

Clarence Valley Council

Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement

April 2020



Clarence Valley, *a community of opportunity*

Our Local Strategic Planning Statement sets the direction for land use planning in the Clarence Valley, and the Priorities and Actions determine how this will be achieved. This will ensure we continue to protect our environment while accommodating population growth and enabling employment opportunities. Thus, creating a liveable community full of opportunities.





Introduction

A Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is a land use planning document. It sets out priorities for where new houses and industry should be, how we provide infrastructure and protect the environment and our natural and built heritage.

The LSPS needs to implement the North Coast Regional Plan and must include or identify the planning priorities for the area consistent with our Community Strategic Plan – Our Clarence 2027. The LSPS sits above our Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and provides the vision and planning priorities for the Clarence Valley.

All Regional Councils across NSW are required to produce a Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) by July 2020. It is an ‘whole of Council’ document, designed to bring together our strategies and plans so that land use planning supports our priorities along with the state government direction.

Get involved

We want to hear your ideas about how Council can help the community, things that need to change regarding land use planning and what our priorities should be to create opportunities for the community. We want to talk to a range of specific stakeholders to ensure the actions in the LSPS provide a planned vision for future land use, population growth and development in the Clarence Valley. The draft LSPS can be further improved by your contribution.

For further information and to view the draft LSPS visit www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/lsp or contact **Stephen Timms** on 0400 446 576 or stephen.timms@clarence.nsw.gov.au.

CLARENCE VALLEY

a community of opportunity

If all zoned land was developed for a range of housing types, this could accommodate up to an additional 16,000 people, taking our population towards 70,000.

There are a wide range of constraints such as biodiversity, bushfire, infrastructure, developers costs and the like, together with low population growth projections that we will work to address in the longer term.

- Existing urban areas
- Potential employment areas
- RU5 zoned land - large lot residential
- Clarence Valley Regional Airport
- Clarence Correctional Centre
- National Parks
- State Forests
- Rivers
- Pacific Highway
- Railway
- Road
- Drinking water catchments

SE QLD & Far North Coast
- significant population growth
Completed Pacific Highway to transform movement between the Clarence, Northern Rivers and SE Qld





The key Actions from the Draft LSPS are summarised below:

1. **Support the development of a Resilience Strategy** for the Clarence to help identify projects and actions to better inform land use and infrastructure planning and identify future funding sources. Work with relevant agencies to update our natural hazard management approach, including emergency management arrangements, hazard reduction, evacuation plans, bushfire mapping and land use plans.
2. **Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal people**, including work with Traditional Owners, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and work with State government on development opportunities. Engage with Aboriginal communities on strategic planning and caring for country.
3. **Update our Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plans** to ensure alignment with the Regional Plan and our other priorities to support recovery and development.
4. **Develop a Local Growth Management Strategy (LGMS)** which will update the Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999, in line with current planning considerations and community expectations to support a sustainable population.
5. **Prepare a Housing Strategy** (incl. social and affordable housing), including a supply and demand assessment.
6. **Revise our development contributions plan** in line with expected guidance from State government.
7. **Prepare an Integrated Freight Transport Plan** to map and protect corridors, support freight and logistics, and inform future planning decisions.
8. **Prepare an Active Transport Plan** and review Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMPs) and integrate 'place making' and transport plans for our town centres.
9. **Support the Grafton CBD and other centres** through developing 'place making' strategies to activate the CBD. These should celebrate our heritage, while considering car parking, pedestrian and access mobility, events and our sub-tropical climate.
10. **Work with industry to attract employment generating activity** and update demand and supply studies for employment land. Progress investigations, planning and zoning for land around the Airport, Koolkhan, South Grafton and other areas.
11. **Support and grow the agricultural sector**, protect important agricultural land and facilitate improvements in the supply chain to support economic activity, primary producers and the agri-food sector.
12. **Develop Local Character Statements for coastal villages.**
13. **Implement our revised Biodiversity Strategy 2020.**
14. **Reinstate Grafton as a Regional City** in the North Coast Regional Plan.

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Acknowledgement of Country

Clarence Valley Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl nations, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



1. VISION

Clarence Valley, a community of opportunity

The Clarence Valley is part of the best region in Australia to live, work and play. Employment opportunities, economic activity and population growth will be driven by an outward looking and interconnected economy, housing choice and our stunning natural environment.

Sustainable and innovative industry and businesses will continue to be supported and welcomed here. Growth in industry, freight and logistics, health and aged care, education, justice, food and hospitality, all underpinned by an important agricultural sector and government services, will be planned for.

The Clarence River weaves through our landscape and communities from the tablelands to the sea. Embracing our riverside and waterfront setting will be encouraged. Our stunning beaches and clean, green environment provide a playground for all sorts of activities and support rich biodiversity and essential ecosystems that support us and need to be managed, protected and enhanced.

Grafton will continue to be recognised as the first city on the north coast, with a vibrant buzz of activity and job opportunities. Maclean, Yamba, Iluka and our many other unique places will continue to support our community and attract tourists and investment. Retaining the charm and local character of our villages and towns is important. We need to continue to provide an enviable lifestyle for those that choose to live here, while welcoming new residents and business.

Providing for housing choice across the valley is needed for families, an ageing population and all needs in well planned communities. Strategic planning is needed to ensure new developments and buildings acknowledge our sub tropical climate, are built in locations that are resilient to natural hazards, and provide for a low carbon sustainable future.

A growing series of festivals and events will entertain and attract locals and tourists to our stunning Clarence Valley, while supporting local farmers, artisans and producers.

Our growing communities will work together with all tiers of government and our Traditional Owners, to respect our past and grow a prosperous local community that is both proud and engaged.

2. SUMMARY

The Clarence Valley's coastal and hinterland communities provide our residents with great urban, rural and natural places to call home and amazing places to visit. The city of Grafton, towns of Maclean and Yamba, and all settlements across our region offer places and spaces for us to enjoy a great lifestyle.

Meeting the needs of a growing and changing community requires proactive planning. Rather than operating through a narrow technical perspective, spatial planning should actively involve all residents in the Clarence because everyone has a stake in the place in which we live, work and play.

The common threads from our various plans and strategies that are woven together in the LSPPS are for us to:

- 1. Collaborate** – work together with the community, business and state government to create a community of opportunity
- 2. Commit** – create a growing population and jobs growth to improve opportunities
- 3. Cultivate** – support community resilience, making sure we have safe places to live, work and play
- 4. Celebrate** – our Aboriginal and shared heritage, stunning scenery, bio-diversity and sub-tropical climate in our natural and built environment.





3. CONTEXT

3.1. Shaping our future

The Clarence Valley aims to see sustained growth in economic activity and people visiting and moving to the area over the next twenty years and beyond.

Through coordinated actions and collective effort from Council and our community, we will create opportunities and support a growing population, beyond current trends.

Our engines of growth are identified in the Regional Economic Development Plan as Tourism, Agriculture and Manufacturing with sub industry specialisations providing opportunities for our community, particularly justice and aged care.

The new M1 will transform the ease with which people and goods can move around the North Coast region, and to south-east Queensland and beyond. The shorter, safer drive from the Gold Coast and Brisbane now puts places like Yamba, Wooli, our stunning hinterland and charming villages within easy reach for visitors and even remote workers.

According to the ABS, Australia's population is growing towards 53 million people by 2100 (using a medium growth rate). Sustained growth in South East Queensland and across the NSW North Coast in the short and long term, coupled with the continued attraction to our stunning environment and economic development in our area is expected to see a growing population in the Clarence.

The Clarence has housing land zoned to accommodate an additional 10,000 -15,000 people, along with land available for employment growth and areas available for potential growth over the term of this LSPS. As outlined below, there are a number of factors that could come together to unlock the potential of the Clarence Valley to support a sustainable population and commensurate services and facilities for our community.

The driving forces that will see an upward trend in the long term prospects for our community include:

- **Significant population growth in south-east Queensland and across the north coast**
- **Population growth and new industries within the Clarence Valley**
- **The new M1 Pacific Highway upgrade, improving accessibility across the region and further afield**
- **Significant infrastructure projects such as the new Grafton bridge, Sportsman's creek bridge at Lawrence and others**

- **Learning, sharing and cultural experiences with our First Nations Peoples**
- **Demand for affordable employment land and transport logistics to support industrial development**
- **Internet and telecommunications connectivity and options to work and learn remotely**
- **Growing health and aged care sector, including the Grafton health precinct**
- **Justice, including the new Clarence Correctional Centre at Lavadia, 12.5km south-east of Grafton**
- **Growth in hospitality and tourism**
- **Continued primary production and growing Agri-food economy**

3.2. Recovery

Supporting the recovery of our community and the environment from the recent bushfires is a focus for Council. Since July 2019 approximately half of our Council area has been burnt (548,698 ha out of a total 1,044,996 ha). This has come on top of severe drought, and followed by some flooding and further damage. This has caused significant impacts to individuals, families and communities across the valley, particularly farmers, small business and the villages of Nymboida, Ewingar and many, many rural areas.

Improving our resilience to future disasters, including bushfire, flood and other natural hazards requires a strategic approach to land use planning, and collaborating with the community and all relevant agencies.



3.3. Our place in our region

Clarence Valley Council is the largest local government area on the North Coast. We currently have a population of more than 52,000 people.

Grafton was the first city on the North Coast and this historic centre is the hub of services and opportunities for people of the Clarence Valley, supported by Maclean, Yamba and many other notable places that service the coastal and rural hinterland.

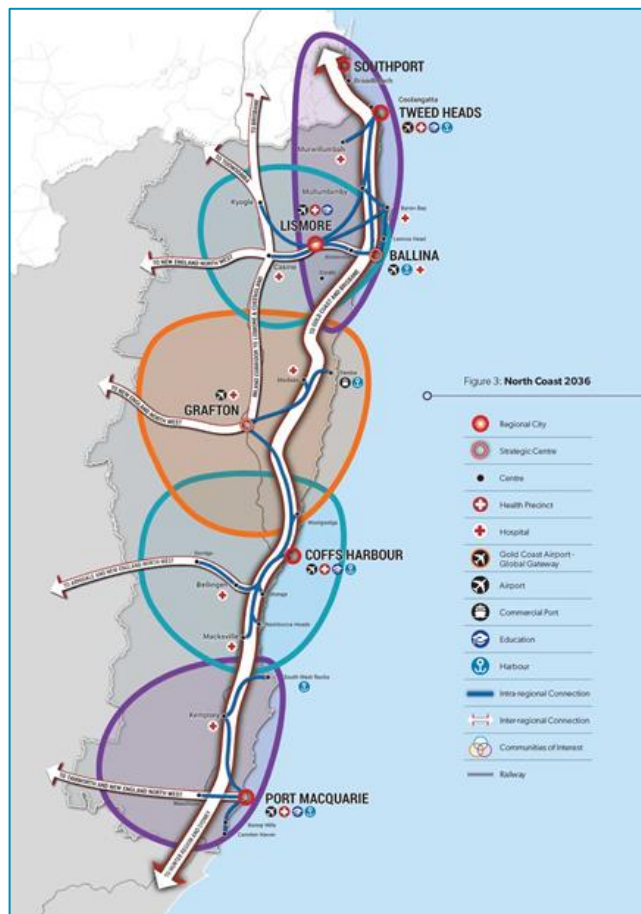
We have strong links across the sub-regions of northern NSW and into Qld. Our strong links with Coffs Harbour will also be fostered to grow our economy and leverage off the growth and demand for employment land in Coffs Harbour. New connections, via our Airport, the Pacific highway upgrade and digitally, will be explored and actions in this plan will be a catalyst to support an outward looking economy and create a community full of opportunities.

Grafton will continue to sit within the stopover travel window for freight and passenger trips between Sydney and Brisbane. Together with rail links, affordable industrial land and strategic freight connections we are perfectly positioned to build on our existing transport and freight logistics expertise, providing jobs and opportunities.

Aboriginal communities have lived in this rich valley, enjoying food and natural resources for thousands of years.

Since the mid 1800's, the Clarence Valley's wealth has relied on our natural resources - rich alluvial soil, a great climate and demand for produce like timber, beef, milk, sugar and seafood as key economic drivers. A focus on continuing to support and nurture our agricultural industry in all forms is critical to our prosperity.

A growing recognition of the stunning natural environment, our important agricultural economy, and enviable lifestyle, make the Clarence a great place to live. The ability to work remotely away from major cities, and the opportunity to participate in an active and inclusive community in the Clarence, will see our population grow beyond current trends.



Positive developments such as a growing health and aged care sector, country universities centre, and industrial marine precinct, with opportunities for significant growth around Clarence Regional Airport and other employment land, will all contribute to attracting employees looking for affordable housing and an enviable lifestyle.

The calendar of events in the Clarence will continue to attract more visitors and also improve the reputation and reasons for choosing to live here.

Grafton is the main commercial centre for the area, and is a hub for regional branches of government and business. This is reflected in journey to work data for the Clarence Valley showing that 93% of residents live and work within the area. Yamba and Maclean are also important service centres to support the local community and as destinations for locals and visitors.

Growth and development will be concentrated in our larger existing centres, providing housing choice and supporting vibrant centres to lift our main streets and villages and provide great places to visit and do business. Development will be encouraged where it provides for a resilient and sustainable future, safe from natural hazards and contributes to the character and charm of the Clarence Valley.

More than 50% of our land area is part of National Park or State Forest, including the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Iluka Nature Reserve. National Parks and natural bushland have shaped the Clarence Valley that exists today. Environmental assets provide a wealth of ecological, cultural and health and well-being benefits that are crucial to our identity and future, and a major draw-card for people to live, work and visit the area. Looking after our natural areas, and managing natural hazards, is essential for sustainable prosperity.

North Coast Regional Plan 2036

The North Coast Regional Plan is a 20-year blueprint for the future of the North Coast.

The NSW Government's vision for the North Coast is to create:

the best region in Australia to live, work and play thanks to its spectacular environment and vibrant communities.

To achieve this vision the Government has set four goals for the region:

- ***The most stunning environment in NSW***
- ***A thriving, interconnected economy***
- ***Vibrant and engaged communities***
- ***Great housing choice and lifestyle options.***

This draft Local Strategic Planning Statement will help to implement those goals, along with the Directions and 54 Actions of the North Coast Regional Plan.



3.4. Our people

Planning is all about people and communities, and the Clarence valleys prospects for growth are underpinned by its ongoing success in attracting new residents and supporting those that are here already.

Our population increased by 5 percent between 2006 - 2016 and are projected to continue to grow through until 2026. While longer term projections indicate a steady population, other driving forces and initiatives will continue to provide opportunities for growth. An ageing population in the Clarence means we need to continue to provide an enviable lifestyle and job opportunities to attract new residents. We are planning for a growing population and jobs growth, providing housing, community infrastructure and an attractive environment for families. Our current demographic trends indicate we need to continue our current work to support our population through the whole lifecycle, particularly our ageing population.

Population Projections provide an indication of how the population may change in the future and are primarily driven by demographic change. The projections can also be influenced by other factors such as infrastructure investment and changing preferences of the housing market. This means projections will continue to change over time.

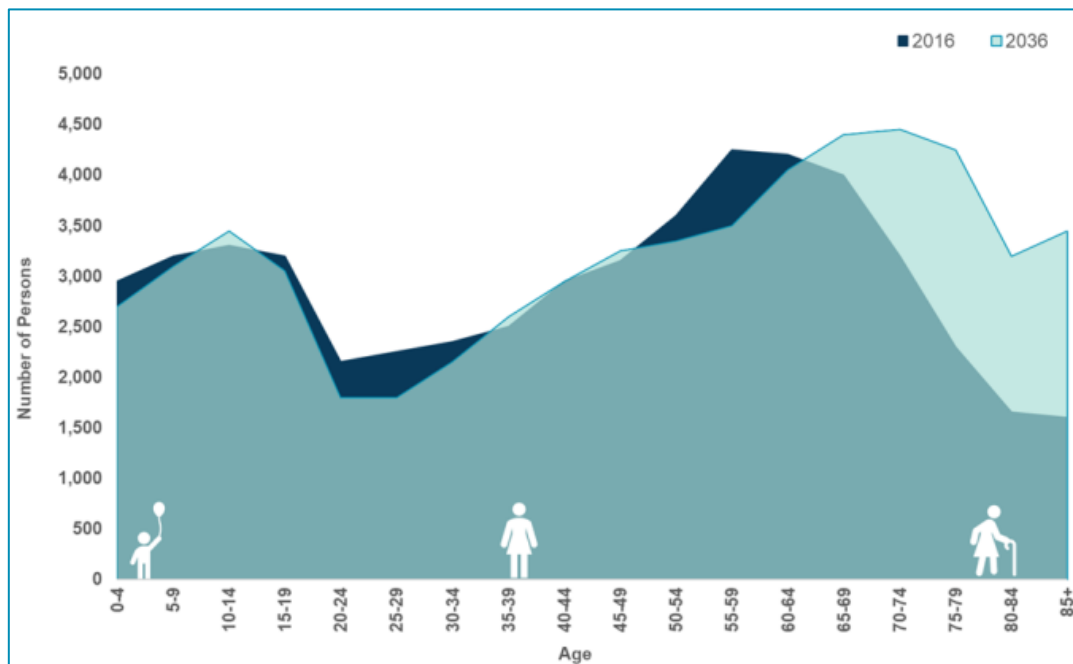


Figure 3 – Potential demographic change over time Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. Based on 2016 census analysis.

3.5. Planning for the Clarence Valley

This plan provides a vision and framework to guide more detailed land use planning, so the Clarence Valley will continue to be an amazing place to live, work and play.

The Clarence Valley Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) builds on and responds to community aspirations, regional and sub-regional connections and global megatrends. In doing so it supports how we will move forward over the next 20 years and beyond.

The development of this draft LSPS has been built on previous community engagement activities, particularly Community Strategic Plan 'The Clarence 2027'. The graphic below illustrates some of the key documents that have informed the LSPS, however there are around 27 different local plans and strategies that have been reviewed and informed the preparation of the draft LSPS, in addition to regional and state plans and national and international instruments.

Fundamental components in land use planning processes include consideration about how land is used, where communities are located and what community and political expectations are in terms of conservation and development.

Land use planning that takes into account natural hazard risk is an important mitigation measure in minimising future disaster losses in areas of new development. This is the starting point for building a strong foundation for a process that contributes to the safety of communities.



Figure 1 - some of the plans that have informed the preparation of this draft LSPS

In developing the CSP the community's most desired attribute for the Clarence was to be 'safe', together with creating more inclusive communities and employment opportunities. This draft LSPS reflects the desired outcomes and the finalised Community Strategic Plan.

The bar graph at Figure 1 addresses the broad question explored through consultation to develop Clarence 2027 "where do you want the Clarence Valley to be 10 years from now?"

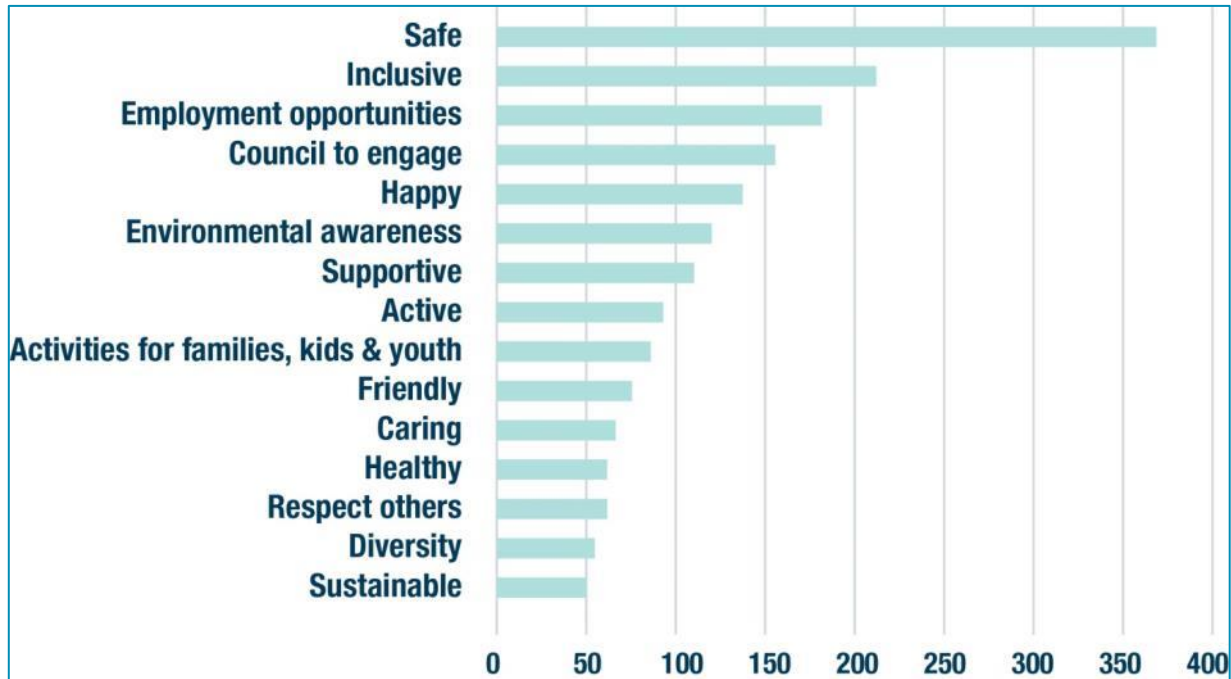


Figure 2 – “Where do you want the Clarence Valley to be 10 years from now?”

A public information drop in session and a workshop about the LSPS process was held in September 2019, and this has also informed the preparation of this draft LSPS, along with extensive engagement within Council and with state government agencies. Further community engagement and targeted discussions are to consult on this draft LSPS.

As a result, Council has a wealth of information, which continues to inform the future direction of the Clarence Valley. This provided the foundations to build upon and support the development of the Clarence Valley LSPS and future strategies and plans will include further engagement with the community.

3.6. Strategic Planning

In March 2018, amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) introduced new requirements for councils to prepare a Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The Act recognises the critical role of councils in strategic planning for their local area.

Each council is preparing an LSPS to set out the 20-year vision for land-use for their local area. This LSPS outlines how actions in the North Coast Regional Plan and our own priorities in the Community Strategic Plan and other plans, strategies and community aspirations will be implemented through the planning process.

The LSPS will shape how the development controls in the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) evolve over time to meet the community's needs, with the LEP the main tool to deliver the council and community's plan.

The Regional Plan sits alongside Infrastructure NSW's State Infrastructure Strategy and Transport for NSW's Future Transport 2056 which now means that all levels of Government must coordinate implementation and align infrastructure with growth and provides opportunities for up-front strategic planning.



Figure 3 - the 'line of sight' through the planning framework

The Local Strategic Planning Statement sits within the planning 'hierarchy' of state, regional and local plans. The LSPS is the final piece of the puzzle that captures how the North Coast Regional Plan applies in the Clarence Valley to ensure we have a strategic plan for the Clarence that generally aligns with the plans and priorities of state government and action at the national and international level, but driven by the needs of our local community.

It helps to ensure we're all working together and trying to achieve similar outcomes, which helps prioritise funding, resources and get better outcomes for the community and the environment through a more strategic approach to land use planning.

The LSPS is designed to provide clearer direction to the community, to developers, investors, government and decision makers, including Council, about the kind of development and activity that we would like to see happen in the Clarence Valley and the actions needed to help provide that direction.

The LSPS will work together with our other plans and strategies for the Clarence Valley and the wider region.

In particular the Actions of the LSPS and its funding and implementation tie together with our Community Strategic Plan and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), especially where these interact with land use, and where land use planning has a role in facilitating better outcomes or specific Actions for the Councils Operational Plan.



Figure 5 - Delivering the operational plan

For example, implementing Councils Economic Development Strategy, or the Clarence River Way masterplan, or our Biodiversity strategy and many other plans and strategies, all rely on strategic decision making with regard to land use, and ensuring that the rules and regulations in our Local Environmental Plan and Development Control

Plans facilitate the expected outcomes. Likewise, funding of new infrastructure, or provision of public amenities and social facilities and services need to be aligned with expectations of existing communities and to support a growing population, to make the Clarence a great place to live, work and play.

3.7. Working together for collective impact

Council cannot act alone to make the Clarence Valley a community full of opportunity. It will require a wide range of people in the community and the public and private sector working together, actively and with purpose, to get the best outcomes.

Spatial planning is designed to “bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function”.

Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land-use planning. It facilitates and promotes sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development.

Rather than operating through a narrow technical perspective, spatial planning should actively involve all members of society because everyone has a stake in the places in which they live, work and play - University College London & Deloitte, 2007

Collective impact, where stakeholders collaborate across sectors to address complex issues, is a problem-solving process. Through working together, with a wide range of people and sectors contributing, it enables solutions to emerge. Preparing strategic plans or trying to provide solutions for ‘wicked’ or complex problems - like creating more resilient communities - often have no single solutions and they require input and knowledge from a range of people across different sectors. The outcomes of various interrelated interventions are often unpredictable at the start of the process, but if we work together the outcomes will be more positive than if we have no plan at all.

Figure 6 illustrates the five conditions for effective collective impact, which should be applied to progress the actions of this LSPS, along with other work programmes across Council and with other agencies and the community.

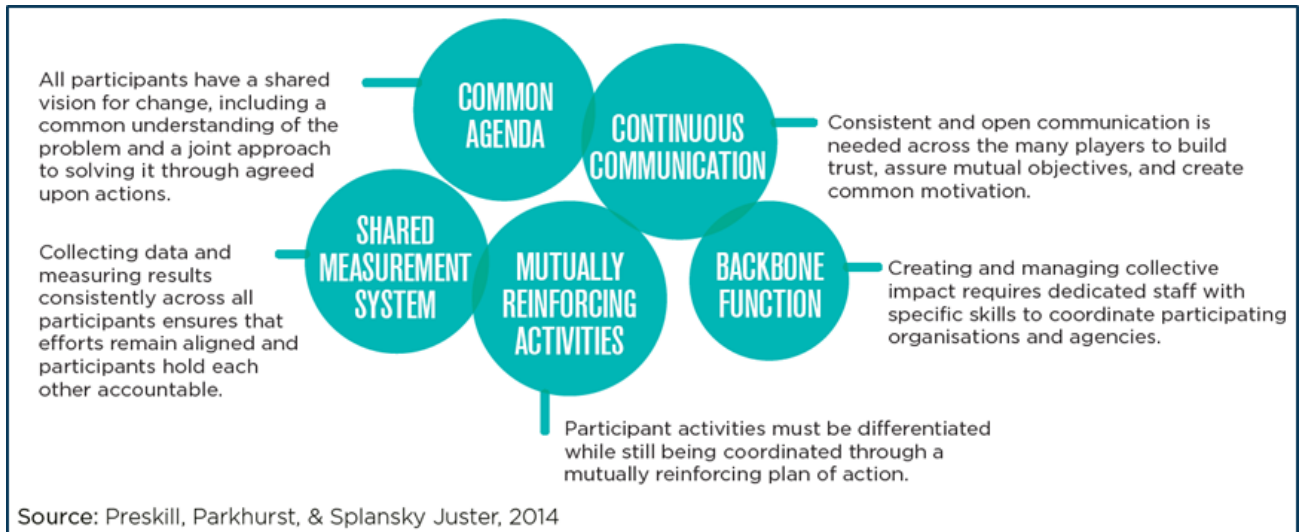


Figure 6 - Conditions for effective collaboration and collective impact

4. PLANNING PRIORITIES

The planning priorities outlined in this draft LSPS have been grouped under the following themes, in order to align with our Community Strategic Plan, *the Clarence 2027*.

Themes:

4.1 Our society - *A community of opportunity*

Land use planning will help to nurture the places and spaces we love, to retain and enhance community life, and provide for a growing population where people are healthy, safe, connected and live in harmony with the natural and built environment.

4.2 Our infrastructure - *efficient and resilient infrastructure to service the community*

Strategic planning will ensure that infrastructure is provided efficiently and effectively to support a growing community and that infrastructure is resilient and sustainable.

4.3 Our economy - *A thriving and sustainable economy*

Strategic planning will help strengthen and diversify our economic base in a way that complements the environmental and social values of the Clarence.

4.4 Our environment - *living in harmony with a well managed natural environment*

Council and the community will value, respect and actively participate in the care, protection and management of the Clarence's natural and built environment for current and future generations.

4.5 Our Leadership - *supporting a collaborative environment for collective impact*

Work together with the community, including business and government, to achieve the short, medium and long term goals for the Clarence in accordance with community aspirations.

Actions

The Actions to help achieve our priorities have been given a timeframe to ensure their implementation, using the following code:

Timeframes	
Short	1 – 2 years
Medium	2 – 5 years
Ongoing	Longer term actions for a cycle of continuous improvement



4.1. Society

A community of opportunity. Land use planning decisions will help to create safe places and spaces where people have the opportunity to live a healthy lifestyle, with places for community interaction and connection. Our community will live in harmony with the natural and built environment, respecting natural hazards, and we will endeavour to create great housing choice and build resilient communities.

The Clarence Valley's rich tapestry of coastal and hinterland communities provides our residents with great urban, rural and natural places to call home and amazing places to visit. Grafton city, the towns of Maclean and Yamba, and all settlements across our diverse landscape provide places and spaces for us to enjoy an enviable lifestyle.

Meeting the needs of a growing and changing community will require proactive planning to ensure we have great places to live, work and play in to the future. This will need to involve improving Grafton's CBD and capitalising on its heritage assets, along with Maclean, Yamba, Iluka and all of our centres. There is scope to provide more multi-dwelling houses and smaller houses within existing settlements – where it does not compromise the heritage values of the place, disrupt the amenity for existing residents or expose more people to unacceptable risk from natural hazards. Maclean, Yamba and other villages and towns can also accommodate more people while maintaining the existing local character.

Ensuring that new development in existing urban areas and in new urban release areas are planned to create great communities is important. Social infrastructure and places where we can interact, socialise, meet and gather for important functions, entertainment and many occasions are also important to create resilient communities.

Ensuring that we plan for more housing, infrastructure and urban development in locations that are resilient to natural hazards and ensure efficient use of funding for infrastructure, social facilities and resource use are all things that we need to consider.

The priorities and actions under the Society theme are focused on ensuring that land use planning decisions support our vision to create a community full of opportunity and align with other activities. We need to plan for a growing population and provide safe, resilient and sustainable places for communities to grow, with housing choice to meet community need.

We also need to further encourage Aboriginal communities to contribute to future decision making and economic self determination, so that communities can be in charge of their own future prosperity and creating opportunities for the next generations.

Priority 1 – Take a proactive ‘place making’ approach to create great places to live, work and play, suitable to our climate.

A ‘place making’ approach puts people first and aims to capitalise on our existing local community assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating great places and spaces that promote people’s health, happiness, and well being. Place making is about delivering at least one, but perhaps all three, of the following objectives: place character, community participation and economic revitalisation. There is a role for everyone to participate in making our Clarence valley a great place to live, work and play. Planning has an important role, but so to do a wide range of other interests which need to be able to progress on their own without interference from regulation. It is about making places function for positive social, economic and environmental outcomes, which is intertwined but different to just aesthetics or design.

The Clarence Valley has distinct places within a varied landscape, climate and physical characteristics. Grafton is approximately 50km inland from the coast and thus can generally experience hotter summer days, cooler winter nights and different wind patterns to the coast. This affects whether people enjoy visiting the Grafton CBD and thus the success of hospitality, retail and business. Yamba has been declared by the CSIRO and Stanford University to have the best climate in the world for people (along with Bunbury, WA and San Diego, California). In summer the nor’easter cools off the town better than any air conditioner.

The Christ Church Cathedral in Grafton, completed in 1884, is reported to include the first attempt in any public building in Australia to alleviate the problem of heat. John Hunt designed adjustable and fixed wooden louvers instead of glass in the cathedral, a ‘passive’ technology that is being ‘rediscovered’ in building design today.

The design of our public buildings, subdivisions and individual buildings needs to consider state guidance regarding sustainable design.

But we can do better to provide attractive, enjoyable places to live, to work, to shop and to play, and to be more efficient with resources and using more economic means of staying cool or warm in this sub-tropical climate.



New communities in urban release areas like Clarenza, Junction Hill, Gulmarrad, James Creek and West Yamba should be designed to balance the needs for new housing, avoid natural hazards (such as flooding and bushfire risks) and retain biodiversity and trees to regulate temperatures among other considerations. A strategic approach to creating great communities living in harmony with the natural environment and the landscape means considering these issues at the earliest opportunity when considering where new urban release areas are, and how to design new communities, facilities, services and infrastructure.

Wider road corridors with extensive tree planting could make new subdivisions more resilient to heat than current designs and encourage more outdoor healthy active lifestyles. Larger back gardens would also enable tree planting and shadier, cooler microclimates for people to enjoy, and some wildlife to survive.

A place making approach driving the development process will capitalise on the communities existing assets, utilising collaborative processes and aiming to create places and spaces that promote peoples health and wellbeing, creating places that everyone can enjoy, particularly children, families, elderly and men and women.

By being deliberate about creating safer communities and places where people have the opportunity to interact, we can create more resilient places. This will help realise other social, cultural and economic benefits over the long term, rather than just meeting housing targets.

If our places are enjoyable to be in, this will in turn attract further development and population growth, in a region where lifestyle, job opportunities and other attractors that could otherwise outcompete what the Clarence has to offer.

Council, the community and the development industry need to keep pace with contemporary place making approaches being offered in other Council areas to ensure we create a prosperous community full of opportunities here. A high level of amenity and functionality makes places even more attractive to visitors and investors. Attractive areas are usually worth more because people demand and visit these areas in preference to other areas.

Priority 1 - Take a proactive place making approach to create great places to live, work and play, suitable to our climate, culture and social aspirations

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
Encourage design excellence that creatively responds to and enhances the Clarence Valley's existing built character, heritage assets, and landscape and community values in line with our climate.	Ongoing	Community, developers
Work with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to update the North Coast Design Guidelines and settlement planning guidelines.	Medium	DPIE
Ensure guidelines produced by the NSW government architect are considered in planning decisions, including "Better Placed" and "Greener Places", especially when planning new neighbourhoods and infrastructure assets (especially bridges, hospitals and other public assets).	Ongoing	Community, developers, state gov't agencies.

Take a proactive place-making approach to create great places to live, work and play, suitable to our climate, culture and social aspirations, including through:		
Amend the Clarence Valley LEP in accordance with updated design guidance and the Actions of the North Coast Regional Plan	Medium	Community, developers, state gov't agencies.
Amend the Residential Zones DCP to incorporate desirable urban design and local character outcomes, driven by community engagement where possible.	Medium	Community, developers, state gov't agencies.
<p>Ensure decision making is applied consistently to implement the objectives of the Residential Zones DCP, and the objects of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, in particular promoting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good design and amenity in the built environment ▪ Sustainable management of built and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal heritage) ▪ The proper construction and maintenance of buildings, including the protection of the health and safety of their occupants 	Short	Community, developers, state gov't agencies.
<p>Build on the Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999 to ensure that a revised overall strategic plan for the Clarence Valley incorporates a spatial planning approach to prepare a local growth management strategy, with consideration to important planning principles such as:</p> <p>Promoting the long term liveability and resilience of the community, and supporting economic, social and cultural improvement</p> <p>Protecting and enhancing terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity</p> <p>A hierarchy of avoiding, mitigating and managing natural hazards and environmental constraints</p> <p>Ensuring a collaborative approach to place making, that engages those that can contribute to making the Clarence Valley a community full of opportunities.</p>	Short - medium	DPIE; community.

Priority 2 - Plan for a growing population and provide safe, resilient and sustainable places for communities to grow

As the population continues to grow over the next 20 years, the Clarence Valley will not only need more houses but also a more diverse range of housing types, along with community infrastructure. These housing types will include traditional standalone houses, but with an increasing need to include single person dwellings, townhouses and affordable accommodation to cater for changing demographics.

The Clarence Valley has historically been a predominantly low-density residential area characterised by detached dwellings on sizeable lots. This pattern of development remains important to the character of the area, and many heritage precincts, with private open space, backyards, gardens and tall trees.

However, there are many in the community that would benefit from more contemporary housing typology, where they can walk to amenities and services, age in place and enjoy access to services and facilities within easy reach. Zoning in existing urban areas provides for these types of houses, and further investigations will be made to determine how best Council can encourage the market to meet demand and provide opportunities for our diverse community in locations which will not compromise the character and heritage significance of the area.

Council has enough zoned residential and rural residential land to cater for a growing population through to 2036 and beyond. Urban release areas have been identified across the valley, to meet demand while maintaining environmental values and avoiding natural hazards like flooding and bushfire. Ensuring that those areas are available for new homes to encourage and support new communities will require Council working proactively with land owners, developers and the community, along with continuing to plan for and provide infrastructure in a timely manner.

Some urban release areas have constraints such as multiple land ownership, recent larger lot development and subdivision, and other typical planning issues that need to be addressed such as access, provision of infrastructure, environmental opportunities and the like. Where appropriate for long term planning outcomes, Council will investigate the development of masterplans or structure plans for growth areas, to ensure land will be readily available at appropriate densities to provide housing for a growing population in to the future, and avoid inefficient use of valuable land for housing.

The Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999 was a sub-regional joint planning project. It provided a 20 year vision for the Clarence valley (through to 2019) which sought to locate population growth in areas which will have the least costs in environmental, social and economic terms. Focusing the bulk of growth close to Grafton, the strategy said, would mean reducing car dependency, improving access to services and reducing the human footprint, leaving more areas for biodiversity, food production and rural industries. These are all aspirations supported today. The strategy focused most growth close to Grafton and Maclean in sewerred areas which are close to services. Those areas comprised Grafton, South Grafton, Maclean, Yamba, Junction Hill village and a future village at Clarenza and possible village type development at Waterview Heights.

The strategy is still relevant today and is being realised as time passes and development continues. The development of a Local Growth Management Strategy (LGMS) is needed to review and update the settlement strategy and provide a contemporary spatial plan for the valley for the next 20 years and beyond.

Estimates of existing dwelling yields in CVC growth areas and existing zoned land are provided on the map below. Additional investigations to encourage up take of development will aim to unlock this potential, where appropriate.

If all zoned land is developed for a range of housing types, this could accommodate up to an additional 16,000 people – taking our population towards 70,000.

However, there are a wide range of constraints (biodiversity, bushfire, infrastructure costs, developers costs etc.) together with low population growth projections which makes this aspiration unlikely in the short term. Council will continue to work with a range of stakeholders to grow our population in a sustainable way.

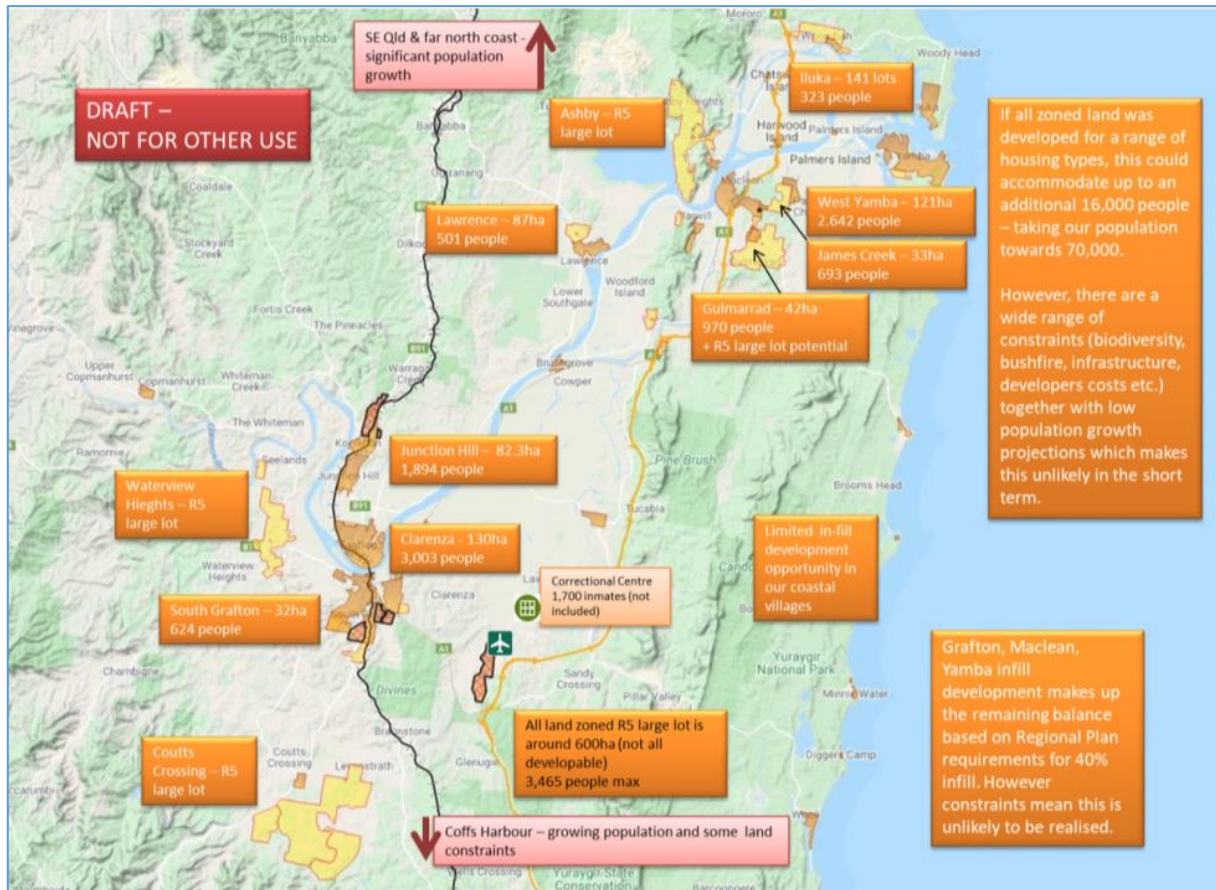


Figure 7 - Housing potential for the Clarence Valley (maximum yield based on existing zoning without constraints analysis)

The North Coast Regional Plan sets a target of 40% of new dwellings being in the form of apartments, dual occupancies, townhouses and villas and homes on smaller lots. Growth within our main centres of Grafton, Maclean and Yamba needs to be considerate of flood risk, and sympathetic to the heritage character and amenity of existing residential areas. Existing zoning (R2 & R3) already enables infill in Maclean and Yamba.

Council will develop strategies to encourage appropriate growth in areas already zoned. Creating better housing, streetscapes and town centres, coupled with well functioning places and economic opportunities, will provide more enjoyable places for people to live, work and play, which in turn will grow the population and attract the best and brightest to make this their home.

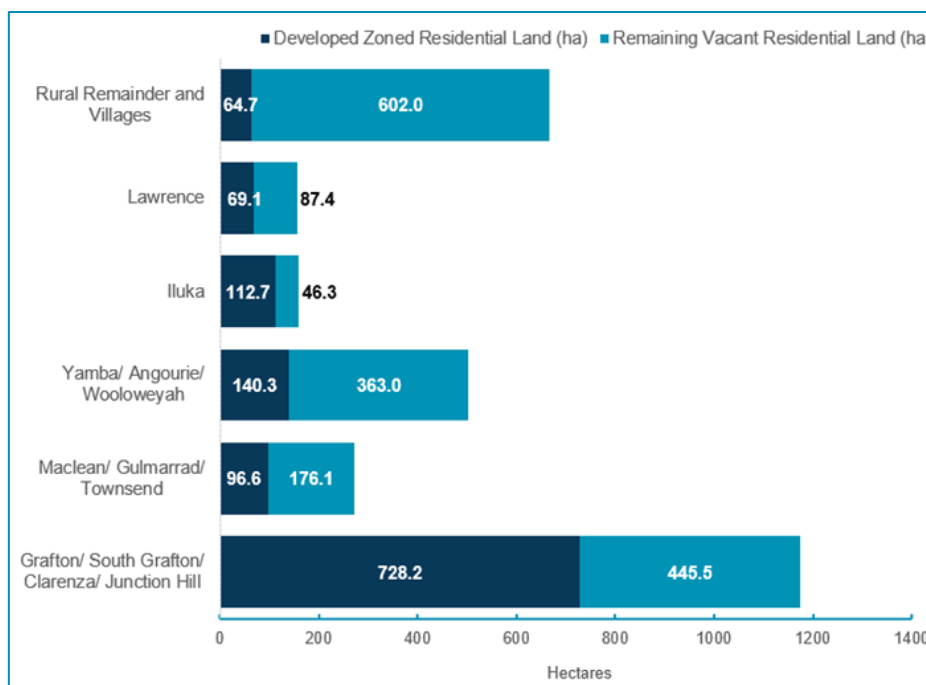


Figure 8 - Housing Demand snapshot

Appropriate infill development is supported through R2 & R3 zoning in our existing centres of Grafton, Maclean and Yamba. The identification of specific urban renewal precincts could offer the opportunity for a step-change in development of those areas, where supported by other considerations such as flooding. Land use interventions could enable renewal that may not otherwise occur. This type of development is important for the economy but is also important for providing new and exciting spaces for both the community of the Clarence Valley and visitors alike.

Planning for growth beyond current demographic projections needs to ensure that decisions do not hamper efforts to provide efficient infrastructure, services and resilient growth beyond the 20 year horizon of this plan.

Monitoring will be also be necessary to ensure that sufficient housing is available to accommodate the needs of our communities in ways that are responsive to their changing size, distribution and demographics.

While our population is ageing we need to cater for those needs, along with attracting younger generations. Accommodation, care and access to medical services will create opportunities for growth in the Clarence, together with an outward looking economy to attract investment and people wanting to contribute to the community.

Clarence Valley Council produced the 'Sustainability Initiative' in 2006, a leadership initiative to help guide all Council decision making to help create a more sustainable Clarence Valley. It was driven by a collaborative approach to making this a great place to live, and provided a framework and key guiding principles around

ecology, economy, society, human habitat and governance that provide a solid grounding for future decision making.

Creating great places to live isn't just about the houses that residents live in; it is also about the communities they live in. Creating more liveable places helps improve the community's quality of life and provides opportunities for people to enjoy our great places. In this sense it will be important to ensure new or infill developments are appropriately planned, designed and supported by infrastructure, including social and green infrastructure.

Priority 2 - Plan for a growing population and provide safe, resilient and sustainable places for communities to grow

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
2.1 Investigate and progress planning for new urban growth areas to facilitate appropriate development, including the development of masterplans or structure plans where necessary, including for Clarenza.	Short	DPIE, community
2.2 Undertake a strategic housing needs assessment study to inform the development of our local growth management strategy for the Clarence Valley, in collaboration with our community, other Councils and state agencies.	Ongoing	DPIE, adjoining Councils
2.3 Investigate measures to encourage a wide range of smaller homes in appropriate locations of existing centres without adverse impacts upon heritage values to help achieve a target of 40% infill housing across the North Coast.	Medium	DPIE
2.4 Undertake a Rural Residential Lands Strategy and investigate the role and impact of rural residential (R5) development in the housing market, considering environmental constraints and natural hazards, and the environmental, social and economic needs of the valley.	Medium	DPIE, community

Priority 3 – Provide housing choice to meet community needs, including social and affordable housing

The Clarence Valley has been proactive in considering the needs of the community, with the development of the Clarence Valley Affordable Housing Strategy and the Positive Ageing Strategy. A proactive approach to encouraging community services to locate in residential areas and increasing residential density and housing types in areas that are already well-serviced is also encouraged.

However, there is a need to continue to diversify housing stock and tenure options to meet the changing needs of our community, including our ageing population, decreasing average household size and changing socio economic profile. Encouraging the development of smaller, more manageable, well-located dwellings that allow for positive 'ageing in place', as well as continuing to provide for the needs of younger people, families and lower income households through planning processes is needed.

The needs of older people who are currently in private rental will also be an increasingly serious issue to be considered in the Clarence Valley.

Council is also aware that declining affordability is affecting the sustainability of its community, including the ability to attract younger people and key workers, and enable longer-term residents to remain within their local communities. Council is committed to protecting and increasing the amount of housing stock that is affordable for purchase and rent to local residents.

Figure 3 illustrates that in 2018 the Clarence Valley had the 5th lowest rental affordability in NSW. While this may change with major infrastructure projects like the Pacific Highway, Clarence Correctional Centre and Grafton Bridge nearing completion, we have economic strategies that want to drive economic growth and attract more significant projects which would keep demand high.

Strategies to ensure we plan for more affordable housing are needed to support a growing economy. We will need to work with North Coast Community Housing (NCCH), state government, developers, NGOs and the community to address these needs.

Council can explore local incentives for affordable and more diverse housing, including bonus provisions or concessions in local plans.

LGA	AHIG Index	NSW rank	Measure
Byron Shire	61	1	Extreme housing stress
Woollahra	47	2	
Ballina	47	3	
Waverley	38	4	
Clarence Valley	29	5	Severe housing stress
Northern Beaches	24	6	
Tweed shire	21	7	
Ku-ring-gai	21	8	
Kiama	20	9	

Source: Compass Housing (2018)

Table 1 - Affordable rental housing in NSW 2018

Priority 3 – Provide housing choice to meet community needs, including social and affordable housing

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
3.1 Provide for a planning framework and processes that enable more dual occupancies, townhouses, villas and smaller dwellings within appropriately planned areas, where these provide for safe housing sympathetic to the character and amenity of the area.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE
3.2 Monitor levels of social and locational disadvantage, in order to provide targeted support and services such as the ageing population and delivering programs aimed at providing opportunities for young people, and affordable housing.	<i>medium</i>	NCCH, community
3.3 Investigate whether there are planning impediments to the establishment and operation of not-for-profit community service providers to ensure key community services can be delivered as effectively as possible.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, NCCH, private and NGO sector
3.4 Work with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, North Coast Community Housing and other partners to undertake a Strategic Housing Needs Assessment, looking at supply and demand for all housing types.	<i>short</i>	DPIE, NCCH, private and NGO sector
3.5 Develop a Housing Strategy in line with the DPIE Local Housing Strategy Guideline 2018, to sit alongside a local growth management strategy.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, community
3.6 Ensure the planning framework and practices, including our LEP, provides for the provision of affordable housing and implementation of our ageing in place strategy.	<i>short</i>	community

Priority 4 - Provide for healthy, safe and well connected communities, particularly providing for social infrastructure

Creating great places to live isn't just about the houses that residents live in; it is also about the communities they live in. Creating more livable places helps improve the community's quality of life, our health and productivity, with flow on benefits for individuals, communities and our wider health system. In this sense it will be important to ensure new or infill developments are appropriately planned, designed and supported by infrastructure that provides for communities and is sustainable and works with natural systems.

Place making is important for our community whichever stage of life they are at. It may include walking links that are safe, convenient and logical connections between local places. This may also include neighbourhood hubs that create places at the heart of local communities, are diverse in size, use and are close to where people live. Connections to and encouraging the use of these hubs are important to create a sense of place in a community. This can be as simple as public halls for gathering, learning, celebrating and meeting or for 'safer places' in times of emergency. Other community assets like sports facilities, playgrounds and others need to be thought about at the earliest planning phase.

Fostering community wellbeing and socially inclusive communities is one of the Clarence Valley's strengths. 'Social capital' and sense of community and looking out for each other makes communities more enjoyable places to live, with commensurate economic, social and resilience benefits.



Council's role is to act as an advocate and a champion for those groups where appropriate. As the population grows, more residents and visitors will be from differing religious, sexual orientation and ethnic groups, which will further diversify the community. A focus on infrastructure delivery to support inclusive growth can also lead to more opportunities and competitiveness for improved wellbeing outcomes.

Designing places with regard to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles can help to create safer places and more sustainable communities. Planning should consider CPTED requirements and when planning for larger scale developments or places that will attract a lot of people, the involvement of the Police and a wide cross section of the community is encouraged.

Priority 4 – Provide for healthy, safe and well connected communities, particularly providing for social infrastructure

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
4.1 Work with Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to establish social infrastructure benchmarks, minimum standards and social impact assessment frameworks for local planning.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE
4.2 Ensure communities are supported by appropriate social infrastructure for the demographics of the existing and future population through life stages (child care, community halls, recreation and the like)	<i>on-going</i>	Community
4.3 Deliver Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) outcomes through the planning process, particularly strategic planning, rezoning and development applications	<i>on-going</i>	NSW Police, community
4.4 Work with state government agencies, particularly the Department of Justice, to monitor conditions of consent for the Clarence Correctional Centre and ensure expected positive outcomes for the local community and economy are delivered	<i>short - ongoing</i>	DoJ, SERCO, DPIE, community
4.5 Up date the Clarence Valley Council Crime Prevention Strategy, with particular regard to recent developments, our growing and diverse community and the Clarence Correctional Centre	<i>medium</i>	Dept of Justice, DPIE, NSW Police, community

Priority 5 – Engage with Aboriginal communities to contribute to future decision making

The Traditional Custodians of the Clarence Valley area are the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl nations. They have a long and proud history of living in the Clarence Valley. The way Aboriginal people managed the landscape, used fire, procured food and built an understanding of the local area needs to be acknowledged to help inform future decision making.

The health of a people and their community is reliant on a strong physical and emotional connection to place and this plan acknowledges a strong belief amongst Aboriginal people that if we care for Country, it will care for us.

Conserving Aboriginal heritage and respecting the Aboriginal community's right to determine how it is identified and managed, will preserve some of the world's longest standing spiritual, historical, social and educational values.

Council commits to work closer with the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to improve the way we care for country and to improve the prospects and opportunities for Aboriginal people in the Clarence Valley. We want to walk on a journey hand in hand to reconcile our past practices and provide for a more resilient and sustainable future for the Clarence Valley.

Land use planning decisions about where urban areas, infrastructure and development occurs, and where the environment and other areas are protected will stay with us for generations. Aboriginal timeframes can have reference to thousands of years, not just current economic or political cycles, or even a single generation. Taking a long term view and being open to a different world view when making decisions will have long term benefits for the sustainability and resilience of our communities.

Respecting Aboriginal culture and customs, important objects and places and involving communities in decisions about their country is important for Aboriginal people and the wider community. At the 2016 census more than 3,200 people, 6.3% of the total population in the Clarence Valley identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders descent. This is significantly higher than NSW (2.9%) and Australia wide (2.8%). While people of all backgrounds are important in the Clarence, the Aboriginal population makes up a larger percentage than others, such as people born in England (2.5%), New Zealand (1.1%), Netherlands (0.3%), Germany (0.3%) and the Philippines (0.3%) recorded in the 2016 census.

While the multicultural make up of the Clarence Valley will increase over the 20 year life span of the LSPS, and we want to encourage further immigration to the valley, there are many reasons why the Council needs to work more closely with Aboriginal communities.





OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment) is the NSW Governments plan for Aboriginal communities. It focusses on revitalising and promoting Aboriginal languages and culture, creating opportunities and capacity, providing choice and empowering Aboriginal people to exercise that choice, as well as giving them the tools to take responsibility for their own future.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has committed to work with Local Aboriginal Land

Councils to identify their land holdings and to map the level of constraints for each site. Council would expect to be engaged in that process also. The information gathered can be used by Aboriginal communities to consider potential land use for that land. A collaborative approach to navigating the planning process has the potential to provide for the economic self determination of Aboriginal communities that can be invested back in to the community, while protecting the environment and providing for communities.

The Clarence Valley has a range of important places, objects and natural areas that are significant for Aboriginal people and the wider community. The Clarence River is particularly significant and maintaining its environmental integrity and sharing stories about its importance is to be promoted. Some sites are listed as Aboriginal Places under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, while others are acknowledged and highlighted in local studies. Ensuring that planning decisions understand and respect those which are important. Sharing information between Aboriginal communities and Council is important. Further work with the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Advisory Committee, along with Local Aboriginal Land Councils, will continue to improve outcomes for the community.

As history is a shared story, places should recognise the significance of the local Aboriginal culture as part of the development and improvement of the Clarence Valley. As discussed in the NSW Government Architects *Better Placed* guidelines, places and landscapes are tied to Aboriginal culture and stories.

Incorporating local cultural heritage into the built environment in meaningful and respectful ways will not only encourage people to engage with local cultural heritage but may also have economic benefits such as encouraging tourism activity. Designing places that incorporate local Aboriginal culture will also strengthen the connections to place and shared purpose for the community.

Priority 5 – Engage with Aboriginal communities to contribute to future decision making

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
5.1 Expand existing partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal communities to facilitate engagement and involvement in future decision making, including the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Advisory Committee (CVAAC) to promote better understanding and cooperative service delivery in relation to planning for the Clarence Valley	<i>short</i>	CVAAC, DPIE
5.2 Ensure that Aboriginal communities have the opportunity to be involved in the development of strategic plans for the valley, including a local growth management strategy, housing strategy and biodiversity strategy.	<i>short</i>	CVAAC
5.3 Participate in closer cooperation with Traditional Owners, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Aboriginal communities and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to identify assets and sites with economic development potential for further investigation.	<i>short</i>	LALC, DPIE
5.4 Update the Aboriginal cultural heritage study and maps and update relevant planning controls and strategies to ensure Aboriginal objects and places are protected, managed and respected through planning decisions and consider the intent of native title agreements in strategic planning.	<i>medium</i>	CVAAC
5.5 Where agreed and culturally appropriate, develop ways of identifying sites of Aboriginal heritage and areas of significance to Aboriginal communities (including maps) in areas for 'investigation' for future urban development and employment land.	<i>medium</i>	CVAAC
5.6 Develop a Clarence Valley tailored information sharing process to improve the understanding of the planning process and local planning framework for Aboriginal communities, and to improve the understanding of Aboriginal heritage, culture and strategic planning issues for planning staff.	<i>medium</i>	CVAAC, LALC
5.7 Incorporate Aboriginal cultural heritage and design in to new development, particularly state government public buildings and other private development where appropriate and financially feasible. Incorporate appropriate provisions in to Development Control Plans.	<i>medium</i>	CVAAC, LALC

Priority 6 - Preserve and enhance the local character and heritage of our diverse places and communities.

Historic heritage underpins the built character of many towns and villages and rural areas of the Clarence Valley. A wide range of heritage items and conservation areas are formally protected in the heritage schedule of the Clarence Valley LEP 2011.

Grafton was the first city on the North Coast and retains gracious streetscapes of historic residences set in mature tree lined avenues, together with buildings of state significance, including the Saraton Theatre and Christ Church Cathedral, and the historic Gaol.

'The Conservation Areas of Grafton and South Grafton comprises a fine gamut of architectural types from the nineteenth and early twentieth century and distinctive streetscapes developed from sensitive planning and landscaping. Together these elements create a distinctive townscape in which much of its original character and evidence of its development is maintained'.



Heritage is a significant point of difference and a key asset for the Clarence Valley. These heritage values have the potential to be a key driver of the economy, and our river city and villages set us apart from other coastal areas and centres on the north coast. Places along the lower Clarence like Ulmarra, Brushgrove, Lawrence, Maclean, Harwood and Yamba played an important role in the historic development of river transport and economic and social development of the area.

The European heritage of these areas needs to be carefully conserved through ongoing use and adaption.

Promoting adaptive re-use of historic buildings, waterfronts and places offers a positive way of telling the story of the Clarence in combination with Aboriginal heritage stories. Understanding the significance and

respecting the local character and heritage of these places is important to the community and can improve the attractiveness and economic vitality of our settlements.

Design that integrates with the heritage and character of the Clarence Valley can increase the level of amenity and functionality making them more attractive to visitors and investors.

Renewal of desirable places will enable people to stay in their neighbourhoods and communities as they transition through life. Design excellence will underpin the success of Clarence Valley's liveable places through to the quality of the streets, buildings and public space.

Local character, particularly in our growing coastal settlements is also important. New development in places from Iluka to Wooli should retain a scale and character which enhances the local coastal vernacular. Iluka, Yamba, Angourie, Sandon, Brooms Head, Minnie Water, Diggers Camp and Wooli are special places with unique local small scale character and important attributes that the local community want to see protected, while allowing appropriately sustainable development that suits the context.

The development of local character statements for these areas could provide more certainty for developers, the community and Council to inform future decision making.

Suburban backyards have many benefits for people, the environment and the character of our urban areas. Providing useable, private, open green space for residents, particularly elderly and children is important. Access to nature, opportunities for growing food, places for trees for shade, biodiversity and stormwater management are also important. Access to nature has benefits for mental health and wellbeing. Small lot development come with challenges for providing enjoyable and sustainable places to live and need to be well designed to create sustainable and resilient communities. Managing our urban environment to provide for green space and trees will continue to be important, while encouraging more development in our existing urban areas.

Priority 6 - Preserve and enhance the local character and heritage of our diverse places and communities

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
6.1 Work with Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to update the North Coast Design Guidelines and ensure new development adheres to the principles and expected outcomes.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE
6.2 Work with local communities to prioritise and then develop site specific Local Character Statements for all existing and proposed Heritage Conservation Areas and associated development controls for coastal communities such as Yamba, Angourie, Brooms Head, Sandon, Minnie Water, Diggers Camp and Wooli.	<i>medium</i>	Local communities
6.3 Update Heritage provisions in the Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plans	<i>medium</i>	Local communities
6.4 Encourage appropriate re-use of Grafton gaol and health precinct with regard to the character of the surrounding streets and aspirations for the economic vitality of the Grafton CBD	<i>short</i>	Local communities

4.2. Infrastructure

Efficient and resilient infrastructure to support sustainable growth. Strategic planning will ensure that infrastructure is provided efficiently and effectively to support a growing population and employment growth, and that infrastructure is located and built to be resilient and sustainable.

The new M1 Pacific Highway provides unprecedented opportunities to tap into the strong and sustained growth in South East Queensland and across the north coast region and beyond. The increased efficiency and safety in the movement of people, commodities and services through this corridor will provide opportunities in areas such as value adding services to agriculture, transport services, tourism, supporting a growing population in the Clarence and many others. The new Grafton bridge and Sportsmans Creek bridge in Lawrence, along with other improvements to our transport and infrastructure assets across the valley provide significant economic and social benefits for our community.

Transport infrastructure has contributed significantly to Clarence Valley's economic growth and social capacity and it will continue to be important for future prosperity.

Capitalising on competitive advantages, such as affordable employment land and relatively affordable land for housing and lifestyle opportunities, will be key to unlocking our potential. Closer proximity to major enabling infrastructure, such as key freight routes and major airports will also open new markets for existing and new businesses across the Clarence Valley.

Enhancing relationships between local businesses and export enablers / wholesalers, transport companies and airport operators will be vital to securing a prosperous and competitive future. Likewise, ensuring infrastructure is in place to capitalise on new demands within the valley, such as the Clarence Correctional Centre, health and aged care, and others, will ensure efficient and effective use of resources and support a growing economy.

The transition to electric vehicles and infrastructure for other technological innovations to improve sustainability will continue to be promoted, however the mental and physical health benefits of active forms of movement – walking, cycling, skating, and water based – mean these will continue to be more sustainable and beneficial ways of travelling, particularly within our larger centres of Grafton, Maclean and Yamba.

The priorities and actions under the Infrastructure theme are focussed on strategic planning and other Council activities that co-ordinate local and state funded infrastructure delivery with land use planning, to provide for communities that are well serviced with appropriate infrastructure at the right time.

There is a need to update the development contributions and funding framework to support new and existing communities and enable employment generating activities.

Further development of industrial and employment land needs to be investigated and supported by the movement of freight and goods through the whole supply chain.

Planning for resilient and sustainable infrastructure, able to withstand shocks and stressors of natural hazards and the natural environment is also important. Council generally has a good understanding of our exposure to potential floods and other hazards.

However, securing funding and prioritising upgrades while considering realistic risks and cost benefit analysis may help in securing grants, encouraging infrastructure providers to provide for resilience and contingencies and ensure we manage risk to life and property.

Encouraging sustainable transport options, efficient use of infrastructure for healthy communities, and planning for new transport technologies.



Priority 7 - Co-ordinate local and state funded infrastructure delivery with land use planning

Our growing population, particularly in new residential areas, need to be supported by timely provision of infrastructure and services. This includes basic needs such as efficient road networks, resilient water and wastewater services, waste management and others. Green infrastructure and social infrastructure, such as parks, playgrounds, walking and cycling links, access to nature and places and spaces for the community to come together for entertainment, recreation, sports and learning and many creative pursuits also need to be planned for. Significant population growth provides the opportunities to fund these improved services, especially within new growth areas around Junction Hill, Clarenza, Gulmarrad, James Creek and West Yamba, along with facilities within existing centres like Grafton, Ulmarra, Maclean, Yamba and our many great places.

Ensuring that our planning and development contributions systems are geared towards enabling good quality development, and providing facilities to support our communities, is important. Likewise, identifying other funding sources to support our growing population and ensure that the provision of affordable housing and development is financially feasible for investors is important. We will continue to advocate state government for better infrastructure funding models and work with agencies to ensure services and facilities are provided to meet community expectations.

Priority 7 - Co-ordinate local and state funded infrastructure delivery with land use planning

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
7.1 Ensure the development of a Local Growth Management Strategy (LGMS), housing strategies and other growth management plans and economic development strategies are informed by and co-ordinated with infrastructure delivery and funding.	<i>short</i>	TfNSW and other agencies
7.2 Work with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to update the current NSW infrastructure contributions regime and ensure it will deliver appropriate outcomes for the Clarence Valley community while encouraging development.	<i>short</i>	DPIE
7.3 Update the Clarence Valley Development Contributions Plan 2011 to better reflect the types of infrastructure and facilities that will need to be provided to meet the needs of additional population and development.	<i>medium</i>	Community, developers, business and relevant agencies
7.4 Work with state government and infrastructure providers to accelerate the provision of infrastructure and availability of residential and employment land to support a growing community and job opportunities in the Clarence Valley, where appropriate.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, TfNSW, and relevant agencies

Priority 7 - Co-ordinate local and state funded infrastructure delivery with land use planning

7.5 Advocate for state government facilities, such as the Clarence Correctional Centre, Hospital redevelopment and future development provides supporting infrastructure to provide for a healthy, prosperous and sustainable Clarence Valley community, including for walking, cycling and other active travel.	<i>medium</i>	Relevant agencies
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Priority 8 - Enable the development of industrial and employment land and the movement of freight and goods

The movement of freight is essential to the Clarence Valley economy. Freight is necessary both for consumers and businesses seeking goods, and for manufacturing and production businesses which produce goods for market. For example, the NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018-2023 stated that online retail sales to Australians were valued at \$24.2 billion, 7.8 per cent of the traditional retail 'bricks and mortar' retail sector. The level of sales was 10.1% higher in December 2017 than a year earlier.

The number of freight movements will continue to grow alongside the growth of online retail. The plan estimates that every five years online retail sales will double. Therefore, the efficiency of accessing markets and receiving goods has a big impact on the competitiveness of doing business from and within the Clarence Valley.

The better the freight efficiency, the more competitive businesses can be, ultimately resulting in more jobs and productivity. There are some key land use opportunities that maximise efficiency of freight movement, particularly co-location of industries in proximity to the established transport gateways south of Grafton at the node of the Pacific Highway, Gwydir Highway and Summerland Way. The current investments in the Pacific Highway and the Grafton Bridge are also important for leveraging the benefits from better connections. Further investment along defined freight routes and through key freight gateways will be crucial into the future.

The Clarence Valley is already in a good position with significant availability of industrial land in various locations. It is important that this existing employment land includes support for intensive freight dependent industries to co-locate in areas with appropriate access to the strategic freight network. Improvements and the growth of these areas and the establishment of new advanced transport hubs, with excellent road connections will also help to capture and process food and fibre that is grown here and moved through the area.

The location of existing and proposed infrastructure and utilities must be considered in relation to sites proposed for urban land release to avoid any conflict or encroachment that would compromise distribution networks. Prioritising maintenance and network improvements to support access of freight will also be important for the continued efficiency of freight movements.

Priority 8 - Enable the development of industrial and employment land and the movement of freight and goods through the whole supply chain

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
8.1 Work with TfNSW and other stakeholders to identify major transport corridors and ensure they are protected for future transport alignments and avoid the encroachment of incompatible land uses.	<i>short</i>	TfNSW
8.2 Work with TfNSW to understand catchment areas for key centres and attractors (such as retail, hospitals, airports, universities etc) to develop a hub and spoke transport network	<i>medium</i>	TfNSW
8.3 Work with industry and business groups in the Clarence to identify development opportunities on existing industrial land and investigation areas for freight and transport based business.	<i>medium</i>	Industry, land owners, community
8.4 Ensure Clarence Valley Regional Airport has the facilities and services to operate as an efficient gateway to meet increasing regional and national travel and freight needs through effective integrated planning, including investigating infrastructure needs for employment land surrounding the airport and emergency management and operational requirements for the airport.	<i>medium</i>	CASA, Community,

Priority 9 - Plan for resilient and sustainable infrastructure

Critical Infrastructure across the Clarence Valley has been designed with the knowledge of floods, bushfires and other hazards. However, there can still be impacts from significant events above design standard, or for infrastructure planned and built historically. Examples can include wooden bridges that can suffer during severe fire weather, or roads cut during floods.

The **NSW Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy** was adopted in 2018. It complements recommendations within the 2017 State Level Emergency Risk Assessment and the NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038. It takes a non-regulatory approach to change the culture of organisations and thinking about resilience in a collaborative manner.

To achieve the outcomes, priority is given to:

1. **Partnering** for shared responsibility around critical infrastructure resilience;
2. **prepare** for all hazards, not just the ones we can foresee, and
3. **providing** critical infrastructure services with minimal disruption.

Council has generally taken this approach to planning for critical infrastructure resilience, and to working with partners at state agencies and other utility providers. For example, the Grafton Flood Evacuation Study identifies that most critical infrastructure like electricity is above the probable maximum flood. However, infrastructure across the valley can be impacted by bushfire, flood or other disruptions.

Planning for new growth areas and new development needs to consider the resilience of infrastructure that will support those communities, including during emergencies and for evacuation and recovery needs.

‘Green infrastructure’ and working with nature is fundamental to creating a high quality of life and is important in creating a region that is climate resilient and adaptable to future needs. The NSW Government’s draft green infrastructure policy *Greener Places*: aims to guide the planning, design and delivery of greener infrastructure to help support more sustainable places.

The design of places and infrastructure that is ecologically sensitive and uses natural processes, such as wetlands for the storage and treatment of stormwater and floodwater, buffering coastal process and many other benefits save money and protect what is important to the community. Integration with recreation and open space and appropriate planting, provides a greater range and degree of benefits for the community than ‘hard’ or ‘grey’ infrastructure alternatives.

By working within the natural systems and understanding natural processes, infrastructure can be planned to be more resilient, through land use decision making, design, or operation. Figure 7 illustrates the wide ranging beneficiaries of green infrastructure, and the Council’s approach is already realising many of these benefits.

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Priority 9. Plan for resilient and sustainable infrastructure

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
9.1 Work with state and local agencies to map and develop a local critical infrastructure resilience strategy, and identify priority areas for action with utility providers and infrastructure managers to address 'weak links' in the infrastructure network.	<i>medium</i>	OEM; DPIE; Health; community; infrastructure providers.
9.2 Ensure emergency management arrangements take in to account new infrastructure in the valley, including the new Pacific Highway, Clarence Correctional Centre, Grafton Bridge and growth and development planned across the valley	<i>short</i>	RFS, SES, and other agencies
9.3 New urban growth areas to be informed by emergency management and evacuation arrangements taking an all hazards approach.	<i>short</i>	

Priority 10 – Require new transport connections to support all modes of travel

Sustainable connections for Clarence Valley are fundamentally about giving the community more convenient options for how they move. Whilst private cars typically provide the highest levels of mobility, transitioning to a more sustainable transport system which achieves a greater balance between cars and other modes such as walking and cycling will help address these challenges.

More sustainable options will also contribute to healthy living and lessen the social vulnerability that can result when people are unable to drive, lack access to a vehicle, or cannot afford the costs of running a private vehicle and therefore cannot travel to access services. This will be particularly important with an older population, who may have different mobility needs or desires.

There is scope to value add within Clarence Valley especially around the main centres such as Grafton, Yamba and Maclean, to improve the pedestrian and cycle network connections. This can include increasing connections along the Clarence River and quality walking and cycling networks to local destinations such as shops, services, entertainment, dining, sports grounds and schools. For smaller towns, the challenge is to ensure that transport to vital services, jobs, shops and entertainment is accessible and attractive.



Transportation technology is changing rapidly. New technologies are becoming available to assist in developing higher quality walking and cycling networks for example glow in the dark bike lanes. Technology is also presenting new ways to travel and providing alternative fuel options, like battery charging points. Planning for these options should be investigated now.

Supporting the way the community moves around the valley, and ensuring that mobility and accessibility for all of the community is front of mind when planning for infrastructure is essential. New development will need to continue to assist in improving how we provide for mobility needs.

Ensuring that new connections and Future Transport 2056 and the Regional Services and Infrastructure Plan harness technology to improve customer and network outcomes. Into the future, the Clarence Valley could trial automated buses, shared connected and automated vehicles, e-bikes and mobility-service platforms.

Priority 10. Require new transport connections to support all modes of travel

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
10.1 Review cycling and pedestrian plans and strategies with a focus on provision of high-quality cycle paths, tracks and trails as well as highly walkable routes between key nodes such as schools, employment areas and the city centre and incorporate suitable end-of-trip facilities and new technologies. Work with TfNSW to promote active transport, including opportunities to develop an active transport network.	<i>short</i>	TfNSW
10.2 Work with TfNSW and other key stakeholders on implementing the Movement and Place Framework through the development of an integrated transport and land use settlement strategy for the valley, along with a 'place plan' for key centres such as Grafton, and areas of 'investigation' for urban development.	<i>short</i>	TfNSW
10.3 Work with TfNSW in the development and implementation of travel demand management policies and actions, particularly for large public buildings such as Clarence Correctional Centre, Grafton base hospital and others.	<i>medium</i>	TfNSW, Dept of Justice
10.4 work with TfNSW in developing car parking guidelines to support the development and vibrancy of centres and encourage a more sustainable mode share, particularly as part of plans to support Grafton and other place making plans, and the local growth management strategy.	<i>short</i>	TfNSW, DPIE

4.3. Economy

A thriving and sustainable economy. Strategic planning will help strengthen and diversify our economic base in a way that complements the environmental and social values of the Clarence.

The Council has set out aspirations to sustainably grow a prosperous economy, capitalising on our natural attributes and attracting business. Our key natural assets are our people; and our coastal, riverine and hinterland amenity; fertile soils; favourable climate; access to markets via the Pacific Highway, rail and air; and the relative affordability of new business and industrial land.

Our specialisations, which need to be planned for, include:

- 'Engines of Growth', such as tourism, horticulture, aquaculture, forestry, marine manufacturing and logistics.
- Business-'enabling' activities, such as tourism connected property services, construction, utilities, and financial and professional services
- Internal, 'population-serving' industries, including health, retail and public administration.

We want to grow existing industries across the Clarence to attract and support a growing population.

Actions in our economic development strategy need to be aligned and supported by the land use planning framework. Providing clear strategic intent to support growing businesses starts with a clear strategic plan and planning processes that are easy to navigate.

The Clarence Valley has a growing and diverse economy, with close to 600 jobs added over the last 5 years and more permanent jobs coming on line with the opening of the new Clarence Correctional Centre in July 2020, expansion of Grafton Base Hospital, small business establishing throughout the Clarence, and possibilities for further innovative education opportunities. We also need to make the Clarence an amazing place to live for Doctors, Nurses and specialist health professionals and other services to support our community.

Developing the areas key tourism attractions and precincts is important, and this should include opportunities presented by the new Pacific highway and addressing the risk of a downturn in smaller centres and developing plans for places like Grafton, Ulmarra, Maclean and Harwood.

The Clarence Valley has an abundance of land already zoned for Industrial uses or earmarked for investigation for employment land. These areas are relatively affordable compared to other areas on the far north coast, and our neighbours like Coffs Harbour. We need to ensure they are well planned, and unconstrained land has a clear pathway for development and supporting infrastructure.

Attracting investment and supporting existing business to these areas, and potentially expanding the existing zones around Koolkhan, South Grafton and potentially opening up new land near Grafton Airport will create new opportunities for job creation.

Understanding the needs of industry and employment generating activity is critical and working together and allowing the market to operate for the benefit of the Clarence is important. A supply and demand study, with direct assistance from industry and land owners is needed.

Agglomeration of activities where innovative business support and grow off each other should also be explored in existing and new areas.

It is considered the Clarence Valley will be best served by encouraging development in the Grafton CBD as a regional city and building upon the competitive advantages of other local centres such as Maclean, Yamba and others.

Key to the future economic success of the Clarence Valley will be the ability to work together with the private sector and state government to proactively anticipate and plan for national and global trends. Providing the land use planning settings to support growth, through zoning and development controls, will be important.



Priority 11 – Provide for a growing economy

Part of the Clarence Valley's investment attraction is its capacity to support emerging or growth industries. This attraction is facilitated by the area's comparative advantages including its tourism infrastructure, transport and logistics options and comparatively affordable places for business and homes, and great lifestyle.

The Clarence Valley currently has over 470 hectares of zoned industrial land, with a further 1,720ha identified in the North Coast Regional Plan for investigation. Ensuring that this land is available and developable is a priority for Council. Investigations will continue to identify areas suitable for rezoning in order to provide certainty to potential developers and employers, and also to direct resources for planning, provision of infrastructure and other support from Council and state government to attract inward investment.

Council will also work with neighbouring Councils, particularly Coffs Harbour, to align our economic development and employment growth strategies and leverage off the expected population growth.

We also have an eye to the north, and growth in SE Queensland and the northern rivers. Proximity to Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport and Gold Coast Airport could also ensure the supply chain of manufactured goods can reach the highest return in available markets and to attract investors and employers to the Clarence.

The Clarence Valley also has a competitive advantage given its location on the confluence of the Gwydir Highway, Summerland Way and the Pacific Highway. We sit at a key east west link to the tablelands, particularly for the movement of freight, cattle, grain and other commodities, with the only east-west link for B-Doubles for the area. With the upgrade of the Pacific Highway and the development of the Clarence Correctional Centre there will be future opportunities to nurture competitive growth segments such as transportation and service industries.

Employment land is identified for investigation to grow existing industrial type development located in Junction Hill/Koolkhan, South Grafton and the near the Clarence Valley Regional Airport, along with Townsend. Redevelopment of existing industrial areas, for higher value employment land where this will not impact on existing industries and jobs is also encouraged.

Further work with industry and potential employment providers will continue to ensure that land supply will attract investment and meet the needs of the Clarence. A land supply and demand assessment, to update our Industrial Lands Strategy and support our Economic Development Strategy is needed. Our economic development strategy suggests the preparation of a Clarence Valley Industrial Land Use Plan.

An updated evidence base is needed to inform our approach across the Council, and the development of our Local Growth Management Strategy. This should examine the role, function and viability of existing centres and employment lands, and effects of existing policies and plans, including this LSPS.

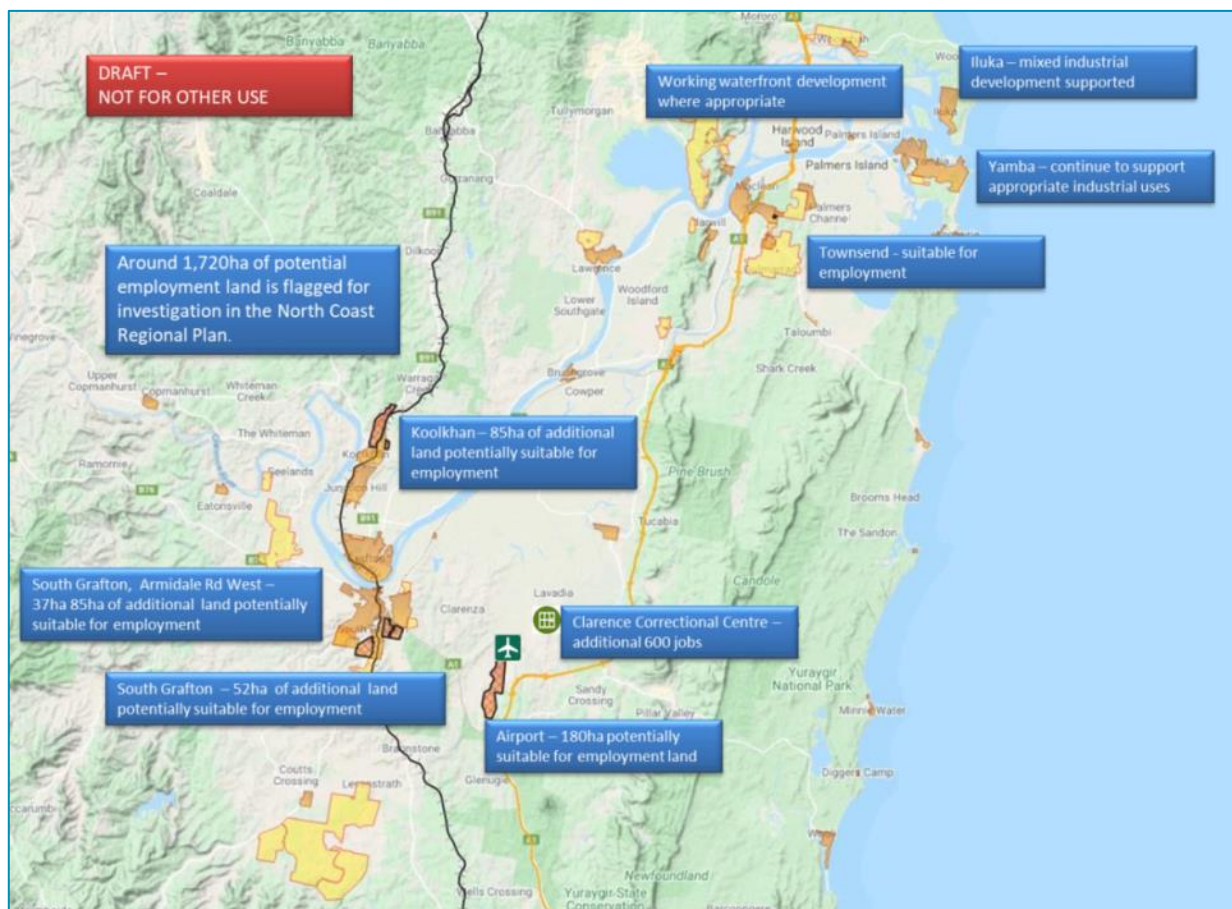


Figure 4 - Potential employment land

Health and education are high value and high growth industries, with the potential to generate a range of enduring career opportunities and higher paid jobs for the local community. It is important that the opportunities offered by these industries are maximised by connectivity, future expansion opportunities, local infrastructure needs and complementary land uses such as professional health suites.

Yamba and Maclean have significant maritime manufacturing industries that create jobs and boost the economy. It will be important for the Clarence Valley to have a focus on the direction of this industry.

The attractiveness of our industrial nodes as principal locations for business both locally and at a regional level should be investment-ready and have sufficient capacity to grow. Industrial land should be managed with a careful balance between protecting remaining stock to allow onsite industry growth and enhancing the function of industrial areas as key employment nodes. This can be achieved by providing infrastructure support, services (non industrial uses) and amenity improvements.

The Clarence Correctional Centre will accommodate 1,700 inmates, featuring state-of-the-art security and surveillance, as well as advanced rehabilitation services.

Infrastructure NSW states that the Clarence Correctional Centre will inject more than \$560 million into the local economy and about 600 permanent jobs once operational.

While the Clarence Correctional Centre will deliver hundreds of jobs to the region and create long-term economic opportunities locally it will be important to monitor the actual impacts once the facility is operational. Social and infrastructure impacts will need to be examined such as accommodation availability for large increases in the population or short-term accommodation needs for visitors, and local procurement targets.

Priority 11. Provide for a growing economy

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
11.1 Ensure the Clarence Valley planning framework (zoning for business and employment land, provisions in the Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plans) supports the implementation of the Clarence Valley Economic Development Strategy (particularly grow the population while protecting our important industries and Council priorities for sustainable economic growth, including tourism activity and other growing and emerging industries.	<i>short-medium</i>	Businesses, community
11.2 Assist the business community to navigate the planning process through a collaborative approach and communication, including supporting the industry development program.	ongoing	Local business community
11.3 Leverage off the increased connectedness created by the M1 Pacific Highway through tourism, export and logistics opportunities and prepare plans for our river towns bypassed by the new highway.	<i>short</i>	Local community
11.4 Complete planning and constraints analysis for our 'Investigation areas' for employment land, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction Hill/Koolkhan • South Grafton • Clarence Valley regional airport (complete) • Gulmarrad and Townsend Identify any zoning, infrastructure funding, regulatory controls that need to be updated to support their development in line with the North Coast Settlement Planning Guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>short</i> • <i>medium</i> • <i>short</i> • <i>medium</i> 	DPIE, land owners, community
11.5 Work with industry to attract employment generating activity and to update demand and supply analysis for employment land across the Clarence. Investigate the need for a Clarence Valley Industrial Land Use Plan.	<i>Short</i>	Industry, community,

Priority 11. Provide for a growing economy

- 11.5 Continue to work with the Department of Justice, SERCO and other stakeholders to ensure land use planning is responsive and proactive to support any potential logistical or service areas to support the new Clarence Correctional Centre.

Short-medium

Dept
Justice,
SERCO,
CVFi,
community



Priority 12 – Consolidate the role of Grafton as a traditional economic centre and plan for vitality of other centres

The Grafton CBD is the Clarence Valley's main centre for cafes, shopping, retail, and banking and office locations. It is a historic river city, with significant opportunities to capitalise on its scenic setting, rich heritage and as a tourism hub. Regional offices for state government services along with health and other community facilities are essential contributors to the Grafton CBD. The state Heritage listed Saraton Theatre is the largest (950 seat) and oldest theatre and cinema in NSW. The Anglican Christ Church Cathedral, historic hotels and streetscapes along Victoria street and Prince street define the prominent civic architecture, visually displaying the prosperity of the first city on the North Coast.

The Grafton CBD needs to be well functioning and a desirable place to visit to support the local economy and businesses within it. We also need to support thriving businesses within the Clarence Valley in order to support the CBD, particularly agriculture, industry and other employment generating activity.

Grafton is a river city with the Clarence River providing a unique setting and recreation and tourism opportunities. Re-establishing the river as a foundation asset in the Clarence Valley provides a competitive advantage over most other regional centres in northern NSW, particularly Armidale, Coffs Harbour and Lismore. Brisbane, Tweed Heads and to an extent Ballina and Port Macquarie are starting to capitalise on river frontage, and it has been proven by Newcastle and many other cities that the amenity, outlook and ambience of major rivers can lift a places profile and the economic and social activity of a city. Our riverside pubs, parks, wharfs and other infrastructure attract people and investment. Ensuring the planning system recognises and supports this is important.

Important centres such as South Grafton, Ulmarra, Maclean, Yamba, Iluka and many others provide for local catchments and visitors, particularly for daily needs, hospitality and entertainment, growing employment and supporting small business and the local community. Protecting the existing character of these centres, while encouraging growth within them, will be critical to ensure the centres continue to be attractive and inviting places for people to use and access.

Over the next 20 years, the Clarence Valley will continue to recognise the Grafton city centre as a critical place for its role as the focus of commercial and retail activity. An enhanced city revitalisation project is a key initiative to improve liveability and to promote Grafton CBD as a vibrant, stimulating and welcoming place.

Development of the old Gaol and Grafton Base Hospital Precinct will need to compliment the existing Grafton CBD, and offer unique employment generating and knowledge based growth industries, to support health, education and creative industries. These should complement the existing CBD and local economic growth.

Activities and events are often the building block of a place to grow its reputation and attractors. An economically and socially healthy destination is one that gives a reason for people to come, stay and spend time and money - with more activities providing for a livelier place. Continuing to grow the creative

community by coordinating key events, programs and festivals, and recognising that arts and culture can drive economic prosperity will be an important step to facilitating energised centres.

Utilising the existing street pattern, further implementing our Urban Street Tree Strategy, and exploring ways of using laneways, arcades and avenues to create microclimates that are cooler in summer, attract more people to enjoy Grafton's heritage and social opportunities year round and re-use vacant buildings and spaces should all be explored to support smaller start up business and attract a younger population and economic activity.

Capitalising on links via the Pacific Highway and surrounding airports will encourage more people from across the north coast, SE Qld and beyond to visit and invest in Grafton and the Clarence Valley. Providing places and spaces for events, markets and entertainment that contribute to economic vitality of the CBD should be planned for.

Priority 12. Consolidate the role of Grafton as a traditional economic centre and plan for vitality of other centres

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
12.1 Future strategic planning should support Grafton CBD as the principal activity centre for business, retail, culture, entertainment and prestige events in the region	<i>Short</i>	Business community
12.2 Undertake a place making study of the Grafton CBD, identifying ways to support and encourage more retail, business, hospitality and other economic activity, transport and parking needs, and include consideration of growth and development and appropriate re-use of the old Grafton gaol and Hospital precinct, including future zoning and planning provisions.	<i>Short</i>	TfNSW, business community, land owners etc.
12.3 Develop community based local precinct plans and economic strategies for local centres, such as South Grafton, Ulmarra, Maclean, Yamba, Harwood and Iluka.	<i>medium</i>	Community, TfNSW

Priority 13 – Support and grow the agricultural sector

The Clarence Valley has provided plentiful supply of food for thousands of years, first to Aboriginal people thriving on seafood and native foods, and for the past 150 years the Clarence has supported thousands of families, businesses and communities in this mighty fertile region of the NSW north coast.

The Clarence Valley has the largest agricultural sector on the northern rivers, with around 2,230 registered farms providing \$493 million annual gross regional product and \$3.5million in annual rates to Council. 1 in 4 businesses in the Clarence is a primary producer. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing employ 1063 FTE, and about 3,821 people are employed in the agri-food economy in the Clarence. To maintain a thriving local economy, vibrant main streets and hospitality sector we need our farmers to be successful and to grow the agri-food sector.

While forestry, sugarcane, beef, dairy and seafood have been the pillars supporting our economy, future productive and sustainable industries are being ventured in to, including Macadamias and many other native foods, horticulture and specialist fruit, vegetables and flowers and many others. Added value is being garnered through a trend of consumers wanting to know where and how food and fibre has been produced, with premiums placed on sustainability, social benefits and local connections and history. The agricultural sector in the Clarence has a positive story to tell.

Infrastructure to support farmers, such as the South Grafton cattle saleyards, fishermans co-operatives and local markets, are essential to keep the economy afloat and growing. Additional investment in infrastructure is needed to support our economy and the social benefits they bring. New infrastructure through the supply chain to support emerging industries and open new markets is also needed. This might include facilities to service the new Clarence Correctional Centre, export via Clarence Valley Regional Airport, or distribution hubs through other transport chains. Investigating zoning for employment and business land, permissible uses in rural zones and also to support markets, farming enterprises and value adding manufacture of agricultural produce will also be undertaken.

The North Coast Farmland mapping project by DPI can be supplemented by further work by Council and community groups such as Clarence Valley Food Incorporated and Southern Cross University to provide a snapshot of agricultural opportunities and areas for protection in the valley.

The availability of good agricultural land, and as a result, the presence of high value agricultural industries is the backbone of the Clarence Valley. Regenerating the landscape to achieve multiple outcomes must include farmland and initiatives with landowners. Sequestering carbon, supporting biodiversity, managing erosion and water quality for the Clarence, and supporting a thriving agricultural sector for future generations are all essential outcomes. The development of our various strategies for economic development, environmental, cultural and social outcomes should be underpinned by these broad landscape management and land use perspectives, summarised thus – if we care for country, it will care for us.

Strategic investment that supports agricultural industries, such as the new M1 Pacific Highway which provides ready access to interstate and overseas markets, creates greater incentive for the establishment of value-adding processes within the Clarence Valley.

Promoting the expansion of agribusinesses through local policies will also help support agricultural industries into the future. Agribusinesses include professional agricultural services, storage and warehousing, machinery and equipment, transport and logistics, and food, beverage and other product outlets. Local food production can also be better leveraged through rural tourism.

Boutique commercial, tourist and recreation activities that do not conflict with primary production in rural areas and support a village atmosphere offer opportunities for greater economic diversity. This can also be linked with the growing markets such as destination weddings.

A new definition of 'artisan food and drink industry' has been developed by state government, which promotes local producers and manufacturers, like independent breweries, to be located where light industry is encouraged, particularly industrial estates. It may be better to enliven existing main streets and commercial areas with bars and food outlets, where these would not impact on the amenity or viability of other businesses. Investigating the potential for permitting certain light industry in the business zones to support our main streets should be explored.



As horticultural enterprises continue to establish on land in the Clarence Valley it will be important to sustainably manage seasonal workers. This may include allowances for appropriate accommodation for workers including temporary options to reduce the social or land use conflicts that these intensive farming periods can produce.

Protecting agricultural land from urban development and incompatible land uses, and avoiding the potential for 'reverse sensitivity' issues and complaints from new neighbours in farming communities is important.

Managing the landscape to avoid the worst impacts from natural hazards like bushfire is also critical for the resilience and future viability of agricultural enterprises in the Clarence. Advocating for management of national parks and state forests, which make up more than 50% of our land area, and bringing together NPWS, State Forests, farmers and Aboriginal communities is important for the recovery and resilience of our primary producers and in turn economic growth in the Clarence.

Priority 13 - Support and grow the agricultural sector

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
13.1 Work with agricultural industries to identify opportunities for improvement in the supply chain and plan infrastructure and facilities to support and grow the agricultural sector	<i>short</i>	DPI, community,
13.2 Examine opportunities to leverage proximity to Gold Coast Airport and Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport in the supply chain for products from the Clarence Valley	<i>short</i>	Community
13.3 Protect rural zoned land and productive agricultural land from urban and rural residential development by directing development to identified investigation areas and not adjacent to productive agricultural land	<i>short</i>	DPI & DPIE
13.4 Implement the North Coast farmland mapping project undertaken by DPI and DPIE, supplemented with local studies	<i>short</i>	DPI & DPIE
13.5 Explore opportunities for artisan food and drink industry developments to be located within existing business zones and centres to improve the vitality and viability of our main streets, particularly in Grafton and Yamba.	<i>short</i>	DPIE
13.6 Work with relevant agencies to support bushfire recovery and future resilience of the agriculture and food producing sector of the Clarence.	<i>short</i>	DPI, DPIE, NPWS, RFS, community, others

Priority 14 – Implement the Clarence River Way Masterplan

The Clarence River is the largest of all NSW coastal rivers, with a catchment area of approximately 22,700 square kilometres. Nearly half of the catchment is managed by National Parks (20%) or State Forests (30%) with over 20% of the areas protected in World Heritage Areas, National Parks, and Nature Reserves. Around 49% is agricultural land and approximately 1% is urbanised.

There is a growing tourist industry focused around water activities such as recreational fishing, swimming, boating and surfing. Tourism contributes more than \$100 million annually to the economy of the Clarence Valley. Boating is a major recreational activity, with 90% of recreational boating related to fishing, but with a growing interest in weekend getaways by boat, along with sailing, skiing, kayaking and other water based recreation.

The Clarence River Way Masterplan (2009) and the Clarence Valley Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 2022 both emphasise the importance of the river not only for economic purposes but also as a social and environmental connector.

These studies both identified the Clarence River as one of our greatest natural assets and its connecting tributaries, wetlands and lakes are a defining feature of the Clarence Valley's identity. The old Pacific Highway alignment is now the 'Big River Way' and most of our bridges and roads throughout the valley expose the enormity of our big river, as they crisscross the meandering Clarence, weaving its way from the tablelands to the ocean.

The Clarence river holds cultural significance for Aboriginal communities, as it does for all people of the Clarence. Over time, the river has evolved from the dreamtime and a source of food, recreation and ceremony, to a working river with the timber industry and ship building to now an asset for amenity, recreation, aesthetic and economic activity. It has the potential to be a connector and attraction for riverside communities and tourists, and particularly for hospitality, with historic pubs dotted along its banks. Improving access to and along the river and its tributaries is important. Strategic planning and zoning to support activity and manage environmental, social and cultural impacts is important.

The River today is one of the Clarence Valley's



primary assets for commerce and tourism. The River has one of the highest concentrations of marine industry businesses outside of Sydney and Newcastle. It is home to the areas fishing industry, supports the LGA's agricultural landscapes, holds significant ecological value and sustains sporting and tourism activities.

As a result, over the next 20 years the Clarence River expected to be a major driver of the LGA's economic and social future. The river will support a range of industries and services including business services, food/beverage, cultural/community services, marine and fishing. There is also an identified need to provide opportunities for visitors, residents and business to make better use of the Clarence River for tourism, recreation and enjoyment.

The Clarence River Way Masterplan (2009) identified that connections to the river in areas such as Grafton need to be highly accessible, easy to get to and to move around in, and where people feel connected to the River and beyond by improved pedestrian and cycling linkages. There has also been an identified need that many businesses can play in providing a diverse range of activities along our River's edge.

The Clarence River is also a main attractor to visitors. Combining a cohesive vision through the masterplan and tourism strategy will assist in activating the waterfront. Maintaining public spaces to a high-quality and supporting riverfront businesses and water sports events is an important focus for the river. It is important to investigate eco-tourism experiences along the river including primitive camping as well as nature-based opportunities and higher value pursuits in the lower Clarence. The river will also play a critical role in providing for the community's recreational needs and health and wellbeing. Boating and water-based sport and recreational activities should be supported by the necessary land-based and in-river infrastructure and amenities, and this needs investigations.

Priority 14 – Implement the Clarence River Way Masterplan		
Actions	Timeframe	Partner
14.1 Ensure the land use planning framework enables the progressive implementation of appropriate projects as identified in the Clarence River Way Master Plan, particularly to enable appropriate development in Grafton and our river towns.	<i>short</i>	Community
14.2 Update the Clarence Valley LEP and relevant DCPs to build on the strengths of the Clarence River and support appropriate tourism opportunities along the river, including nature base tourism.	<i>short</i>	DPIE, RMS, TourismNSW, community
14.3 Explore opportunities and supporting planning controls for marine industries that are sustainable and fit with the amenity and local character expectations of the community.	<i>short</i>	Industry, community, DPIE

4.4. Environment

Living in harmony with a well managed natural environment. For Council and the community to value, respect and actively participate in the care, protection and management of the Clarence's natural and built environment for current and future generations

The Clarence Valley community places a high value on the natural environment and biodiversity. This is not surprising given that the natural environment underpins not only many of the region's key industries like agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and tourism, but also the wellbeing of our residents and cultural connections to place. We live in the most stunning environment in NSW, and also the most biodiverse region. Around 50% of our local government area is national park or state forest, and the Solitary Islands Marine Park borders our southern coastal villages between Sandon and Wooli. Wetlands, lakes, beaches and national parks are the main feature of our coastal areas, including Iluka Nature reserve which is part of the World Heritage Listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia.



The Clarence River has the largest catchment and is the longest river on the NSW east coast, and our big river or Breimba/Breembia, is our greatest natural asset. There is a diversity of vegetation types and wildlife habitats and the catchment is home to many endangered species including the last viable populations of the Eastern Freshwater Cod.

The economic and social benefits of biodiversity are considerable. For example, the recreational fishing industry in Australia is worth an estimated \$2.9 billion per year. Similarly, national parks are Australia's biggest tourism asset — more than 40% of all international visits include a trip to a national park.

In the Clarence Valley, the economic value of biodiversity is hard to quantify, but most of our large industries — such as horticulture, agriculture, aquaculture, tourism and forestry — rely on a healthy environment. The natural areas of our coast and hinterland are what people love about this area. Maintaining water quality, protecting biodiversity, retaining and managing our natural areas and the links between rare remnants of ecosystems is critical to our social, economic and cultural well being.

The vision of our draft Biodiversity strategy 2020 is *for Council and the community it represents to understand and value the biodiversity of the region, working together to implement policy and actions, so biodiversity can be protected and enhanced for future generations*. The LSPS and planning framework is one of the key tools we have to ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced.

The priorities of our Biodiversity strategy are to:

1. Protect habitat and wildlife corridors
2. Have appropriate clearing controls and vegetation management
3. Be proactive about pest and weed management
4. Ensure the landscape is managed for bushfire and other impacts of natural hazards on the environment and human activity
5. Protect and improve aquatic habitat
6. Promote awareness and community education
7. Adapt to our variable and changing climate cycles

The successful implementation of the biodiversity strategy, in tandem with land use planning, will involve a collaborative approach between Council, the community, landholders and other government agencies to manage biodiversity now and into the future. It will increase in the amount of effective connectivity in habitats, increase landowner involvement in biodiversity conservation programs, maintain and improve populations of threatened species and improve water quality and overall river health.

The management of natural hazards, such as flooding, bushfire, coastal erosion and extreme heat, also rely on healthy and well managed natural areas, healthy ecosystems and natural assets. Land use planning has a role to play at the strategic level, determining where and how development occurs across the valley, and the broader impacts on biodiversity, the risk of natural hazard and the amenity and intrinsic values of natural areas.

Development in the Clarence has generally taken a risk informed approach to sustainable development. We know all too well about floods and bushfires, but that doesn't mean we are immune to their effects. Determining an acceptable level of risk needs to be done with the community and with knowledge and input from the insurance industry, emergency management and others. Re-evaluating risk, considering historic

and more recent disasters in the Clarence, and across NSW and Australia, needs a strong evidence base and mature conversation with everyone involved.

Sustainable communities are ones that are distinctive, diverse, adaptable and resilient in a changing environment. To deal with complex problems such as maintaining ecosystems and accommodating a growing population, will involve a collaborative process with the community and with relevant authorities and people, such as NPWS, LLS, RFS, SES, RMS, LALC, land holders and others.

Maintaining the integrity of the natural environment is critical to the Clarence Valley's future prosperity and sustainability. Biodiversity will be enhanced and vegetated areas of the LGA will continue to provide benefits to the community including high quality water and pristine environments that are resilient to natural disturbances. Future needs will include planning holistically for high demand areas to ensure that they do not impact adversely on the LGA's important natural assets.



Priority 15 - Preserve and enhance our natural environment

The Clarence Valley is blessed with an abundance of natural areas, biodiversity and areas of high environmental value. We are surrounded by 5 major national parks and almost half (450,000 ha) of the Clarence Valleys total land area (1.044 million ha) is either National Park or State Forest. The Council will need to work closer with NPWS and State Forests to ensure they are a good neighbor when it comes to natural hazard and pest management for adjoining property owners, and to ensure the other half of the Clarence in disparate ownership is managed for the benefit of the entire ecosystem and social and economic prosperity.

The Solitary Islands Marine park hugs our coastline from Sandon to Woolli (and beyond to Coffs Harbour) and the Sandon and Woolli rivers are some of the most pristine in NSW. Water quality in the Clarence catchment is also essential to maintain our natural environment and support social, cultural and economic activity. The Clarence floodplain management project, weeds control and many other strategies already manage and improve the floodplains ecosystems.

The Clarence Valley LGA is home to 113 threatened fauna and 113 plants. The LGA also supports 18 threatened ecological communities and 3 endangered populations. Over 450,000 ha of the Clarence Valley are included in the formal reserve system. It is a stronghold for populations of a number of species, including the endangered Coastal Emu, Black-necked Stork and the Coastal Giant Butterfly.

Residents and visitors of Clarence Valley understand the important role biodiversity values play in our identity, livability and attractiveness. As more people come to the Clarence Valley to live or visit, and as more people use waterways and our natural areas for recreation, these assets will need to be carefully managed so as to ensure that they can continue to sustainability support a wide range of activities. The Clarence Valley is also renowned for its ecologically significant wetlands, including over 25,000 ha of nationally important wetlands.

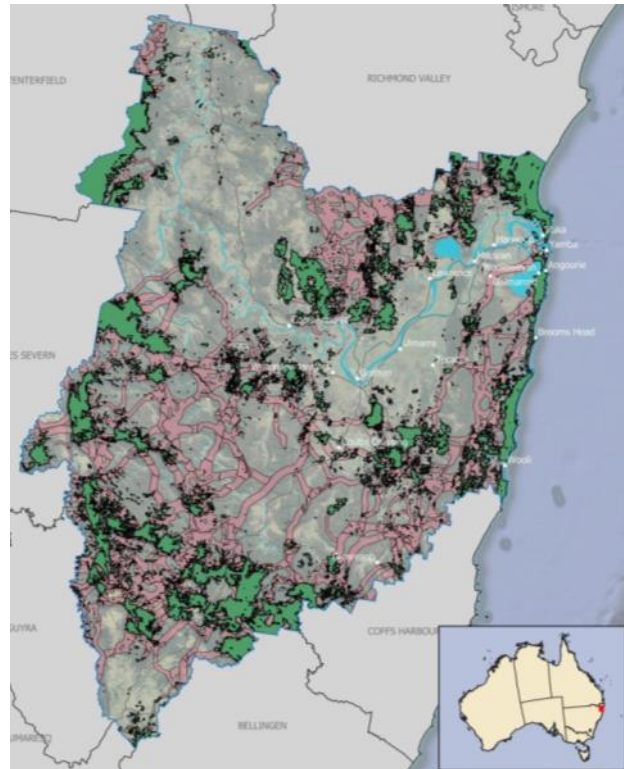


Figure 5 - Simplified fauna corridors and habitats map for the Clarence Valley

The protection of the environment and its values is already managed through existing planning controls which are an important ongoing management tool. The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 provides a framework and tools to avoid, minimise and offset impacts on biodiversity through the planning and development assessment process. A range of tools are also available to protect biodiversity on private land including biodiversity stewardship agreements, conservation agreements and wildlife refuge agreements. However, further mapping of areas of environmental importance and detailed studies to determine appropriate planning policy response and actions is needed.

Strategic planning and mapping at a local level will allow identification and protection of biodiversity assets, to ensure that development is placed appropriately to avoid adverse impacts on the region's biodiversity. This should include work with adjoining Councils to identify corridors, areas of importance and where appropriate to align the actions and activity of Councils and state government regarding biodiversity protection and implementation of our Biodiversity strategy.

Koalas are an iconic species that require increased attention to ensure their long-term survival. Clarence Valley currently has a Koala Plan of Management for Ashby, Woombah and Iluka, and the recommendations have been adopted into our DCP's for these localities, along with Waterview Heights. We currently have a koala register which is gathering location data on this iconic species across our Clarence which will then feed into a Council wide koala management plan, which is currently with the state government for approval. A strategic approach to identify and protect areas to support viable koala populations is important to help sustain their long term viability, and inform land use decisions.

Building on existing incentives - landholders, community groups and government will be supported to continue to improve their management of high priority biodiversity sites and to protect and enhance native vegetation communities. Programs such as the biodiversity awareness program could be delivered across the Clarence, to strengthen efforts to protect and enhance biodiversity. A key aim will be to build the capacity of the community to contribute actively to the preservation of our natural assets.



Aboriginal people were, and in numerous cases still are, reliant upon plants, animals and ecological processes because bush foods, medicines and materials are components of Aboriginal economies, personal identity and culture. Examples of areas where Aboriginal people combine traditionally derived and Western solutions have seen significant rehabilitation of flora and fauna. Enterprises based on natural resources for rehabilitation of vegetation, production of artefacts and niche foods or bush medicines are important to many Aboriginal groups. These enterprises rely upon a diversity of species.

Actively engaging with the local Aboriginal communities to protect and restore a range of high conservation value assets could be of long-term benefit to the Clarence Valley environment and our communities. Proactively engaging with and learning from Traditional Owners, and involvement in environmental stewardship, fire management, food production and historic accounts of natural hazards and cultural practices would all enrich our wider community.

Priority 15. Preserve and enhance our natural environment

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
15.1 Take a strategic approach to land use planning, informed by our biodiversity strategy and strategic environmental goals, particularly for corridors and areas of high environmental value	<i>ongoing</i>	Community
15.2 Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to enable their cultural traditions and connection to country to be included in the planning for environmental outcomes.	<i>ongoing</i>	Traditional Owners; CVAAC; community
15.3 Ensure that water quality and aquatic biodiversity impacts are considered in planning decisions, and the planning framework aligns with our coast and estuary management plans.	<i>ongoing</i>	BCD; Community
15.4 Continue to protect water supply catchments from development and activity that could compromise drinking water supply, including for Shannon Creek dam, Lake Hiawatha and Lake Minnie Water.	<i>ongoing</i>	Community

Priority 16 - Foster a balance between sustainable development and the environment

Clarence Valley's landscape beauty, biodiversity and natural resources are recognised nationally and internationally. Coastal places, such as Iluka, Yamba, Angourie, Brooms Head, Sandon, Minnie Water and Woolli provide an enviable lifestyle for residents and visitors, where the environmental assets are essential to their character and the communities wellbeing and quality of life - in fact, many are entirely surrounded by National Parks.

The natural environment of our river valleys and backdrop of the escarpment ranges provide the foundation for the character of our urban areas.

There are significant opportunities, through strategic land use planning and good urban design, to create places where people want to spend time, enjoy social interaction, access services and contribute to the local economy. Utilising the value of the natural environment, whether that is street trees or riverside links in urban areas, natural stormwater management, amenities in parks and natural areas, and larger scale strategic approach to managing the landscape and land use across the valley, can all provide ways positive outcomes.

Improving sustainability will involve incorporating natural landscape features into the urban environment; protecting and managing natural systems; cooling the urban environment; innovative and efficient use and re-use of energy, water and waste resources; and building the resilience of communities to natural and urban hazards, shocks and stressors.

Urban development, particularly new housing and employment land, is needed to support our growing population. This growth is not mutually exclusive with maintaining our natural environment.

A 'place-making' approach, where we think carefully about the location of new urban development to create places that respect and integrate with the natural environment, will continue to make the Clarence Valley a community full of opportunities.

Rural residential development and other forms of urban development that utilise land will be investigated to ensure we provide a diversity of housing types without impacting on the natural environment. A Rural Residential Strategy should be explored, to also consider impacts on biodiversity.

Managing development pressure and maintaining the green breaks between our unique villages, linking important ecological communities and improving the blue-green grid across our area and links with other Council areas is important. These measures will help differentiate and separate the distinctive character and lifestyle of each village, protect the landscape and its cultural heritage and preserve opportunities for outdoor recreation and healthy lifestyles of residents.

Priority 16. Foster a balance between sustainable development and the environment

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
16.1 Initiate projects and surveys that will provide more detailed, local scale vegetation and habitat mapping.	<i>short</i>	BCD
16.2 Develop and maintain relevant biodiversity mapping layers, including fauna corridors and linkages, to inform strategic planning for urban development, infrastructure and other planning purposes, including with adjoining Councils.	<i>medium</i>	BCD, adjoining Councils
16.3 Implement an agreed approach for the Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and application through assessing planning proposals and development applications	<i>medium</i>	Community
16.4 Ensure land use planning decisions contribute to management policies and practices that protect and increase the amount of land covered by native vegetation and minimise potential climate change impacts on biodiversity by increasing the resilience of natural ecosystems and landscapes.	<i>medium</i>	Community
16.5 Ensure that land use and development decisions contribute positively to bushfire management in a way that maintains, or does not compromise, the ecological integrity of areas of native vegetation or the health and safety of people, and contributes to the resilience of the economic, social and cultural aspirations for the Clarence Valley.	<i>medium</i>	Community, RFS, BCD
16.6 Implement actions in adopted estuary management plans (including the Clarence, Wooli, Sandon and Lake Cakora estuaries) which contribute to protection, enhancement and promotion of biodiversity and disaster risk reduction.	<i>medium</i>	community
16.7 Update relevant sections of the regional and local planning framework to implement actions of the Biodiversity Strategy 2020, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine priority areas to conserve and repair reaches and sub-catchments for the freshwater rivers and creeks • Map habitat corridors across all land tenures and identify areas of greatest conservation significance • Adopt a Council wide Koala Plan of Management (KPoM), with supporting detailed maps and priorities for land use planning • Develop a factsheet delineating allowable activities and decision pathways for clearing of native vegetation and increasing native vegetation cover, for use by planning staff and developers 	<i>medium</i>	community

Priority 17 – Plan for safer, more disaster resilient communities

The Clarence Valley has a diverse landscape from the coast to the rural hinterland. We have responsibility for more than 70km of coastline, 50% of the area is state forest or national park, the Clarence River is the largest easterly flowing river in NSW and we have the largest agricultural sector on the north coast.

While this gives the Clarence Valley stunning scenery and enviable natural assets, it also means communities in the Clarence Valley are exposed to a wide range of natural hazards.

These hazards mostly present themselves and impact on communities in line with Australia's various climatic cycles of dryer years which produce drought, heatwaves, bushfire and consequent impacts; and wetter years when east coast lows, flooding, storm surge and coastal erosion are more prevalent. However, the potential impacts of natural hazards can impact on our people and economy at any time.

Severe wind, hailstorms, flash flooding and other environmental hazards such as acid sulfate soils, landslip, invasive weeds and pests, infrastructure failure and electro-magnetic variance (EMV) all have the possibility of impacting communities. The State Level Emergency Risk Assessment (SLERA), and processes at a state government level deal with many hazards, however land use planning to make our local community safe is a core responsibility of Council.

The Clarence river catchment is a huge 22,716 km² and stretches from the Queensland border to the Doughboy Range in the south. The river itself is greater than 430km in length with 10 rivers flowing into it. Since flood records commenced in 1839, Grafton has been subject to over 120 floods - the highest being in January 2013 at 8.08m. There has been limited research on pre-European settlement, but research from other catchments indicates that significantly bigger floods have occurred and can occur in the Clarence catchment. Modelling of floods indicates that our settlements can be impacted by flood, and while levees have provided some protection to recent floods, larger floods have the potential to impact on Grafton and our other settlements on the floodplain.

“Land use planning is perhaps the most potent policy lever for influencing the level of future disaster risk.”

Productivity Commission Report into
Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements, 2015

The NSW Flood Development Manual provides an analysis of the likelihood of different floods happening within a lifetime. The table below illustrates that there is a 50% chance of a 1:100 year flood occurring within any given 70 year timeframe (within a lifetime). This gives strong credence to the idea of a longer term planning time horizon for land use strategy and development decision-making. Recent floods in Grantham, Townsville and other places around Australia have been up to a 1:1000 chance per year event.

Size of flood (chance of occurrence in any year) (ARI/AEP)	Probability of Experiencing the given flood in a period of 70 years	
	At least once (%)	At least twice (%)
1 in 10 (10%)	99.9	99.3
1 in 20 (5%)	97.0	86.4
1 in 50 (2%)	75.3	40.8
1 in 100 (1%)	50.3	15.6
1 in 200 (0.5%)	29.5	4.9

The state governments Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 provides development standards for designing and building on bushfire prone land in NSW. It requires a more strategic approach to ensuring that bushfire is considered at the earliest possible phase of the development process, from regional plans, land use planning, zoning, masterplans, subdivisions to individual building applications. Big picture decisions regarding where we put more houses, employment land and infrastructure across the Clarence Valley must consider bushfire and risk to life, property and amenity, along with biodiversity impacts of clearing for development and asset protection. These considerations need to work alongside on-going management regimes, such as our bushfire management plan and climatic extremes that can be experienced. A more strategic landscape management approach, rather than ad hoc development applications, is needed.

Historic settlement patterns and decisions have meant that some communities are exposed to fire hazard. Planning for new urban development and infrastructure needs to ensure we take a precautionary approach to avoid hazards, alongside potential impacts of asset protection and hazard reduction on biodiversity and environmentally sensitive areas.

Rural residential development and development in bushfire prone areas, primarily rural zones of our valley, need to be informed by landscape scale bushfire considerations, including evacuation routes, ember attack, smoke and emergency response considerations. We require a better approach to hazard reduction. These considerations may mean that some land will be unsuitable for development, and new development that creates additional risk to life or property needs to be addressed.

Established homes and infrastructure in bushfire prone areas would not normally come in contact with planning processes, however, Council will explore ways to ensure that we don't 'plan and forget', and checking of compliance with development conditions, appropriate asset protection and vegetation and property maintenance to protect emergency personnel, the life of occupants and neighbours, and protect property and amenity should be explored with RFS, DPI, LLS, NPWS and other agencies.

Land use planning leaves the longest legacy for the community. Decisions made now about where homes, businesses and infrastructure are located will stay with us for generations. This means that they need to be located and designed to avoid unacceptable risks from the potential exposure to natural hazards.

Working across sectors, technical disciplines and through the whole cycle of - prevent, prepare, respond, recover - is essential for land use planning at the prevention phase, but also for recovery and long term resilience.

Priority 17 – Plan for safer, more disaster resilient communities

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
17.1 Ensure that decision making helps create safer, more disaster resilient communities, with particular regard to the long-term social and economic costs of the potential effects of natural hazards, and issues relating to risk to life and evacuation capacity.	<i>short</i>	RFS, SES, DPIE, community
17.2 Update mapping of bushfire prone land, in accordance with Planning for bushfire protection 2019 and in collaboration with NSW RFS and DPIE.	<i>Short-medium</i>	RFS & DPIE
17.3 Ensure that the Clarence Valley Floodplain Management Plan is updated in line with any amendments to the NSW Floodplain Development Manual and that our LEP, DCPs and other planning processes reflect best practice	<i>medium</i>	SES, community
17.4 Update the Grafton flood evacuation plan to consider future growth and recent developments, such as the new Grafton Bridge, to ensure the community is prepared for potential flood events and breaches of the levee wall, and to support sustainable development and vitality of the Grafton CBD and North and South Grafton.	<i>short</i>	SES, community
17.5 Promote the use of flood resilient building practices for development in areas at risk of flooding in the Clarence up to Probable Maximum Flood and explore the economic feasibility and implications of planning controls.	<i>short</i>	SES, DPIE, community
17.6 Advocate to state government for critical infrastructure development, such as hospitals, highways and other government funded projects to be resilient and sustainable to promote the resilience of communities within the Clarence Valley.	<i>medium</i>	State government agencies
17.7 Support the development of a Clarence Valley Resilience Strategy with relevant stakeholders at local and regional levels, focussed on providing a strategic approach to management of natural hazards across our landscape and settlement patterns and aligning Council activity and funding opportunities from external sources, particularly government funding for resilient communities.	<i>Short-medium</i>	OEM, community, all agencies

Priority 17 – Plan for safer, more disaster resilient communities

17.8 Work with local SES, RFS, OEM and relevant state agencies to secure funding to proactively promote and visit high priority rural and rural residential areas to ensure that properties are prepared for bushfires, floods and other hazards across the Clarence Valley.	<i>On-going</i>	SES, RFS, OEM & community
17.9 Review and update floodplain risk, bushfire and coastal management mapping to manage risk, particularly where urban growth is being investigated.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, FMA, RFS, & community
17.10 Incorporate new knowledge on regional climate projections and related cumulative impacts in local plans for new urban development.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE

Priority 18 – Promote a low-carbon community

The Clarence Valley Council Sustainability Initiative 2006 was an award winning process that identified actions that could be taken to achieve the vision of creating a culture of living sustainably in the Clarence Valley. The guiding principles and key elements of the Initiative are still relevant today and important to this LSPS.

Taking a strategic approach to planning can help contribute to living more sustainably. This includes how we plan our settlement patterns across the valley and sub region, forms of transport we use, the design of communities and infrastructure, and of course detailed design and energy use in buildings, among others. Many other actions sit outside of planning controls.

Where possible and economically feasible, going beyond minimum requirements in state based legislation, such as guidelines for BASIX and reducing greenhouse gas emissions will have commensurate benefits for achieving goals set by Council.



Opportunities to develop 'exemplar' sustainable buildings and sustainable communities could be explored. Work with local architects, the Green Building Council of Australia and willing developers or business owners could provide an example for the Clarence community of how to develop cost effective and efficient buildings suited to our climate. Promoting existing buildings that use passive heating and cooling and other sustainability initiatives should also be explored.

Council has joined a number of other councils world wide that have recognised the urgency needed to implement actions to mitigate and adapt to projected climate change impacts and acknowledged a 'climate emergency'.

We have actioned the climate emergency by fast tracking a strategy of cutting Council emissions by 40% and increase the use of renewables to 50% well before 2030. Council adopted a five-point resolution aimed at addressing climate change urgently, including making "climate change" a sub heading in all council reports and continuing to carry out actions in an earlier "100% Renewables" strategy.

Council has been proactive on both mitigation and adaptation to our climate.

As outlined above our plans include measures to plan for resilience to natural hazards. Ensuring we consider floods, bushfire, coastal erosion and other hazards when making decision about land use, and any modelled increase from a changing climate is important to adaptation. Other measures such a implementing the Biodiversity strategy, ensuring our economy is resilient, implementing streetscape strategies to shade and

cool urban areas, and identifying public heat refuges and other strategies will provide for better places for the community to enjoy, and also living with our variable climate.

Considered planning, informed by a robust evidence base and taking a precautionary approach to hazards is needed to ensure people, property, and infrastructure are able to respond to changing conditions. Adaptation strategies will be needed for existing built up areas that are at risk or will become at risk in the future.

Shannon creek dam provides urban water security to support a growing population, but the current drought and devastating bushfires should remove any complacency regarding future water security. It is important to plan ahead and ensure this region, including Coffs Harbour, is resilient and maintain confidence for investment and growth. Drought has a devastating impact on our agricultural sector and economy and highlights the need to support sustainable agriculture initiatives.

There are a number of important actions regarding water security that need to continue, including: Implementing the Regional Water Efficiency Strategic Plan; monitoring regional water supply; ensuring new development is water wise; and, that planning for new urban areas considers water security, infrastructure costs and efficiency.

Planning to be more water efficient, and ensuring that the Clarence river catchment retains its natural attributes and avoids the development of future dams in other locations across our valley is essential for the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of our valley.



As well as water availability, water quality is a key consideration across the catchment. Land use planning needs to ensure that our waterways and productive rivers remain clean and usable for urban uses, agriculture, recreation and ecosystem services. Innovative approaches to water conservation include large-scale water efficiency measures such as water sensitive urban design and water reuse. Protecting wetlands,

riparian corridors and other features across our catchment will maintain a well functioning catchment and is an important responsibility of land use planning.

Potential exists to incorporate more sustainable energy generation options and projects and the Clarence Valley is already well placed to utilise renewable energy generation, both through private houses and larger scale renewable generation.



However, while renewable energy such as solar and hydro have identified potential within the Clarence Valley, large scale land use change to solar or wind farms would only be progressed where they do not impact on agricultural land, the environment or existing or future communities.

Attracting investment for renewable energy projects within the Clarence Valley could help position us as a 'region of excellence' for alternative energy technologies. Investigating opportunities for green industries such as bottle recycling plants and reuse of waste strategies will not only assist in management of energy use and reduction of waste generation but also has the potential for significant economic benefits in terms of employment generation.

Ensuring that planning considers health impacts from a warming climate, building resilience to deal with damaging storm events and promoting initiatives to reduce emissions from transport are attached to Actions in other sections of the LSPS.

Priority 18. Promote a low-carbon community		
Actions	Timeframe	Partner
18.1 Update relevant planning controls to ensure that areas for investigation for urban or employment land must also consider energy efficiency, infrastructure efficiency and sustainability impacts through the planning process	<i>short</i>	DPIE, community
18.2 Plan for an 'exemplar' sustainable development within the Clarence, and investigate working with the Green Building Council of Australia and willing developers or businesses to incorporate and promote best practise sustainable design.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, private sector & community
18.3 Ensure strategic planning and development proposals consider the regional water efficiency strategic plan and best practice water sensitive urban design	<i>short</i>	DPIE, community
18.4 Work with state government agencies and large scale developments to promote sustainability initiatives that go beyond minimum statutory requirements.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, private sector & community
18.5 Develop a valley wide carbon emission reduction plan	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, community
18.6 Promote the installation of electric vehicle charging stations and develop policy to include charging stations in new development		DPIE, private sector & community
18.7 As part of development of a Resilience Strategy (Action 17.7), identify and support a network of extreme heat refuges, and increase the urban tree canopy and plant life along retail streets, carparks and other urban areas.	<i>short</i>	DPIE, private sector & community

4.5. Leadership

Leadership – creating a collaborative environment for collective impact. Work together with the community, including business and government, to achieve the short, medium and long term goals for the Clarence in accordance with community aspirations.

Clarence Valley Council has responsibilities for supporting our community to reach its potential and for local decision making about how we use land, protect the environment and encourage and facilitate economic development and social and cultural improvement.

The Local Government Act and Environmental Planning and Assessment Act recognise that Councils must work with their local community to achieve the desired vision for their area.

Through the land use planning system we will ensure that we have suitable land available for development, and systems in place to support inward investment and sustainable development and a growing population.

Council will continue to advocate for investment, jobs growth and sustainable environmental outcomes to support our community. As the community grows we will continue to plan ahead for services and great spaces to support residents and visitors, of all ages and from all backgrounds, to maintain our great lifestyle and natural environment.

The Clarence Valley is the largest LGA on the north coast and therefore services an extensive area. We are home to over 52,800 people, the fourth largest population on the north coast.

This LSPS recognises the importance of Grafton as a key centre servicing the LGA and beyond. It fulfils the role of a regional city, for residents and many visitors in between Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Armidale.

Physical and digital connectivity across our region and in to south east Queensland and beyond, and our strong relationships with surrounding Councils such Coffs Harbour, will help to support our growing population and provide jobs and opportunities within this amazing landscape.

This LSPS seeks to reinforce the strong regional relationships that are apparent on the north coast. It capitalises on the significant economic opportunities that exist, leveraging from Clarence Valley's central location, economic diversity and ready access to a skilled workforce.

Being one of the largest populations on the north coast, together with one of the most broad-based regional economies in the region, we have a leadership role to support our agricultural industry, and attract further investment in our industries that are our engines for growth – particularly health and education, justice, agriculture and food production, transport and logistics, and tourism.

Priority 19 - Grow regional and sub-regional relationships

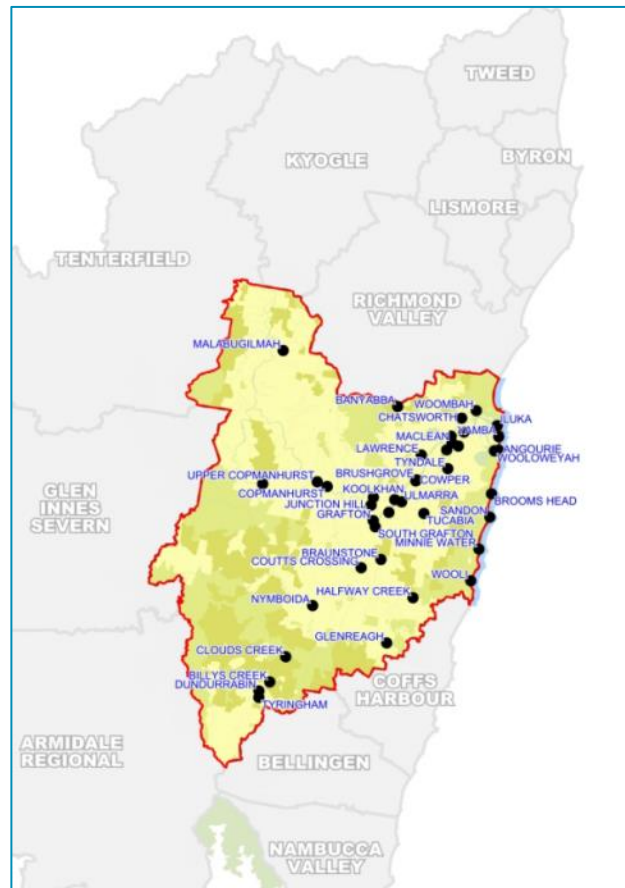
The Clarence Valley's location on the crossroads of the Pacific Highway, Gwydir Highway and Summerland Way, together with the rail, air and sea links, provide connections north towards Queensland, south towards the Hunter / Sydney as well as west to the New England & North West. The new dual carriage Pacific Highway, and new Grafton Bridge, will transform the way we travel and move goods around the north coast, opening up new markets for tourism, produce and ideas.

The Clarence Valley has close relationships across sub regional boundaries, including with the surrounding areas of Coffs Harbour and Bellingen, Richmond Valley, Ballina, Lismore and Byron, and with Glen Innes Severn, Armidale and Tenterfield.

These areas have unique social and economic linkages and the Clarence Valley is in the position where it can leverage opportunities provided by these relationships.

Coffs Harbour LGA is commuting distance to the Clarence Valley and offers complementary housing and employment opportunities. Employment land supply is low in the Coffs Harbour LGA due to environmental constraints, so working together with Coffs Harbour council presents opportunities for a more strategic approach.

Promoting a unified voice across a broad base from supporting Councils to government and other large organisations will help to co-ordinate and secure funding, strategic growth and leverage opportunities for our community.



Priority 19 - Grow regional and sub-regional relationships		
Actions	Timeframe	Partner
<p>19.1 Strengthen regional and sub-regional relationships with other local Councils, state government, and business, particularly focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering high levels of economic activity and employment in export-oriented and high-value sectors. • Protecting and enhancing major gateways including the Pacific Highway, Gwydir Highway, Clarence Valley Regional Airport, railway, Port of Yamba and freight and passenger transport systems • Investigating and planning for future economic relationships with Coffs Harbour, including developing a more detailed understanding of economic development opportunities and the development of employment and industrial land in the Clarence Valley 	<i>medium</i>	DPIE, adjoining Councils, especially Coffs Harbour
19.2 Work with state government agencies to undertake collaborative planning studies and activities to implement the North Coast Regional Plan and this Local Strategic Planning Statement.	<i>medium</i>	DPIE

Priority 20 - Partner with all groups in the community

Council is the largest employer in the valley and our staff are an important part of the community. As well as working for the local community in public service for the Council, we *are* and of the community. Council staff have been impacted by bushfire and drought, economic fluctuations and also enjoy the many great things about living in the most stunning environment in NSW.

Working in partnership with the community is a core responsibility of Council, and assisting people and businesses through the planning process and engaging people in strategic planning for our area is important.

We want to provide for a community full of opportunities, and to do that we must work alongside the community to improve the economic opportunities and protect the natural environment which we love.

We want to increase economic self determination of Aboriginal communities, and to learn from Aboriginal knowledge to ensure we care for country. Aboriginal communities should be able to have a say in the future of their country, and we will find ways to ensure this happens, while everyone feels like they have the opportunity to have their say about the future of the Clarence Valley, including farmers, local communities, business and everyone that contributes to making this a great place to live.

Priority 20. Partner with all groups in the community

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
20.1 Implement the Community Participation Plan and the objects of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, particularly to provide increased opportunity for community participation, more strategic approach to planning and the sustainable management of built and cultural heritage, including Aboriginal heritage.	<i>ongoing</i>	DPIE, LALC's
20.2 Work with Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl Aboriginal communities to investigate ways in which local Aboriginal culture can be incorporated into neighbourhood and town centre planning and across the landscape of the Clarence Valley.	<i>ongoing</i>	Local Aboriginal communities
20.3 Collaborate and partner with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal communities to deliver opportunities for local Aboriginal people to participate in planning and decision making processes and development.	<i>Short and on-going</i>	DPIE, LALC's, Aboriginal communities

Priority 21 – Seek recognition of the importance of Grafton as a regional city

Grafton currently functions as the traditional hub for the Clarence and the wider region for residents between Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Armidale.

It is defined by its established services, functions and attractions around the attractive commercial base, and existing strategic infrastructure including a train station, expanding base Hospital, airport, commercial port, and road infrastructure at the confluence of the Pacific Highway, Summerland Way and Gwydir Highway. Grafton has attracted Australia's largest Correctional Centre and is a regional base for local and State Government agencies. A focus on a growing education sector, with a Country Universities Centre, competitive high schools, TAFE and community college and interest from other Universities will support our community through life long learning. A growing medical sector and industries to support a mature and elderly population present opportunities for jobs in and around Grafton. Grafton services and is supported by the north coasts largest agricultural base, including cattle sale yards and expanding horticulture and primary production to make Grafton a competitive city. Food processing and logistics and a freight base at the strategic centre between Sydney, Brisbane and the north-west provide a strong base to further grow job opportunities.

The Clarence Valley is the largest LGA on the north coast and therefore services an extensive area. The LGA has become home to over 52,800 people, the fourth largest population on the north coast. It has a larger population base than the regional city of Lismore as well as having the capacity to grow with significant residential infill and greenfield sites and significant employment land capacity.

Grafton is also a hub for a number of cultural and sporting facilities with the Grafton Regional Gallery, the historic Saraton Theatre and Grafton Racecourse and the largest horse racing carnival in regional NSW. Our Jacaranda festival and daily economic activities generate a wide range of employment opportunities for people living in Grafton and its surrounding catchment.

It is recognised that coastal cities such as Tweed, Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour have grown significantly due to the allure of the coastal lifestyle. However, many major services and facilities have remained within traditional cities such as Grafton. With Grafton being accessible to several inland towns and villages having affordable housing options, access to high-speed broadband, a passenger airport and available employment land stocks, it will continue to provide this higher order role into the future.

Grafton was previously recognised as the top service centre (major regional centre) together with Coffs Harbour in the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (2009) and still meets the criteria as a regional city.

A significant local population that is expected to grow beyond current trends, a major centre for State Government administrative services, its higher order regional health, justice, education and commercial services, Grafton is already a functional regional city and should be recognised as such.

Priority 21. Seek recognition of the importance of Grafton as a regional city

Actions	Timeframe	Partner
Work with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment during the review of the North Coast Regional Plan 2036 to recognise Grafton as a Regional City.	<i>short</i>	DPIE
Implement the LSPS to support the growth of Grafton to make it a great place to live, work and play.	<i>ongoing</i>	



Priority 22 - Implementation

The Clarence Valley LSPS is an over-arching plan, which is intended to provide a strategic framework to guide decision making in our area. It includes a range of actions to ensure we make informed decisions to provide for our community to grow and prosper in to the future. It is essential that the implementation of the plan is well thought through, and that a process of monitoring and reviewing the LSPS is in place.

1. Timeframes

The Clarence Valley LSPS has an active, foreseeable planning horizon of 20 years. The strategies and actions in this plan accommodate, at least, this 20-year horizon.

Although the vision for the Clarence Valley is an enduring one, as further growth takes place, technologies change and new national and international opportunities arise, opportunity will also exist to revise the priorities and actions of the Clarence Valley LSPS.

The implementation of the Clarence Valley LSPS will be an ongoing program of work though the delivery of the identified actions. Each action presented will be delivered over the 20-year timeframe. The delivery of the actions presented will be dependent on Council resources and funding.

2. Monitoring and review

Council will monitor, review and report on its LSPS to ensure that its planning priorities are being achieved.

Council will use the existing Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework under the Local Government Act 1993 for the purpose of monitoring implementation of the LSPS.

Council will commence its first full review of the LSPS in 2023 and again every four years to align the review period with Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Regular reviews will ensure that the LSPS reflects the vision the community has for the future of the Clarence Valley and is aligned to the latest trends and information available about the environment and the community's social and economic needs.

An Annual report will explain to Council, the community and other interested parties how the LSPS is being implemented and any items for Action. Reviews will also be fed upwards to inform any reviews of the North Coast Regional Plan and improvements to planning policy and practice.

22. Implementation

Action	Timeframe	Partner
22.1 Prepare an annual report to Council to capture how the LSPS is being implemented and make the report public. Report to DPIE annually, and inform any reviews of the North Coast Regional Plan and other planning priorities through the life of the LSPS.	<i>ongoing</i>	DPIE, all of Council

Appendix A – Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CBD	Central Business District
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
DCP	Development Control Plan
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
EP&A	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
Employment Lands	Employment lands has the same definition as the North Coast Regional Plan, 2036 and includes land zoned IN1 General Industrial, IN4 Working Waterfront and B5 Business Development under the Clarence Valley Local Environmental Plan 2011
Greenfield	Undeveloped land identified for residential or industrial/commercial development
Infill	Development of unused or under-utilised land in existing urban areas. Most infill development sites are in centres such as Grafton, offering the possibility of better utilising existing infrastructure to accommodate population growth
IP&R	Integrated Planning and Reporting
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LG Act	Local Government Act 1993
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
TfNSW	Transport for NSW (a state government department)



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