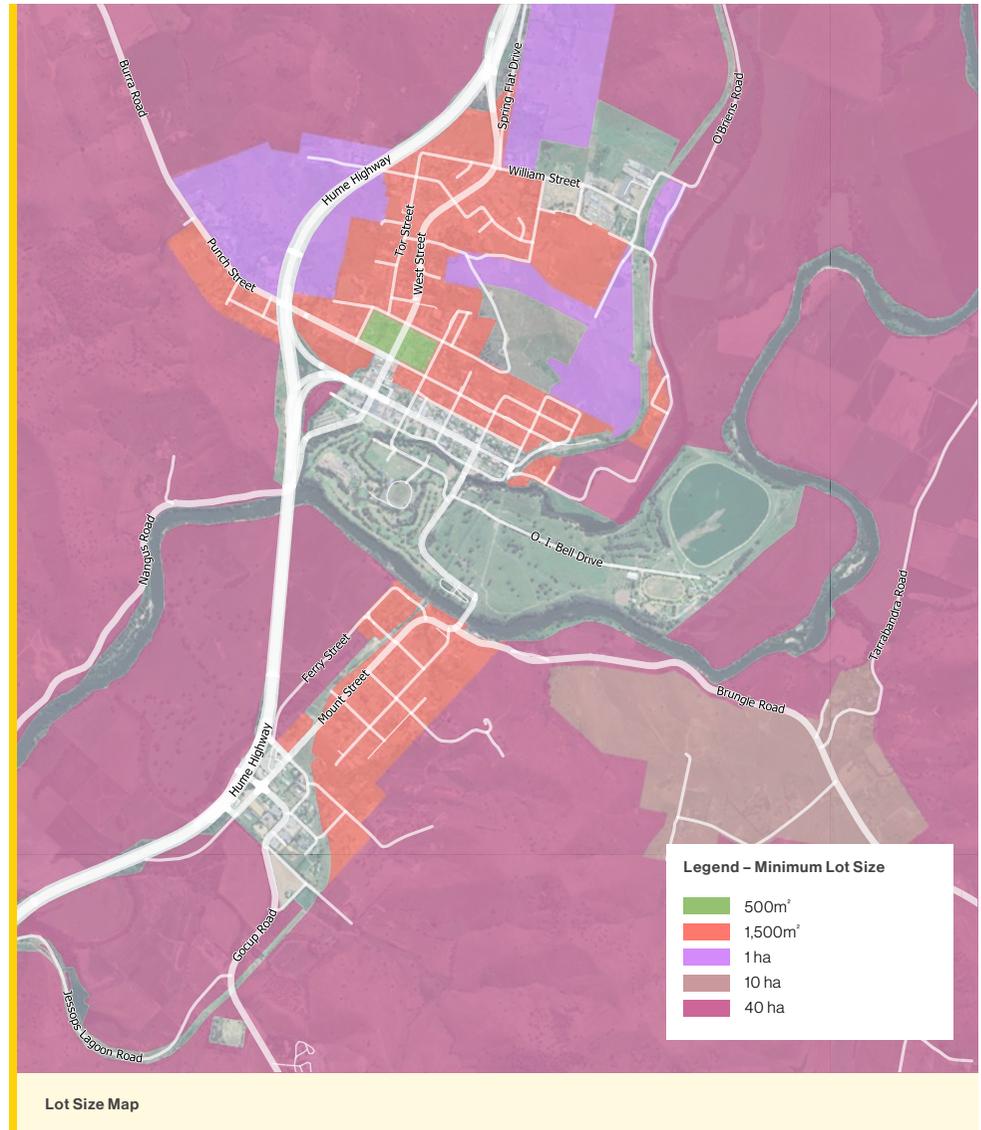
There is a 1,500m² lot size in the R1 General Residential Zone, which is relatively high even for a regional town, which can have the effect of sprawling development too far from centres of amenity and employment.

Consideration must be given to the “in-between” zones, which perform an important transitional purpose from the more urbanised town centres to productive, broadacre agricultural use.

The minimum lot size can effectively encourage or discourage development at a particular density and should be applied appropriately in conjunction with the particular land use zoning to facilitate the preferred outcome.

Where the zone permits, individual lot sizes can be effectively reduced through strata or community subdivisions.

To encourage infill development throughout Gundagai, a reduction or abolition of the minimum lot size in urban areas might be considered.



3.11. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN

The Development Control Plan (DCP) is a non-statutory document produced by each LGA that guides and facilitates development. The DCP contains local planning rules, developed by individual Councils, and assists in providing certainty on the aims and objectives set out in the EPIs.

It is a fundamental part of the suite of documents that inform land use planning in NSW at a local level, providing fine grained design and detailed guidance for built form and urban design.

Gundagai does not currently have a DCP in operation and therefore has no development control document that can be used in making planning decisions.

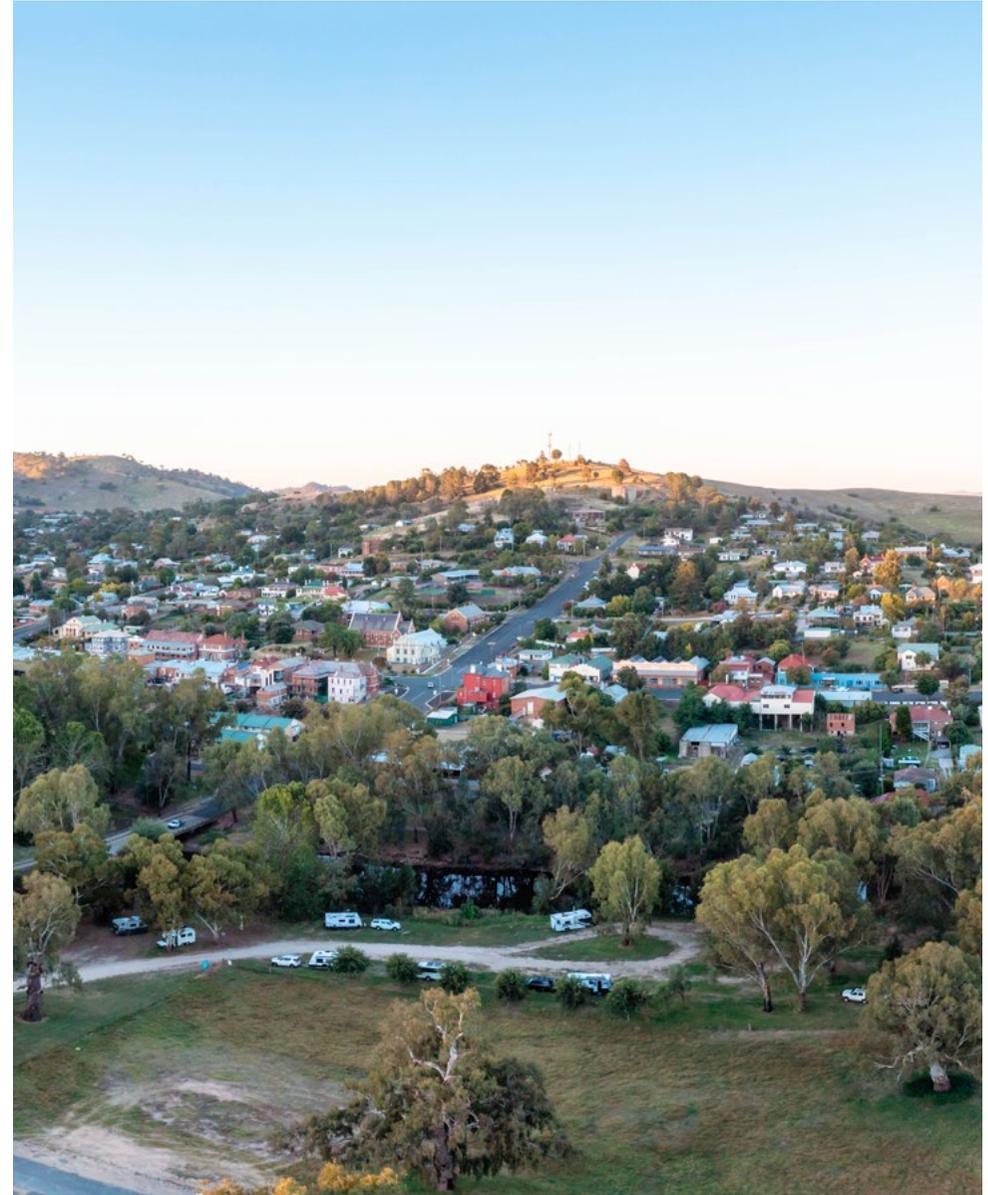
A small, separate DCP was prepared in 2007 for the 5 Mile precinct, including the Dog on the Tuckerbox site.

3.12. CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS

Local contributions plans levy new developments to contribute to infrastructure and planned community facilities. In Gundagai, this includes public toilet upgrades (Yarri Park), upgrades to the Old Gundagai Town Site and the continued implementation of the cycleway plan.

The GCRC Section 7.12 Development Consent Levy Contributions Plan 2018 applies to all development throughout the shire valued at over \$100,000. It was adopted by Council in 2018 with a projected ten year lifespan.

For future development, specific Contributions Plans can be tied to particular land use outcomes, including residential and industrial subdivisions and estates.



3.13. HERITAGE

European and Indigenous heritage listings play a vital role in land use planning in Gundagai, ensuring the protection and recognition of historically and culturally significant sites. These listings, under the Heritage Act 1977 and Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, help safeguard buildings, landscapes, and places with cultural, social, or architectural value.

For Indigenous heritage, listings preserve Aboriginal cultural sites, landscapes, and sacred places, maintaining connections to Country, identity, and traditions. Protecting these sites is crucial for cultural continuity and reconciliation.

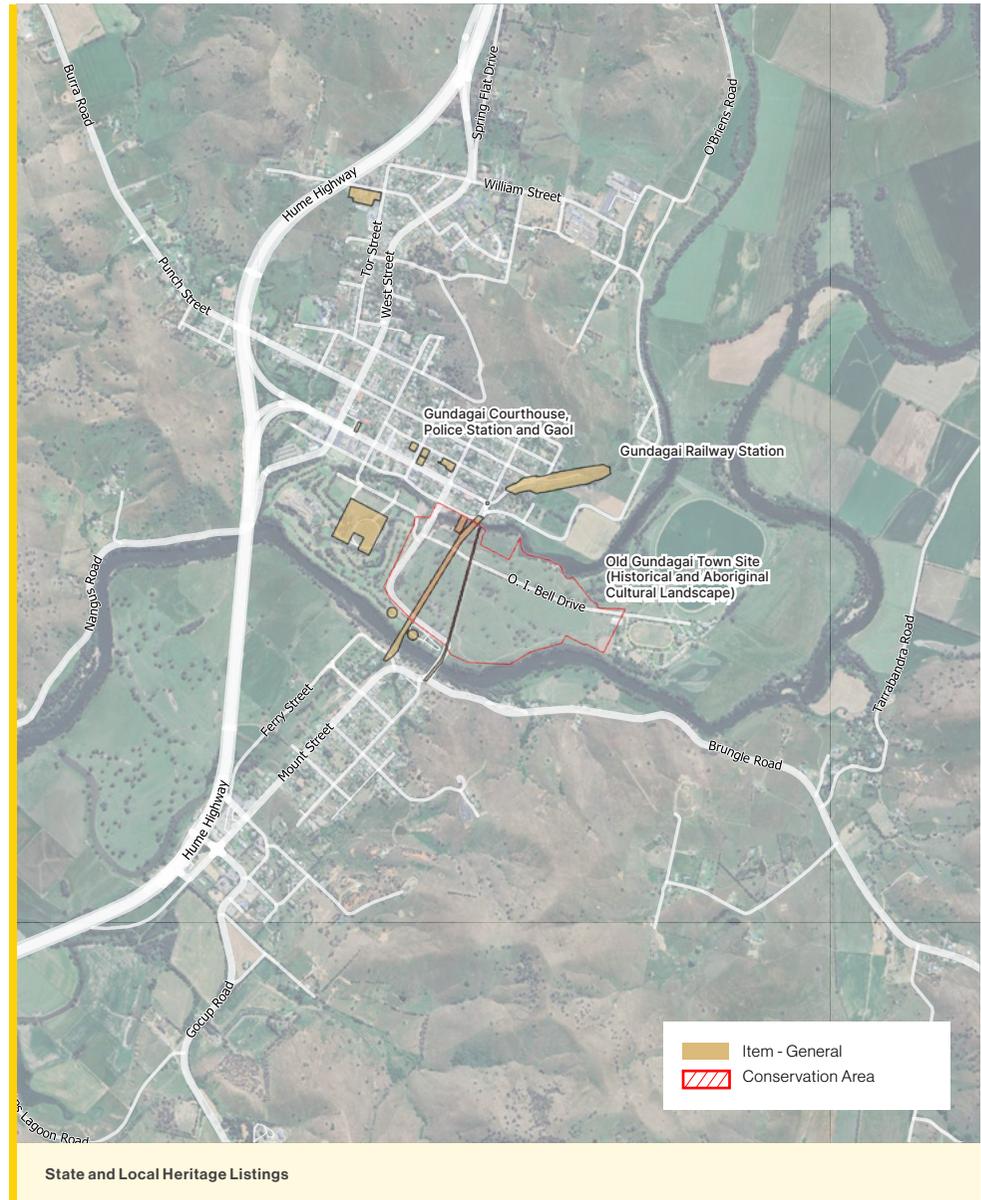
Listed sites of significant Aboriginal cultural importance within Gundagai include the Old Gundagai Town Site (Historical and Aboriginal Cultural Landscape).

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study has not been completed for the area by Council, which may afford a less specific type of protection to the cultural landscapes, related artefacts and sites.

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (“the NPW Act”) and managed jointly by Heritage NSW and the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). Part 6 of the NPW Act provides specific protection for Aboriginal objects and declared Aboriginal places by establishing offences of harm, which includes destroying, defacing or damaging an Aboriginal object or place, or moving an Aboriginal object from the land.

For European heritage, listings retain historical buildings, precincts, and industrial sites, fostering a sense of place and supporting tourism.

Listed site and buildings within Gundagai include the Old Gundagai Town Site, Railway Station, Courthouse, Police Station and Gaol.



4

DEMOGRAPHICS



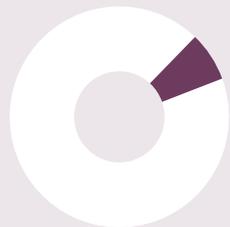
4.1 POPULATION

The Gundagai Urban Centre* supports an estimated residential population of 1970 persons (ABS, 2021) (based on usual place of residence), with an almost even split between males and females of 50.15% and 49.85% respectively. Of the total population, 7.16% of the LGA identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The makeup and location of the population, their preferences and requirements will inform future land use and planning strategies.

While over the last twenty years, the population has been stable, its makeup and distribution has fluctuated.

Any future population change is not likely to be evenly distributed. Regionally, people are consolidating closer to urban centres for the lifestyle, employment, services, healthcare and amenity.



7.16%*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Figure 5 - ATSI Population Percentage 2021
*Urban Centres and Localities (UCLs) are defined using Statistical Areas Level 1 (SA1s) that meet density and/or urban infrastructure criteria.

Gundagai Population

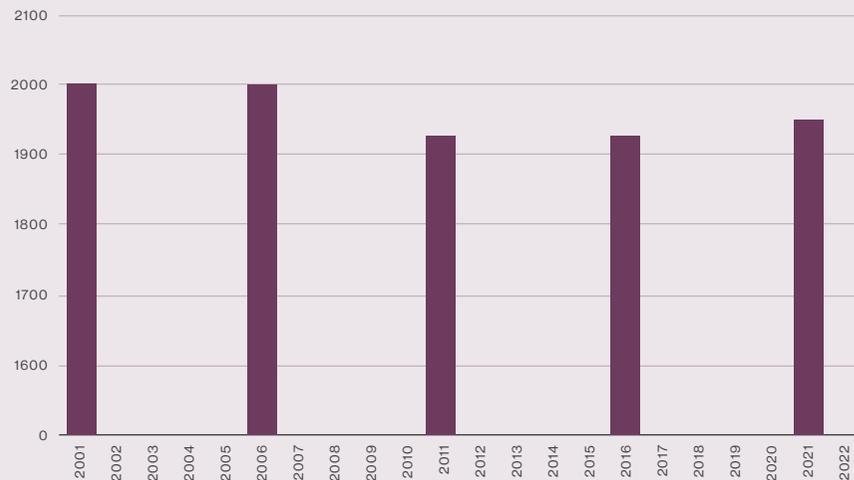


Figure 6 - Gundagai Residential Population (2001-2021) ABS



1970

Residential population



50.15%

Male



49.85%

Female

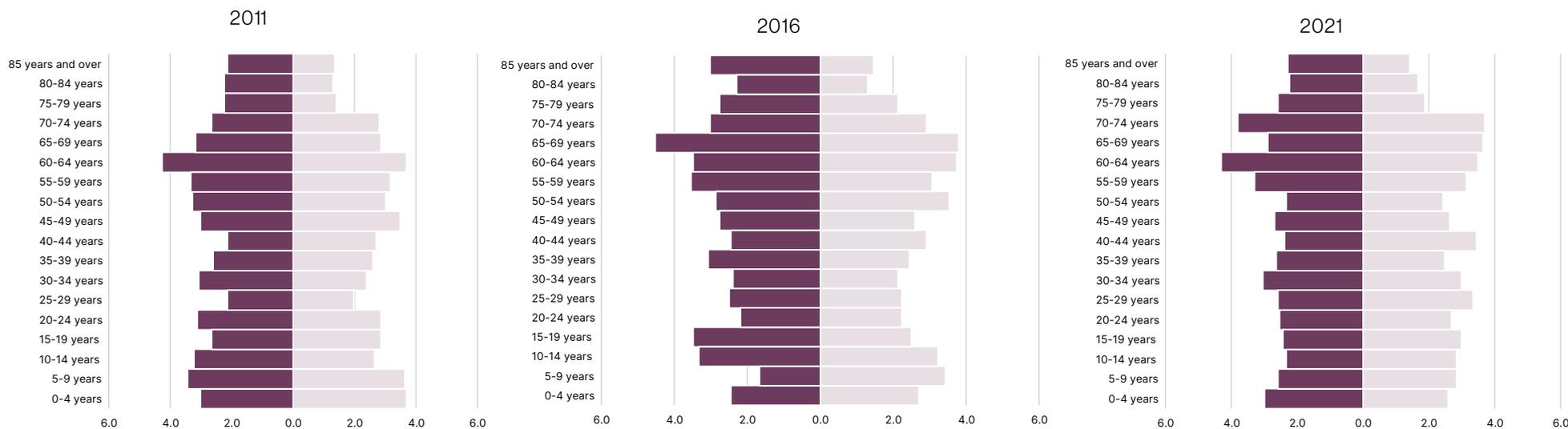
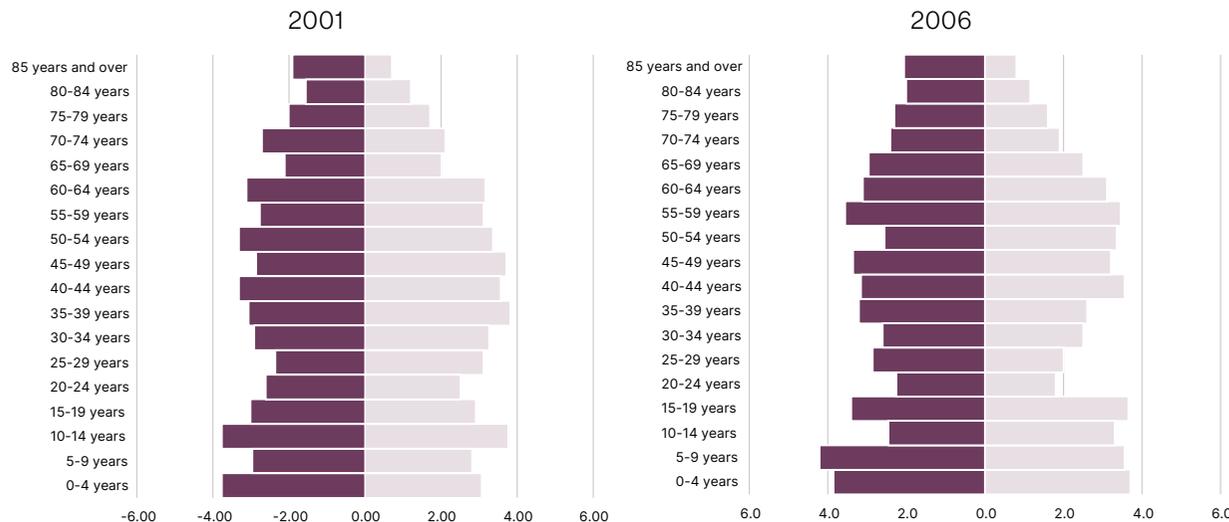
4.1.1. Population Changes and Distribution

Overall, Gundagai's population has been stable since the turn of the century, with a population of 2,207 at the 2021 census.

As well as the number, the profile of Gundagai is changing, particularly a shift toward an aging population, which is a trend fairly common to regional Australia.

As can be seen from the series of population pyramids spanning from 2001 to 2021, Gundagai has an aging population (quite high even for a regional town), which will affect community requirements for healthcare, amenity and land use planning.

● Female % ● Male %



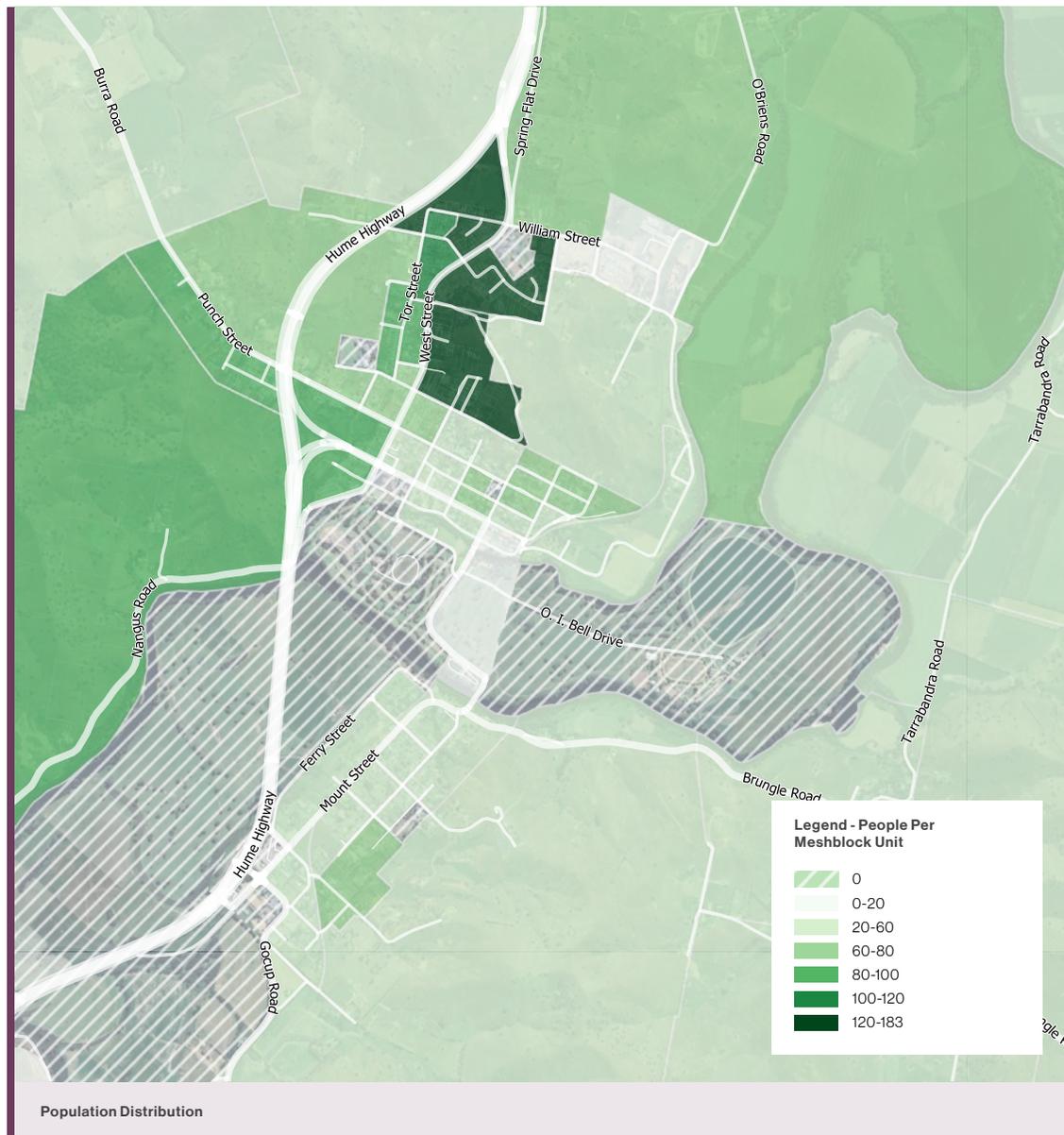
4.1.2. Population Distribution and Density

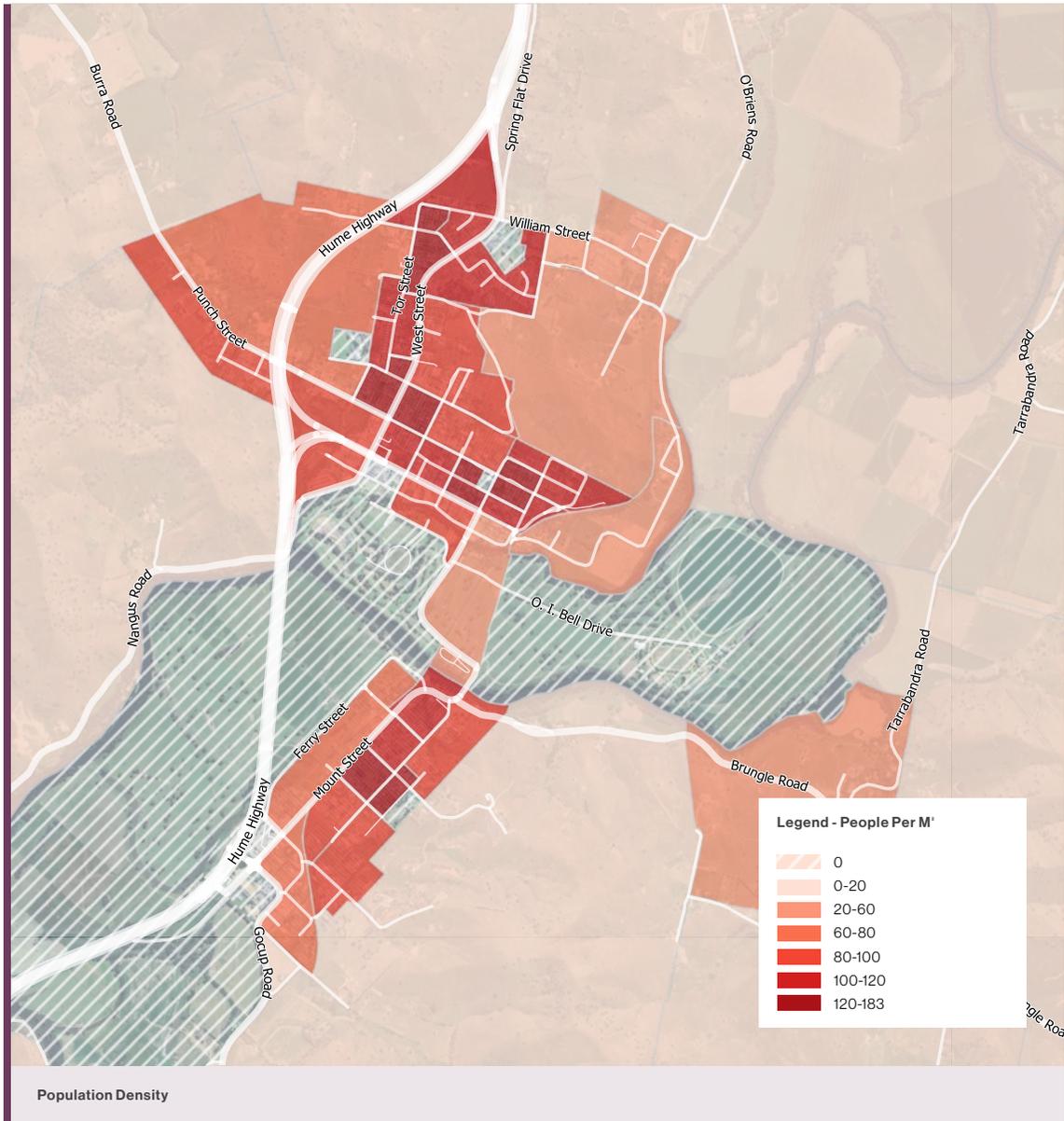
The population density for Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA varies between one to four people per square kilometre.

The average density for Regional NSW towns is 3.62 people per square kilometre, which puts Gundagai at the lower end of the spectrum. Gundagai's relative size and regional location also contribute to this.

While low density living is often part of the appeal of a regional lifestyle, and a reason for many who choose to live there, it is important to balance this with inefficient land uses, such as embedding car dependency due to long travel distances by maintaining that low density.

While the population density in and of itself may not prove insightful, understanding it in conjunction with other demographic categories such as age, migration or family groups can be useful.





4.1.3. Cultural Diversity

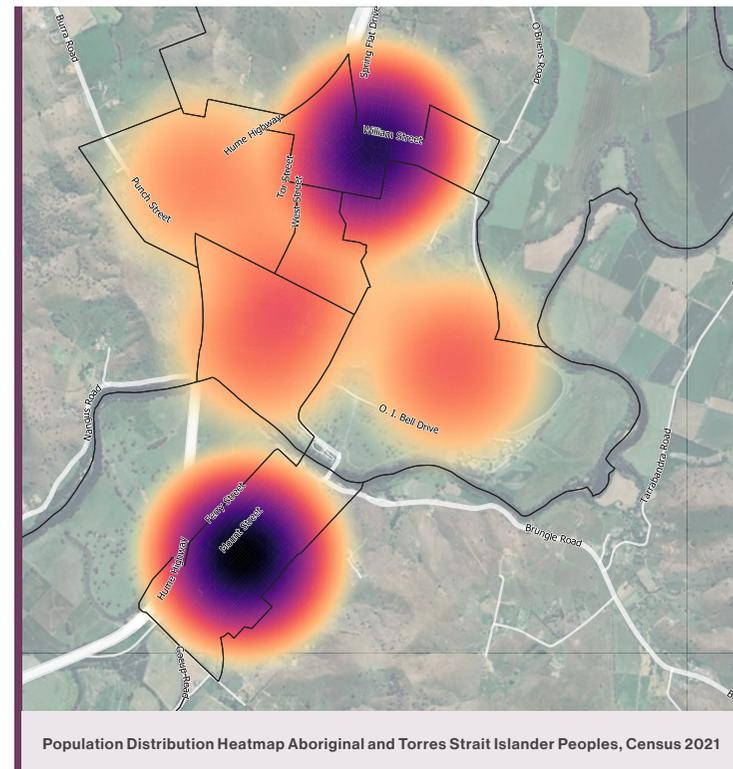
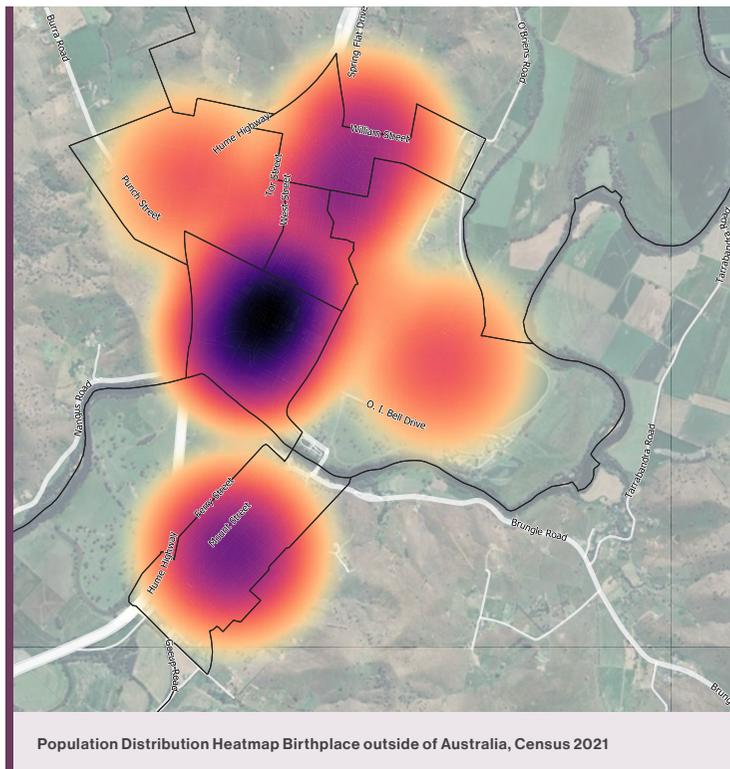
For a small regional LGA, Gundagai has a relatively small proportion of the population born outside of Australia (10.2%), less than the CGLGA (15.8%).

In the immediate region, LGAs with people of people born outside of Australia include Snowy Valleys (17.6%), Junee (15%), Wagga Wagga (17%) and Hilltops (15.8%).

ABS (Country of Birth by Person)

There is a concentration of migrants in Gundagai, a phenomenon that may be useful to unpack – the reasons for settlement, community, affordability and housing preferences can be investigated. (see following heatmap).

Likewise, there is a geographical spread of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander citizens throughout the Gundagai township. This data can be important for the provision of services, specific healthcare and preferred housing types.



4.1.4. Population Migration

The largest cohorts of internal in-migrants come from fairly close origins, which is largely true for their location one year ago and five years ago.

The proportion of overseas migrants is also notable, though importantly this statistic does not cover temporary, seasonal or those on working visas, who may comprise a substantial group of workers.

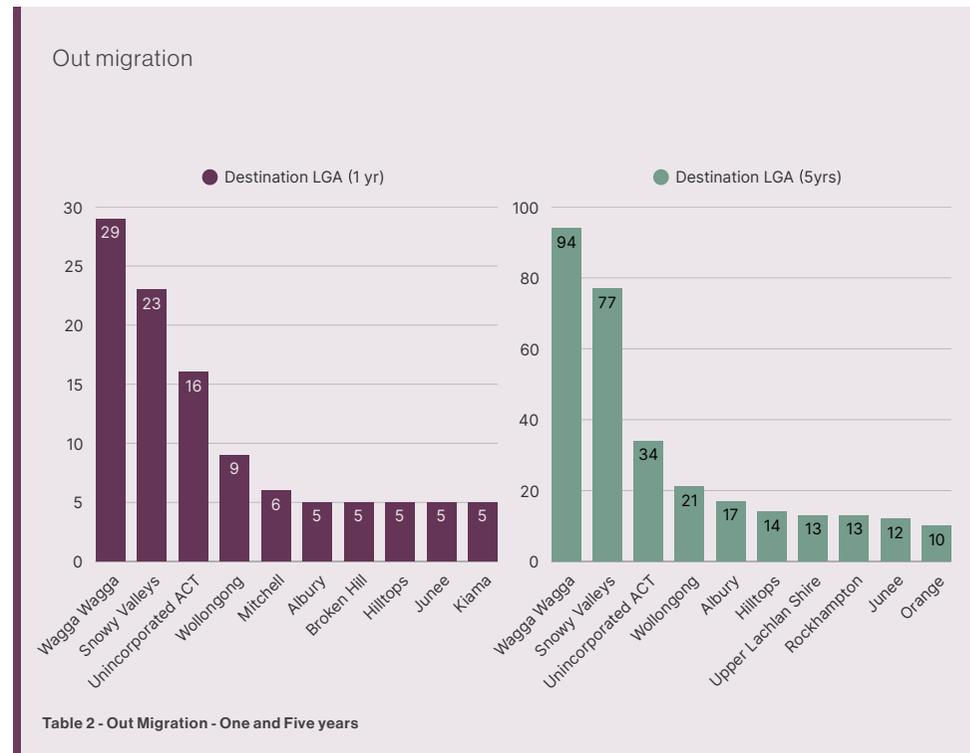
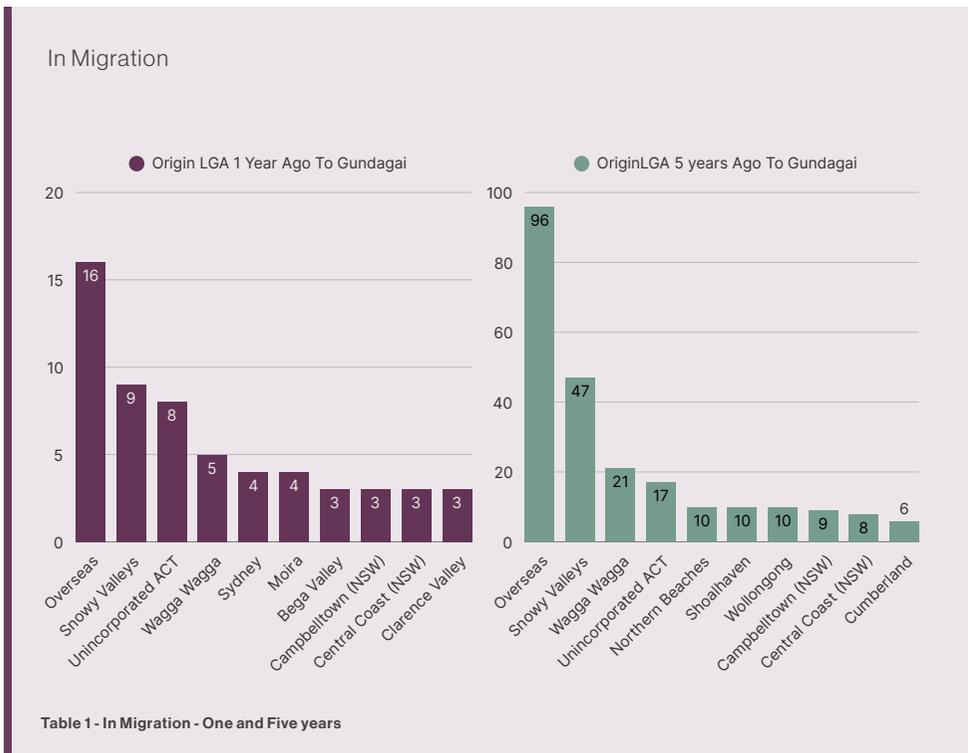
The largest cohorts of internal (within Australia) out-migrants are also moving to relatively close LGAs, though the size of the locations people are migrating to might indicate people may be moving for employment or greater opportunity.

Local Population Movement

Movement to and from the neighbouring LGAs of Wagga Wagga, Snowy Valleys and the ACT is highest, indicating people moving around the region.

Migration by Age group

A loss of young adults and young families (18-24, 25-34 and 35-44 year old cohorts) is the most significant outward migration trend, which may reflect a lack of opportunity, employment or education.



4.2. HOUSING

Housing is one of the most influential factors in determining how the planning instruments should be framed for the future.

Housing activity is not necessarily a result of historical planning or decisions made by Council though is more likely linked to larger scale migration flows locally, regionally and nationally.

The changes to the makeup of the population will place significant demands on housing stock in the future, particularly;

- The capability of the existing dwelling types to cater to changing household types
- The rise of lone person households
- Smaller family units and one parent families
- Housing stock suitable for an aging population
- Appetite for development

At the 2021 Census, there were 758 occupied private dwellings recorded in Gundagai: 88.0% were separate houses, 0.8% were semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc, 9.1% were flats, units or apartments and 1.3% were other dwellings.



4.2.1. Household composition

As at the 2021 census, there were 737 “households” throughout the LGA, comprised of groups outlined in Table 2.

Changes in household size (how many people occupy a dwelling) over the past fifteen years shows an increase of lone person households, and can be analysed in conjunction with the change in age groups (see Population pyramids).

For instance, it is a safe assumption to make that many of lone person households are older persons, who will have particular needs for housing.

The gradual decline in three and four person households usually indicate a decrease in family groups (also refer to change in household types, Figure 9)

The change in household type broadly aligns with the change in household size. The rise in one and two person household are reflected in the growth of couples without children and lone person households.

The decrease in ‘Couples with children’, and three/four person households (likely the same cohorts) may indicate people moving for access to schooling, or other employment opportunities.

A small rise in group households (usually groups of unrelated people) might indicate people living together for financial and social benefits.

Table 3 - Households, persons usually resident, ABS

Number of persons usually resident	Households
1 person	264
2 persons	267
3 persons	82
4 persons	81
5 persons	49
6 or more persons	16

Household Number Change (2006-2021)

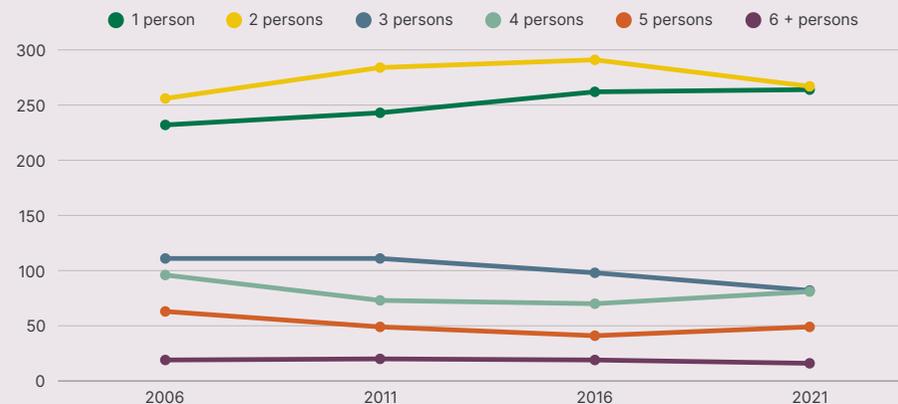


Figure 8 - Change in Household Number (ABS)

Household Structure Change (2006-2021)

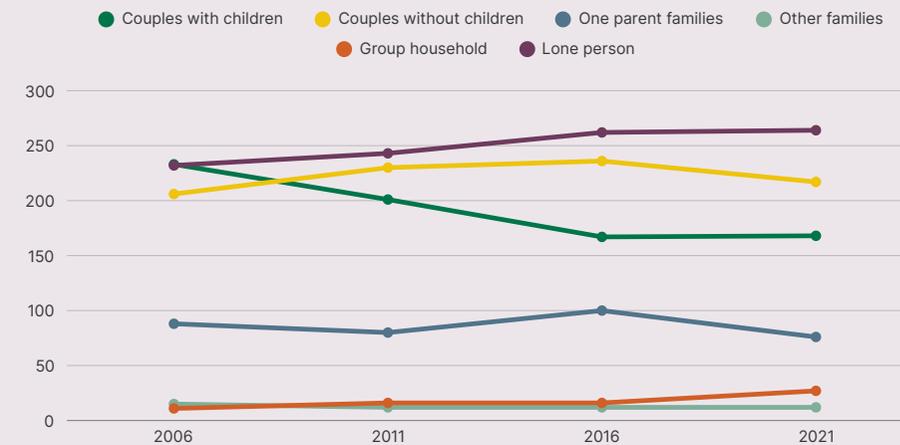


Figure 9 - Change in Household Type (ABS)

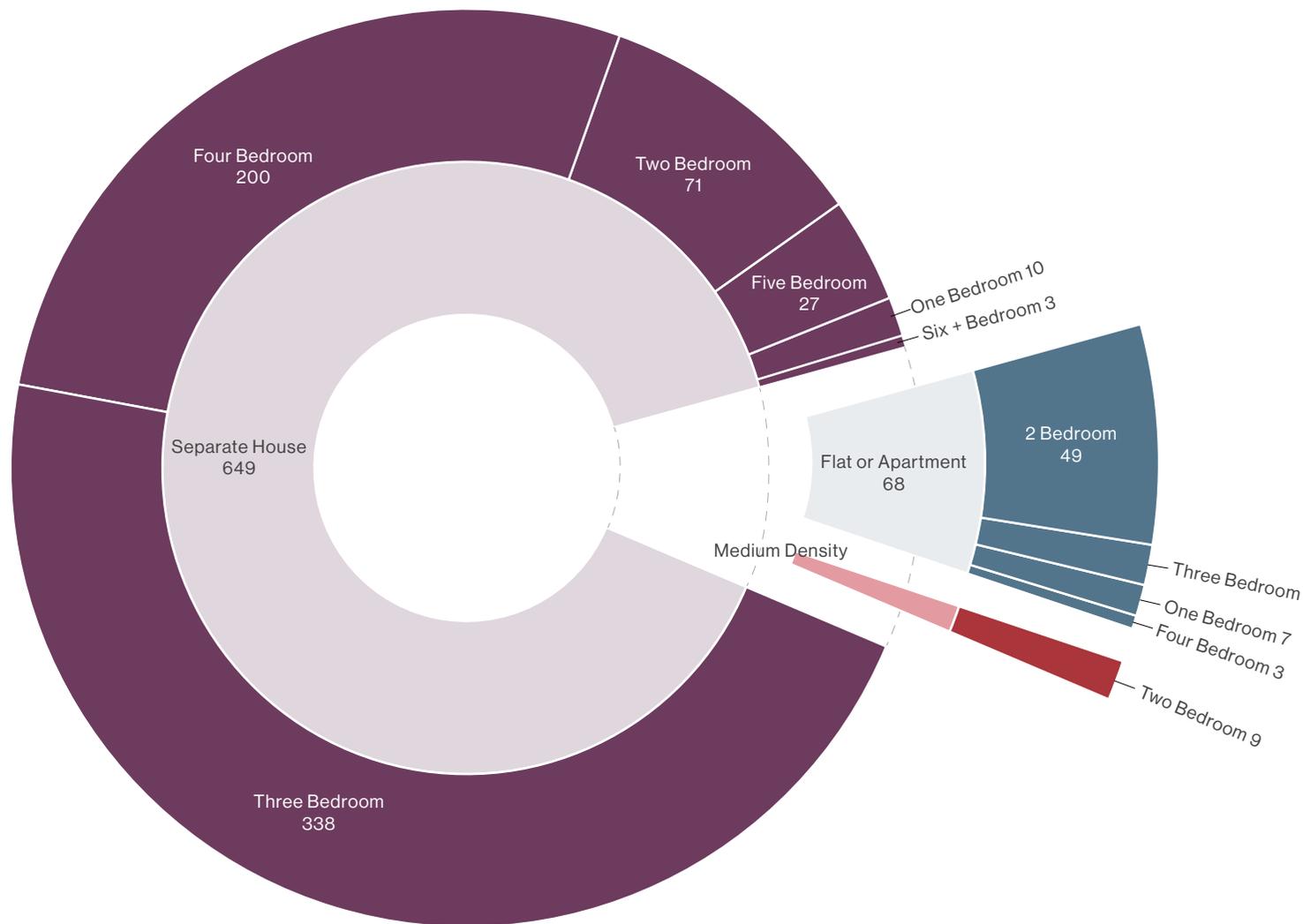
4.2.2. Dwelling Types

Throughout Gundagai, the dominant housing type is a detached three-bedroom dwelling. There is also a high proportion of four, five and over bedroom houses, and a small number of one and two bedroom dwellings, which is increasingly mismatching with the changing household compositions.

At the time of the 2021 census – there were 264 lone person households, 206 of whom are residing in separate dwellings.

The majority of dwellings containing three bedrooms and over indicate there is an increasing mismatch between the housing stock, and the changing household makeups.

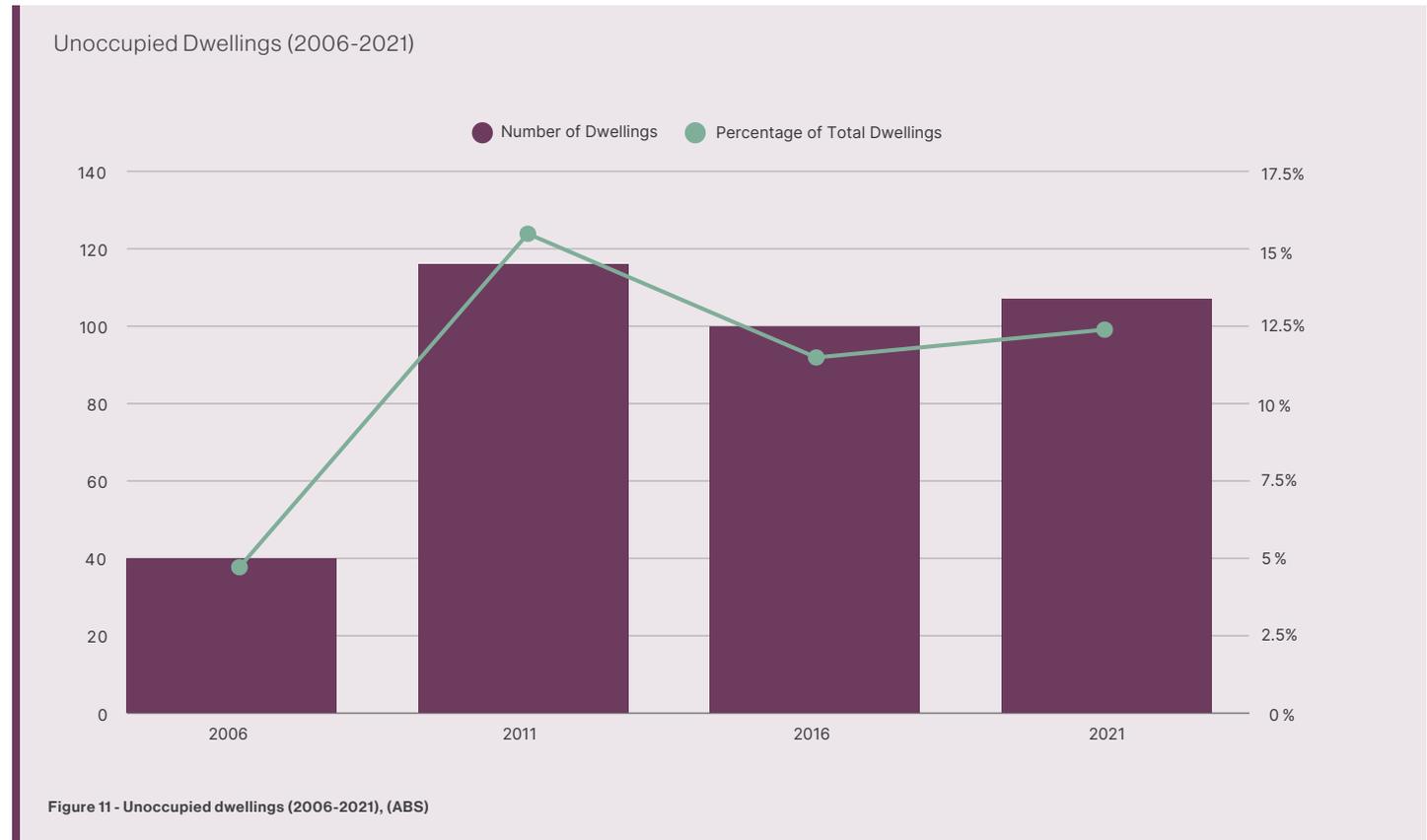
Gundagai Housing Stock



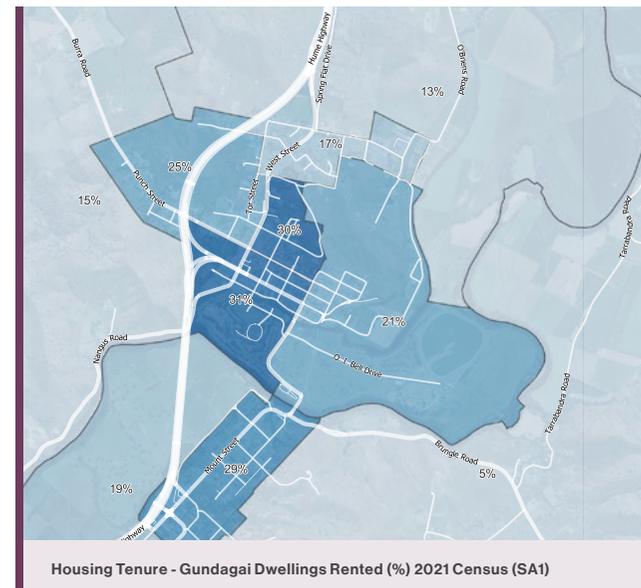
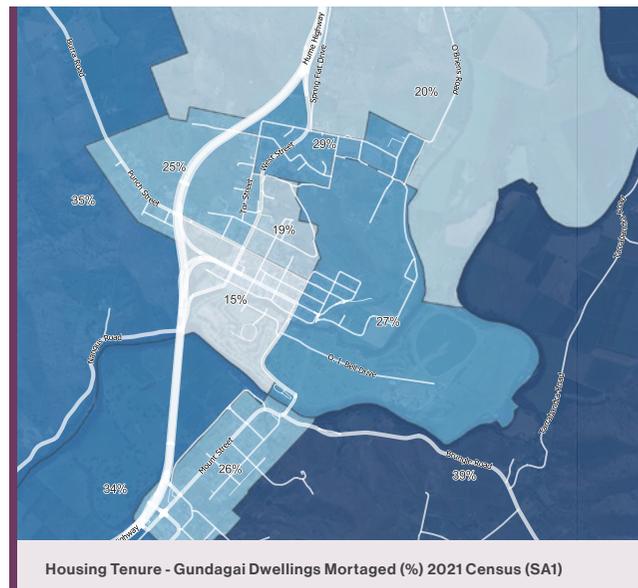
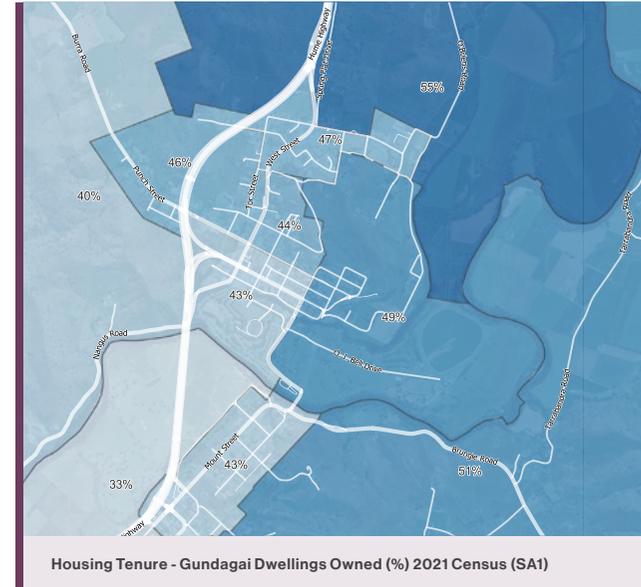
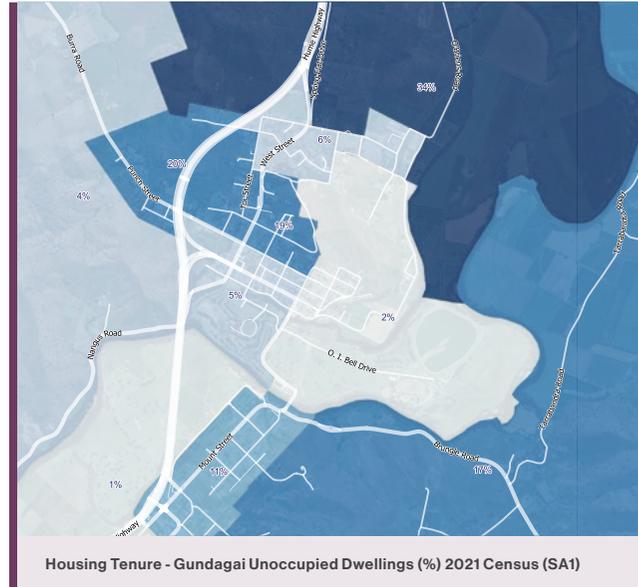
4.2.3. Unoccupied Dwellings

In 2021, of a total of 107 private dwellings were considered unoccupied – 12.4%, which represents around 130% of the Australian regional average.

This is a number that can be quite alarming during periods of scarce housing availability and rising costs of living, though is fairly consistent with national averages. Often this can be explained by people not being at home during a census, houses in the process of being sold or rented, or being used for short term rentals.



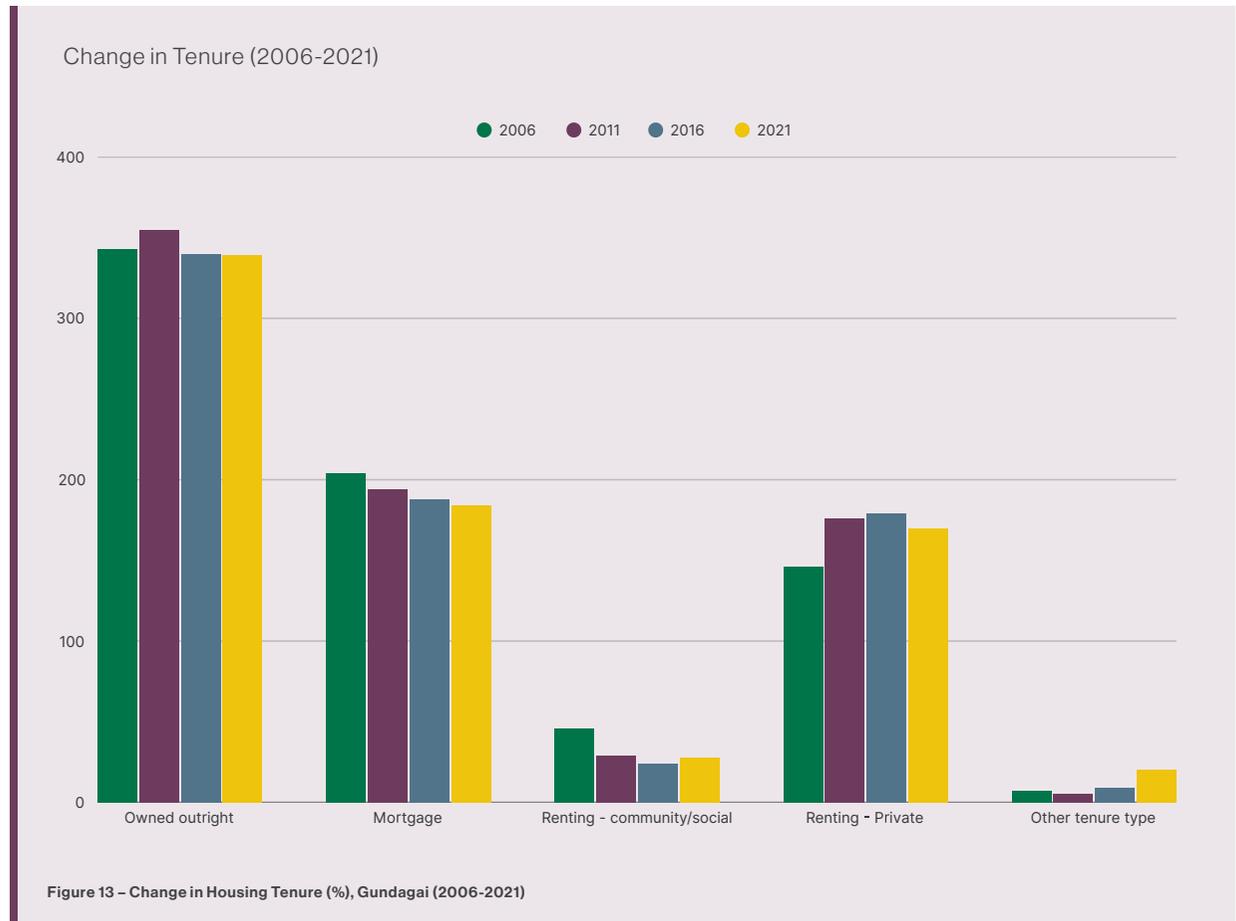
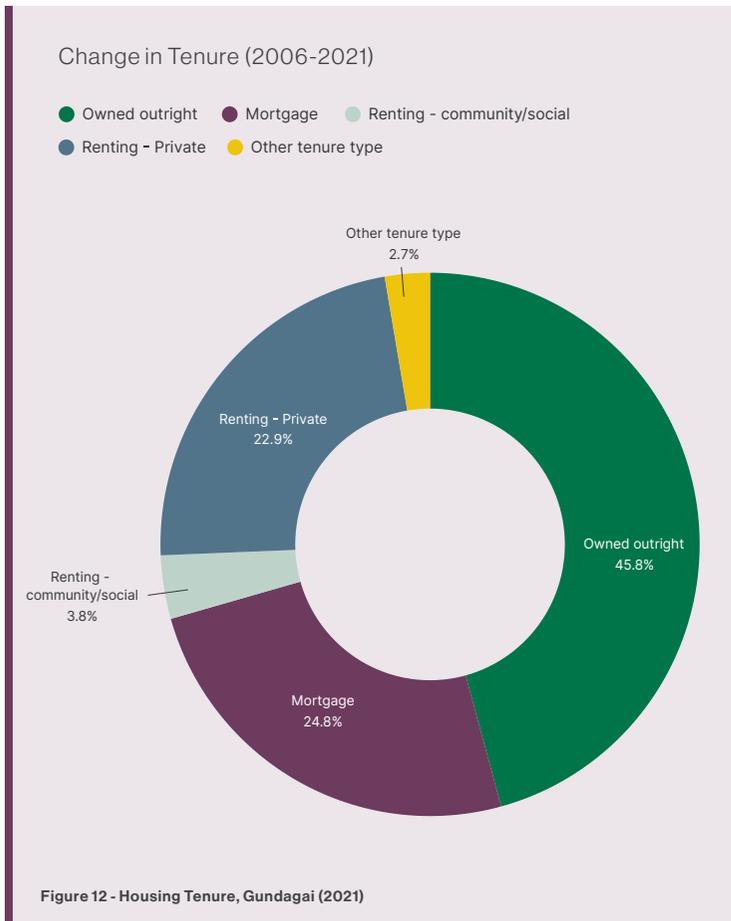
The following maps show the Housing Tenure Maps of unoccupied dwellings, which may be helpful in the context of Gundagai, particularly the above average numbers close to the centre of the town.



4.2.4. Housing Tenure

Due to the low population numbers, it can be hard to identify clear trends in housing tenure though it may be instructive to analyse them in conjunction with population dynamics.

Changes between 2006 and 2021 show the number of fully owned and mortgaged properties has decreased slightly and renting increased. Other tenure types, which often includes short term rentals and stays has increased slightly



4.2.5. Housing Payments

Mortgage and Rental payments have been most recently reported at the 2021 census.

Of the 24.3% of households paying mortgages, the majority are paying between \$800 and \$1,800 per month. This has likely increased as interest rate rises have occurred since the census. There are also a notable number of households in the lowest bracket, which could indicate properties with very low mortgage balances, subsidised housing, or other unique financial arrangements.

While the Census figures may be slightly dated, data suggests that rental costs are still relatively low, with the majority of households paying less than \$350 per week, well below the NSW Regional median of \$540 for houses.

Monthly Mortgage Repayments (2021)

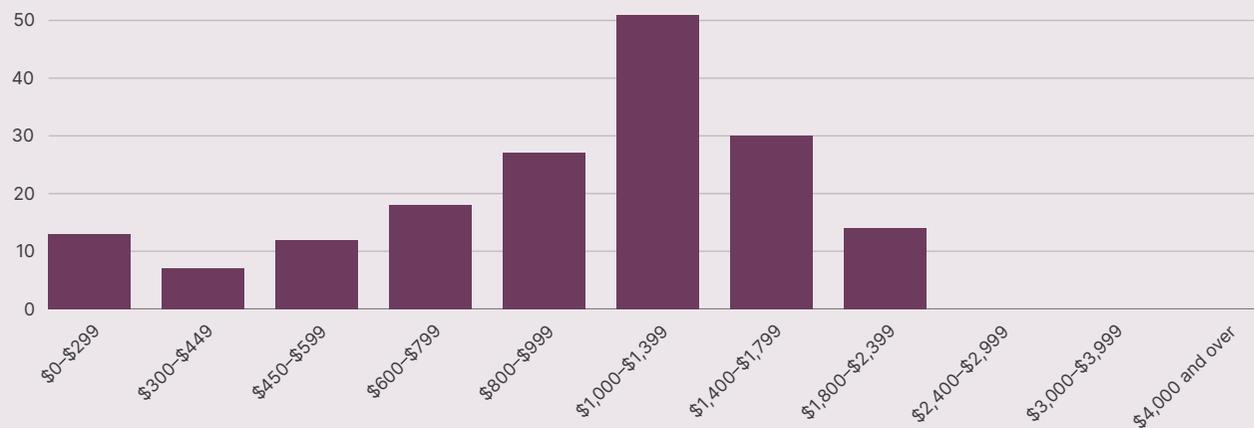


Figure 14 - Monthly Mortgage Repayments (2021), ABS

Monthly Mortgage Repayments (2021)

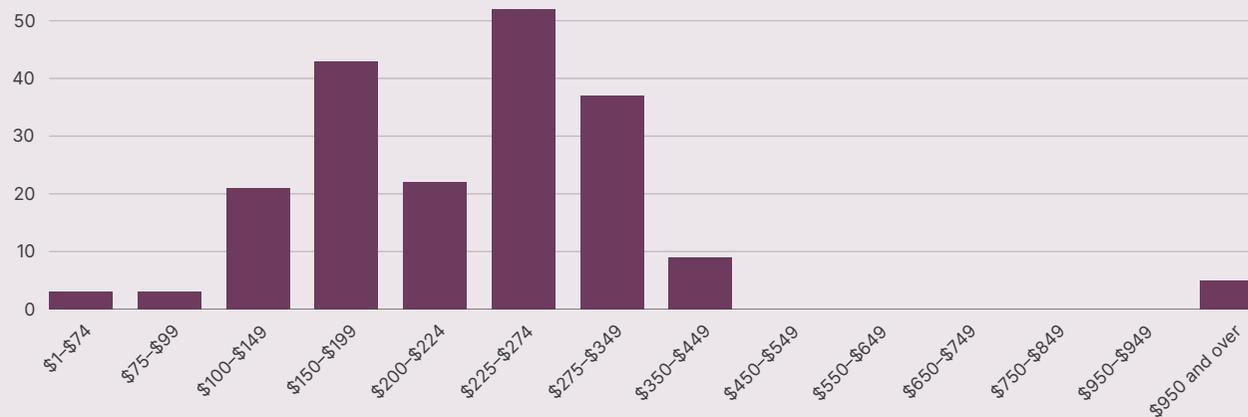


Figure 14 - Monthly Mortgage Repayments (2021), ABS

4.2.6. Housing and Land Sales

Access to affordable housing is perhaps as important culturally as it is economically, in Australian society. As a fundamental human right, housing is important for shelter as well as security. This often clashes with property's standing as asset class, due to its potential for capital gains.

Housing prices in regional Australia have increased quite dramatically following the COVID pandemic and Gundagai is no exception. Over the past ten years, recorded house prices have risen by almost 100%, and particularly since 2020.

Of interest is the increasing house sales within the E1 Local Centre Zone, rising from one dwelling in 2015, to nine in 2024. This may reflect a higher desire for residential properties closer to the town centre.

Table 4 - Average Residential Property Sales 2015-2025, CoreLogic

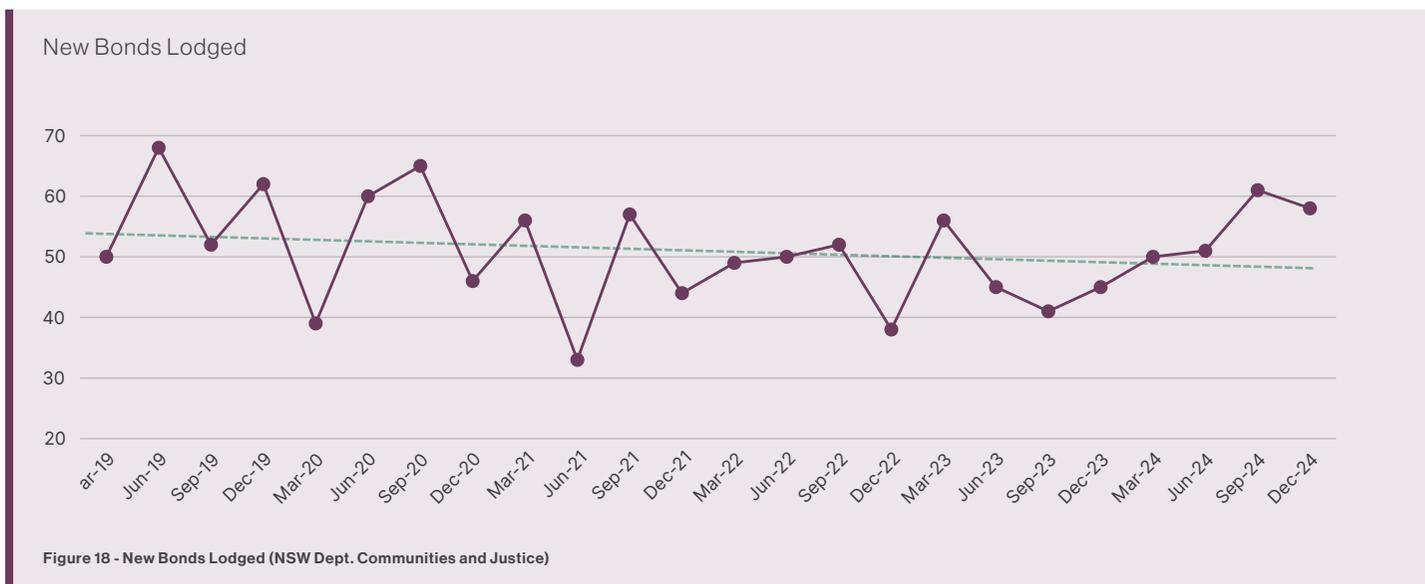
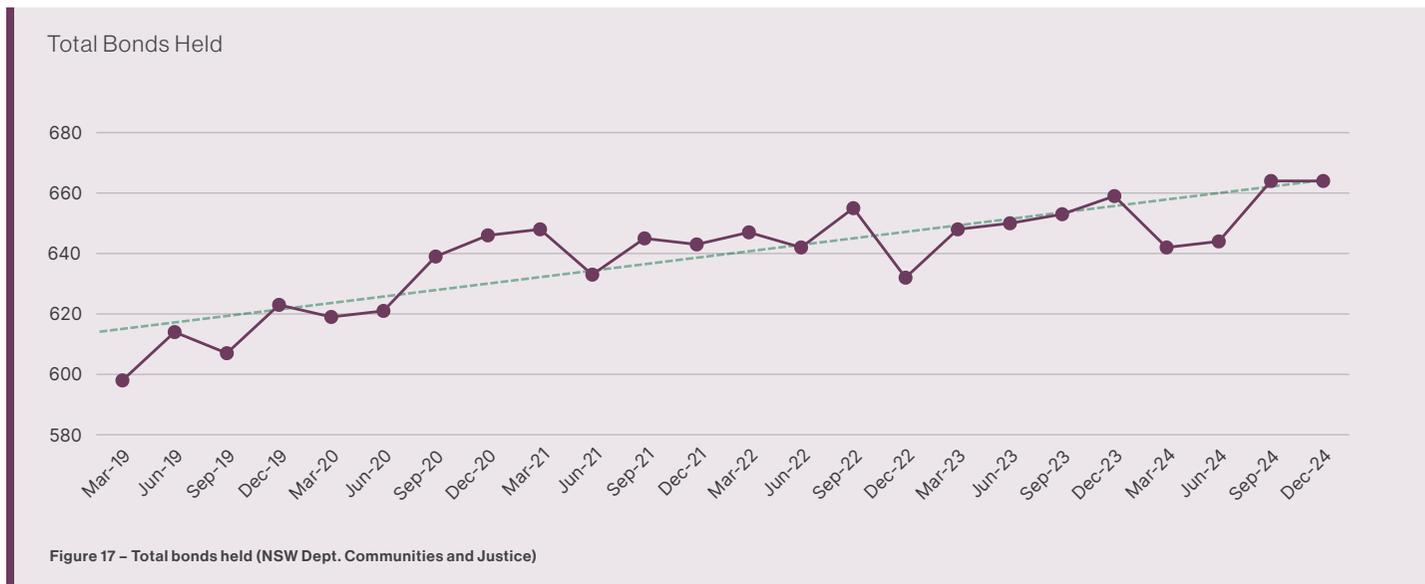
Year	Average Housing Sale Price	Average Land Sale Price
2024-25	\$426,021	\$155,375
2023	\$393,216	\$100,000
2022	\$320,836	\$169,200
2021	\$270,114	\$92,156
2020	\$221,779	\$141,800
2019	\$230,523	\$62,000
2018	\$241,788	\$147,100
2017	\$230,198	\$85,000
2016	\$224,760	\$82,500
2015	\$206,459	N/A



4.2.7. Rental Availability

Figures held by the NSW Dept of Communities and Justice show the number of bonds held are steadily increasing which indicates that people are staying in their rental properties longer and rental stock may be harder to source. This correlates with the increase in renting figures shown in the previous section as well as the decrease in new bonds lodged per quarter.

*Note the data shown in Figure 17 and Figure 18 are for the Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA



4.3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

4.3.1. Family Income

The relationship between income and housing costs is crucial because it directly impacts an individual's or household's financial stability, quality of life, and ability to meet other essential needs.

Figure 19 shows the most recent income figures by family type from the 2021 Census – Couples with and without children and one parent families.

As at the 2021 Census, most households in Gundagai are paying between \$800 and \$1,800 per month to service a mortgage, which is deemed manageable (up to 30% of income)

One-parent families are disproportionately represented in lower income brackets, which may indicate a need for targeted support to improve their financial stability and housing affordability.

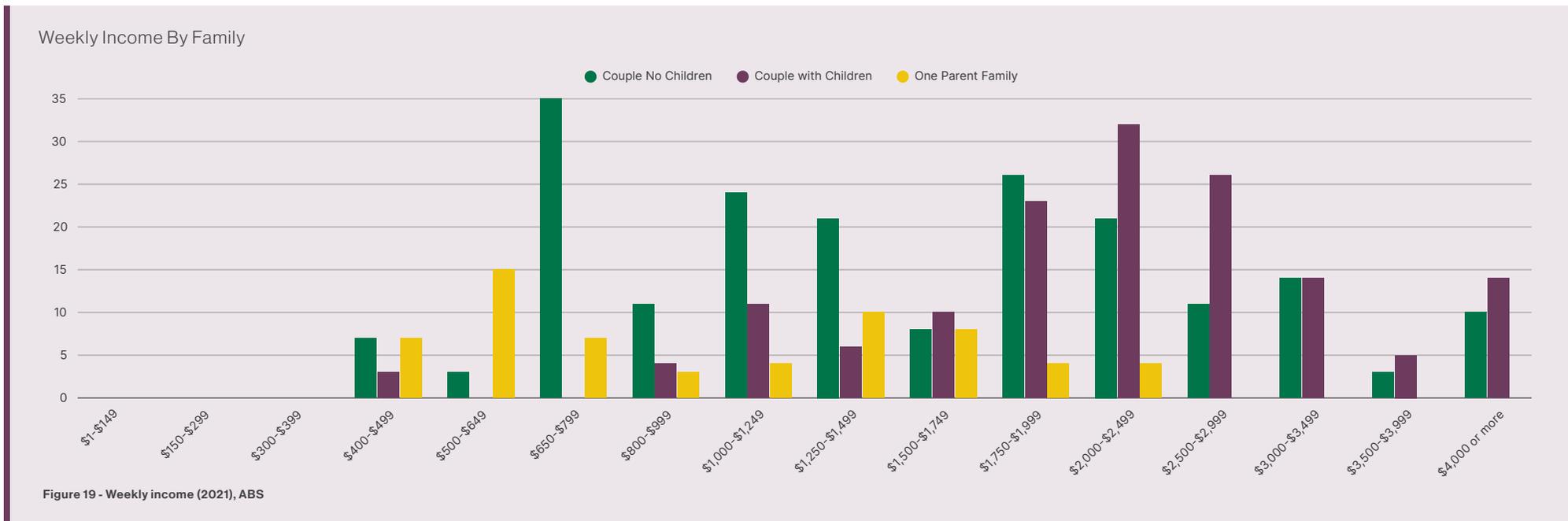
Couples with children have the highest representation in the **\$2,000 – \$2,499** weekly income bracket (32 households), indicating that many families with children fall into this middle-to-upper income range. They also have a significant presence in higher income brackets (e.g., **\$4,000 or more**), with 14 households earning this amount.

Couples without children are more evenly distributed across income brackets, with a notable concentration in the **\$650 – \$799** range (35 households).

They are also well-represented in higher income brackets, with 10 households earning **\$4,000 or more**.

One-parent families are concentrated in lower income brackets, with the highest number (11 households) in the **\$500 – \$649** range.

Very few one-parent families earn above **\$1,750 per week**, highlighting potential financial challenges for this cohort.



4.3.2. SEIFA

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a measure of relative advantage and disadvantage. It's not an absolute figure and can be a good indicator of accessibility to employment, education, amenity, healthcare, higher order regional towns, or where funding might be required.

1000 is the national, median rating for the index where the further deviation from 1000 indicates the relative advantage or disadvantage.

Listed in the 30th percentile (where only 30% of the areas are considered more disadvantaged), Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA's rating for the 2021 index is 926.

SEIFA (2021)

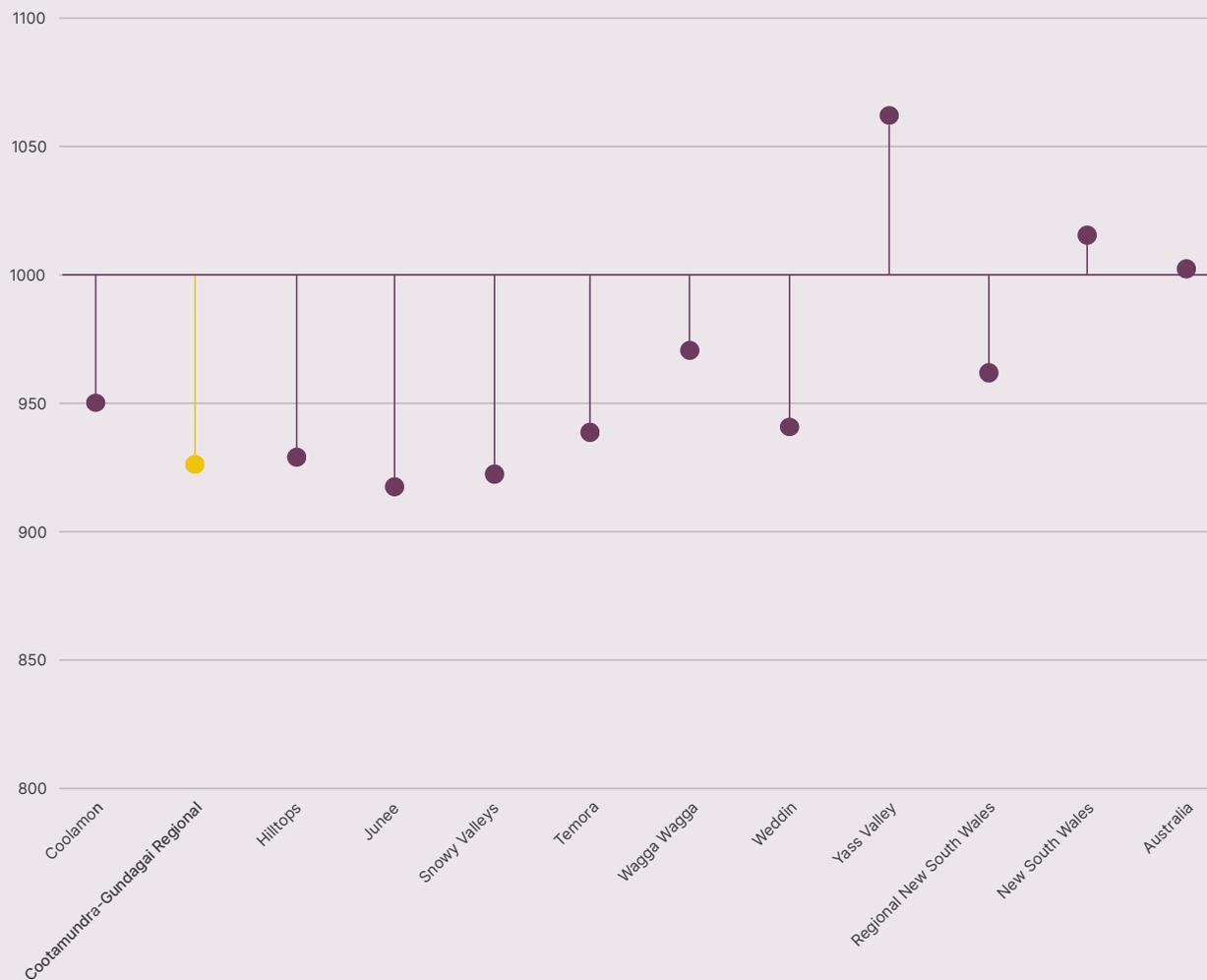


Figure 20 - Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (ABS, 2021)

4.3.3. Social Assistance and Housing

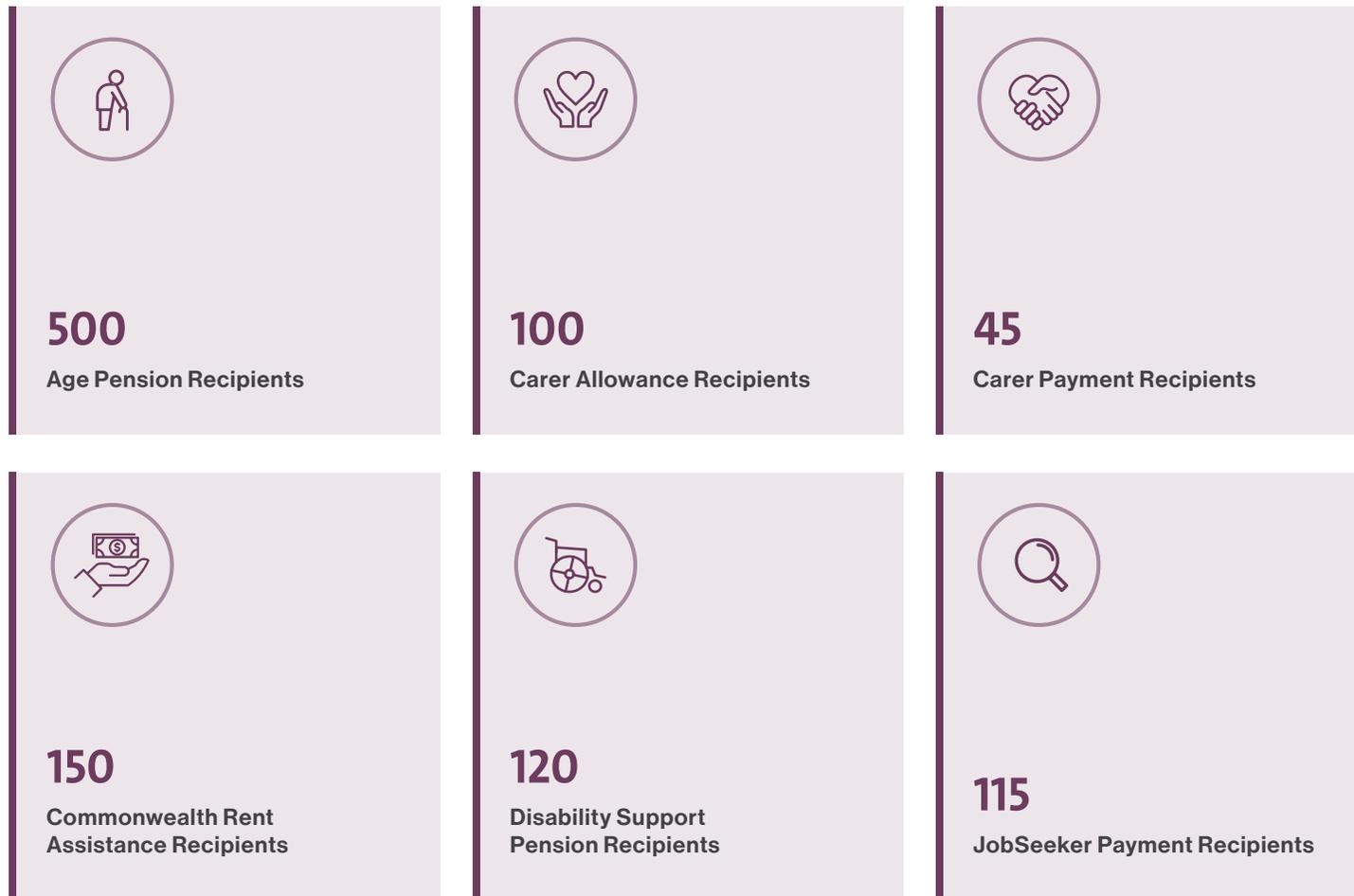
In Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA, there are 150 people receiving Commonwealth Rent Assistance (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare).

For social housing, there are less than five priority applicants and 17 general applicants in the Gundagai Allocation Zone in 2024. Though these numbers are relatively small, expected wait times are up to two years for properties with up to three bedrooms. (DCJ, 2024)

Much of the direct control for social housing sits outside of Council's remit, such as the rates of rent assistance and income support.

At a minimum, effective advocacy to all levels of government will be required from Council to support housing for vulnerable groups in the community.

Figure 21 - Assistance by LGA (Australian Dept. of Social Services)



4.3.5. Education

There are a number of public and private schools providing primary and options throughout Gundagai

Gundagai Preschool

Gundagai Public School

Gundagai South Public School

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Gundagai High School

Other secondary school locations particularly with boarding options are located in Wagga Wagga.

A Country Universities Centre is soon to be located in the nearby Tumut which provides a physical location for any enrolled tertiary student to access study spaces and internet. The CUC is government funded and provides an essential hub for students who may be studying externally, online and live in the area. In 2021, 64 students (12.2%) were undergoing tertiary education, and like secondary school students travel (locally) to Wagga Wagga for TAFE, Charles Sturt University and UNSW Rural Campus.



4.3.6. Employment

Over the past twenty years, the Manufacturing sector has been the most populous employers in Gundagai, and this number is increasing. The second largest cohort, and perhaps the one Gundagai is best known for is the Accommodation and Food Services sector. As a major stop on the Hume Highway for road travellers,

Gundagai's town centre is host to numerous motels. Accommodation availability is also under pressure as one hotel has been purchased by an employer for its workers, reducing the town's capacity.

There has been a small growth in other industry sectors, that aligns well to the aging population including Health Care and Social Services.

Where people are employed has an impact on land use planning. Emerging, service based industries benefit from co-location with other amenities and services in town centres, and within proximity to where the people are who require those services. Agriculture, however, is more dependent on the location of production and widespread.

There remains a level of uncertainty of the amount of workers in agriculture and horticulture throughout Australia and this may be contributing to some of the pressure felt for housing throughout Gundagai. Data around temporary and seasonal workforces, such as Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) is presented by the federal government at very broad levels.

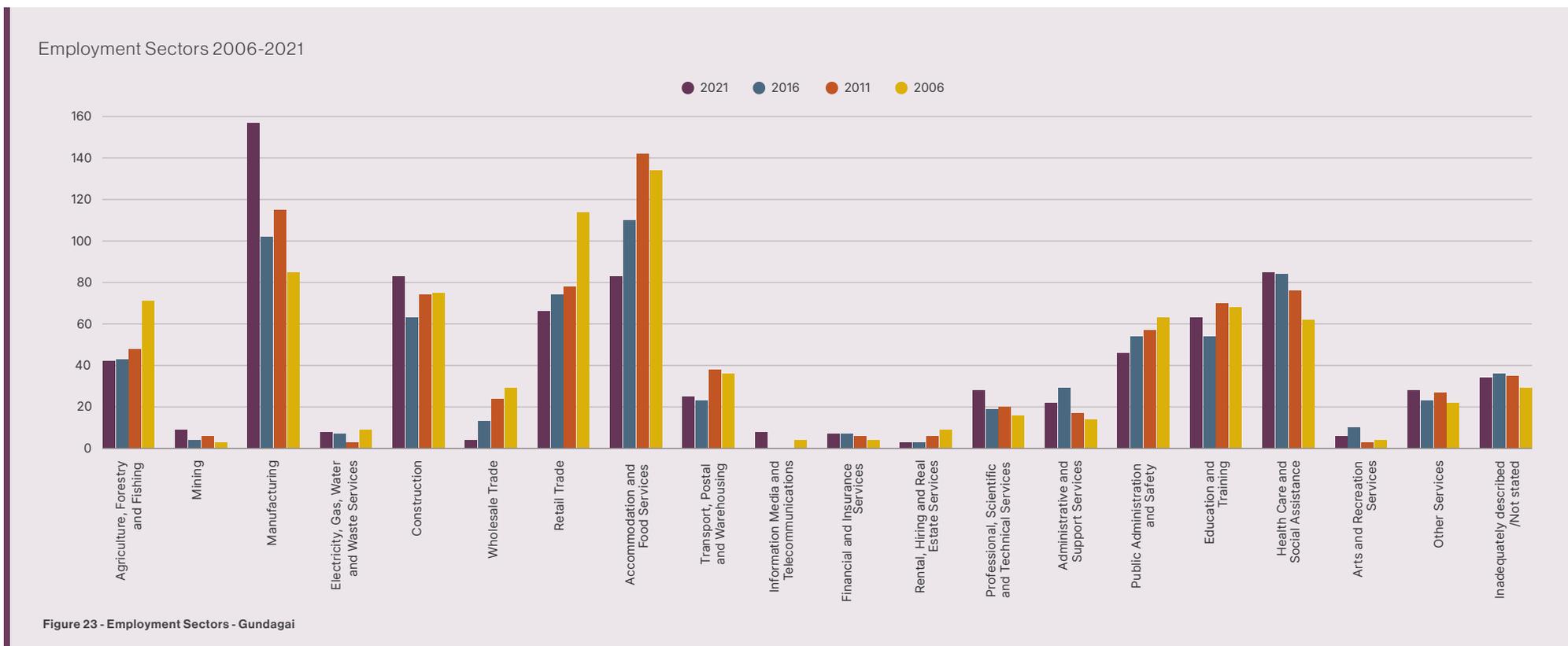


Figure 23 - Employment Sectors - Gundagai

4.3.7. Case Study – Gundagai Meat Processors

The Gundagai Meat Processors (GMP) was established in 1974; founders, the Barton family have worked in butchery in Gundagai since 1919. GMP processes a high volume of lamb each year and has invested significant capital in developing its capabilities and expanding meat export opportunities.

The company hires skilled and unskilled workers, training them for various roles throughout the facility.

GMP is the largest single site employer in Gundagai, choosing to remain in the area to leverage the location and access the strategic transport network of the Hume Highway. It is located at the southern periphery of Gundagai, 5km from the central Sheridan Street.

GMP hires a large number of migrant workers and understand the value in limiting employee turnover, working to be an employer of choice. Cohorts include lone persons, couples and family groups.

GMP assists workers with both housing and transport to and from the facility, where necessary.

In planning for the various cohorts of workers, it is worth considering migration pathways, which can be considered in a spectrum ranging from a single person, working a minimal 88 days in a regional centre to fulfil visa requirements through to a person worker who may come alone, to be joined by partners and families when secure employment, housing and residency/citizenship can be attained over a period of years.

To reflect that diversity, provision for a range of dwellings should be considered:

- Modular/Pre-fabricated dwellings, shared facilities
- Medium Density Dwellings
- Family Housing
- Multigenerational Family Housing

GMP has difficulties providing this range of housing options, including prohibited uses within Residential zones (Gundagai LEP, Housing SEPP), which restricts prefabricated, modular housing solutions, through to finding family size homes.

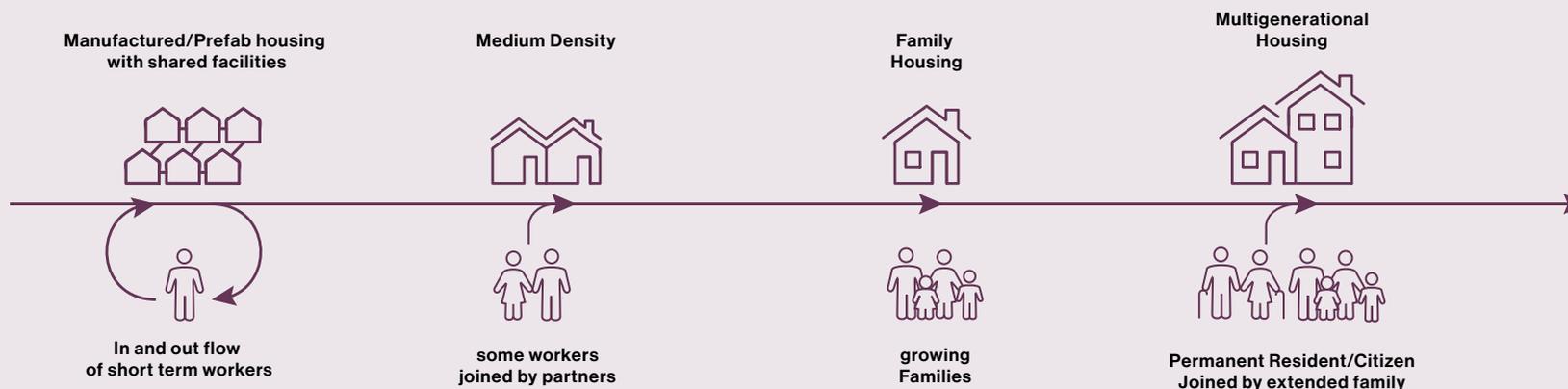
Worker accommodation

GMP has purchased an existing hotel in Gundagai and rent a number of dwellings on behalf of employees, guaranteeing rental income for owners.

As an accommodation shortage is prevalent throughout Gundagai, there is some resentment within the community (whether fairly characterised or not) as competition for housing is high.

Compounding issues include the cost of living, the rise in house and rental prices experienced since 2020 and COVID.

Migration Pathway Scenarios



Opportunities:

There is a chance for Gundagai to embrace migration as an opportunity for renewal, rather than competition so there are mutually beneficial outcomes for employers and the community.

By working with the community, the largest employer and putting the right housing mechanisms in place, the town can:

- Ease accommodation pressures.
- Retain local spending power
- Boost local services and schools.
- Maintain its identity while evolving.

Success depends on leadership, clear messaging, and making sure the benefits are shared — by the people already here, and those who hope to join them.

See section 7.2.6 for relevant recommendations.

Recommendation

Ensure guidelines for Manufactured Home Estates are included in a Development Control Plan to ensure urban design outcomes, streetscape, landscape and amenity are enhanced

This recommendation will work in tandem with others throughout the Strategy which encourage an increase in density and capacity in residential zones.



4.3.8. Unemployment

Cootamundra-Gundagai currently has a relatively low unemployment rate of 2.6%, well below the current national average of 4.1%, itself at twenty year lows.

In Australia, **unemployment** is defined by the **Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)** as a situation where a person meets the following three criteria:

- 1. Not Employed:** The person did not work at all during the reference week (the week when the survey is conducted).
- 2. Actively Seeking Work:** The person actively looked for work during the previous four weeks, such as by applying for jobs, contacting employers, or attending job interviews.
- 3. Available to Work:** The person was available to start work during the reference week if a job had been offered.

The **Labour Force Participation Rate** is defined as the percentage of the working-age population (typically aged 15 and over) that is either employed or actively seeking work (unemployed). It is a key measure of the proportion of the population that is engaged in or available for the labour market.

A higher participation rate generally indicates a greater proportion of the population is contributing to or seeking to contribute to the economy.

The latest figure of 4757 people in the Cootamundra-Gundagai is a relatively high proportion of the working age population, though that number is declining.

Unemployment Rate 2020 - 2024



Figure 21 - GCLGA Unemployment rate (Small Area Labour Markets, 2024)

Labour force participation (2020-2024)



Figure 22 - CGLGA Labour Force Participation (Small Area Labour Markets, 2024)

4.3.9. Workforce and Economic Diversification

The Regional Australia Institute (RAI) classifies the diversification of Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council's economy as 0.55 (utilising the Hachman Index where zero indicates no diversity and one indicates a very diverse economy), relative to the rest of Australia.

As a small town, with a population under 5,000. RAI research generally encourages the pursuit of a diverse economic base which complements or supports main, service based industry – “related variety”

Related variety can benefit local economies that are dependent on service-based industries, such as tourism and education, that derive their demand from other sectors of the economy. Broadening the offer from these service industries can in turn enrich customer experiences and further broaden the customer base. (RAI)

Though a small town, Gundagai has leveraged its locational advantage to provide short stay and stopover type accommodation and related services for road travellers on the Hume Highway.

From a land use planning perspective – consideration of permitted uses, particularly within Employment, Local Centre and Tourism Zones should encourage this variety of supporting uses.

Diversification Index - Cootamundra-Gundagai and surrounding LGAs

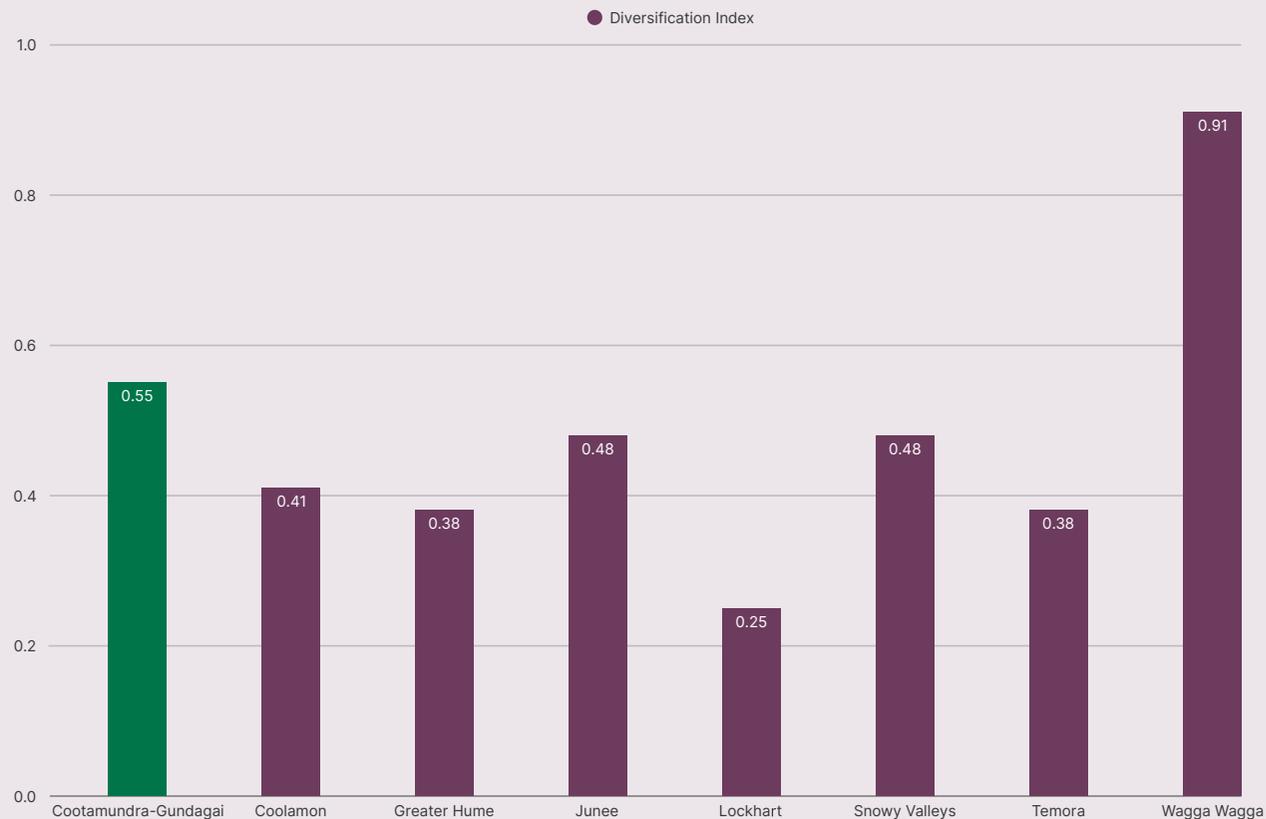


Figure 20 - Diversification Index

4.3.10. Journey to work

The spatial relationships between where people live and work are vital to land use planning structures. The geographic spread of both housing and employment lands, how far people travel and by what mode of transport all contribute to the urban and socio-economic structures.

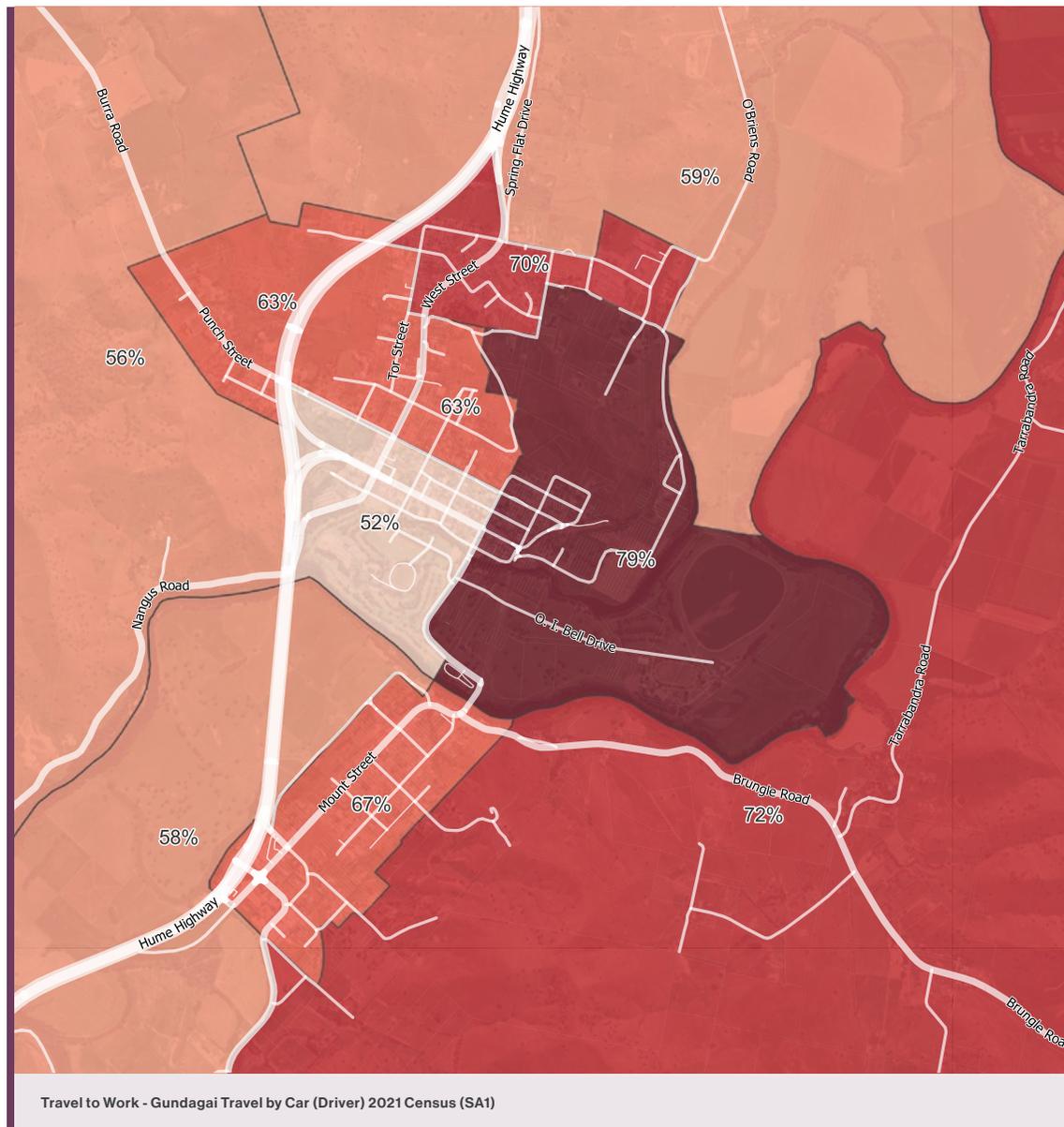
By far, the most dominant transport mode is the private car. Public transport is for all intents, non-existent and there is a small cohort of people who walk to work in Gundagai.

Post COVID, throughout regional Australia the prevalence of working from home has increased. This has implications for the spaces people live, as well as those they work in. As a consequence, people may seek extra bedrooms in a dwelling for office or work space. As there is currently the combination of 3+ bedroom homes with shrinking family units, this is unlikely to create a substantial problem for housing supply in the short term.

At the 2021 Census, 611 people from Gundagai worked within the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council area.

Those workers who travelled outside of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council area commuted to the nearby Snowy Valleys and Wagga Wagga LGAs

During the Census period, only 56 people (6.9%) worked from home.



4.4. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEMOGRAPHY AND LAND USE



Lone person households in Gundagai are increasing



The workforce population is declining and the population is ageing



Dwelling types are overwhelmingly three bedrooms and over, meaning there is a disproportionate balance between household size and dwelling size



Disproportionate typical lot size vs minimum lot size, which can impede gentle increases in density (for example, by subdividing a lot into two Torrens titled lots).



Gundagai has traditionally been relatively affordable, though house and rental prices have increased markedly since COVID.



The number of private renters is increasing.



The cost of developing and releasing green field land is high in comparison to undertaking infill development due to the cost of the cost of servicing.



There is limited availability of necessary services in Gundagai for the ageing population.



There is a need to identify and encourage new industry and employment generating uses to establish in Gundagai to retain and increase population

5

ENVIRONMENT



This section of the strategic review addresses the environmental aspects that will influence the preparation of a land use strategy.

Areas of analysis in this section include climate, vegetation, environmentally sensitive land, threatened species, flooding and bushfire hazards, air, noise, water, salinity, waste management, effluent disposal, land use conflict, heritage, local state of the environment reports as well as the implications and issues for planning.

The Cootamundra Gundagai Regional LSPS vision pays particular attention to the environment, climate drivers and mitigation. Sustainability is a cornerstone of the document.

The community values the inherent connection to the river systems, understanding its importance to Aboriginal and European cultural heritage values, connection to Country and an understanding of place.

Council understands the health of the environment is directly connected to the health of Gundagai.

Gundagai is within the Southwestern Slopes Bioregion, an extensive area of foothills and isolated ranges comprising the lower inland slopes of the Great Dividing Range extending from north of Cowra through southern NSW into western Victoria.

This bioregion is dominated by a sub-humid climate characterised by hot summers and no dry season. A temperate climate, with warm summers, occurs at higher elevations along the eastern boundary of the bioregion.

Southwestern Slopes Bioregion, NSW DPE

Gundagai is also sited on an area of naturally occurring asbestos, which can present health and environmental risk, if disturbed. Council has an Model Asbestos Policy (2023) for dealing with risks due to natural and manufactured asbestos.



5.1. CLIMATE

Climate modelling for the Riverina Murray Region is important for the Gundagai, especially as it relates to agriculture, water availability, bushfire risk, human, flora and fauna health. Projections include:

- Maximum and minimum temperatures are projected to increase.
- Number of hot days will increase.
- Number of cold nights will decrease.
- Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) - Average fire weather as well as severe fire weather days to increase in Spring and Summer.
- “Temperature is the most robust indicator of climate change. In NSW, 6 of the 10 warmest years on record since 1910 have occurred since 2013.

Riverina Murray Climate Change Snapshot

Heat related stress is the biggest environmental cause of hospitalisations and death in Australia. As the population in Gundagai ages, and the number of hotter days increases, the risk also increase.

“People aged 65 years and over are at increased risk of heat-related illnesses and need special care in hot weather.

Risk factors include living alone, chronic medical problems and certain medications.”

Heat stress and older people – betterhealth.vic.gov.au



The NSW and Australian Regional Climate Modelling (NARCLiM) project summarises projections for severe weather changes and models high and low-emissions scenarios.

As of 2024, high emissions scenarios are more likely, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has reported the first twelve month period of 1.5°C over pre-industrial levels. NSW and the ACT have both already warmed by 1.4°C since national records began in 1910.

Gundagai's agricultural, and tourist economies, community health, will likely be more at risk in the coming decades.

This will have effects on dwelling patterns, how and where people choose to live, and their relationships to the built and living environment.

Annual Temperatures

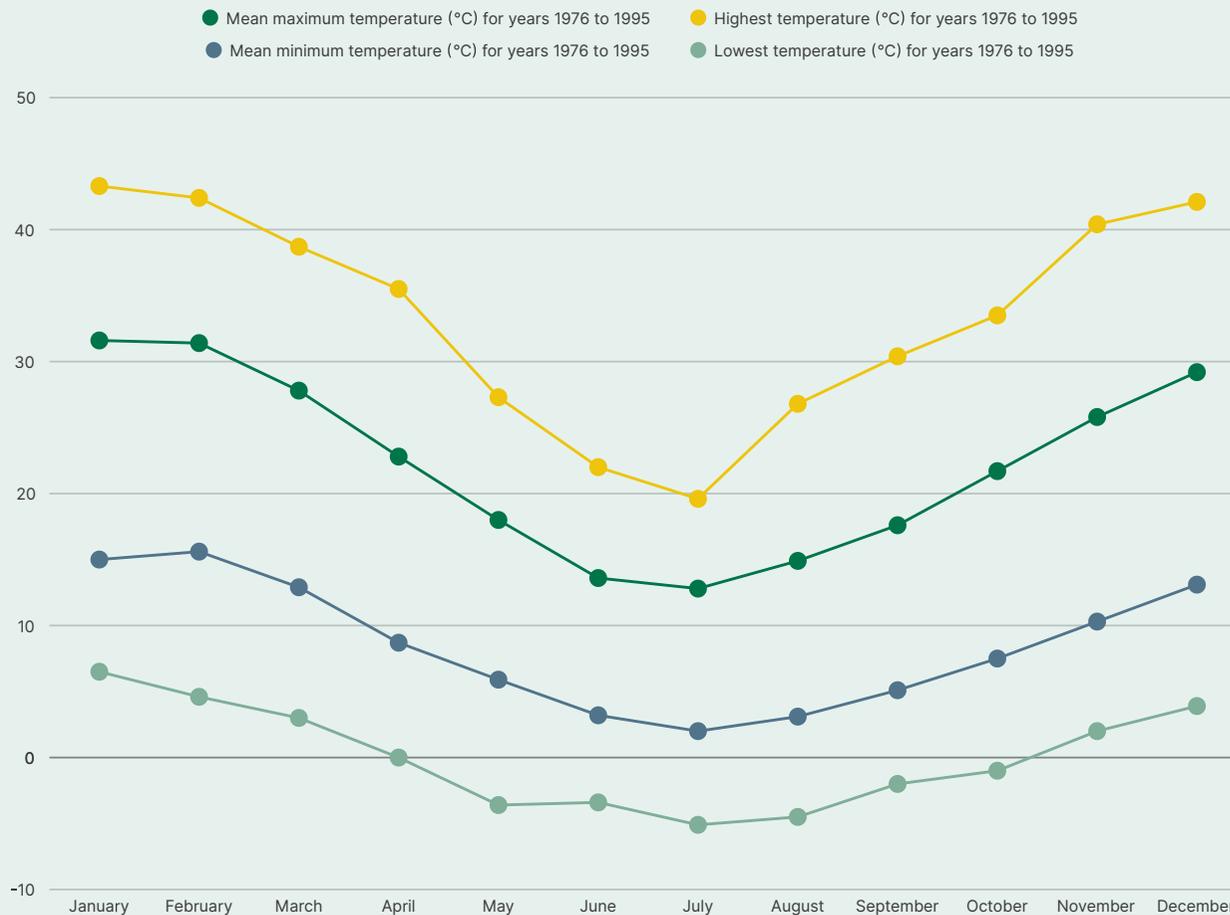


Figure 24 - Gundagai Annual Temperatures, Bureau of Meteorology

5.2. Flooding and Water

The impacts of climate change will result in more extreme weather events. Flooding has the potential to be more devastating than previously modelled or planned for.

As the average temperature increases, so too does the atmosphere's capacity to hold water, and precipitate larger volumes.

Gundagai is downstream from the ungated Burrinjuck Dam and Blowering Dam (Tumut River), and is at risk from riverine flooding during major events.

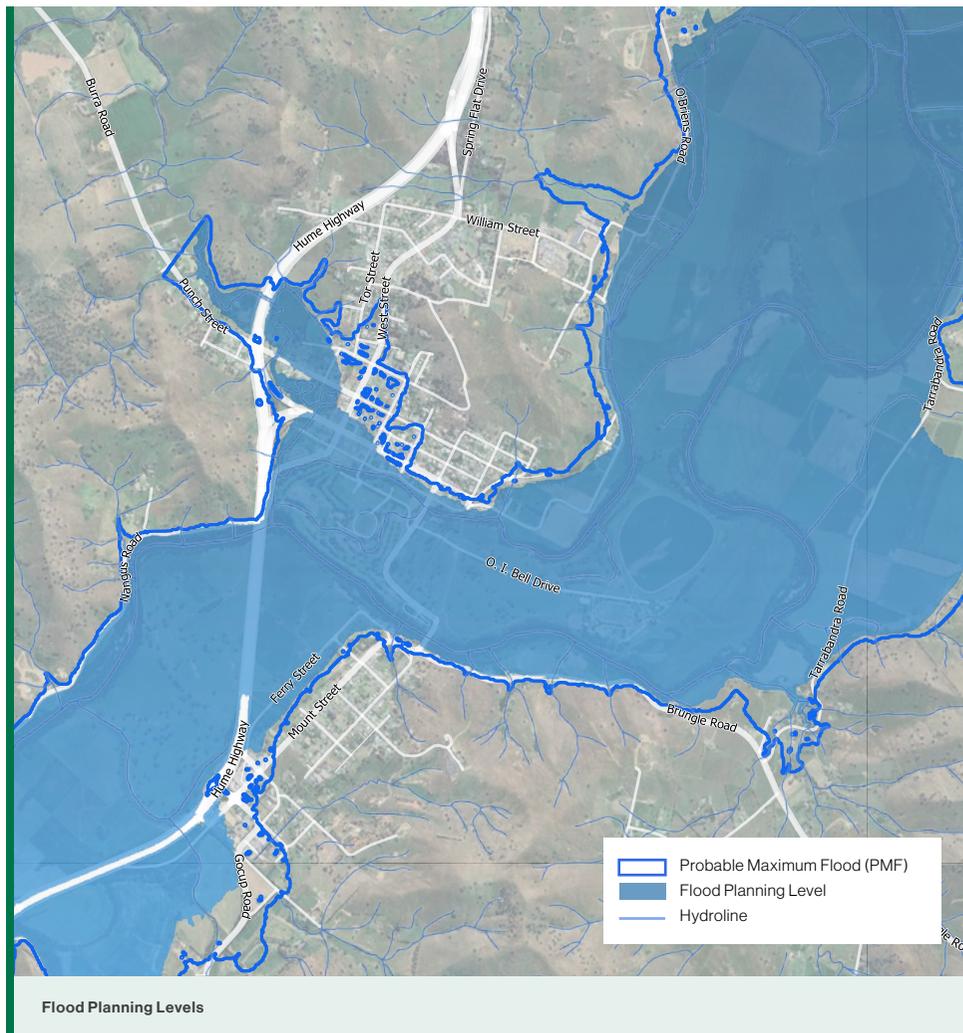
Flood risk is a key impact to consider when developing any land use strategy, when assessing land that may be suitable for development, or considering land that is becoming more flood prone as the effects of climate change are more readily felt.

In certain geographic areas, insurance premiums are already beginning to rise in accordance with the increased risk.

As of 2023, NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure has amended the way it assesses flood risk, and considers not just the modelled 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) risk, but the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) levels when assessing suitable places for land use, inhabitation, dwelling and infrastructure.

The Gundagai Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan was completed in 2018 and has set out the required flood planning area, probable maximum flood level and risk categories.

As part of that process a number of buildings have been identified for voluntary house raising and/or voluntary buyback due to the flood risk, deep, fast-flowing water and with a shorter warning and evacuation time. State government funding is available as part of the Resilient Homes Program.



5.3. Bushfire

Council is responsible for bushfire mapping, which is then reviewed by the Rural Fire Service before certification by the commissioner. Bushfire mapping is a key input into the development of a housing strategy, particularly when assessing land that may be suitable for development.

Bushfire prone vegetation maps are separated into three categories and a buffer zone, which currently apply to Cootamundra-Gundagai LGA.

Category 1

Vegetation Category 1 is considered to be the highest risk for bush fire. It is represented as red on the bush fire prone land map and will be given a 100m buffer. This vegetation category has the highest combustibility and likelihood of forming fully developed fires including heavy ember production. Vegetation Category 1 consists of:

- Areas of forest, woodlands, heaths (tall and short), forested wetlands and timber plantations

Category 2

Vegetation Category 2 is considered to be a lower bush fire risk than Category 1 and Category 3 but higher than any excluded areas.

It is represented as light orange on a bush fire prone land map and is given a 30 metre buffer.

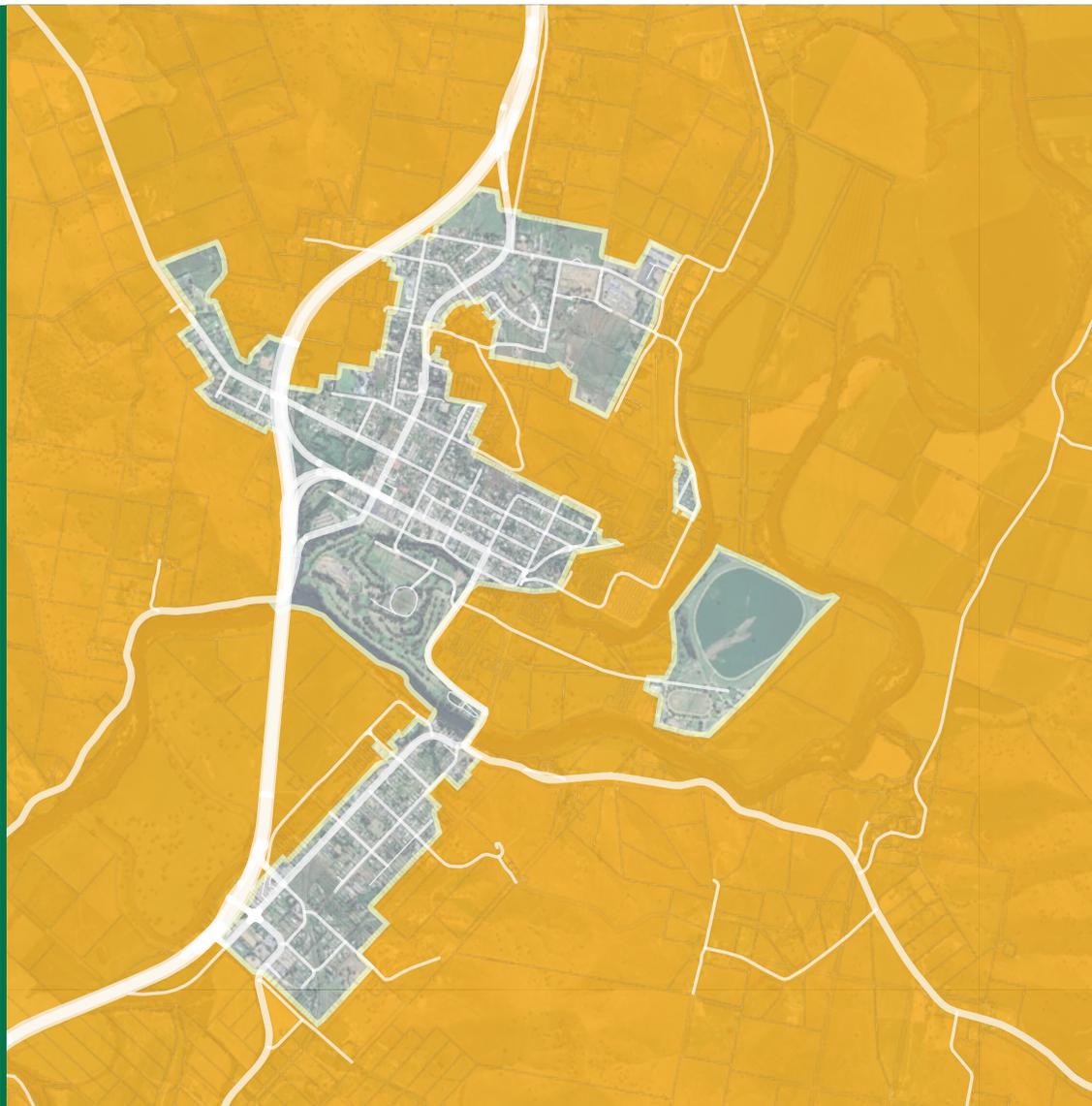
This vegetation category has lower combustibility and/or limited potential fire size due to the vegetation area shape and size, land geography and management practices. Vegetation Category 2 consists of:

- Rainforests.
- Lower risk vegetation parcels. These vegetation parcels represent a lower bush fire risk to surrounding development and consist of:
 - Remnant vegetation;
 - Land with ongoing land management practices that actively reduces bush fire risk. These areas must be subject to a plan of management or similar that demonstrates that the risk of bush fire is offset by strategies that reduce bush fire risk; AND include:
 - Discrete urban reserve/s;
 - Parcels that are isolated from larger uninterrupted tracts of vegetation and known fire paths;
 - Shapes and topographies which do not permit significant upslope fire runs towards development;
 - Suitable access and adequate infrastructure to support suppression by firefighters;
- Vegetation that represents a lower likelihood of ignitions because the vegetation is surrounded by development in such a way that an ignition in any part of the vegetation has a higher likelihood of detection.

Category 3

The recently introduced Category 3 (grasslands, freshwater wetlands, semi-arid woodlands, alpine complex and arid shrublands) have a broadscale applicability at the perimeter of urban Gundagai, and are widely applied, reflecting the threat posed by grasslands and the undulating geography.

The Category 3 bush fire hazard partially affects the key investigation sites and can be taken into account at a development application stage, depending on the scale and type of development; and accommodating suitable Asset Protection Zones and Bushfire Attack Level ratings for new construction.



Bushfire Hazard Map

Legend - Bush Fire Hazard Category

- Buffer
- Category 1
- Category 2

6

CONSULTATION



A multi-faceted approach has been taken to consultation with the community and stakeholders in order to meet people where they were most comfortable contributing to the Strategy.

Councillor Workshop

Councillors were presented with the breadth of background analysis and community feedback up to that point in the development of the Strategy and given the opportunity to consider the project and seek clarification on important issues.

Community Sessions:

Attendees were presented with information gathered through the research and background phase and their experiences of that were sought through structured conversation as well as being encouraged to consider the future of land use throughout Gundagai.

Dotmocracy A participatory voting exercise for people to consider the balance of housing types.

Future planning exercise Attendees were presented questions asking them to:

- Consider a vision for Gundagai in 2045 and the types of decisions the community would need to make now, to achieve that.
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of implementing different densities, maintaining character, and housing diversity

Targeted Interviews

Interviews with stakeholders sought to understand housing and employment land use throughout Gundagai. The varied perspectives of the participants, including employers, real estate and Council staff helped to consolidate the Strategy’s aims and offer specialised viewpoints to uncover unreported data and refine the approach.

Online survey

An online survey was conducted and sent out to the community. An encouraging 63 responses were received.

Respondents were asked about their relationship to Gundagai, living and employment statuses and what, if any, changes they would like to see in the future.



6.1 Consultation outcomes

Throughout the consultation process, there were some consistent themes and trends that arose, around why people chose Gundagai and what they felt needed to be addressed through the Strategy.

“Gundagai offers a strong sense of community, a beautiful natural setting, and a relaxed pace of life — all while being located on a major transport route.”

People choose to live in Gundagai because of:



Family and Community



Location



Environment



Affordability



Key Themes



A need for housing diversity

“Ultimately, matching housing supply to the needs of workers at different life stages will ensure Gundagai remains a viable and appealing place to live and work.”



Housing options to support an ageing population

“Elderly are staying in their homes as there is nowhere for them to downsize to”



Affordability and availability of suitable business premises.

Barriers to securing the right premises for your business in Gundagai



Employees are hard to secure and retain due to a lack of housing availability

“More units for workers and other accommodation for singles.”

7

THEMES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS



The Strategy is founded on three, interconnected themes, with supporting strategies and practical actions.

The three themes upholding the Strategy encompass the results of the background research and community feedback process.

Strategic land use, encompassing where and how we live and work is complex topic and as such, an array of recommendations are made that each work towards the Strategy's themes and vision.



Theme:

Capacity and Preparedness

Strategies:

- Identifying land use opportunities for diverse community aspirations
- Building capacity within the community in readiness for future opportunities
- Understanding and mitigating environmental risk



Theme:

Simplification

Strategies:

- Removing planning barriers to pave the way for desired land use outcomes
- Identifying land suitable for desired uses and planning for its development



Theme:

Diversity and Accessibility

Strategies:

- Reflecting the diversity of the community in the types of housing, employment and land uses available.
- Physical accessibility through universal design

7.1. CAPACITY AND PREPAREDNESS

7.1.1. Identifying land use opportunities for diverse community aspirations – Key Housing and Employment Investigation Sites

Key investigation sites have been nominated in this Strategy which can provide further land for brownfield and greenfield development opportunities within the already residentially zoned areas of Gundagai. Rezoning more land at the periphery or "spreading out" is not an efficient use of land nor is it cost effective for the community, despite its perceived expedience.

There are a number of factors to consider when determining the most appropriate land for future development. Gundagai's environmental constraints and geography are key considerations:

- Flood risk – can come from different sources and intensify depending on the extend of development in an area. Impermeable surfaces (roads, infrastructure, dwellings) can alter flood behaviour and decrease the capacity for land to adequately drain during a flood event.
- Land gradient – some of the land throughout Gundagai is steep, which can present increase the expense to construct buildings, as well to service the lots with reticulated water and sewer.

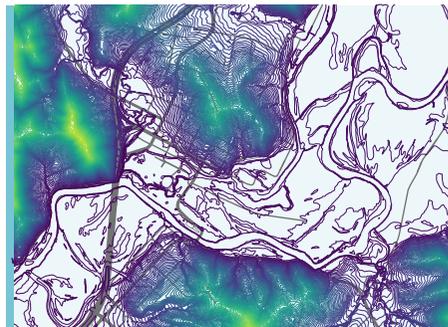
- Environmental Significance – land that may be host to ecologically important species or habitats to flora and fauna should also be avoided.

Other infrastructure considerations include proximity to existing services and transport networks, the cost to augment reticulated systems and to collect adequate contributions.

There is a plentiful supply of land within the key investigation sites, and a relatively slow rate of development, which will allow the time for Council to consider a well-designed outcome.

*Note: While accurate, diagrams are to communicate selection criteria, which are reflected in key investigation sites. Detailed analysis and relevant technical reports should be undertaken in the event of site master planning and development applications.

Criteria for Key Investigation Sites



Avoid: Steep gradients



Prioritise: Proximity to amenity and services



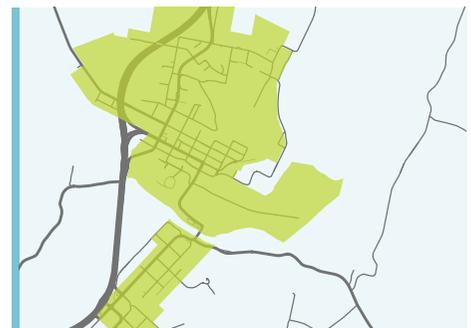
Avoid: Areas of environmental significance



Prioritise: Serviced areas (infrastructure)



Avoid: Flood risk



Prioritise: Already zoned areas

7.1.2. Key Residential Investigation Site 1

Key Residential Investigation Site 1 is located at the north western edge of Gundagai in land currently zoned for General Residential and Large Lot Residential Use.

It has proximity to West Street, the major north-south collector road in Gundagai.

To the south, flood risk emanates from Jones creek. This has been modelled and mapped in the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan, a master plan can be considered for the site that avoids this risk.

The site sits at the edge of the current sewer catchment area and is serviced with water – investigation into network augmentation can be undertaken as part of any further planning.

Section 7.1.1 looked generally at the criteria for areas prioritise and to avoid. Within this investigation site, Section A represents the least constrained opportunity and should be considered first.

Section B, particularly the eastern and northern edges are adjacent to the Gundagai Hospital and Uralba Hostel – the provision of aged care services, retirement village style development may be suitable.

The land is bordered by the Hume Highway and noise may be a consideration in any future development.

	Section A	Section B
Site Area	49,972m ²	74,718m ²
Developable area	74,876m ²	
Preferred Land Use Zone	R1 General Residential	
Lot Size m²	450m ²	
Potential Lot Yield	166 lots	
Years' Supply (Common Growth Scenario)	33 years	
Years' Supply (High Growth Scenario)	20 years	
Timeframe	Medium	Long

*Note: Dwelling construction in Gundagai averages about five new dwellings per year, but annual activity varies widely, with some years seeing no new homes and others more than a dozen. This volatility makes it difficult to apply standard absorption rates or forecast years of supply with confidence. Lot yield estimates should therefore be considered indicative only.



Figure 21 - Key Residential Investigation Site 1

7.1.3. Key Residential Investigation Site 2

Key Residential Investigation Site 2 is on the northern side of Mount Parnassus. It represents the most unconstrained greenfield residential sites in Gundagai.

Travel to central Gundagai is slightly further, the road network encourages residents drive around Mount Parnassus.

It is at the edge of the current sewer catchment area and is well serviced with water supply. Due to its location, connection to the sewer network (and necessary pumping) may be cost prohibitive for some parts of the site which may dictate the lot size and yield, should sewage need to be treated on site.

It avoids flood risk, sited well above the Probable Maximum Flood level.

While it is further away from the Hume Highway, the land is steeper than in Site 1, which may increase construction costs for dwellings built there in the future.

While this land is already zoned for residential development, master planning and inclusion in the DCP (see section 7.2.2) will provide useful guidance.

In addition to the site selection criteria, landowner sentiment and willingness to develop (or not), will play a part in the sequencing.

	Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D
Site Area	11,578m ²	54,793m ²	119,077m ²	68,291m ²
Preferred Land Use Zone	General Residential	Large Lot Residential	General Residential/ Large Lot Residential	General Residential
Lot Size m²	450m ²	5,000m ²	450m ² / 5000m ²	450m ²
Potential Lot Yield	18 lots	9 lots	185 lots/23 lots	67 lots
Years' Supply (Common Growth Scenario)	4 years	2 years	37 years/ 4 years	20 years
Years' Supply (High Growth Scenario)	2 years	1 year	23 years/ 3 years	13 years
Timeframe	Short	Short	Medium	Short



Figure 22 - Key Residential Investigation Site 2

*Note: Dwelling construction in Gundagai averages about five new dwellings per year, but annual activity varies widely, with some years seeing no new homes and others more than a dozen. This volatility makes it difficult to apply standard absorption rates or forecast years of supply with confidence. Lot yield estimates should therefore be considered indicative only.

Section C has capacity for both general residential and large lot residential outcomes. This flexibility introduces greater variability in yield estimates and servicing assumptions, particularly where on-site wastewater treatment may be required.

7.1.4. Key General Industrial Investigation Site

The General Industrial Investigation Site represents an opportunity for larger scale industrial use.

Due to flood risk and gradient, the north-eastern third of the E4 General Industrial Zone is deemed unsuitable for further industrial development.

The northern portion of the subject site is currently occupied by the Saleyards and the southern portion by a Council depot.

While both sites represent a brownfield development, the location and proximity to a road network, zoned land, water network, the opportunity a larger scale industrial investment (within a short timeframe) might present to the local economy warrants an investigation into the possible relocation of either use.

As a matter of possible sequencing, the Saleyards are used infrequently enough to investigate initially, before considering consolidating Council functions.

Other than limited existing development, Gundagai does not have any large lot industrial land and it isn't developed regularly within the town. Working to make land available would represent an incremental approach designed to gauge demand. Assumptions about future supply and take-up cannot be reliably made, as there is insufficient local context to support evidence-based projections.

Site Area	Saleyards 49,916m ²
	Depot 36,214m ²
Developable area	Saleyards 34,941m ²
Preferred Land Use Zone	E4 General Industrial
Lot Size m²	5,000m ² +
Timeframe	Medium (pending investigation of alternative sites for current uses)



Figure 23 - Key General Industrial Site

7.1.5. Key Productivity Support Investigation Site

The Key Productivity Support Investigation Sites represent small scale opportunities in the current MU1 Mixed Use Zone in South Gundagai, which is also proposed to be rezoned to E3 Productivity Support Zone to better reflect the opportunities the site presents for what is essentially light industrial use.

While the available sites are more fragmented than the General Industrial opportunities at the north of Gundagai, they can better serve small commercial/ industrial uses that may not be suitable for the Sheridan St E1 Local Centre Zone, which has a retail/service/amenity/residential focus.

Strategy feedback has indicated there is a desire for developed, ready-to-go small industrial lots which this area has great potential for.

It enjoys access to reticulated water and sewerage networks, which ideally will lessen the upfront cost of developing these lots for this use.

Industrial and commercial development in Gundagai has been limited for many years, with very little recent activity to guide reliable forecasts. Because there is no consistent pattern of land release or take-up, it is not possible to make meaningful assumptions about future supply or growth. Estimates such as lot yield, absorption rates or years of available land would be highly speculative. At this stage, the main value in identifying available land is to create opportunities, planning and development pathways and observe real demand, rather than to project long-term supply figures.

Site Area	Variable – from 2,000m ² to 28,000m ²
Developable area	89,057m ²
Preferred Land Use Zone	E3 Productivity Support (refer section 7.2.1)
Lot Size m²	Variable
Potential Lot Yield	Variable
Timeframe	Short-Medium



Figure 24 - Key Productivity Support Investigation Site

7.1.6. Building community capacity – readiness for future opportunities

Unused building and land register

In the 2021 Census, 107 private dwellings were listed as unoccupied in Gundagai.

This may be for a range of reasons including absent owners, dwellings for sale, homes are rentals, but not occupied, or are newly completed and yet to be occupied. As these are privately owned, utilising the stock may present difficult negotiations.

Brownfield sites may present more readily available opportunities.

The Housing Australia Future Fund, and any other State or Federal housing grants, will prioritise projects that are ready to commence. Knowing sites that are potentially ready to develop will be an important first step towards that readiness.

Short Term Rentals operated through online platforms such as Airbnb are increasingly scarce as the private rental market tightens, which can be exacerbated by the increase of temporary and seasonal workers. Council could facilitate a short term rental register to audit and understand the extent of the perceived problem.

Within employment zones and key investigation sites, this Strategy recommends investigation of building and land use to identify opportunities for utilisation and development of infill sites.

Actions:

Undertake a comprehensive land and building audit.



7.1.7. Council as developer - an affordable housing portfolio.

The appetite for risk amongst developers within the region is understandably low, especially where it involves exploring new housing types.

Where Council acts as the developer, success can be measured in ways other than financial gain and the outcomes can be designed to be both flexible and specific e.g. medium density developments designed and constructed with universal design principles. Developments could be managed by community housing providers and made to approved residents or key workers.

It may benefit the community for Council to act as a developer for pilot projects, to explore, educate and promote new types of development for underserved members of the community.

Similarly, Council may wish to investigate the development of small infill sites within the new E3 Productivity Support Zone to build a portfolio of turnkey business properties and serviced lots.

The factors that define a community driven project, rather than a developer led project are vastly different.

- **Increased control over development:** Local governments can directly shape housing within their area, ensuring it aligns with community needs and planning objectives. This could include factors like housing type, affordability, and sustainability.
- **Addressing specific housing needs:** Local governments have a deep understanding of their community's housing needs, allowing them to tailor development projects to address specific gaps, like affordable housing for key workers or seniors.
- **Potential for cost savings:** By eliminating the profit margin of private developers, local governments could offer more affordable housing and industry options.
- **Community engagement and ownership:** Local government involvement can foster a sense of community ownership and participation in the development process, potentially leading to better outcomes.
- **Innovation and experimentation:** Local governments could experiment with innovative models and construction methods, potentially leading to better and more sustainable housing solutions.

- The specific risks and benefits would likely vary depending on the scale and scope of the local government's involvement, from smaller projects to large-scale developments. Council will need to consider potential for financial risk, conflict of interest and ensure strong public support and community engagement.

Actions:

Explore options for modest pilot projects to demonstrate alternative housing models required by the community.

Work with land and building audit to explore options for acquiring and developing small serviced lots within employment zones.

7.1.8. Understanding and Mitigating Environmental Risk

As part of completed the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan (2018), a number of buildings have been identified for voluntary house raising and/or voluntary buyback due to the flood risk, deep, fast-flowing water and with a shorter warning and evacuation time. State government funding is available as part of the Resilient Homes Program.

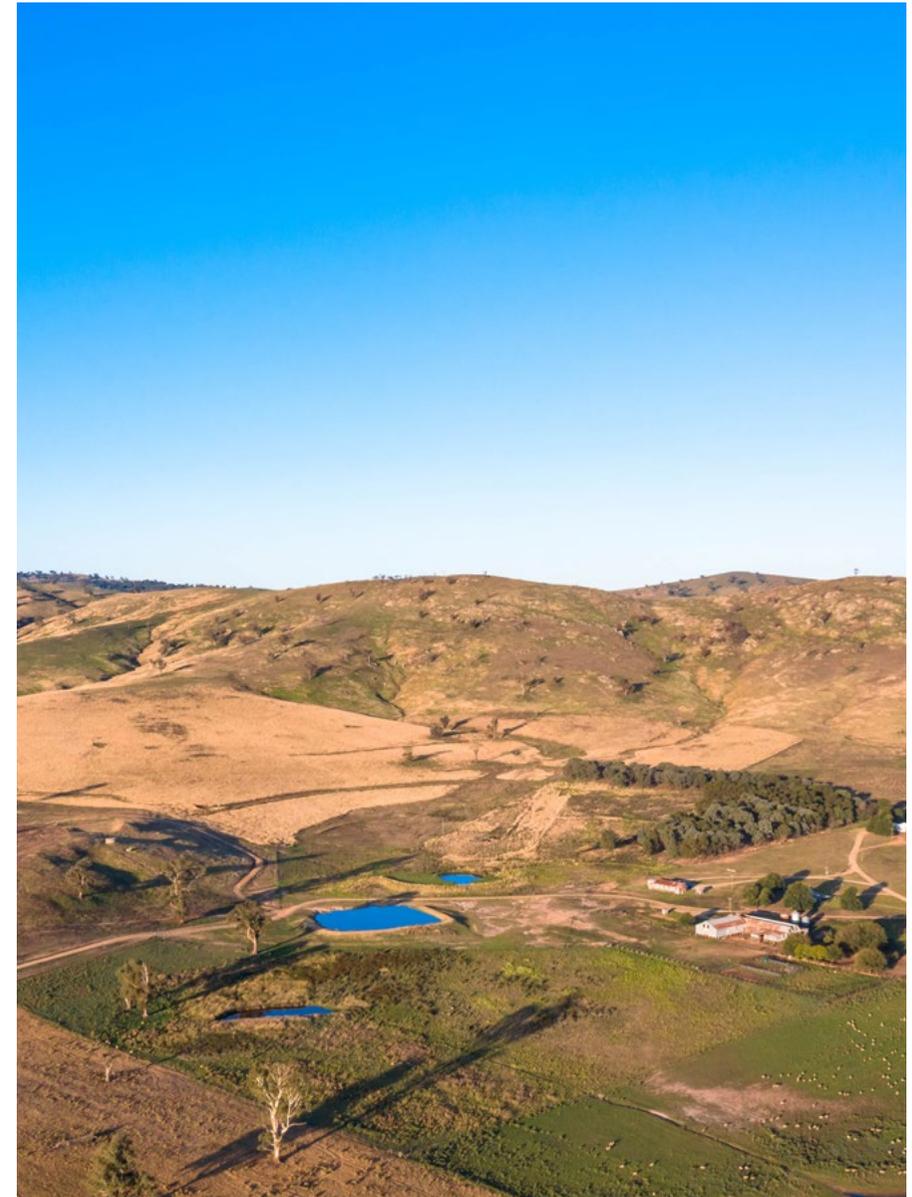
Bushfire hazard mapping has been updated and endorsed by Council in 2025.

More generally, flooding and bushfire can be considered symptomatic of broader climate change effects. While land use planning can consider these and seek to lessen those risks, it also has a role to play in effectively reducing that risk by addressing the drivers.

This Strategy has sought to implement its actions within the bounds of its current urban zones.

Actions:

- Implementation of local options for Resilient Homes Program through community consultation and engaging residents
- Implement appropriate development controls regarding hazards and risk to urban development within a DCP for Gundagai



7.2. SIMPLIFYING PLANNING AND LAND USE

7.2.1. Land Use Zoning Amendments

Land Use Zoning throughout Gundagai is generally considered to appropriately reflect the general intention of developments across particular areas of the township and is suitable for the type of development Council.

The Strategy recommends rezoning the current MU1 Mixed Use Zone in South Gundagai to E3 Productivity Support to encourage a light industrial and business focussed outcome in this location. This amendment seeks to provide more certainty in the area for businesses, developers and the community seeking light industrial opportunities and take advantage of South Gundagai's proximity to the Hume Highway.

Feedback has indicated a desire within the community for small business and light industry use which isn't suited to the Sheridan Street precinct of retail, service and amenity. This change also aligns with actions set out in the LSPS.

The objectives of the E3 Productivity Support Zone include:

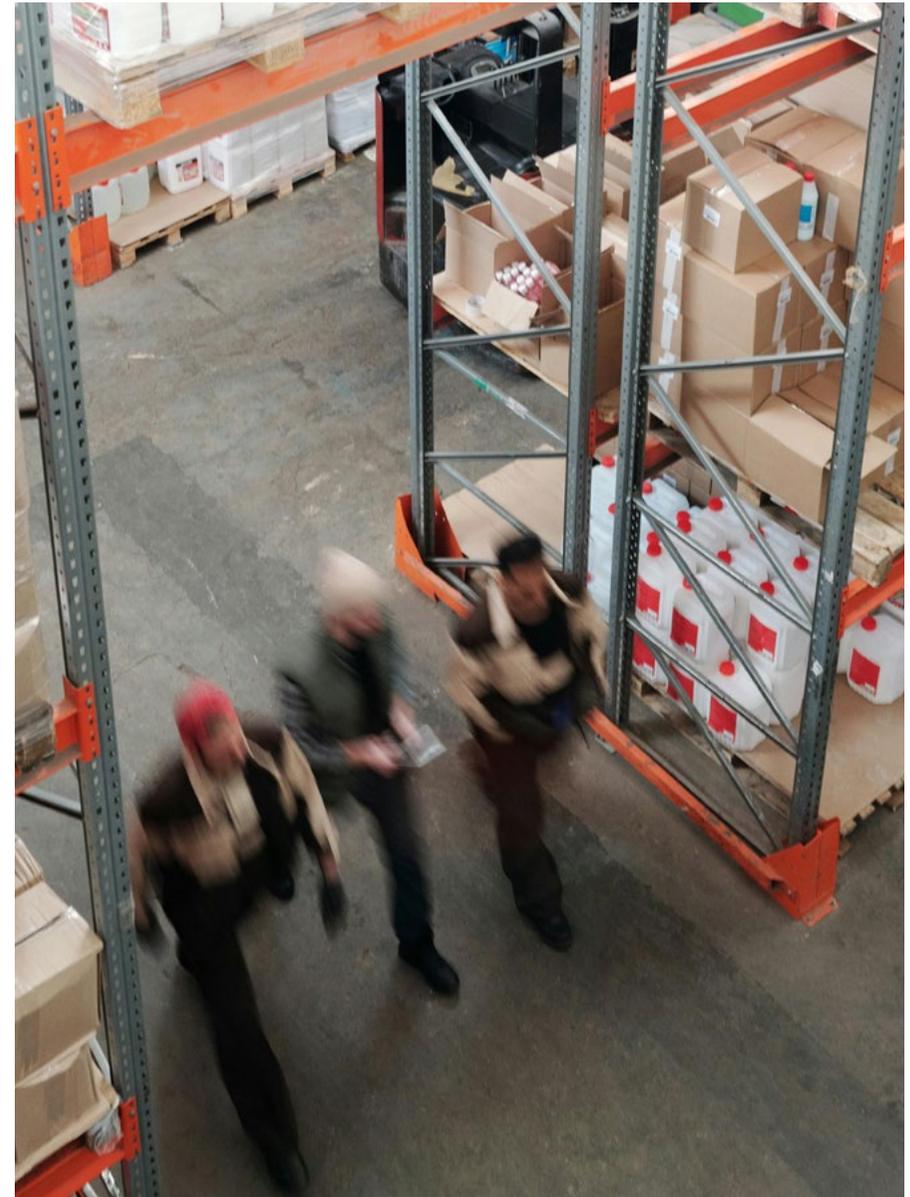
- To provide a range of facilities and services, light industries, warehouses and offices.
- To provide for land uses that are compatible with, but do not compete with, land uses in surrounding local and commercial centres.

- To maintain the economic viability of local and commercial centres by limiting certain retail and commercial activity.
- To provide for land uses that meet the needs of the community, businesses and industries but that are not suited to locations in other employment zones.
- To provide opportunities for new and emerging light industries.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities and services to meet the day to day needs of workers, to sell goods of a large size, weight or quantity or to sell goods manufactured on-site.

Importantly, all property owners will retain existing use rights though the area will not be considered for further residential development

Action:

Rezone MU1 Mixed Use Zone to E3 Productivity Support Zone.



7.2.2. Master Planning and Contributions for Key Investigation Sites

Gundagai already has a supply of zoned urban land for both primary urban land (R1 and R3 zone) and lifestyle properties (R5 zone). It is largely recommended that these existing urban areas be prioritised for future housing outcomes to accommodate further growth.

In addition, the Strategy has identified key investigation sites which are considered capable of accommodating proposed for Gundagai within the Strategy and their inclusion within the DCP the long term growth of Gundagai and ensuring the town is able to efficiently take advantage of growth opportunities.

A key challenge for the efficient growth of Gundagai will be the release of urban land and provision of enabling infrastructure. It can be useful to consider areas that are planned for future growth and provide a clear vision for the community' housing plans. The Strategy recommends that future master planning and supporting infrastructure planning be undertaken for the investigation sites to appropriately plan for their release.

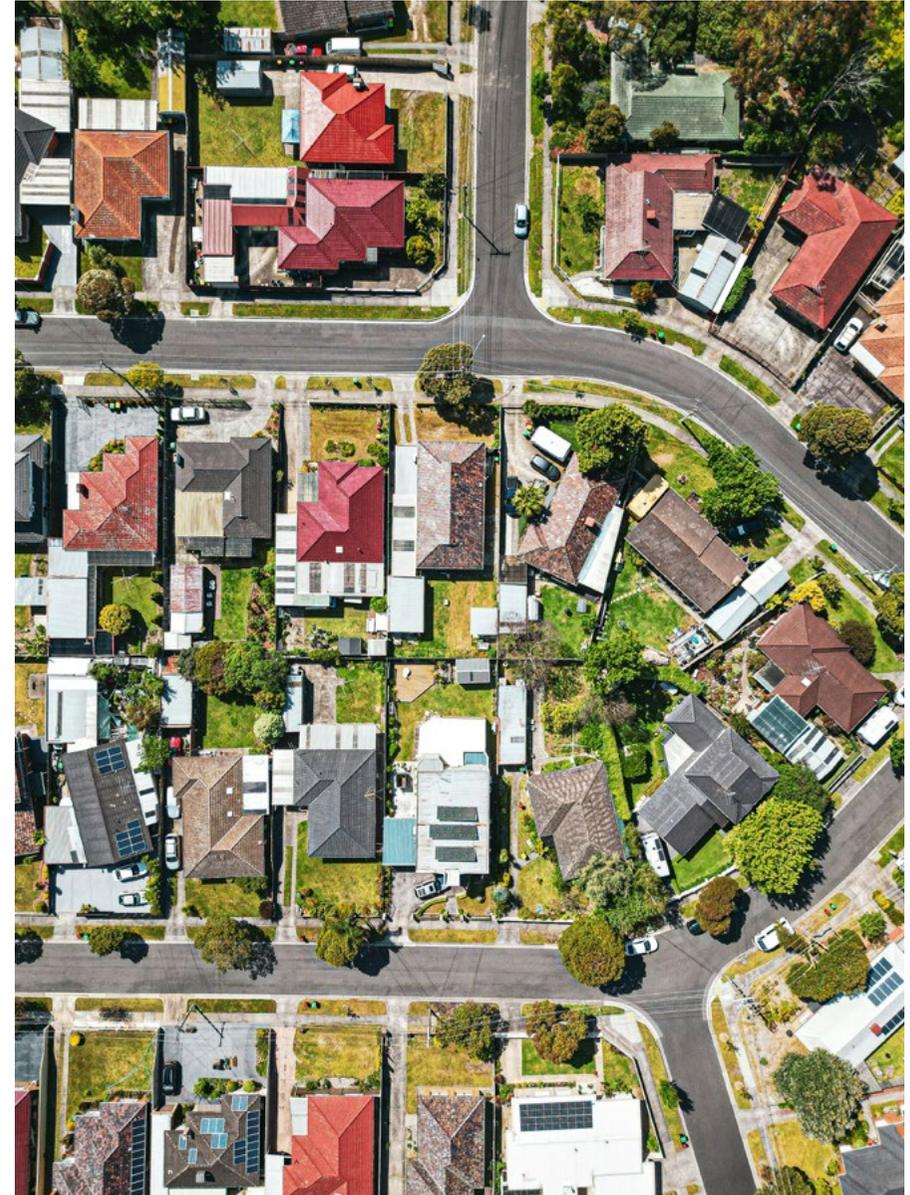
Master planning and consideration of the growth areas should consider:

- Understanding site context and existing uses
- Developing key planning goals for the area
- Land Use Mix
- Sequencing
- Infrastructure and contributions
- Open space and urban design
- Specific plans for lot layout, densities
- Sustainability initiatives

A fundamental component of future master planning work would be a contribution plan that enables equitable delivery of infrastructure and services for the new urban areas. This ensures that key infrastructure to service growth areas can be made available at the right time and in the right sequence.

Action:

Develop master plans for key investigation sites and include in DCP. Incorporate infrastructure and contributions for future developments.



7.2.3. Incentivising Infill Housing

With traditionally larger lots and a restrictive lot size minimum, Gundagai has significant potential for infill development of existing urban land.

Infill development refers to the process of developing vacant or underutilised land within existing urban areas, as opposed to expanding outward into undeveloped or greenfield areas, which historically has been the accepted and preferred way to create housing opportunities in Gundagai.

Infill development maximises the use of existing urban infrastructure, services, and amenities. It allows for more efficient use of land within established communities, and leverages existing infrastructure, reducing the need for additional expansion and maintenance. It can also be used to enable growth in the township while infrastructure to develop greenfield areas are further planned, funded and developed.

Infill development is often located near existing transportation and road networks, reducing barriers to varied and more sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, cycling and walking.

It can contribute to the revitalisation of existing areas by bringing new life, attracting new residents, businesses, and investments. It also increases the catchment for businesses seeking to attract investment and a stable employment base.

Infill development helps to slow the spread of inefficient land use by utilising available space within existing residential zones. It can help to avoid the fragmentation and erosion of prime agricultural land, and environmentally significant spaces in the surrounding areas (such as the Murrumbidgee River).

Infill development allows for the creation of a variety of housing options, including multi-family dwellings, townhouses, and mixed-use developments. This diversity contributes to a more inclusive and resilient housing market that can meet the needs of different demographic groups, one of the changes occurring within the Gundagai community.

Actions:

- Consider removing subclause 3A from Clause 4.1 of the Gundagai LEP to simplify the development of primary urban land
- Consider removing the R3 Medium Density Zone and associated minimum lot size and zoning this land R1 General Residential
- Consider applying a standard minimum lot size across the R1 zoned land of 450m²
- Implement an 'Exceptions to minimum lot sizes for certain residential development' clause in the Gundagai LEP as per the Standard Instrument, which would enable concurrent subdivision and construction of 1 or 2 dwellings on lot sizes of 300m²

7.2.4. Infill Opportunities – Secondary Dwellings

Secondary dwelling, often known as Granny Flats, present an opportunity to provide extra accommodation throughout Gundagai.

As a default they're allowed within the R1 General Residential Zone and from a planning perspective, are enabled by the State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 (Housing SEPP).

A secondary dwelling can be built with consent or as a complying development where it meets the requirements set in the Housing SEPP.

Privately constructed secondary dwellings may offer alternatives to addressing some accommodation shortages:

- Key worker housing
- Migrant working housing
- Tourist accommodation
- Ageing in place

Some advantages of secondary dwellings are that extra carparking provisions are not mandatory.

Secondary dwellings can also be considered in the rural zones. Clause 5.5 of LEP (an opt-in clause), can be adopted by Council to allow them within a certain distance of primary dwellings and limited to a certain floor area, whether that is a square metreage or a percentage of the primary dwelling.

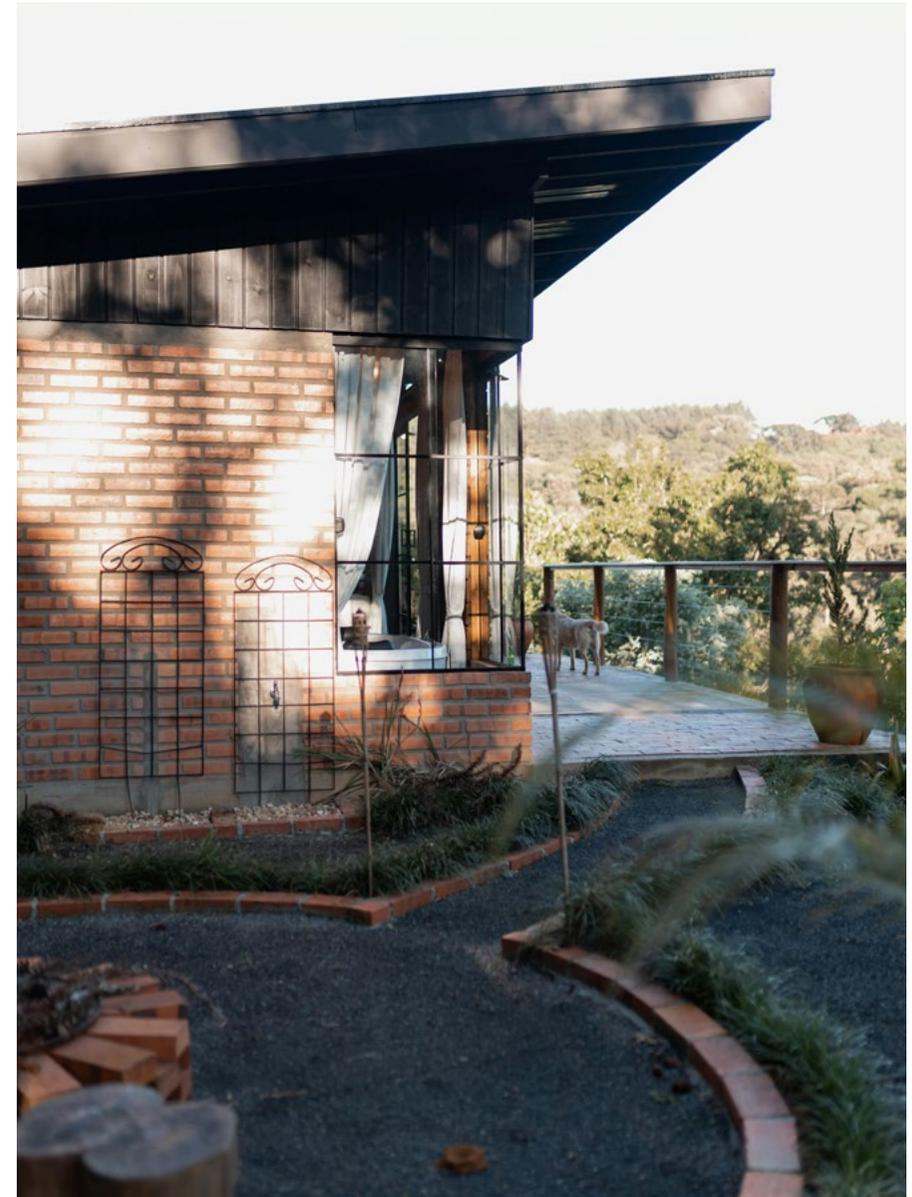
Exceptions to Clause 5.5 are not allowed under via clause 4.6 (Exceptions to development standards), which can help to ensure consistent application and delivery of secondary dwellings.

Recommendation:

Introduce Clause 5.5 to the Gundagia LEP to provide certainty for secondary dwellings in the RU4 Primary Production Zone Small Lots Zone and RU1 Primary Production Zone.

Recommendation:

Include guidelines for Secondary Dwellings in the Development Control Plan



7.2.5. Development Control Plan

The implementation of a Development Control Plan (DCP) is the most important recommendation of this Strategy. Gundagai does not have a DCP, the risks of which have been analysed earlier in the Strategy.

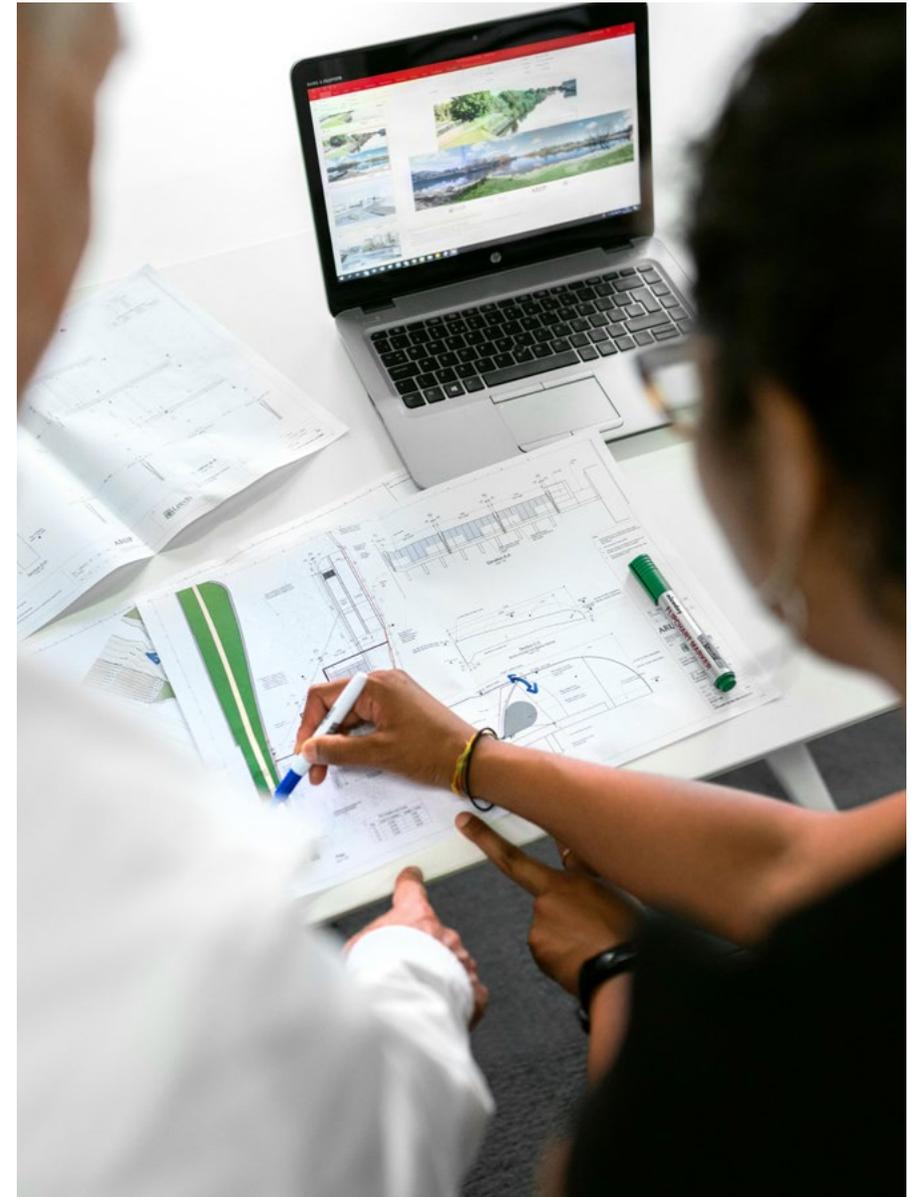
The DCP is a key planning tool, providing detailed design and planning guidelines to support the broader controls of the LEP, particularly

- Built form and urban design
- Environmental Sustainability
- Heritage and Local Character
- Access, Parking and Transport
- Subdivision and Lot Design
- Infrastructure provision
- Signage and Advertising

In the context of this Strategy, the DCP is also recommended to include master plans with controls outlining the above themes for key investigation sites. This provides certainty for landowners and developers as well as Council and the community when considering future development in preferred locations.

Action:

Council to prepare a comprehensive Development Control Plan for Gundagai.



7.2.6 Regional Accommodation and Housing

Regional employers (such as GMP, highlighted in the Strategy's case study) can be reliant on migrant, seasonal or transitional workforces often require permanent buildings with flexible occupancy, rather than traditional caravan parks or short-stay tourist accommodation formats. These models can house cohorts ranging from single workers to families, and can be structured to support settlement pathways over multiple years.

Under the Housing SEPP, options such as co-living housing, multi-dwelling housing co-housing/boarding houses with shared facilities, and modular/prefabricated dwellings can provide an intermediate form of accommodation: permanent in construction, but suited to temporary or variable tenures.

These arrangements can offer private rooms or small units supported by shared amenities (kitchens, laundries, living spaces) and can be managed under a single tenancy or operator. They have been successfully adopted in other regional LGAs for seniors, lone workers, and key-worker groups, and may be appropriate for longer-term seasonal and migrant workers in Gundagai.

For Gundagai, these options can help address diverse housing needs across a migration spectrum from individuals completing short-stay employment requirements, through to workers settling locally with partners and families. However, current planning settings in Gundagai (LEP and Housing SEPP classifications) constrain delivery, particularly for modular and prefabricated housing in residential zones.

In compiling the planning options to support workers and broader workforce needs, a suite of contemporary housing mechanisms should be considered:

1. Co-Living Housing (Housing SEPP)

- Permanent build form; flexible tenure.
- Scales well for singles and couples.
- Avoids stigma associated with boarding houses.
- Does not rely on "caravan park" permissibility.

2. Multi-Unit Modular / Prefabricated Housing with Shared Facilities

- High-quality, permanent structures assembled offsite.
- Works on small land parcels and can scale to demand.
- Allows mix of private studios, 1-2 bedroom units, and shared amenities.

3. Manufactured Home Estate (MHE)-style Developments

- Can deliver stand-alone dwellings with good amenity.
- Should be guided through a DCP to ensure streetscape, landscape quality and integration with neighbourhood character.
- Should be clearly separated from "tourist caravan park" definitions.

Providing flexible, permanent worker accommodation reduces pressure on the existing rental market, mitigates community resentment, and supports local spending, school enrolments and long-term population renewal. A broader, more contemporary housing toolkit creates clear benefits for employers, residents and Council, while avoiding unintended consequences tied to outdated or overly narrow land-use definitions.

Noting Gundagai's LEP Land Use Tables are generally classified as "open", adding new definitions helps to signal Council's intent for this type of housing to be developed.

Given impending changes to the Local Government (Manufactured Home Estates, Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings) Amendment Regulation 2023, Council can prepare for a more refined set of definitions

Action:

Add co-living housing, boarding houses to R1 General Residential, R3 Medium Density Residential, and E1 Local Centre Zones.

Introducing DCP provisions for non-tourist manufactured housing, including design, landscape, servicing, and management standards.

7.3. DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

7.3.1. Physical Accessibility through Universal Design

Universal design is a vital concept for buildings because it promotes the creation of spaces that are accessible, inclusive, and accommodating to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. The concept of universal design goes beyond just meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities; it strives to create environments that enhance usability and comfort for everyone. In Gundagai, where there is an unusually large ageing population these concepts can be integrated into a Development Control Plan and incentives considered in a Contributions Plan.

1. Inclusivity: Universal design ensures that housing is inclusive, catering to individuals with diverse abilities and characteristics. This includes people with disabilities, elderly individuals, families with young children, and others. By designing with inclusivity in mind, housing becomes more welcoming to a broader range of residents.

2. Aging in Place: As the population ages, there is a growing desire for individuals to age in place—remain in their homes and communities as they get older. Universal design features, such as no-step entries, wider doorways, and accessible bathrooms, enable older adults to live independently and safely in their homes for a more extended period.

3. Flexibility: Universal design emphasizes flexibility in the layout and features of a home. This flexibility allows spaces to adapt to the changing needs of occupants over time. For example, a home designed with adjustable countertops and easily modifiable spaces can accommodate individuals with different mobility requirements.

4. Increased Safety: Universal design promotes safety by minimizing obstacles and hazards. Features such as slip-resistant flooring, well-lit pathways, and grab bars in bathrooms enhance the safety of the living environment for all residents, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.

5. Market Appeal: Universally designed homes have broader market appeal, as they cater to a wide range of potential buyers or renters. This can be especially relevant in a diverse and aging population where the demand for accessible and adaptable housing options is increasing.

6. Cost-Effectiveness: Incorporating universal design principles during the initial construction or renovation phase can be cost-effective in the long run. It eliminates the need for costly retrofits or modifications later on, making housing more sustainable and accommodating over time.

7. Compliance with Regulations: Many regions have regulations and building codes that require certain accessibility standards in housing, especially in new constructions. Universal design ensures compliance with these standards, helping developers and homeowners meet legal requirements.

8. Enhanced Quality of Life: Universal design contributes to an improved quality of life for residents. By removing barriers and making spaces more functional for everyone, it fosters a sense of independence, dignity, and well-being among all occupants.

9. Social Integration: Accessible and inclusive housing fosters social integration by allowing people with different abilities to live in the same communities. This promotes diversity and strengthens social bonds within neighbourhoods.

Actions:

- Develop Universal design guidelines, integrate into Development Control Plan.
- Investigate potential for incentivising dwellings that incorporate Universal Design principles via contributions schemes.

8

CONCLUSION



8.1. SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIONS

Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeframe
Key Investigation Sites		
Residential Zones	Council	Short to Medium
General Industrial Zone	Council	Medium
Productivity Support Zone	Council	Short
Develop master plans for key investigation sites and incorporate into Development Control Plan	Council	Short-Medium
Undertake a comprehensive land and building audit	Council	Short-Medium
Explore options for modest pilot projects to demonstrate alternative housing models required by the community.	Council	Short-Medium
Work with land and building audit to explore options for acquiring and developing small serviced lots within employment zones.	Council	Medium-Long
Implementation of local options for Resilient Homes Program through community consultation and engaging residents	Council	Short-Medium
Rezone MU1 Mixed Use Zone to E3 Productivity Support Zone.	Council	Short
LEP Specific Recommendations		
Consider removing subclause 3A from Clause 4.1 of the Gundagai LEP to simplify the development of primary urban land	Council	Short
Consider removing the R3 Medium Density Zone and associated minimum lot size and zoning this land R1 General Residential OR abolishing minimum lot size.	Council	Short
Consider applying a standard minimum lot size across the R1 zoned land of 450m ²	Council	Short
Implement an 'Exceptions to minimum lot sizes for certain residential development' clause in the Gundagai LEP as per the Standard Instrument, which would enable concurrent subdivision and construction of 1 or 2 dwellings on lot sizes of 300m ²	Council	Short
Introduce Clause 5.5 to the Gundagai LEP to provide certainty for secondary dwellings in the RU4 Primary Production Zone Small Lots Zone and RU1 Primary Production Zone.		
Council to prepare a comprehensive Development Control Plan for Gundagai.	Council	Short
Develop Universal design guidelines- and integrate into Development Control Plan.		
Investigate potential for incentivising dwellings that incorporate Universal Design Principles via contributions schemes.	Council	Short
Implement appropriate development controls regarding hazards and risk to urban development within a DCP for Gundagai	Council	Concurrent with DCP
Recommendation: Include guidelines for Secondary Dwellings in the Development Control Plan	Council	Concurrent with DCP

8.2. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Council will undertake regular monitoring and reporting of this Strategy as follows:

Annual reviews of housing delivery and supply against the implementation and delivery plan to ensure that the Strategy and the LEP are delivering the Strategy's objectives

Five-yearly reviews of the evidence base and housing stock against the broader aims of the policy environment to ensure that the Strategy is aligned with the housing needs; and

Ten-year review of the Strategy to ensure the, the evidence base and the strategic and planning contexts are aligned with the goals of the community, the broader aims of the policy environment, Strategy implementation and delivery plan.





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