

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING

# ISSUES PAPER

2021

**PARKES**  
*It all adds up.*





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through a review of existing policies and preliminary stakeholder engagement, a number of key issues have been identified and documented in this Issues Paper. The following Table summarises key issue themes, criteria that can be considered for decision making and possible implementation tools:

- The Parkes Shire Housing Issues Paper has been prepared with regard to the DPIE Housing Guidelines and community housing strategies prepared throughout Australia, and the Parkes Housing Preference and Perceptions Surveys and other local data.
- Parkes and Forbes Shire Councils are preparing housing strategies at the same time, in order to share knowledge and ideas and to present separate housing strategies for each LGA that have regard to the sub-regional issues and priorities identified.
- Household composition in the Parkes Shire is diversifying. Unfortunately, the types of housing available in towns are not diversifying enough to match this.
- Price and affordability drive location and housing choice: Affordability is an important determinant of housing preference shifting towards more compact dwellings.
- Housing preferences vary considerably with age and household type. Younger households and families tend to prefer detached housing but the preference for more compact housing, semi-detached dwellings and apartments increases with age.
- Affordability is the main barrier to obtaining preferred housing: Low income households (those with household incomes less than \$50,000 per year) are more likely to state lack of affordable housing as a barrier than medium and high income households. Older people are also more likely to see affordability as a barrier.



PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 01 PAGE 4

### INTRODUCTION

Introduction  
Community Engagement

## 02 PAGE 8

### WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

Why is housing important?  
Role of Council  
Benefits of a strategic approach  
Planning for housing needs  
Our housing challenges

## 03 PAGE 12

### HOUSING STRATEGY PROCESS

Housing strategy process

## 04 PAGE 14

### STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT

State and regional planning context  
Local planning context

## 05 PAGE 16

### SHIRE SETTLEMENTS

Town and settlements in Parkes Shire

## 06 PAGE 18

### SHIRE PROFILES

Parkes Shire Community Profile  
Parkes Shire Housing Profile

## 07 PAGE 22

### HOUSING ISSUES ANALYSIS

Managing estimated population growth  
Age profile  
Migration  
Employment  
Housing supply  
Housing tenure  
Housing mix  
Housing preferences  
Household composition  
Housing ownership and affordability  
Social and affordable housing  
Environmental constraints  
Services and infrastructure  
Transport and movement  
Technology and innovation  
Land-use conflict  
Parkes - Forbes alliance

## 08 PAGE 42

### VISION FOR HOUSING

Vision for housing



# 01

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

# INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT





## INTRODUCTION

Parkes Shire Council is preparing a housing strategy to plan for the future housing needs of our main settlements in the Parkes Shire.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy aims to provide the evidence base for Council to make informed decisions about the rezoning and release of land for residential purposes as well as the planning of roads, infrastructure and services. The strategy should also assist a range of stakeholders involved in the housing market, such as developers of residential subdivision estates and apartments, community housing providers, builders and other trades, real estate agents and conveyancers.

As a first step in the housing strategy process, the Parkes Shire Housing Issues Paper has been prepared to share the findings of Council's preliminary investigations and foster further discussion and inputs from the wider community. The Issues Paper draws on a range of inputs, including demographic, housing and economic data, housing policy guidelines, housing sector strategies and studies undertaken for other places.

A Parkes Shire Housing Preference Survey is also being conducted throughout the Shire to obtain local data on the types of housing people would prefer into the future. Public exhibition of the Parkes Shire Housing Issues Paper and consideration of feedback will be directly followed by the preparation of the draft Parkes Shire Housing Strategy.







## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To address our housing challenges, Parkes Shire Council is gathering feedback from the community to assist in the preparation of the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy.

So far, Council has undertaken an extensive review of other housing strategies that have been prepared throughout Australia. The NSW government Housing Guideline has also been followed as part of the preparation of the Parkes Shire Issues Paper.

Both Parkes and Forbes Councils are preparing housing strategies at the same time, in order to share knowledge and ideas about housing issues that will affect sub-regional growth and planning. Engagement with other government departments, service authorities and private stakeholders involved in the housing sector market is also being undertaken to ensure the housing strategy takes into account a wide range of views and ideas on housing.

Public exhibition of Parkes Shire Issues Paper is the first community engagement step in the housing strategy process. A Housing Preference Survey is also being conducted to learn more about the issues and challenges facing the shire into the future.

Interested community members are invited to read the Parkes Shire Housing Issues Paper and provide written submissions to Council on what should be included in the preparation of the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy. Leave a comment, complete a survey or interact with mapping via the website [www.yoursay.parkes.nsw.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.parkes.nsw.gov.au)









# 02

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## WHY DO WE NEED A HOUSING STRATEGY?

WHY IS HOUSING IMPORTANT

ROLE OF COUNCIL

BENEFITS OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH

PLANNING FOR OUR HOUSING NEEDS

OUR HOUSING CHALLENGES






## WHY IS HOUSING IMPORTANT?

Housing is one of the most broad and complex issues faced by towns and cities today. As Australia's population continues to grow, so too will the population of Parkes Shire. By 2041 the Parkes LSPS indicates the Parkes Shire population is projected to increase by more than 3,000 residents, putting pressure on existing transport and services, the environment and housing supply. As Parkes attracts more residents, the provision of well located, diverse and good-quality housing is important to ensure that our shire continues to increase its high standards of living and remains welcoming and accessible to a wide variety of people.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF COUNCIL?

Council has a role to play in facilitating the preparation of planning schemes that supply of new housing that better matches the community's preferences and needs. In order to plan for the future needs of our community, Council must set a strategic direction for housing policy to better inform land-use zoning and other planning controls.



*The housing system is beyond the responsibility of Council or a single State agency on its own. It is affected by and affects most other policy areas, including environment, economy, infrastructure, social services and health.*

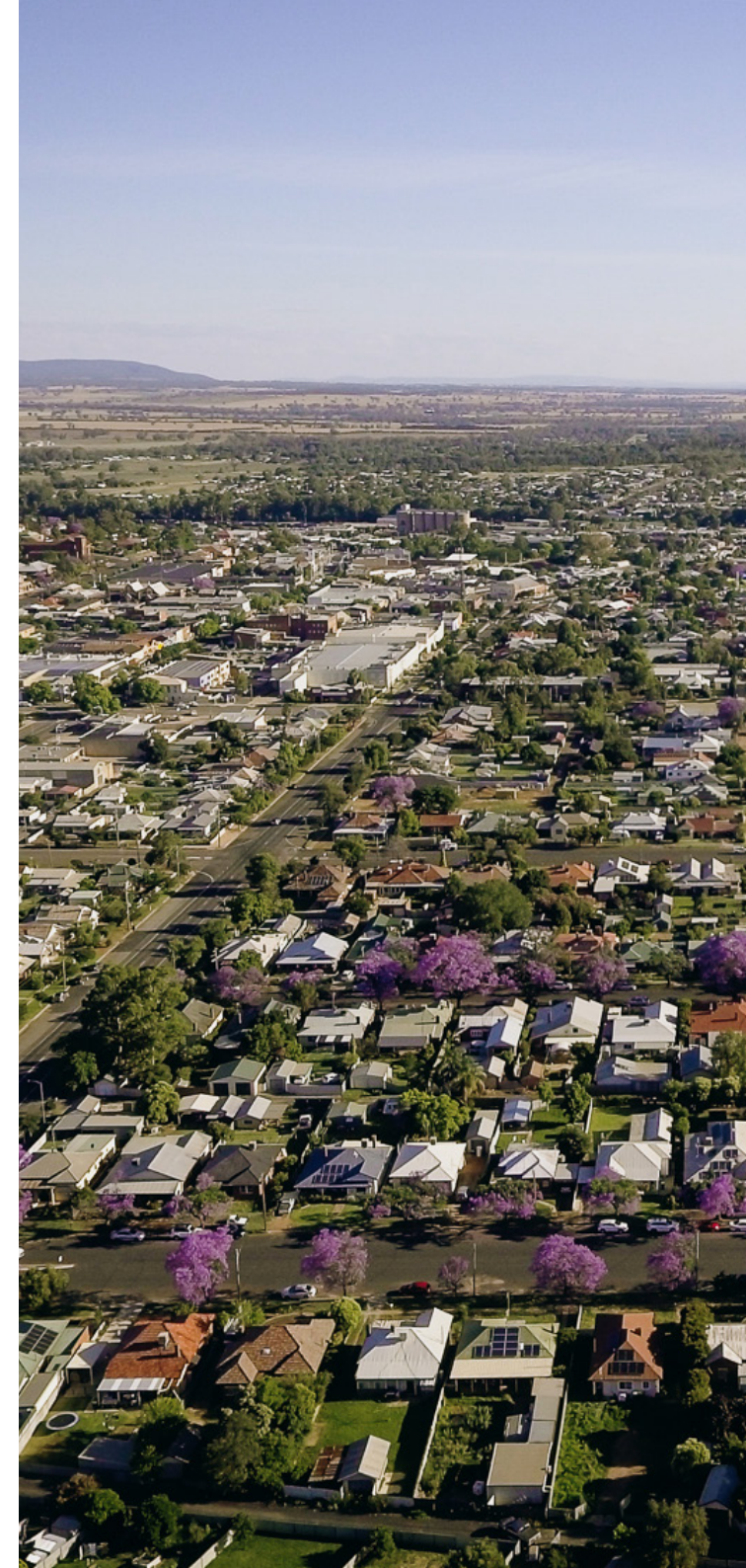


## BENEFITS OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Without a strategic approach, our urban areas are unlikely to successfully establish a positive legacy of living for future generations. A strategy approach allows everyone, including Council, to step back and examine the evidence base and make informed decisions about the rezoning of land for residential purposes as well as the planning of roads, infrastructure and services. Importantly, the strategy approach provides opportunities for a range of stakeholders to contribute to the future planning of the housing market throughout Parkes Shire, including developers of residential subdivision estates and apartments, builders and other trades, real estate agents and conveyancers as well as other community groups and individuals.

## PLANNING FOR OUR HOUSING FUTURE

In order to plan for the future needs of our community, a new housing study is needed to accommodate population growth, improve housing choice and increase housing opportunities in high demand areas. This will set a strategic direction for housing policy and inform land-use zoning and other planning controls. The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy sets a 20 year vision for housing in the Shire, in line with the NSW Government's Local Housing Strategy Guideline and the Parkes Local Strategic Planning Statement.







## OUR HOUSING CHALLENGES

The Parkes Shire Housing Issues Paper aims to inform community discussions about the challenges we face in housing our community. It forms a background document to the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy, which is intended to be drafted directly following the public exhibition of the issues paper and housing preference survey phase.

The Parkes Shire Issues Paper raises a wide range of issues that require further discussion. From our preliminary investigations, we already know a lot about population growth and housing, including:

- Our population is growing, with potential for significant population increases in and around Parkes.
  - Our community has an increased proportion of older residents.
  - Our settlements remain low density, both in terms of population density and dwelling density.
  - Our average household size is decreasing, but our dwelling structure remains largely the same, and is not representative of the changing nature of our households.
  - Our transport remains dominated by private cars, which influences the design of our houses and where and how we live.
  - Our employment challenges effect where people want to live.
  - Recent large construction projects have led to temporary employment spikes, which places pressure on housing supply and affordability.
- Housing stress and affordability affects a large portion of our population, but it means very different things to different people.
  - Technology and innovation are influencing the design of houses and how we use our homes for work and leisure as well as an expression of our ideals.
  - Our natural environmental assets benefit the entire community and need to be conserved, which poses challenges for future housing growth.



# 03

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## HOUSING STRATEGY PROCESS

---





WE ARE  
HERE



### EXHIBITION ISSUES PAPER

Council is seeking community feedback on the Issues Paper to inform future stages of the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy.



### HOUSING PREFERENCE SURVEY

At the same time as the exhibition of the Issues Paper, a survey is being conducted across all age groups and communities in the shire to gauge what types of housing locals prefer now and possible housing requirements for the future.



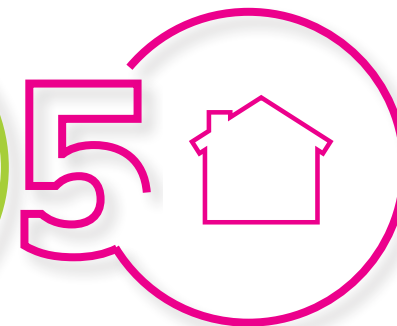
### REPORT ON CONSULTATION

The feedback from consultation will be reported to Council to consider the findings of preliminary engagement and to set the directions of the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy.



### EXHIBITION OF HOUSING STRATEGY

Once completed, the draft Parkes Shire Housing Strategy will be placed on public exhibition, inviting further comments from relevant government agencies, stakeholders involved in the housing sector, community groups and individuals.



### FINALISATION OF HOUSING STRATEGY

The finalised Parkes Shire Housing Strategy will be reported to Council for adoption, along with a review of all submissions received on the draft strategy.



# 04

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT

---

STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

---

LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

---





## STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan (CWORP) sets out the strategic land-use planning direction for the region over the next 20 years. The plan estimates that by 2036, the region's population would increase to 308,950, which accounts for 23,450 additional persons living in the region. The following goals are set in the CWORP to achieve the vision for the region:

- The most diverse regional economy in NSW.
- A stronger, healthier environment and diverse heritage.
- Quality freight, transport and infrastructure networks.
- Dynamic, vibrant and health communities.

These goals are supported by 29 strategic directions in the CWORP, and Councils are being asked to undertake further investigations on how each Local Government Area will achieve their regional priorities. Ensuring an adequate supply of land for residential purposes is a key regional priority in the CWORP for the Parkes Shire.

There are a number of State Policies that relate to housing delivery in NSW as follows:

**The State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009** (Affordable Housing SEPP) aims to increase the supply and diversity of affordable rental and social housing in NSW. The Affordable Housing SEPP covers housing types including villas, townhouses and apartments that contain an affordable rental housing component, along with secondary dwellings (granny flats), new generation boarding houses, group homes, social housing and supportive accommodation.

**State Environmental Planning Policy No 70** allows the imposition of conditions relating to the provision of affordable housing.

**State Environmental Planning Policy No 65 – Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development** aims to deliver better living environments for residents choosing apartment living and to enhance streetscapes and neighbourhoods. It establishes a consistent state wide approach to the design and assessment of apartments and the way they are assessed by councils. The Apartment Design Guide explains how to apply SEPP 65 design principles to the design of new apartments.

**State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008** provides parameters for exempt and complying development. Exempt development is very low impact development that can be carried out on certain residential, rural, commercial and industrial properties. Exempt development does not need any planning or building approval, but must comply with the National Construction Code. Complying development generally includes larger building works than exempt development. Complying development applies to e.g. a construction of a new dwelling house and alterations / additions to a house.

The NSW Government has published a Local Housing Strategy Guideline 2018 and Housing Strategy for NSW – Discussion Paper, 2020. The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy is intended to be drafted generally in accordance with these housing guidelines.

## LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The Parkes Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2041 has been prepared by Council accordance with the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, which requires local strategic planning statements to include / identify the following:

- The basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters.
- The planning priorities for the area, consistent with any strategic plan applying to the area and any applicable community strategic plan under Section 402 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993.
- The actions required for achieving those planning priorities.
- The basis on which Council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.

The Parkes Local Strategic Planning Statement has identified areas of land for future residential development, which require further investigations to determine future demand, constraints and opportunities, infrastructure and servicing requirements, lot sizes and housing types and the logical release of serviced land for residential development.



# 05

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## PARKES SHIRE SETTLEMENTS

---





## TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS IN PARKES SHIRE

Parkes Shire is located in the Central West of NSW, five hours drive from Sydney and three hours from Canberra.

The Shire comprises rich agricultural and grazing land, which are important contributors to the economy. Parkes Shire also has a strong mining sector anchored by the Northparkes Mines, which is expanding. The transport and freight sector continues to strengthen with the new Parkes (National Logistics Hub) Special Activation Precinct.

Tourism is important to the local economy, facilitated by its position on the Newell Highway. The 'Dish' - the CSIRO Parkes Radio Telescope located at the Observatory - is a key attraction due to its pivotal role in Apollo 11's moon landing. The Parkes Elvis Festival, held in January, is a premier event bringing 25,000 people annually to Parkes, followed closely by other festivals and events such as the ABBA Festival at Trundle.

Within the Parkes Shire are the towns of Alectown, Bogan Gate, Cookamidgera, Parkes, Peak Hill, Trundle and Tullamore. Many people also live on agricultural properties of varying sizes.

Parkes is also an integral part of the Central West Region. The LGA has a close-knit relationship with its neighbour Forbes, seen in an exchange of workers between the two towns and regionally focused business. Parkes and Forbes are considered a twin-centre in the Central West and Orana Region Plan.

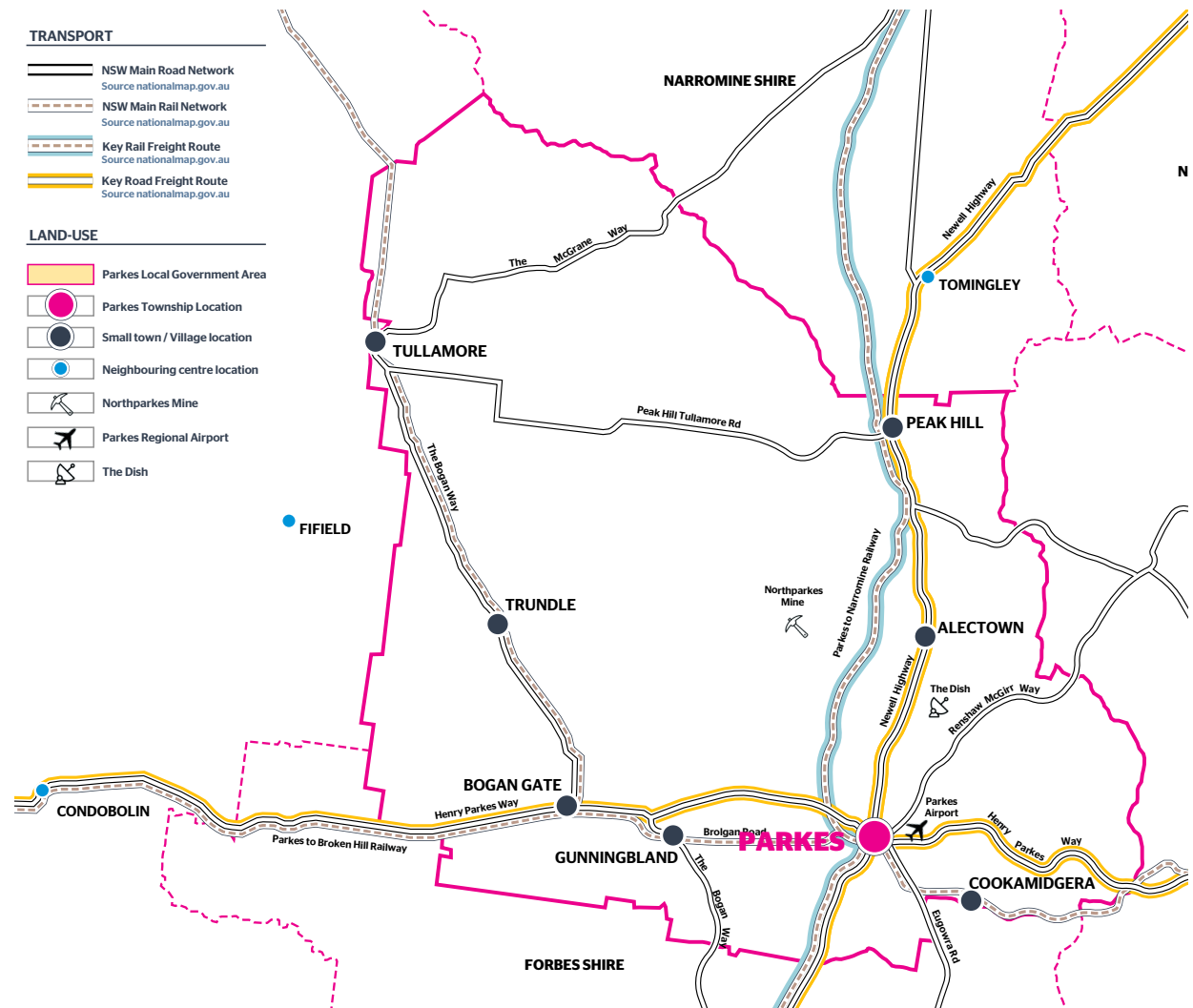


Figure 1 - Parkes Shire Towns and Settlement Map.



# 06

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## PARKES SHIRE PROFILES

---

PARKES SHIRE COMMUNITY PROFILE

---

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING PROFILE

---



## PARKES SHIRE COMMUNITY PROFILE

Understanding the communities that make up the Parkes Shire is critical in planning for our current and future housing needs. Demographic trends such as population growth, age cohorts, fertility rates, migration patterns and household composition all have influences on the nature of housing supply and demand. Housing needs are determined by projected population growth, analysis of likely trends in demographics, including household types, household size, age cohorts and an understanding of housing preferences. A snapshot of the local community profile, including demographic trends are shown in the infographic to the right of page.



**14,608**

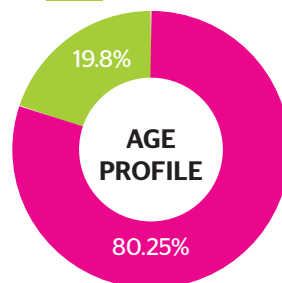
PARKES SHIRE POPULATION



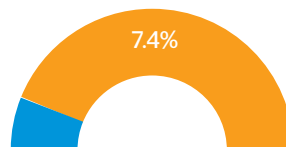
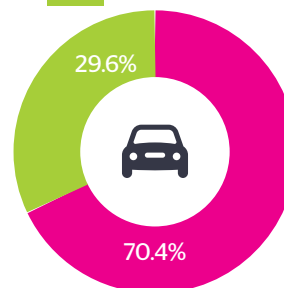
**41**

MEDIAN AGE

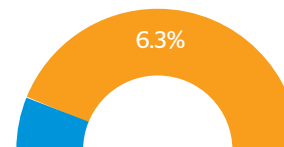
**> 65 YEARS**  
**<65 YEARS**



**DRIVE TO WORK**  
**OTHER**



PARKES EMPLOYMENT RATE



NSW UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



WORKFORCE BREAKDOWN BY %



**39.7%**

COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN



**40.2%**

COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN



## PARKES SHIRE HOUSING PROFILE

The current housing stock is substantial in Parkes Shire and will continue to provide the mainstay of housing for the population for many years to come. Demand for new housing is projected in all settlements in the Parkes Shire to certain extents, driven by a range of demographic trends such as decreasing household sizes and changing needs and preferences for different types of housing. A snapshot of the local housing profile and key housing market trends are shown in the infographic to the right of page.



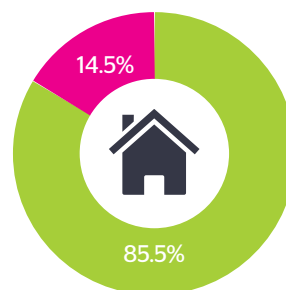
**6,740**

TOTAL DWELLING STOCK

**5,891**

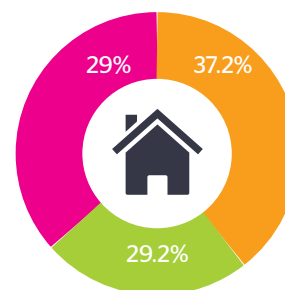
DETACHED DWELLINGS

VACANT  
OCCUPIED



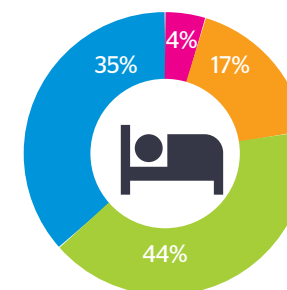
HOUSING OCCUPANCY

RENTED  
OWNED OUTRIGHT  
MORTGAGED



HOUSING OWNERSHIP

1 BEDROOM  
2 BEDROOM  
3 BEDROOM  
4 + BEDROOM



DWELLING STOCK BREAK-UP



**2.4**

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



**29%**

SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS



**\$320**

MEDIAN HOUSE RENT



**\$312K**

MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE







# 07

## PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

# HOUSING ISSUES ANALYSIS

MANAGING ESTIMATE POPULATION GROWTH

AGE PROFILE

MIGRATION

EMPLOYMENT

HOUSING SUPPLY

HOUSING TENURE

HOUSING MIX

HOUSING PREFERENCES

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

HOUSING OWNERSHIP VIABILITY

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

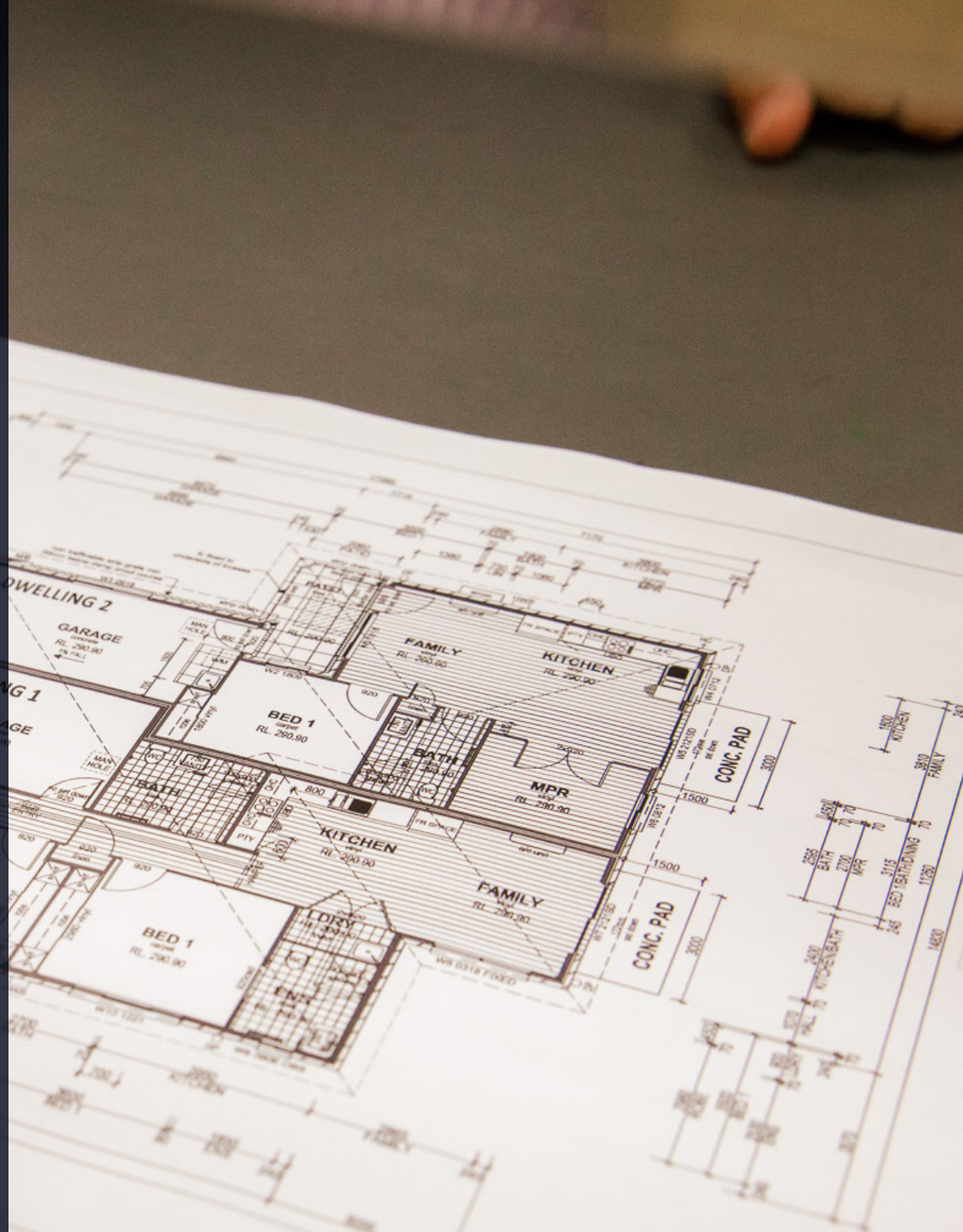
SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

LAND-USE CONFLICT

PARKES - FORBES ALLIANCE



## MANAGING ESTIMATED POPULATION GROWTH

Historically, Parkes Shire has experienced relatively stable population since 2001, with a difference of only 480 people between the smallest population in recent years (14,600 in 2006) and the largest (15,080 in 2011).

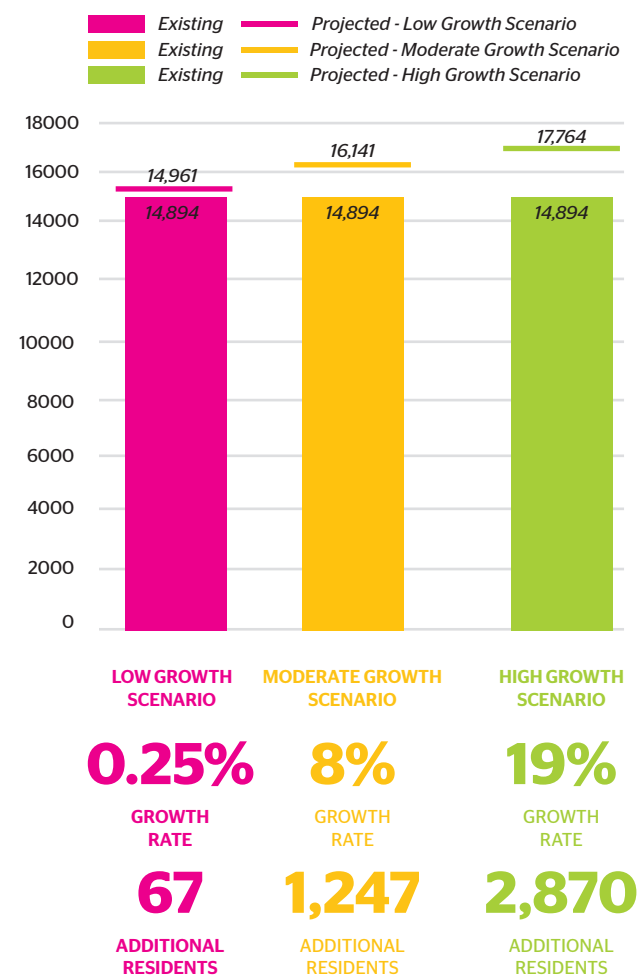
Since the peak in 2011, there have been small declines year on year in terms of population size up until 2018. These changes have been influenced by Parkes' ageing population and increased mortality rates in the Shire. There has also been a decline at all younger ages, except for those people in their early 20s, and among all people over the age of 50. Since the beginning of the 2000s there has been a notable hollowing out of the working age population.

Since 2018, there have been a number of significant changes and announcements that may see substantial changes in future population growth in the Parkes Shire. Future population growth may be driven by more people migrating into the Parkes Shire in response to employment opportunities from transport, waste management, energy, mining and infrastructure projects at Parkes.

Major projects such as the Inland Railway, Parkes Newell Highway Bypass, Parkes National Logistics Hub and the Northparkes Mines are all contributing to a significant employment boom in and around Parkes, which is leading to other spin-off developments and opportunities.

The Astrolabe Group have been engaged by Parkes Shire Council to undertake a demographic analysis of the Parkes Shire and prepare population and household projections which takes into consideration the unique issues that are being presented in the Parkes context. Astrolabe presented three possible growth projections, based on low, moderate and high growth scenarios, as shown in the infographic to the right of page.

Parkes Shire Council intends to use the high growth scenario to inform the development of housing supply and demand analysis. By taking into consideration the higher growth scenario, the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should provide for a robust reserve of serviced residential zoned land to be made available in response to any potential employment generating developments.





## AGE PROFILE

A key factor of the population of the Parkes Shire is the future growth and composition of aged residents.

Currently, the life expectancy of Australians is 79.7 years for males and 84.2 years for females, and by 2040 the life expectancy for males will be over 85 years and females over 88 years.

The aging of our demographic profile will impact significantly on the nature of housing demand. In particular, this has implications for the type of housing older people need, especially if they wish to stay in their local area as they get older. More aged care places and adaptable forms of housing will be needed, as well as smaller homes for those wishing to downsize when children move away, or to reduce maintenance. The need for security and ready access to key facilities and services are increasingly important considerations.

Surveys of older people and lone person households across the State reveal a preference for more compact housing, which is currently not readily available in the Parkes housing market. The Parkes Housing Preference Survey also confirms a preference for more compact housing as a means of maintaining independency.

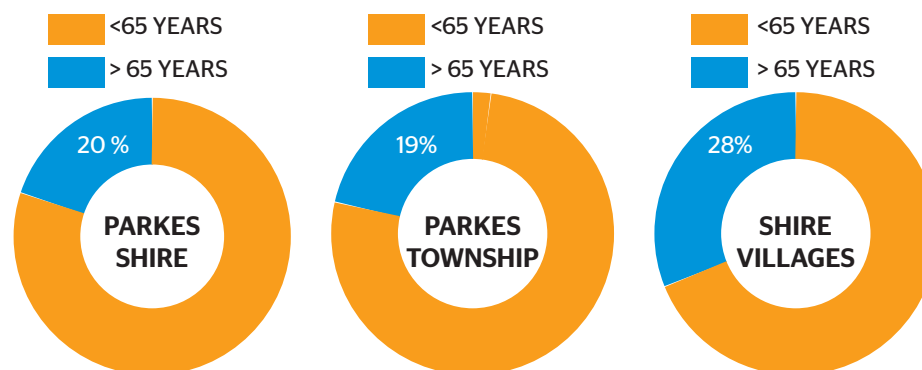
The out-migration of younger ages to larger centres is also having the effect of magnifying the proportion of older people in the Parkes Shire.

The following actions are likely required in response to changes in the age profile of the Parkes Shire:

- Improvements to public realm that benefit older people; for example improved walkability of neighbourhoods, Parkes CBD, Lake Foreshore and open space.
- Adaption to existing housing to make premises more accessible.
- More affordable housing choices.
- More compact housing.
- Locating housing that is not only compact, but also low maintenance and accessible, and located in well serviced areas.

- More self-care dwellings in retirement villages.
- More retirement village accommodation.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should aim to provide for the expansion of the aged care facilities as well as more compact housing to allow residents the option of living in a private home for as long as possible. The provision of more aged care facilities and age specific housing will have the added advantage of freeing up existing detached housing stock for younger families and alleviate the pressure to build more detached houses.



## MIGRATION TRENDS

Publication of migration estimates at local government level is a useful tool for understanding what is driving change in local communities. The infographic to the right of page shows the current migration in and out of the Parkes Shire. What stands out is the significant exchange of people in and out of Parkes Shire indicated by the migration estimates.

The majority of migration into the shire is from the surrounding region. However, there is increasing migration from temporary workers involved in seasonal, construction, mining and rail-related projects. There are also emerging trends that show migration from larger cities seeking a permanent 'tree change' from metropolitan living.

Some of the main reasons given by people seeking a 'tree change' has been the increased commute times and road congestion within metropolitan areas, as opposed to the relative ease of commuting in regional centres such as Parkes. The Covid-19 Pandemic may also be accounting for greater interest in regional towns as safer places to live.

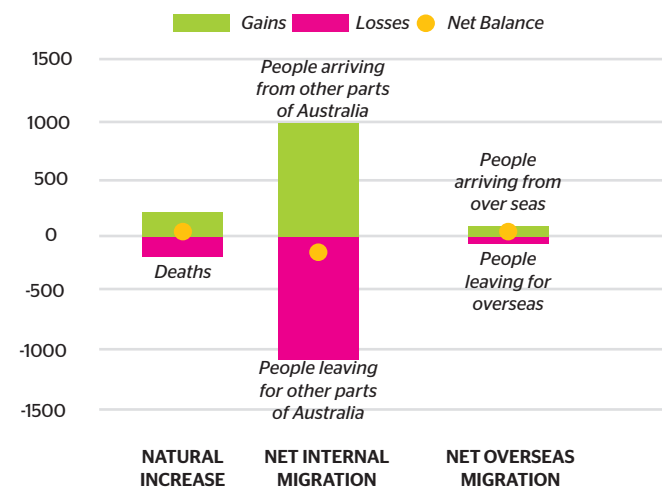
By far the most influential factor contributing to Parkes' potential growth in population is migration shifts from people seeking jobs and cheaper housing. The lower house prices in regional areas have meant that people have been able to trade Metropolitan properties for larger houses on larger allotments or alternatively, purchase a similar house and have additional money left over.

As being experienced in regional centres such as Orange and coastal towns such as the Central Coast and Byron Bay, rapid

rise in migration levels is leading to a depletion of housing supply and commensurate increase in housing rents / prices.

Recent ABS reporting indicates that in the June 2020 quarter there was a net loss of -10,500 people from Australia's greater capital cities through internal migration. This was a larger net loss than in the previous quarter (-10,100) and the June 2019 quarter (-4,300). This figure may be substantially higher, as many people may take some time to update their address information when they move. As a result, some movements included in this release may have occurred outside the reference quarter (including after 30 June 2020). It would appear that record numbers of Australians are taking advantage of being able to work from home and relocating to commutable country towns and their lure of open space, fresh air and cheaper housing. This in turn is creating new jobs and business opportunities.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should provide for a robust reserve of serviced residential zoned land to be made available in response to any potential housing demands from employment generating developments and any increases in migration.



### PARKES SHIRE MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS 2018

Source: Astrolab



## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Parkes Shire is currently experiencing a significant employment boom, not witnessed since the construction of the Northparkes Mines at Goonumbla in the early 1990s. This new construction era has largely been brought about as a result of road, rail, mining and general construction projects in and around the Parkes area. How this employment generation is influencing the resident shire population, housing availability and access to community facilities is largely unclear from mainstream demographic data, given the majority of construction projects have occurred post 2018.

Recent State government announcements of their continued investment in Parkes (Inland Rail, Parkes National Logistics Hub Special Activation Precinct, Newell Highway Bypass) will continue to drive short-term employment gains extending into the mid-2020's. This will continue to create specific housing and accommodation stresses in Parkes, and highlights the important role that investment / rental homes, caravan parks, motels and hotels have in accommodating temporary construction / seasonal workers.

Longer-term changes to the demographic profile in and around Parkes are becoming increasingly more likely, particularly from increased migration of full time workers and their families into Parkes and surrounding towns and reduced out-migration of shire residents.

The size and remoteness of towns in the Parkes Shire means that a change in employment patterns can have a significant effect on housing supply, which in turn can contribute to peaks in housing demand.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should aim to facilitate the maintenance of temporary housing accommodation with robust reserves for peak periods. Development of additional motel accommodation, renewal of unused upstairs hotel accommodation and expansion of caravan parks may be worthwhile projects for Parkes Shire.

People are also using their homes as a means of earning an income, including a growing number of people working from home under various housing types. The Covid-19 Pandemic and the use of digital connectivity have accounted for significant increases in people working from home.

It is important that strategies are in place to provide for more permanent accommodation types, such as freestanding dwellings and units that can also be used for work related purposes. A robust reserve of serviced residential zoned land should also be made available for working adults and their families.



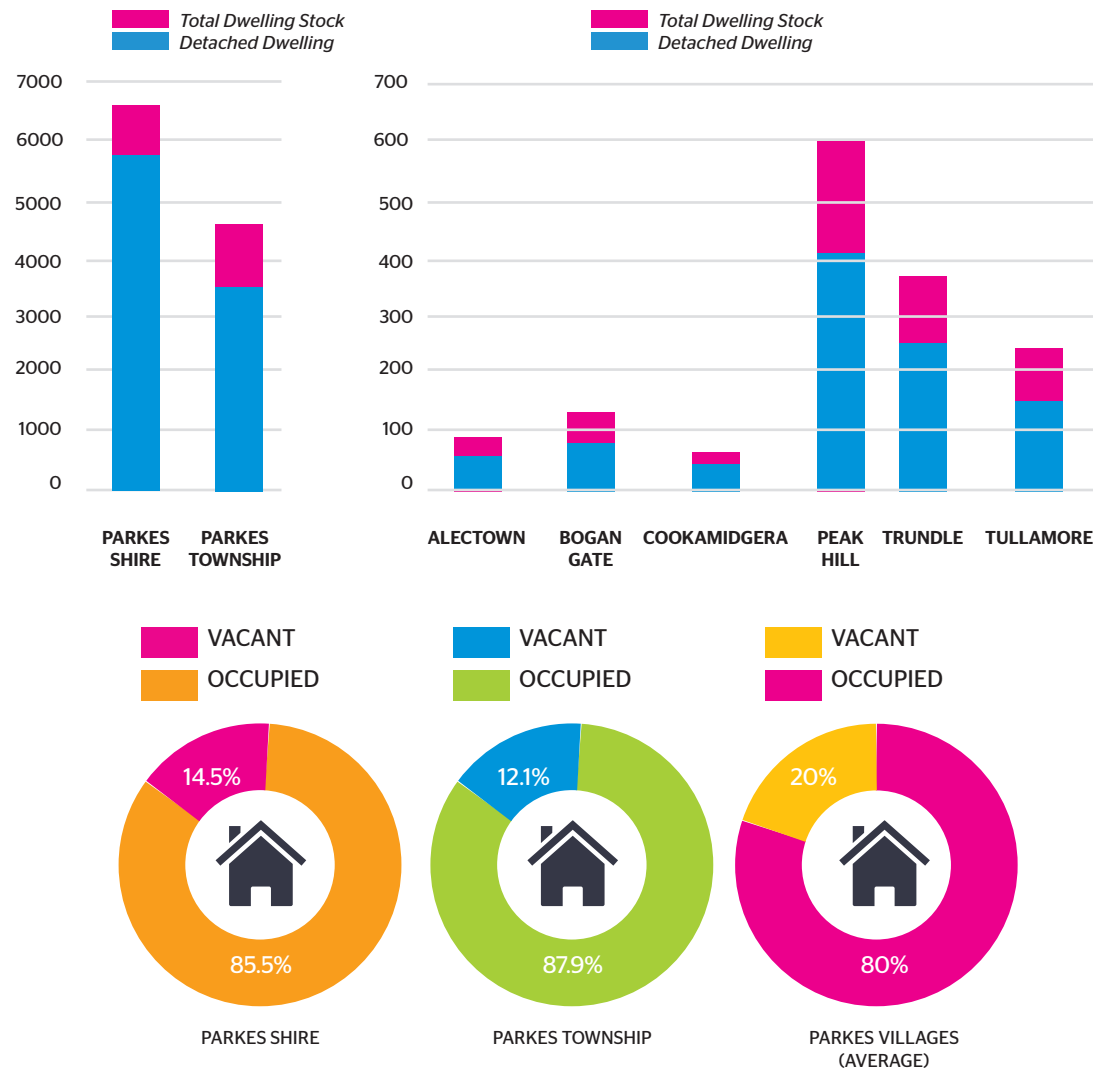
## HOUSING SUPPLY

There are currently 6740 dwellings in Parkes Shire, comprising freestanding dwellings, units, caravan parks, manufactured home estates and self-contained housing in retirement villages.

There are very few unoccupied dwellings in Parkes, which makes the local housing supply vulnerable to peaks and associated rises in rents and house values. The number of people living in houses is also declining, with an average of 2.4 people per household which is also influencing housing demand.

Based on future population growth projection of 2870 new residents, there is demand for an additional 1361 dwellings by 2041, which equates to a minimum of 68.05 new dwellings required each year to sustain estimated housing demands.

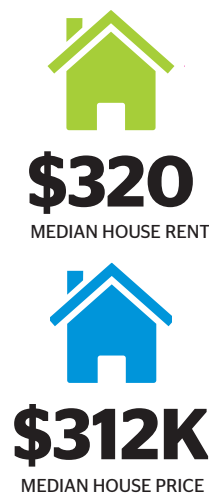
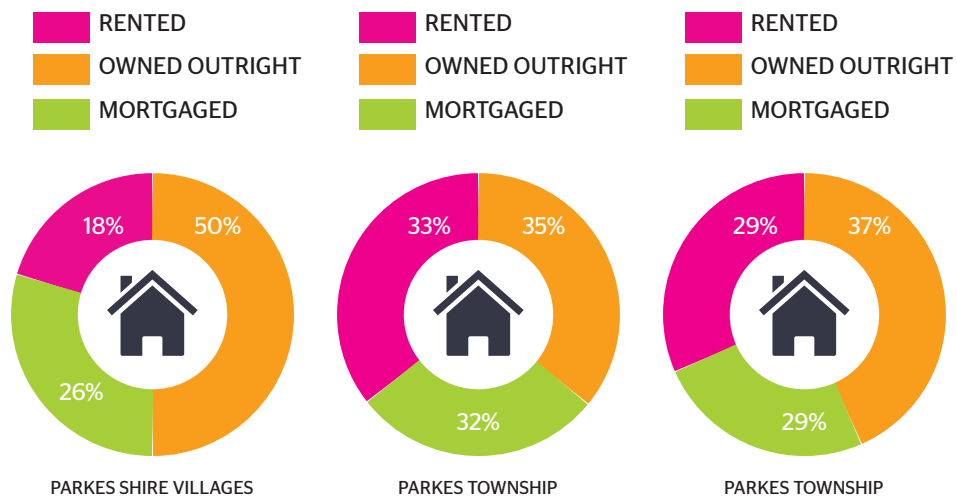
Based on the current rate of housing approvals (approximately 35 new dwellings per year), supply is not keeping up with housing demand.





## HOUSING TENURE

Owner occupancy has long been the predominant form of housing tenure in the Parkes Shire. In 2019, the majority of people in Parkes rented (31.1%), followed by people who had a mortgage (30.9%). The median mortgage repayment per month in Parkes was \$1,300 and median rent per week was \$200.



## HOUSING MIX

Parkes LGA's housing stock remains dominated by detached houses. Similarly, the majority of people (approximately 90.1%) live in low density neighbourhoods. Three bedroom dwellings are the most common configuration in the Parkes LGA (43.5%), followed by 2 bedroom homes (15.5%), 4 bedroom homes (34.4%) and only 3.1% were 1 bedroom or studio dwellings.

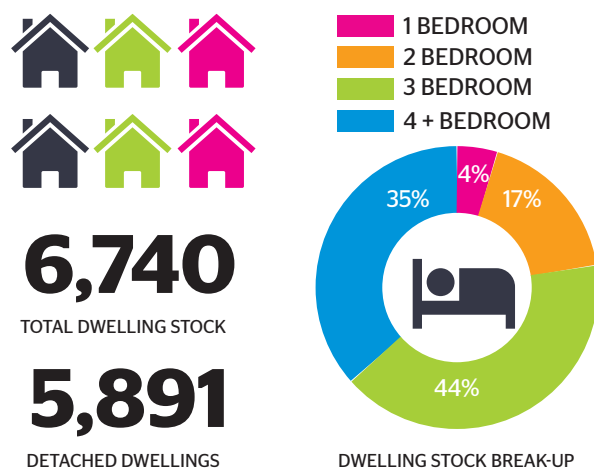
The main housing types are currently:

- Dwellings on standard and larger residential lots - Approximately 92% of dwelling stock;
- Medium Density Dwellings / more compact houses (450m2 per lot) - Approximately 8% of dwelling stock.

While the average household size (in terms of the number of occupants) has declined, the number of 4 and 5 bedroom dwellings as a proportion of total dwellings has increased from 32.7% in 2011 to 34.4 in 2016 . Many people value living on farms and rural-residential style lots.

Medium-density housing, such as dual occupancies, townhouses and low-rise apartments are scattered throughout the urban area, and not concentrated around services and community facilities.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should aim to provide a wider mix of housing types, including housing for couples and single occupant housing.





## HOUSING PREFERENCES

When planning for a diversity of housing, the difference between housing aspirations (what people ideally want) and expressed demand (where people choose to live) requires consideration of various factors, including financing, land availability, planning controls, infrastructure and higher demand in areas near jobs, facilities or services.

State-wide trends provide some insight on some of the main factors influencing where people choose to live, including:

- Historic trends and attitudes.
- Location of employment.
- Land value.
- Convenience to work, schools, shops and other daily essentials.
- Connection to friends and family.
- Amenity and landscape (water, open space, rural areas and bushland).
- Heritage neighbourhoods.

The Parkes Shire Housing Preference Surveys provides local data that indicates that many people in Parkes value established housing close to town, east Parkes and large lot housing adjoining the Goobang Creek.

Most residents in Parkes live in residential neighbourhoods with detached houses that comprise moderate indoor and outdoor living spaces, modest rear yards with privacy and a storage shed for additional storage and hobbies.

Neighbourhood safety, convenience to shops and public open space, friends and family appear more important values when determining housing requirements and choice in Parkes. The changing demographic and household type such as smaller families, an ageing population, and larger numbers of people living alone, means that we will continue the shift towards a greater variety of housing types.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy will need to identify sites with attributes for strong urban form, improved liveability and easy access to the Parkes CBD and open space areas.



## HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

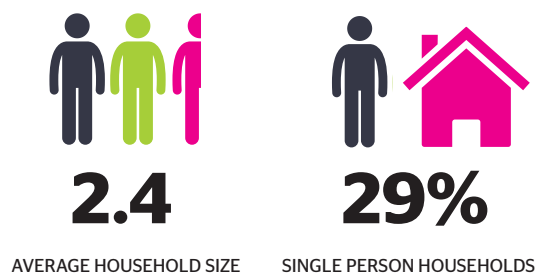
As people progress through different life-cycle stages and their family structures and financial situations change so do their housing needs and preferences.

Understanding the likely changes to household and family structure is one of the most important planning tools for developing housing strategy options that are relevant to the Parkes context, as it provides insights into the level of demand for different types of housing.

While owner occupancy has long been the predominant form of housing tenure in the Parkes Shire, many alternatives exist. Consequently, Parkes Shire's current housing mix consists of a range of accommodation such as freestanding dwellings, medium density dwellings and shorter term housing (motels, hotels, bed and breakfast, serviced apartments and caravan parks).

Couples with children are the largest household group in the Parkes Local Government Area, representing 39.7% of the population. A further 18.7% of the population are one parent family households and 40.2% were couples without children, 29.8% were lone person households and 2% of households were classified as group households where two or more unrelated people live together. Into the future the number of households comprising one or two people are expected to increase. In particular, the numbers of households comprising older residents is projected to increase by ....%. While most residents prefer to live in detached housing, the Parkes Shire Housing Preference Survey indicates that a significant share of households would prefer more compact forms of housing than is currently available in town.

In addition to providing robust reserves of serviced residential zoned land for standard house blocks, the Parkes Housing Strategy should also explore the creation of pockets of smaller blocks for more compact housing, such as courtyard houses and dual occupancy developments.





## HOUSING OWNERSHIP VIABILITY

While Parkes can provide for adequate areas of residential zoned land for new housing, the residential release and take-up of residential land has proven to be a challenge. A variety of factors are related to housing viability, such as:

- Difficulty and cost of servicing land.
- Low rate base from which Council can draw upon to help fund upfront infrastructure provision.
- Lower availability of builders, labour and availability of materials can lead to increased costs and delays.
- Anticipated market trends / outlook.
- Slow release of residential blocks.
- Local sentiment towards certain areas leading to low interest in blocks.
- Mortgage access and interest rates.
- Taxation settings.
- Economic outlook.
- Investor sentiment.

All these issues influence the appetite of private developers to invest in regional centres such as Parkes, when there are quicker and easier projects and profits to be made in larger centres and metropolitan areas.

Building new housing estates requires substantial capital, and is only viable in regional areas where the area's population is growing and housing is in demand. The viability of providing higher density housing can also prove not financially feasible to many developers, especially where existing services (such as water, sewerage and electricity) may not have the capacity for this type of housing.

Planning for housing growth must complement the needs of the private development and construction sector involved in the provision of housing. In general, release areas must be large enough to engender economies of scale, services must be available or close by, upfront developer costs must be practically managed and planning controls need to be flexible enough to respond to site specific conditions and solutions.







## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing stress is one measure of housing affordability – how much a household pays for housing as a proportion of their gross income. People can overextend themselves or suffer an episodic problem such as redundancy or rent rise. Those most likely to suffer mortgage stress are sole parents and families with children on low incomes; low income singles; older Australians; and first home buyers.

In addition, as house prices increase so too do rents. As a result, low income households are often forced to compete for private rental housing with working, middle income or high income households. Those often likely to suffer from rental stress can include students and low income households. Consequently, the largest group of households experiencing housing stress is those in the private rental market.

Different measures contribute to relieving housing stress and improving housing affordability. They include:

- Providing smaller, more affordable housing.
- Increasing the availability of different types of housing.
- Housing assistance.

Housing types that can contain an affordable rental housing component include villas, townhouses and apartments, along with secondary dwellings (granny flats), new generation boarding houses, group homes, social housing and supportive accommodation.

Housing assistance remains important for many Australians who, for a variety of reasons (including low income), experience difficulty in securing or sustaining affordable and appropriate housing in the private market. The increase

in house prices can also lead to the emergence of an 'intermediate housing market' where moderate income households, with secure employment are now facing severe hurdles in achieving home ownership. Low income growth compared to the rising cost of housing can increase mortgages, decreased home ownership and placed pressure on social housing and homelessness services.

The availability of affordable housing can also have implications on the urban form and social cohesiveness of a place. Lack of affordable housing can lead to locals having to move to other more marginalised towns, where they may be unable to access jobs and other key services. It can also place pressure on housing accommodation for aged residents, where rising rents force residents from their "lifetime homes", and prevent opportunities to "age-in-place".

With the private market unlikely to address affordable housing need, it is essential that the planning policy focuses upon improving supply-side efficiencies along all facets of the housing production pipeline, from rezoning to construction. Access to affordable housing will also continue to be an issue high for the Federal and State government agenda. A significant component of housing assistance is social housing, which includes all rental housing owned and managed by government or not for profit community organisations, which can be let to eligible households.

It will be important for continued monitoring of housing supply and affordability in the Parkes Shire. It is also important that the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy identifies suitable strategic development sites for affordable housing projects that may be progressed by government and community housing providers.



## SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

As with many other areas in Australia, Parkes Shire is experiencing pressures for new specialist housing accommodation facilities for its ageing population. Typically, aged and disability accommodation is provided either by family or disability service agencies in State Government and are often provided within purpose built housing. The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy must also consider the prospect of “lifetime homes” which allow residents the opportunities to “age-in-place”.

In response to housing pressures, Parkes Shire Council has identified several sites in its ownership that might be suitable as social and affordable housing projects. Council is seeking to partner with community housing providers to develop these sites.





## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Residential land-use is particularly sensitive to environmental constraints and risks.

Developing residential land is difficult and expensive when it is relatively free of constraints, let alone when it has attributes that make it more difficult and expensive to develop, and offers to deliver less returns on investment than constraints free land parcels.

Constraints that influence the 'highest and best use' of residential land are key considerations that test the feasibility of developing residential land. Planners, engineers, valuers, real estate agents, banks and mortgage brokers all rely of various tools to evaluate site constraints and issues that might affect the 'highest and best use' of land for development. For larger residential development sites, such as greenfield residential land, constraints and opportunities investigations and studies may be undertaken, or Development Applications lodged to determine the viability of a site for development.

Careful management of future residential growth is required to both protect character areas and environmentally sensitive areas.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy will need to identify environmentally sensitive land to ensure new residential release areas and development sites do not detrimentally impact water resources, natural features, areas of native vegetation, heritage sites the productive capacity of soils. The strategy also includes recommendations for updating land-use planning controls to manage new development on land shown as environmentally sensitive.





## LAND-USE CONFLICT

Residential land-use is particularly sensitive to other land-uses that create high levels of noise, vibration, odours and traffic. Solutions to land-use conflict often involve expensive interventions such as acoustic walls, double glazing of windows, upgraded ventilation systems, or relocation of land-use.

Similar to many towns in NSW, historic unplanned development in Parkes has resulted in some incidences of land-use conflict between residents and nearby businesses. Council continues to work through such issues with landowners, using the tools available under NSW legislation, including the Local Government Act 1993 and the Protection of the Environment Act 1997.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy advocates for the establishment of appropriate buffers between residential land and industrial and primary production land-use. The establishment of adequate setbacks on residential land parcels are also key recommendations for review under the Parkes Local Environmental Plan 2012 and Parkes Shire Development Control Plan 2013.





## SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The provision of services and infrastructure is expensive and requires extensive planning to achieve robust, cost-effective and sustainable service provision.

In regards to Council's infrastructure responsibilities (local roads, drainage, water and sewerage and open space) there is limited funding to maintain / expand the existing network. To a large extent, Council rates revenue is used to maintain the current networks, with Council relying on additional State and Federal funding to make improvements to the infrastructure network. Competition between regional centres is the reality for infrastructure and services funding. Communities that deliver a strong vision for housing and related infrastructure provision into the future will be successful in winning grants and government support to overcome infrastructure barriers.

Council must be careful where it directs infrastructure spending to ensure these investments make the greatest contributions to Parkes' vision for housing. The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy needs to include infrastructure mapping that identifies existing and proposed new infrastructure and services required to support the Parkes Strategic Housing Framework Plan.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should also include recommendations for updating land-use planning controls to provide guidance on the timing, location and capacity specifications of key infrastructure, to ensure the consistent / sustainable release of residential land.





## TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

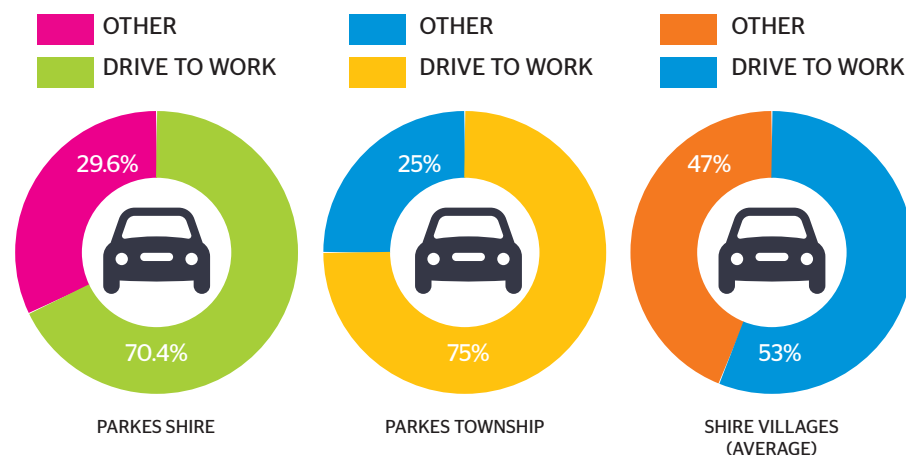
Understanding how our population gets around is important in planning for where people will live in the future.

According to ABS Census Data, around 70.4% of the Parkes Shire working population use private vehicles (car and truck) to get to work, 0.5% went by public transport, 6% cycled and 5.6% walked and the remaining 17.5% not stated. In addition, 87.7% of households had at least one motor vehicle. These figures have remained quite consistent over the past 2 decades.

Urban form in Parkes Shire is predominantly characterised by low density and dispersed urban and rural-residential living. This type of urban form has led to a reliance on the private car as the primary means of transport. Cars and garages are likely to continue to remain part of the design of our houses for many more years to come. Use of electrical motor vehicles may mean that our homes become recharging stations for our transport.

The need for more user friendly pedestrian and cycling facilities in Parkes are considered particularly important to connect neighbourhoods to the Parkes CBD and other attractors such as the Parkes Aquatic Centre, schools and parkland. Options to encourage viable public transport in and around Parkes Shire and possibly between Parkes and Forbes and the Parkes National Logistics Hub are also important initiatives which should be investigated, including possible funding assistance from State or Federal governments.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy should aim for an integrated planning approach to housing, transport and infrastructure. The strategy includes infrastructure mapping that identifies existing and proposed new transport infrastructure required to support the Parkes Strategic Housing Framework Plan.





## TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Technology is always advancing. New materials, innovations and systems are constantly be applied in housing, such as off-site manufacturing and prefabrication, local energy generation and storage, water recycling and reuse and 'smart' home communications.

Climate sensitive design and the need to meet certain sustainability criteria are also driving changes in the design of residential developments and neighbourhoods. Houses are also becoming more self-sufficient, whether passive design to capture sunlight and wind for heating or cooling, or from more direct interventions such as solar panels and batteries to capture solar energy for the powering of homes and rainwater collection for reuse on gardens and plumbing.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy needs to review subdivision and housing design standards to include new and innovative design principles, such as water sensitive urban design, street tree planting to create shade and solar orientation of lot layouts. In particular, the creation of water features in new housing estates and reuse of stored water to achieve 'green housing estates' are important innovations for the delivery of Parkes' housing vision for the shire.







## PARKES - FORBES ALLIANCE

Parkes and Forbes townships are located less than 30 kilometres apart and are regarded as twin-centres in the Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036. Services and facilities are shared between towns and many people commute from Parkes to Parkes for work purposes, and vice versa.

Both Parkes and Forbes Shire Councils are preparing housing strategies at the same time, in order to share knowledge and ideas and to present separate housing strategies for each LGA that have regard to the sub-regional issues and priorities identified. For example, employment generation from the Parkes National Logistics Hub is an issue that will affect Parkes and Forbes LGAs, and planning of the largest towns in each shire must have regard to the housing demands generated from the development of this activation precinct. Infrastructure and transport issues also need our combined consideration along with the need to protect and manage biodiversity.

While a shared planning approach is being undertaken, separate housing strategies will be developed for Parkes and Forbes LGAs, mainly to deal with the issues that are not homogenous within both shires, and which require their own unique response.







# 08

PARKES SHIRE HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

## VISION FOR HOUSING

---



## VISION FOR HOUSING

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy aims to support the vision and values of the community, providing goals and actions for housing that will contribute to fulfilling these aspirations.

The vision mapped out in the Parkes Shire Community Strategic Plan remains relevant for the Parkes Shire Housing Strategy - that the Parkes Shire will be:

***“A progressive and smart regional centre, embracing a national logistics hub, with vibrant communities, diverse opportunities, learning and healthy lifestyles”***

The large and small communities of Parkes Shire means that we have a diverse range of settings for our housing, including town centre, standard freestanding housing estates, large lot residential, rural and natural settings. In line with most Australian communities, Parkes' household composition is diversifying. Unfortunately, the types of housing available in towns are not diversifying enough to match this.

The Parkes Shire Housing Strategy aims to provide adequate housing that meets demand into the future. The Housing Strategy aims to facilitate infill housing that is well located, and that responds to the changing population, ensuring our housing meets people's needs into the future. New estate planning will also be facilitated. The strategy also seeks to grow housing diversity, particularly close to town centres, open space and other attractors such as schools, town swimming pool and sporting clubs.







PREPARED BY  
Currajong & Parkes Shire Council

---