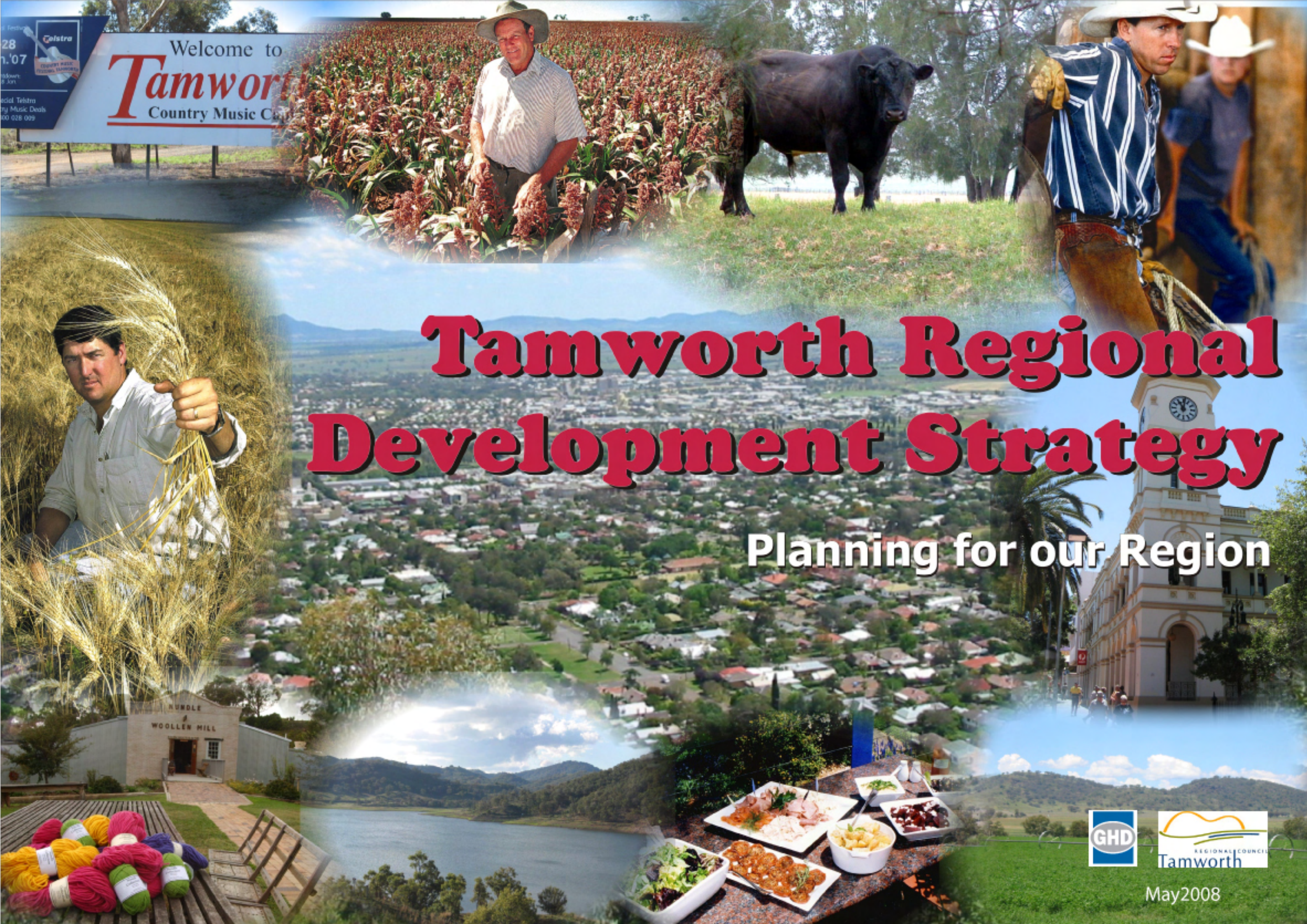




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Welcome to
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Tamworth Regional Development Strategy

Planning for our Region



May 2008

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1. Introduction

Tamworth Regional Council was formed on 17 March 2004 as a result of an amalgamation between Barraba Shire Council (south of the Nandewar Range including the town of Barraba), Manilla Shire Council, Nundle Shire Council, Parry Shire Council (excluding 588 square kilometres involving the township of Werris Creek and the village of Currabubula) and Tamworth City Council.

Following the New South Wales Government's recent reforms to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979; one of which requires each Local Government Area within NSW to prepare a new comprehensive Local Environmental Plan in accordance with a standard Local Environmental Plan template that took effect on 31 March 2006, Tamworth Regional Council and the Department of Planning (DoP) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to undertake the Tamworth Regional Development Strategy (RDS). The primary aim of the Strategy is to develop a comprehensive strategic planning framework for the new Tamworth Local Government Area (LGA) that will reflect the current and future needs of the community.

GHD Pty Ltd (GHD) was commissioned in October 2005 to prepare the Tamworth Regional Development Strategy (RDS) on behalf of Tamworth Regional Council. The Strategy is a prerequisite for the comprehensive review of the five Local Environmental Plans applying to the former Local Government Areas. The Strategy is to guide the preparation of a new region-wide LEP.

1.1 Strategy Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the RDS is to provide Council with a strategic plan to manage growth and to provide strategic direction for urban and rural areas in the Tamworth LGA. The Strategy has no statutory status, however it may be referenced in the new LEP and is to form the basis upon which the comprehensive review of these five LEPs will be undertaken. This review will lead on to a single LEP for the joint area.

The Strategy builds on the Tamworth Region Issues Paper to prepare a broad planning framework. This is done in the context of the natural, physical and human environment of the Region whilst taking into consideration the new model LEP recently gazetted by the State Government.

The Strategy is to assist in co-ordinating future development activities by identifying an orderly and efficient supply of lands in an environmentally acceptable way. In environmental planning terms, a strategy refers to the objectives and guidelines that describe how Council and the community intend the LGA to develop in the long term. It is usually a written document that explains what Council wishes to achieve (and why), and how it is proposed to achieve the stated objectives. The Strategy extends for a period of 10 years

A Strategy is intended to be a supplementary document to the Issues Paper. The Strategy will provide for the future direction and management of land uses within the Tamworth Region. The Strategy is a link between the Issues Paper and the resultant LEP. It incorporates the issues identified in the Issues Paper, and outlines the policies and actions required to respond to these issues. It will be used as a reference document to provide an understanding of how the LEP evolved and the intent of the LEP.

The objectives of the RDS are to:

- ▶ Provide a framework for future land use planning of the Tamworth Region to guide the preparation of a new region-wide LEP;
- ▶ Ensure that the community remains actively involved in the planning and assessment process and allow for community ownership of the Regional Development Strategy and region-wide Local Environmental Plan;
- ▶ Provide a region-wide local planning context to future planning in the Tamworth Region that acknowledges its location on the North West;
- ▶ Ensure that Tamworth Region is developed as a place to "live, work and play" for its existing and future residents; and
- ▶ Ensure that future planning achieves principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD).

1.2 Description of the Tamworth Region

1.2.1 Context

The Tamworth Regional LGA is located approximately midway between Sydney and Brisbane within the New England and North West Region on the Great Dividing Range and North-West Slopes and Plains in northern NSW. The Oxley and New England Highways link the Region to southern and south-western Australian markets and Tamworth City is the principal centre of the New England and North West Region.

The LGA covers approximately 9,650 square kilometres and had a 2005 estimated resident population of 54,910 people. Tamworth City is an important commercial centre, servicing a large part of the population of northern New South Wales (NSW). Tamworth boasts one of the largest industrial concentrations in regional NSW. The region is well serviced by road, rail and air networks, linking the region to the coast and the Australian eastern seaboard capital cities of Brisbane in Queensland and Sydney in NSW.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is a leading NSW rural and regional LGA, comprising the city of Tamworth and surrounded by numerous towns and villages and rich agricultural country, including beef, sheep, poultry, fish, summer and winter crops, cotton, dairying, eggs, fruit, vegetables and vineyards. The farmland contrasts with productive native and planted forests linked by remnants of naturally vegetated steeper country, some of which is protected as national parks or nature reserves.

1.2.2 Topography and Climate

Tamworth's land resources range from steep hills with rocky, shallow soils to the east, and deep, fertile floodplains and valuable agricultural land along the major river systems of the Peel, Manilla and Namoi Rivers. The topography also defines the broader visual catchment of the rural lands, which is generally enclosed to the east, west and south by hills. The valley floors and flat to undulating plains are characterised by a mixture of intensive agriculture (lucerne and poultry mainly) and cropping and grazing whilst the hills are heavily vegetated. Rainfall and temperatures vary throughout the Region, with the tablelands generally experiencing higher rainfall and lower temperatures.



Figure 1.1 The Tamworth Regional LGA, located within the New England, and the North-West Region



1.2.3 Population Profile

In 2001, 52,302 persons (Census, 2001) lived in the Tamworth LGA. Tamworth and its immediate surrounds are experiencing growth, however, population is not growing in Attunga, Barraba and Bendemeer. Tamworth City accommodates the majority of the population living in the Tamworth Region. The regional population is also ageing, with the proportion of the younger age groups declining.

Tamworth's population is projected to increase to 65,560 by 2031 (DIPNR: 2004). As the population of the Tamworth Region is projected to grow, the age distribution of the population is expected to change. The most significant change is the proportion of people aged 65 and over will increase substantially and persons aged between 10 and 19 years is expected to decline.

A smaller proportion of families are having children and there are a greater proportion of one-parent households and lone person households, which is consistent with the trends in NSW. The majority of households in the Tamworth Region are separate households containing couple families with children.

1.3 Planning Legislative Framework

Land use is controlled and managed within the Tamworth Region by a range of legislation and regulations. These include Acts of Parliament, associated regulations, plans and policies. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* governs planning legislation and the various plans and policies that relate to the Act. These include:

1.3.1 State Planning Provisions

State Environmental Planning Policies

The following State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) are applicable to the Tamworth Region:

- SEPP No.1 – Development Standards;
- SEPP No.4 – Development Without Consent;
- SEPP No.6 – Number of Storeys in a Building;
- SEPP No.8 – Surplus Public Land;
- SEPP No.9 – Group Homes;
- SEPP No.11 – Traffic Generating Developments;
- SEPP No.15 – Rural Landsharing Communities;
- SEPP No.30 – Intensive Agriculture;
- SEPP No.32 – Urban Consolidation;
- SEPP No.33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development;
- SEPP No.36 – Manufactured Home Estates;
- SEPP No.44 – Koala Habitat Protection;
- SEPP No.45 – Permissibility of Mining;
- SEPP No.48 – Major Putrescible Landfill Sites;
- SEPP No.55 – Remediation of Land;
- SEPP No.60 – Exempt and Complying Development;

- SEPP No.64 – Advertising and Signage;
- SEPP No.65 – Design Quality of Residential Flat Development;
- SEPP (Seniors Living) 2004;
- SEPP (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004; and
- SEPP (Major Projects) 2005.

Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006

This instrument provides a model for all Local Environmental Plans and will provide the base document for the preparation of the new Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan (LEP). This instrument prescribes land use zones to be included in any new LEP, the associated objectives and uses that apply to those land use zones, miscellaneous provisions and definitions.

Department of Planning Circulars

The preparation of the Tamworth Regional Development Strategy included consideration of the State's planning circulars, which offer 'best practice' guidance on a range of planning issues. The most relevant planning circulars are as follows:

- Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006;
- Local Environmental Studies;
- Rural Land Use Policy;
- Policy for Sustainable Agriculture; and
- Better Rural Residential Development.

1.3.2 Local and Regional Planning Provisions

Local Environmental Plans Operating Within The Region

The five Local Government Areas that now make up Tamworth Regional Council still have the following five current planning instruments to guide growth in their respective areas. These Plans are as follows:

- Tamworth LEP 1996;
- Parry LEP 1987 and the Draft Parry LEP 2006;
- Manilla LEP 1988;
- Barraba LEP 1990; and
- Nundle LEP 2000.

Following endorsement by the Minister for the Department of Planning, the Tamworth Regional Development Strategy will be the underpinning document for a new Local Environmental Plan for the Tamworth Regional Council.

1.3.3 Existing Development Control Plans

Currently thirty-one Development Control Plans guide development for the five original Local Government Areas. Once the Minister for Planning has approved the Regional LEP, a review of these DCPs will be undertaken to ensure only one DCP applies to any one plot of land in accordance with the requirements of recent changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.



1.3.4 Other Strategies and Studies

- Tamworth Urban Development Strategy 2002

The principal aim of the 2002 Tamworth Urban Development Strategy was to review the 1993 Tamworth Urban Development Strategy and undertake further investigation in order to identify development trends and issues that have emerged, or remain, that need to be addressed in the 2002 Strategy, identify opportunities and constraints for future activities and development, identify ideas and options for the future of the City and recommend a preferred Strategy for the Council and community’s consideration.

- Parry Shire Rural Strategy 2003

The Parry Shire Rural Strategy was prepared to provide a basis for a Shire wide Local Environmental Plan. The document outlines the existing situation with regard to the physical, social and economic environment of the former Parry Shire. The Strategy was prepared in consultation with Council, Government Department and the Community. The Strategy identifies the need to ensure that rural lands are conserved for future rural use.

1.4 The Structure of the Strategy

After the description of the Regional Development Strategy in this section, the report goes on to document the issues important to the development of the region.

Each chapter includes:

- Strategic Directions to address the main challenges; and
- Specific Actions to implement the suggested strategy.

Part A - Introduction

Chapter 1 Provides an introduction to the Strategy, including the purpose and objectives of the Strategy, a brief description of the Region and a summary of the legislative planning framework that currently applies.

Part B – Regional Strategies

Chapter 2 Outlines a vision for the Region and the guiding principles to achieve the vision, formed through background research and community consultation.

Chapter 3 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to the links between the various centres that make up the Region and the cohesion of the Region.

Chapter 4 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to the cultural and social needs of the Region.

Chapter 5 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to how future housing needs will be met.

Chapter 6 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to protecting the rural future of the Region.

Chapter 7 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to employment and economic development within the Region.

Chapter 8 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to the natural environment.

Chapter 9 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to improving transport and accessibility within the Region.

Chapter 10 Provides strategies and specific strategic directions and actions in relation to improving infrastructure provision throughout the Region.

Part C – Local Strategies

Chapter 11 Provides local area strategies, which will provide guidance for the main settlements within the Tamworth Region.

Part D – Implementation

Chapter 12 Outlines the implementation and monitoring process for the Strategy.



2. Vision and Guiding Principles for a Sustainable Lifestyle

2.1 Vision for Tamworth Region

The following vision provides the foundation for this Strategy. The vision has been developed in partnership with the community whilst also recognising the issues and opportunities to provide a better future for the Tamworth Region.

It is important to voice the aspirations the community has for the new Tamworth Regional Council area, for the present and future. Whilst such aspirations will change, the vision can be used as a point of reference to understand the changing needs of the communities that make up the Region. This vision, used as a point of reference and discussion enables planning directions to focus on what is important to the community and what can be realistically achieved for the Region.

A generation from now, our regional areas can be far better places to use, recreate, enjoy and experience than they are today.

This document introduces you to a vision for the Tamworth Region that is worth striving for.

The Tamworth Region is a peaceful, vibrant, rural place with a robust and secure economic and employment base.

The Tamworth Region respects and facilitates the character of the individual centres and communities that make up the Region. It identifies landscape and townscape elements that assist in achieving ecologically sustainable development principles, fosters a sense of community for existing and future residents and enriches the lives of residents, workers and adjoining communities.

The Region responds to its special setting and unique opportunities. It protects and enhances the natural environment as well as balancing the competing needs of the community.

This vision can also be achieved by the adoption of the development principles, objectives, implementation strategies and policy actions that have been provided in this document.

The views expressed during the community consultation process of this Strategy provide the basis of the vision above and largely influenced the principles listed below. The guiding principles and have been used to direct and refine the strategies proposed in the Strategy.

2.2 Guiding Principles

The vision is embodied into the following guiding principles. The principles have been developed to achieve the vision and have been used to direct and refine the strategies proposed in this report.

Strengthening the Region and Supporting Existing Centres

- ▶ Foster links between the various centres and communities in such a way that recognises the role of each place and the needs that place may have.
- ▶ Recognise the service role that Tamworth has to all areas of the Region, particularly to the North-West.
- ▶ Provide a region-wide local planning context to future planning in the Tamworth Region that acknowledges its location on the North West.
- ▶ Maintain and enhance the liveability and amenity of the Tamworth Region as a place to live, work and pursue a lifestyle of choice.
- ▶ Establish a town centre hierarchy that supports commercial and retail business at the local and regional levels.
- ▶ Advocate that communities be active in defining the character of their town or centre.
- ▶ Ensure planning provisions support and promote sustainable employment, industrial lands and specialised centres.

Meeting Cultural and Social Needs

- ▶ Encourage the retention of a younger population.
- ▶ Ensure that community facilities and services are adequate and accessible.
- ▶ Provide for the recreational needs of the current and future population.
- ▶ Protect the heritage values of the Region.

Meeting Future Housing Needs

- ▶ Provide for a variety of housing types, which acknowledge changing household structure and that caters for all sections of the community.
- ▶ Provide for affordable housing throughout the Region for low to moderate income earners.



- › Ensure that future growth in residential housing can be accommodated within the Region in a range of housing types.
- › Provide future rural-residential land that is relatively unconstrained and meets sustainability objectives.
- › Employ urban design techniques to ensure that Tamworth City and the other towns and villages of the Region are accessible.

Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

- › Manage rural communities and villages to remain viable.
- › Ensure agriculture carries on into the future as a significant, environmentally and economically sustainable industry with the capacity to capitalise on opportunities for intensification and diversification.
- › Contribute to the protection, enhancement and conservation of rural landscapes and character and the environment within the Region.

Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- › Provide for and facilitate future economic growth in the Region.
- › Ensure innovative and sustainable growth in the Tourism sector.
- › Encourage and support commercial development within the Region.
- › Ensure the provision of well-located, suitable land for future industrial purposes.

Caring for the Natural Environment

- › Conserve areas of scenic amenity.
- › Minimise the impact on the climate.
- › Minimise the risks associated with natural hazards.
- › Protect and enhance areas supporting high conservation values.
- › Avoid fragmentation of the landscape with an emphasis on consolidating and connecting intact landscapes.
- › Protect and enhance the quality and quantity of local water resources.

Improve Transport and Accessibility

- › Manage and improve the road and rail networks.
- › Support the role of the airport in strengthening the Region's economy.
- › Provide a public transport system that meets the needs of the community.

Improving Infrastructure Provision

- › Ensure the provision of a secure and reliable water supply to the Region.
- › Ensure the provision of appropriate sewer services to the Region.
- › Ensure the adequate provision of electricity and telecommunications infrastructure.
- › Manage and minimise stormwater and waste and encourage water savings and recycling of effluent.



3. Strengthening the Region and Supporting Existing Centres

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth Regional Council will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Strengthening the region and supporting existing centres is measured through the seven principles, which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

3.1 Strategies

3.1.1 Strengthening the Region

Strengthening the Tamworth Region as a major region in the New England – North West is an important direction in this Strategy. It is particularly important because the region has only recently been formed and it will take time for people to identify with the new area as a region.

The Tamworth Region is the regional hub of the New England - North West. The Region also has convenient access to other regional towns such as Armidale and Inverell as well as being well serviced by transport networks linking the Region to the coast and the capital cities of Brisbane and Sydney. It is therefore important to provide a shire-wide local planning context that acknowledges its location in the New England - North West.

As the Regions' major centre, Tamworth City has an integral role in the success of the Region. Employment growth, improvements to the public domain and creating a liveable and safe environment are fundamental to Tamworth's future. It is therefore important that Tamworth be innovative and forward thinking in any development strategy for the region. Tamworth City will be discussed in more detail in the Local Area Strategies.

The Tamworth Region also operates as a network of communities with the Tamworth City as its hub. Future management of these centres will be based on an understanding of the local and regional role they play in the New England - North West Region. The challenge is to manage their diverse regional and local roles so they meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors and maintains a high quality of amenity. For that reason appropriate planning should be undertaken for each town and village.

3.1.2 Settlement Hierarchy

A settlement hierarchy provides a framework for understanding the relationships between settlements in the local region as well as between neighbouring settlements.

In the past, many rural residential developments have undermined this structure by allowing people to live in dispersed locations with little regard to direct access to higher order centres. A key objective of the settlement hierarchy is to maintain the traditional rural landscape by limiting urban sprawl and having a boundary or a footprint for each place. A clear boundary will limit the impact on the surrounding environment and ensure settlements do not sprawl or form strip/ribbon development.

Defining a settlement hierarchy will also encourage development that recognises and complements the different roles and functions of the settlements. This will also ensure that towns maintain important elements of urban form and township character.

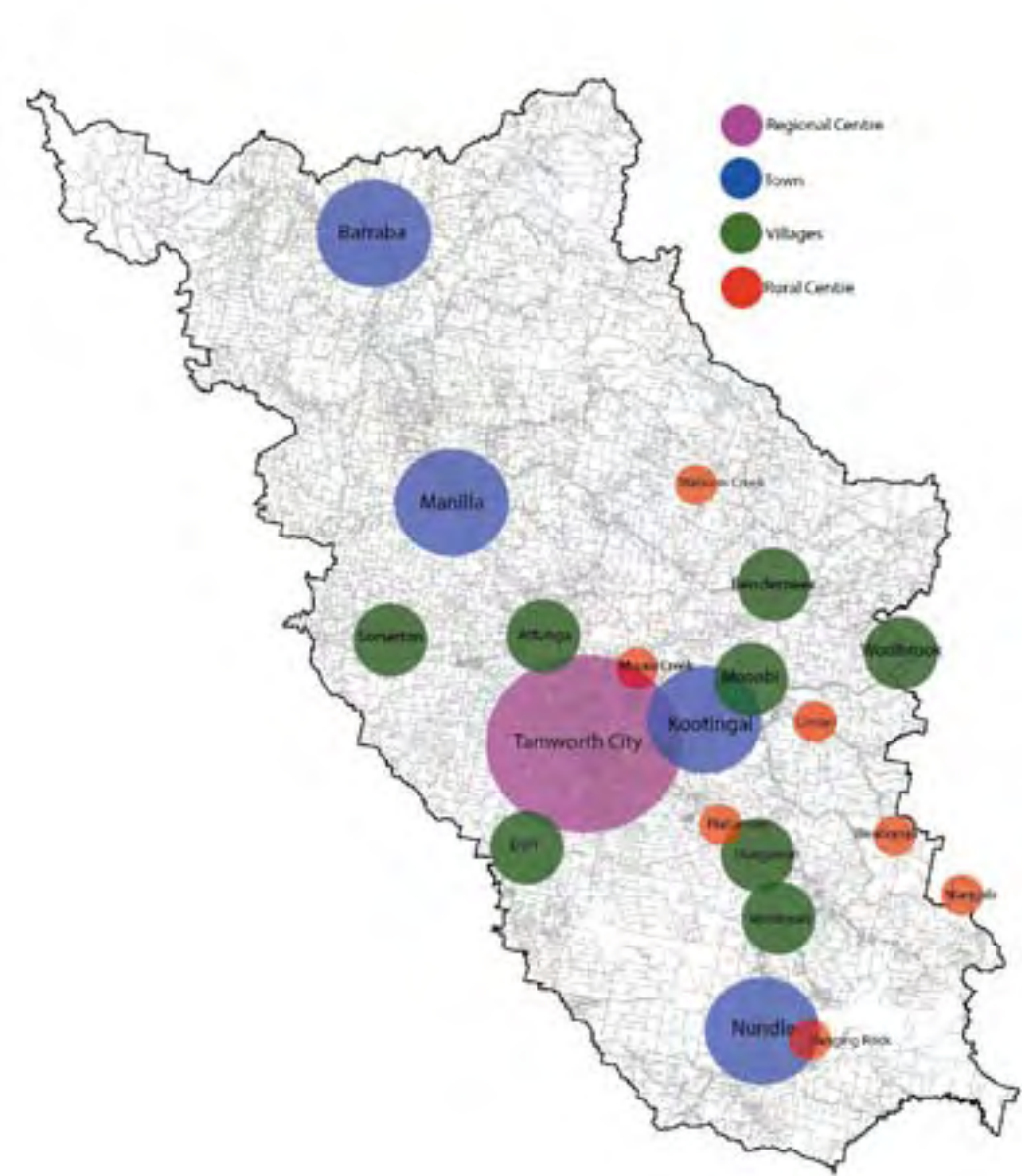


Figure 3.1 Settlement Hierarchy

3.1.3 Neighbourhood Character

Enhancing the character of neighbourhoods will strengthen the viability of the centres as it allows for better access and greater use. Neighbourhoods also need to accommodate a range of community needs and be adaptable to change over time in response to cyclical changes in such factors as demographics, household size, services, facilities and the condition of housing stock.

The desired character of neighbourhoods can be determined through open consultation between local communities, state and local governments and the development industry. Expressing the vision for the physical characteristics and community needs of the neighbourhood is important in identifying the type and location of redevelopment and regeneration. The Local Area Strategies (shown in Chapter 11) concentrate on the desired future character of the towns and villages in more detail.

3.1.4 Urban Design

Urban design is central to the shared ‘sense of place’ and identity of the local communities. A vibrant and responsive public realm has community, economic and environmental benefits. For the residents of towns and settlements, having urban spaces that are legible, distinctive, stimulating and beautiful adds meaning and richness to life, promotes civic pride within the community, and helps people to efficiently access resources.

Many towns within the Region have a distinctive character and identity, which has historic roots and forms part of their charm and attraction for visitors. This identity should be retained through a responsive urban design process.

3.1.5 Livability

The Tamworth Region has a favourable climate, spectacular scenery and diverse lifestyle options. To many, living in the Tamworth Region provides the best of both worlds; access to the services and facilities within the regional centres such as Tamworth City and Armidale, combined with the opportunity to live in a rural and bush land setting. As agriculture has declined, the choice to live in rural areas has been driven more by lifestyle, than opportunities for income from the farm. Often a consequence of this is conflict between farming activities and lifestyle.

To maintain the livability of the Tamworth Region in the long term, land use planning needs to carefully consider the location and type of any future development. The inappropriate location or type of land uses such as residential development may jeopardise the future livability of the LGA.

3.1.6 Sense of Place

Sense of place in this instance relates to a sense of belonging. A number of residents have lived in the area for many years and are part of second and third generation families. This is likely to have enhanced the sense of belonging that these residents feel towards the area.

Sense of place has been found to be positively affected by urban planning that encourages visual coherence, diversity and attractiveness of houses and other buildings. One of the major attractions of Tamworth is the contrast of the graceful rivers, the rural plains and the gentle mountains, which creates a landscape of considerable beauty and interest.

Longer-term strategic planning and short-term urban design measures can assist in maintaining and enhancing a sense of place.

3.1.7 Creating Communities

Most people value a sense of community in the place they live. They want to know their neighbours and feel a part of their community. The success of a vibrant and self-sustaining community depends largely on the involvement of its residents. Community involvement and partnership will also foster a common focus within the community for the character of their town or village. It is therefore important to involve communities in their community by implementing a range of social, economic and environmental initiatives.

3.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

1. Encourage development that recognises and complements the different roles and functions of the towns and villages of the Region
- (a) Adopt the settlement hierarchy for the Region outlined below and as shown in Figure 3.1.
- (b) Ensure that towns provide functions and maintain important elements of urban form and township character in keeping with the settlement hierarchy.
- (c) Direct major urban development towards Tamworth City which already contains sufficient levels of services and infrastructure.
- (d) Allow uses and activities, which serve primary industry, such as value-adding commercial and retail enterprises, to locate in towns and villages if not adversely impacting on surrounding uses.
- (e) Ensure retail development in towns is consistent with the town's function.
- (f) Encourage the development of activities, such as restaurants and visitor accommodation, to complement the recreation and tourism functions of towns and their hinterland.

Regional Centre	
Location	City of Tamworth
Function	This provides a wide range of employment, entertainment and recreational opportunities, a full range of local services and higher order services such as Hospitals, TAFE, a University campus as well as several high schools and a number of large chain supermarkets. It also has the Council administration and regional offices of State Government departments. It has a large mixed commercial area providing service, retail and office uses with a large chain supermarket. It caters for convenience, weekly and comparison-shopping. It is the principal centre of the LGA.



Town	
Location	Barraba, Manilla, Nundle and Kootingal
Function	This provides a range of local services and variety of employment opportunities in tourism and retail but relies on the Regional Centre for other opportunities. It has shopping for weekly and convenience shopping.
Villages	
Location	Attunga, Bendemeer, Dungowan, Duri, Moonbi, Somerton, Woolomin, Woolbrook
Function	This provides only for convenience needs and typically has only a general store / post office.
Rural Centre	
Location	Hanging Rock, Limbri, Moore Creek, Niangala, Piallamore, Watsons Creek, Weabonga,
Function	This is a focal point for the surrounding community and usually has a community hall or bushfire shed. There are generally no shopping facilities.

2. Maintain the character of each town and protect the surrounding landscape character from urban encroachment

- Contain urban growth within current town boundaries.
- Promoting 'desired character statements' to guide development in communities to help them retain significant residential character, protect heritage value, and develop good quality design of neighbourhoods as articulated by the community and councils.
- Promote the positive elements of towns and ensure development complements and enhances the desired character and sense of place of the local community.
- Ensure that development contributes to the desired character and exhibits a strong contextual relationship with its locality.
- Ensure that future development in towns is designed and located to protect sensitive environments.
- Apply Zone B2 Local Centre to town centres such as Kootingal Nundle, and Manilla that provide a range of retail, business, entertainment, community uses and employment opportunities which serve the need of people who live in, work in and visit the local area.
- Apply Zone B1 Neighbourhood Centre to villages which provide a range of small – scale retail, business and community uses which serve the needs of people who live and work in the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Ensure that zoning effectively discriminates between areas that are targeted for

substantial change and areas that require careful management.

3. Promote the principles and practice of good urban design

- Encourage participation, co-ordination and partnerships in consideration and development of infrastructure projects and public places.
- Promote the benefits of high quality urban design in project planning and development through programs, demonstration projects and public awareness raising.
- Reinforce the importance of active frontages between public places and the private domain to revitalise centres and create quality pedestrian experiences.
- Reinforce the expression of distinctive natural elements such as hills, watercourses and vegetation and emphasise significant views and view points.
- Identify and emphasise key arrival points into towns and reinforce the contrast between urban development and the countryside.
- Have regard to existing cultural, environmental and topographical features in the design of allotments, buildings and neighbourhoods.
- Create opportunities for cultural expression in neighbourhoods through urban design, the inclusion of art into public spaces, appropriate landscape treatments and other design techniques.

4. Enhance the livability, sense of place and sense of community in the Region

- Implement actions that build healthy communities through assisting the people within those communities to become involved in small town renewal projects such as facilitated by the handbook *Small Town Renewal – Change the Future of your Community* for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2001.
- Investigate methods of 'branding' Tamworth to create a unique marketable image which has relevance the region, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Tamworth as a vibrant and active community focused region.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.



4. Meeting Cultural and Social Needs

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth Regional Council will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Meeting cultural and social needs is measured through the four principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon. Many of the following strategic directions and actions are reflected in the Tamworth Regional Social Plan 2006.

4.1 Strategies

4.1.1 Population Profile

Projections of population numbers, age profile, rate of household formation, geographic distribution preferences, work patterns and lifestyle expectations all have key implications for planning. Over the planning period and beyond, the profile of the population of the Region will continue to change in terms of age, family structure and the way people live, recreate and work.

Tamworth's population has shown three distinct trends: its population is projected to grow at a steady rate, its age profile is projected to rise and it is predicted that there will be an out flow of young and skilled persons. While some of these population trends are the experience of many regional areas of NSW, they are particularly acute in the Tamworth Region.

It is anticipated that the most significant population change to occur will be the substantial increase in the proportion of people aged 65 and over. This will have a significant impact on demand for health services and for aged-care and residential services in the Region. The out migration of the young skilled and educated population has implications for the social and economic viability of the Region. To encourage skilled, working age young people to stay in the Region, well located jobs and an attractive environment and lifestyle must be provided.

4.1.2 Community Services and Facilities

To support and encourage a physically and socially active community, it is essential to provide access to a range of health and community services and facilities. Council needs to ensure that all members of the community have access to community centres that are well designed and maintained, accessible, with good amenity and that provide facilities applicable to the needs of specific groups.

The Region's current community services and facilities are either educational or health related and are currently focused in Tamworth City. Providing services to more remote parts of the Region is often difficult and expensive due to lower population densities and dispersed settlement patterns.

In order to effectively plan for community facilities the demand in relation to both number and range of community facilities must be clearly identified. In part, the demand for community facilities can be forecast using population figures, usage patterns of existing facilities, and to a lesser degree, benchmark standards for the provision of community facilities. Community consultation also plays a critical role in identifying the community expectations as well as their current demand for community facilities.

Community services and facilities planning should also aim to be accessible to all social groups while acknowledging that thresholds of population in some parts of the Region are insufficient to support a full range of health and community services and that alternative

arrangements may be required to ensure access to facilities in some localities.

4.1.3 Public Recreation

Open space plays an important role in providing opportunities for recreation and sporting activities. Quality open space also provides a visual contrast to the built environment, contributes to a sense of place and provides opportunities for biodiversity conservation.

There are various recreational opportunities throughout the Region, many of which focus on the natural attributes of the area. National parks such as Warrabah National Park are popular for bush walking and bird watching, while local dams including Chaffey, Dungowan, Lake Keepit, Split Rock and Sheba provide opportunities for activities such as fishing and bird watching. Other recreational facilities scattered throughout the Region include local swimming pools and parks.

To continue providing for the recreational needs of the current and future population there is a need to identify any additional recreational facilities that may be required by the community. These additional facilities need to provide for the diverse population of the Region, be equitable and encourage all people to participate.

4.1.4 Heritage

Aboriginal Heritage

With the exception of the Parry Shire LEP 1987, which lists nature reserves and Aboriginal areas, there are no Aboriginal heritage items listed under the provisions of the other LEPs that currently apply to the LGA. In 2000, a study was undertaken in the former Tamworth City LGA, which identified 66 sites of Aboriginal significance. These sites included isolated finds, artefact scatters, stone quarries and scarred trees. The study also provided detailed recommendations for the preservation and conservation of each site identified, and recommended land use activities considered appropriate to occur in the vicinity of the identified sites.

Outside the former Tamworth LGA Aboriginal heritage surveys, to date, have been undertaken in a piecemeal fashion. To ensure that Aboriginal heritage items and places are protected appropriately, sensitive areas throughout the Region need to be identified and investigated.

Non-Indigenous Heritage

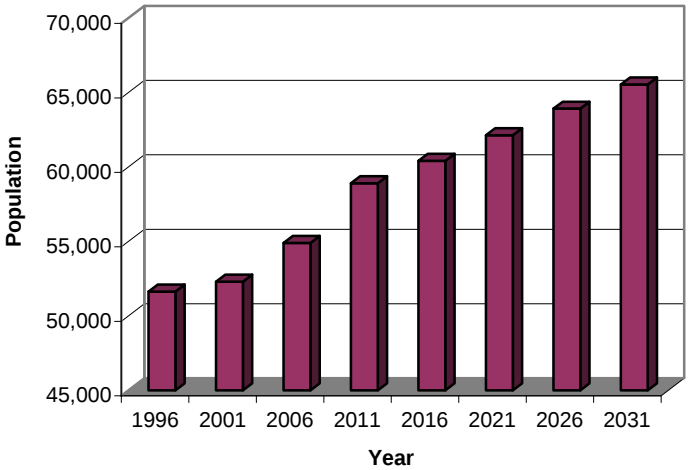
There are many items of heritage significance listed under the provisions of the five LEPs that currently apply to the LGA. Barraba has 9 items, Manilla has 17 items, Nundle has 3 items, Tamworth has 223 items and Parry has 12 items.

The first major heritage initiative by the Regional Council will be the preparation of a Community Based Heritage Study. The study will focus on areas where there have been no previous studies undertaken. Heritage studies have been previously undertaken for the former Tamworth City and Parry Shire LGAs (Tamworth Heritage Study 1988 and Parry Community Based Heritage Study 2003). Therefore, the project will involve the communities of Nundle, Manilla and parts of Barraba in the identification and assessment of significant heritage places within their communities.

4.1.5 Public Art

Public art can significantly increase a community's quality of life by developing public spaces to become 'distinctive lifestyle environments' which reflect local cultures, their aspirations, concerns, local issues, and identities. In turn, public art can provide people

Figure 4.1 Tamworth Region Population 1996 to 2031



Source: Department of Planning (2004), Transport & Population Data Centre, Statistical Local Area Population Projections



with opportunities to learn and understand, which develops a sense of belonging, promotes community pride, encourages inspiration and facilitates a stronger connection to community life.

At present there are few examples of public art in the Tamworth Region, with existing pieces being largely located in Peel Street and the Botanical Gardens. To enhance the community's experience of public space, efficient and effective planning and management processes need to be integrated for public art into the Tamworth's infrastructure. The result will be enriched public spaces with art works that celebrate and reflect local cultures and add a feeling of quality to people's daily experiences.

4.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

4.2.1 Population Profile

1. Develop policies that support the ageing population

- (a) Facilitate closer examination of the impact of an ageing population on Tamworth Regional Council finances (revenue and expenditure) and service provision (infrastructure, community support, health promotion and aged care services).
- (b) Facilitate effective engagement of older people in local government decision-making processes by fostering relationships with seniors' organisations (in particular organisations that represent the diversity of older people's needs and circumstances, including those of Indigenous Australians and culturally and linguistically diverse groups).
- (c) Provide the opportunity in policies for sites for retirement villages, nursing homes and similar accommodation, which will induce downstream effects and free up family housing. The sites for aged housing need to be integrated within the community and have ready access to transport and other community and human services.
- (d) Facilitate joint developments between providers of housing, Council and community groups to provide aged housing.

2. Develop policies that aim to retain youth within the Tamworth Region

- (a) Encourage opportunities to develop youth training and education programmes.
- (b) Foster employment opportunities for young adults and offer more traineeship programs, cadetships and apprenticeships.
- (c) Form a Youth Advisory Committee to the Council.
- (d) Identify young people's 'desired future' for the region. This will determine the youth requirements/needs within Tamworth, which will include the current 'gaps' in youth services and facilities.

4.2.2 Community Services and Facilities

3. Locate and design community services and facilities within the Tamworth Region to meet the needs of the community and to ensure equitable access

- (a) Review Council's current Community Plan to reassess community needs and desires in relation to community facilities and services. This should include a community needs assessments and stakeholder consultation.
- (b) Identify areas that are lacking services and develop collaborative arrangements to

provide these facilities and services. Foster effective partnerships between public, private and community sectors in responding to identified community needs and in developing services.

- (c) Monitor population and socio-demographic trends and prepare local area demographic projections to guide government, community and industry in the provision of community facilities and services.
- (d) Investigate opportunities to expand existing and/or create additional Council managed community services and facilities (via Section 94 funds, if required).
- (e) Investigate opportunities for mobile health care services to overcome the distance between settlements in the Region.
- (f) Encourage the co-location of health and community services and facilities with public transport, activity centres and housing to improve accessibility.
- (g) Facilitate improved community access and delivery of health and community services and facilities, particularly in areas with disadvantaged communities.

4.2.3 Public Recreation

4. Provide recreational opportunities that respond to the present and future leisure and recreation needs of the changing population

- (a) Develop an open space/recreation plan for the Region that identifies guiding principles, priorities, goals and strategies for the provision of future recreational facilities.
- (b) Existing recreational facilities that require upgrade work should be identified and prioritised to enhance facilities and to maximise utilisation.
- (c) Develop family orientated recreation events/facilities.
- (d) Design open space and recreation facilities to cater for people with special needs, including people of different cultures, ages and/or with disabilities.
- (e) Develop recreation and sport facilities that are multi-use (including the shared use of school facilities) and which are able to accommodate changing use over time.
- (f) Set aside land for future recreation and sport needs and ensure land currently used and earmarked for future recreation and sport activities is appropriately zoned and protected from incremental development.

4.2.4 Heritage

5. Identify items and places of Aboriginal heritage significance in the Tamworth Region

- (a) Undertake an assessment of the Aboriginal heritage in the LGA, in consultation with local Aboriginal groups.

6. Identify items and places of European heritage significance in the Tamworth Region

- (a) Ensure that adequate community consultation is undertaken with respect to identification of heritage items. This is to include discussions with affected landowners.



7. Protect and enhance identified heritage values

- (a) Include a list of heritage items, conservation areas and Aboriginal areas (where appropriate) in the LEP.
- (b) Review the existing development control plans for Tamworth City and the towns and villages throughout the Region, which have identified heritage character, and amend where necessary.
- (c) Develop streetscape protection and improvement measures for all villages.
- (d) In collaboration with the Department of Environment and Conservation, develop a long-term strategy for the management of Aboriginal heritage items in the Tamworth Region.

8. Increase community awareness and involvement in identifying, protecting and enhancing heritage

- (a) Develop and implement an education program, which informs the community of the benefits of heritage conservation.
- (b) Continue to provide free heritage advice to residents.
- (c) Encourage landowners to prepare conservation plans for significant items and places.

4.2.5 Public Art

9. Encourage public art in the development of public areas to create distinctive environments.

- (a) Research the values of local communities and their environment to develop themes for public artworks that are representative of the communities' distinctiveness.
- (b) Develop public art projects as part of gateways where they are the point where people first observe and experience the "sense of arrival" in the Tamworth Region.
- (c) Research and contact organisations and other stakeholders that may be able to assist with and support public art projects.
- (d) Research and seek funding for public art from various sources such as local businesses, organisations and Council partnerships.
- (e) Develop strategies to create community involvement and ownership of public art.
- (f) Develop a Public Art Strategy that provides a framework and conceptual guidelines for the implementation of public art.
- (g) Support the creation of art works that promote social cohesion and consider access, equity and usage issues.



Public Art features in the streetscape can provide unique opportunities to tell stories or explore historical or heritage themes.



Interpretive panels tell stories of past uses



Walkways and Pavements provide a framework for Public Art



Introduce new urban spaces, public art and squares in conjunction with streetscape improvements

5. Meeting Future Housing Needs

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Issues such as household structure, housing choice, housing affordability, supply of and demand for housing, built form and urban design influence the ability of the Region to meet future housing needs.

5.1 Strategies

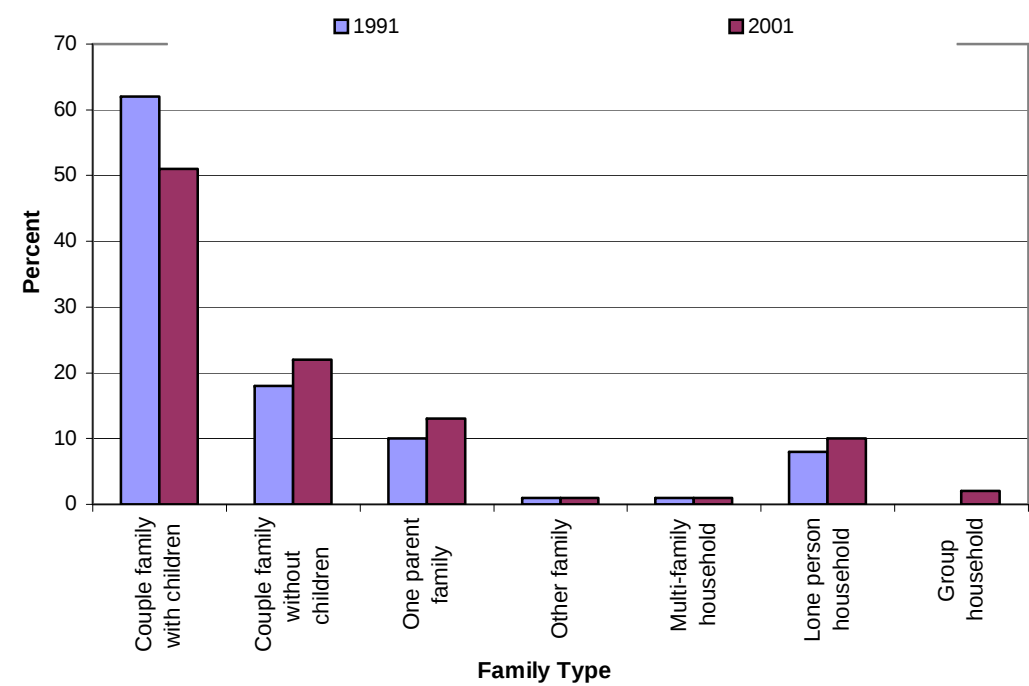
5.1.1 Household Structure

Household structure provides an indication of the type of housing that will be in demand within a region. Couple families with children were the predominant family type (62%) within the Tamworth Region in 1991. Other family types in 1991 included couple families without children (18%), lone person households (8%) and one parent families (10%).

In 2001, only 51% of households consisted of couple families with children, 22% consisted of couple families without children, 13% comprised one parent families and 1% other families. Lone person households consisted of 10% of households as shown below.

The changes in household structure indicate that fewer families are having children and there are a greater proportion of one parent households and lone person households in the Tamworth Region. This trend is likely to continue and will ultimately impact upon housing choice.

Figure 5.1 Tamworth Region 1991 and 2001; Household Structure



5.1.2 Housing Choice

The predominant form of housing in the Tamworth Region is detached dwellings on large (700 – 1,000m²) lots. Other popular forms of housing include dwellings on rural residential or lifestyle lots. In 2001, there were a total of 26,806 dwellings within the Tamworth Region. Detached dwellings made up 79%, flats, units and apartments made up 7.3%, semi-detached houses and townhouses made up 2.4% and caravans, cabins and houseboats made up 1.1%.

It is expected that with an ageing population, a reduction in occupancy rates and changes in household structure, future housing in the Tamworth Region will need to include a range of types and tenures and be adaptable to various lifestyles and situations and, particularly, smaller households.

Low density housing, whilst a popular form of housing, cannot always cater for all sections of the community. Strategies should therefore be developed that aim to provide a variety of housing types in order to cater for the elderly, young and socially disadvantaged groups in the community.

5.1.3 Housing Affordability

“Affordable housing is housing for low to moderate income earners that is priced at such a level that allows them enough income after paying housing costs to meet other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. While the term can encompass public and community housing (generally called social housing) it is more often used to describe other forms of assistance targeted to people who are either not eligible for social housing or who tend not to be able to access it.” (Source: National Housing Strategy 1992).

Generally factors which indicate the need the affordable housing relate to income levels, unemployment rates, single parent families, young people, housing prices, rents and mortgage levels.

Parts of the Tamworth Region have relatively high levels of unemployment, retirees on fixed incomes and low-income earners, thus placing increased demand on the provision of affordable and special needs housing. Further, it is also home to an increasing number of families, especially single parent families.

There are a number of reasons why strategic actions are needed to address the affordable housing issue:

- The Region has a high proportion of population over 65 years of age and this is projected to continue for at least the next 20 years;
- Tamworth will continue to attract more holiday-makers, retirees and families escaping the city for a healthy lifestyle. Those seeking to invest in a holiday house are looking for reasonably priced units close to entertainment (shops and restaurants). The retirees and families coming to the area are generally active and affluent having just received their superannuation or sold houses in the city at a relatively high price. As a consequence they are seeking medium to large residential lots to build, or to buy established houses in the more modern areas and close to amenities. The developers are responding to this demand with older housing stock close to services gradually being redeveloped. The new housing estates are continuing to focus on the standard detached houses and prices are generally increasing with demand;
- As older areas redevelop, those families that previously occupied the older housing stock are being forced out of town or at least to the fringe locations away from services and amenities;



- As the population in the area increases and the retired population becomes older and less financially secure, the demand for smaller forms of housing will correspondingly increase. However, the ability to provide that form of housing will no longer be available.
- The ageing of the general population of Australia is inevitable and plans to accommodate those people in their later years must be initiated now before the opportunities are lost.

It is clear from the analysis that the Tamworth Region and particularly Tamworth City as the main population centre, is going to experience pressures from population growth. In coming years the demand for affordable and special needs housing will rise. Without action, Council may see increases in unemployment levels, homelessness, crime, and domestic violence. A proactive, concerted and coordinated effort by all stakeholders is needed if these problems are to be avoided.

5.2 Housing Supply and Demand

The housing market in the Tamworth Region is complex with different markets operating across each locality based to varying degrees on the needs of first and second home buyers, retirees, investors and renters as well as lifestyle choice. An analysis of the supply and demand for residential and rural residential housing within the LGA is required to determine the ability of the existing settlements to grow and accommodate future growth and will provide the basis upon which additional land may be needed.

5.2.1 Residential Housing

Supply

The majority of settlements across the Tamworth Region have capacity for additional housing. It has been estimated from a detailed land audit that a total of 195ha of residential land is available for additional housing in Tamworth City. Of this 195ha, 114ha has already been approved for development. A potential lot yield of 987 lots is anticipated for the remainder of the land not under consent.

Table 5.1 Unconstrained Residential Land Register

Suburb	Under Consent (ha)	Available & not under consent (ha)	Total Land Available & immediate release(ha)	Lots approved - yet to be released	Land available & not under consent – (Potential Lot Yield)
Calala	60.87	3.26	64.13	264	38
Coledale	6.57	3.08	9.65	0	43
East Tamworth	-	43.00	43.00	-	517
Nemingha	-	-	0.00	-	
North Tamworth	2.60	14.50	17.10	10	174
Oxley Vale	13.38	8.40	21.78	119	119

Suburb	Under Consent (ha)	Available & not under consent (ha)	Total Land Available & immediate release(ha)	Lots approved - yet to be released	Land available & not under consent – (Potential Lot Yield)
South Tamworth	6.02	0.00	6.02	87	0
Westdale	25.31	8.06	33.37	220	96
TOTAL	114.74	80.30	195.04	700	987

The majority of this land is located in the suburbs of East Tamworth (517), North Tamworth (174), Oxley Vale (119) and Westdale (96).

In addition to the existing developed areas, the Hills Plain area, north of Tamworth, has been identified to accommodate Tamworth's long term residential and rural residential development. The Master Plan adopted in 1995 comprises the following key elements:

- The progressive staged release of land for rural residential and residential land over the next 60 years introducing an ultimate population of up to 10,000 people.
- The release area will comprise four distinct housing areas and densities progressively decreasing from the centre towards the edge in the following manner:
 - in the southern part of the site are lots less than 2000 m² are proposed,
 - in the central and southern parts of the site the lot size proposed will be between 2000 m² and 4000m² are proposed,
 - in the southern part of the site the lot size proposed will be from 4000m² to 1 hectare; and
 - in the eastern part of the site the lot size proposed will greater than 1 hectare.

The towns of Barraba, Kootingal, Manilla, and Nundle have large amounts of unconstrained land available for development with potential lot yields in the order of 181, 245, 265, 63 lots respectively.

Table 5.2 Unconstrained Residential Land Register- Other Villages

Town/ Village	Under Consent (ha)	Available & not under consent (ha)	Total Unconstrained Land (ha)	Lots approved - yet to be released	Available & not under consent – (Potential Lot Yield)
Attunga		16.55	16.55		68
Barraba		14.59	14.59		181
Bendemeer		8.61	8.61		34
Dungowan		10.77	10.77		47
Duri		15.10	15.10		64
Hanging Rock	2.27	2.68	4.95	2	11



Kootingal	2.31	19.13	21.44	20	245
Manilla		25.42	25.42		265
Moonbi	3.80	6.70	10.50	6	35
Nundle		14.93	14.93		63
Somerton		0.00	0.00		0
Woolbrook		0.00	0.00		0
Woolomin		0.00	0.00		0
TOTAL	8.38	134.47	142.85	28	1013 ????

Opportunities also exist for additional housing within the villages of such as Attunga (16.55ha), Bendemeer (8.61ha), Dungowan (10.77ha), Duri (15.10ha), Moonbi (6.70ha) and the rural centre of Hanging Rock (2.68ha). However, no land is available at Somerton, Woolbrook or Woolomin.

Demand

Building approvals in the Tamworth Region have historically indicated a healthy supply of building activity. Dwelling growth for the ten-year period between 1991 and 2001 was 2,516 dwellings (ABS: *Census data*) or 10.3 %, (an average annual growth rate of 1 %). Between 1999 and 2003 there were a total of 1,215 dwelling units created within the Region or an average of 243 dwellings per year. Over this five-year period \$308 million dollars was spent in building approval in the Tamworth Region.

Approximately 80% of these dwellings approved were on residential/ village lots. It has been calculated that approximately 194 dwellings per year (over the five year period) were approved on residential lots. In light of the above growth rates, it has been estimated that the Region will need to accommodate approximately 213 dwellings per year or 4,260 dwellings over the life (20 years) of the Strategy.

5.2.2 Rural residential Housing

Rural residential development involves the subdivision of rural landholdings into lots usually between 4,000m² and 5 ha. Although electricity supply is provided; roads may be sealed with culvert drainage only, water may be supplied by rainwater tanks, and on-site effluent disposal may be required.

There is significant demand for rural residential development in the Tamworth Region. These developments do not allow for any productive rural activity and residents are usually reliant on the commercial, community and employment services of nearby centres. They present the following issues for the Tamworth Region:

- Retention and management of remnant vegetation;
- Impacts on the visual character of the rural environment;
- The inflexibility of subdivision and development patterns to accommodate transition to alternative uses, in particular the utilisation of land that may have potential for urban expansion;
- Loss of productive agricultural resources;
- Impacts on delivery of Council and other public services to remote, under-populated locations;

- Sustainability issues associated with reliance on longer private car journeys; and
- Environmental management, such as effluent disposal, flora and fauna and bushfire protection.

Trend data has shown that rural residential lots are very popular, provided the prices are reasonable. As demand generally always outstrips supply opportunities, it is inappropriate to seek to satisfy demand.

Supply

Existing rural residential development is located within the former Parry and Nundle Shires and Tamworth City. Land zoned for rural residential purposes totals 24,296ha. Currently, there is 6,365 hectares of developed rural residential land in these areas. The remaining 17,931 hectares of the rural residential land is vacant, and of this:

- 3,713 hectares is considered unconstrained of which 3,230 hectares is considered available and not under consent; and
- 14,219 hectares of land available that is constrained.

The amount of unconstrained available land not under consent will yield a potential 2,603 lots. In addition, a total of 13,781 hectares of constrained land exists within these areas. The lot yield cannot be accurately quantified, as constraints are not fully understood.

Table 5.3 Rural residential Land Availability

Location and Zone	Land Unconstrained Under Consent (ha)	Land Unconstrained available & not under consent (ha)	Total Unconstrained Land Available (ha)	Land Unconstrained available & not under consent (Lot Yield)	Lots approved - yet to be released
Nundle Land Zoned 1(b)	-	0.00	0	0	-
Nundle Land Zoned 1(b2)	-	0.00	0	0	-
Nundle Land Zoned 1(c)	-	89.33	89.33	152	-
Nundle Mixed Zone	-	0.00	0	0	-
Subtotal	0.00	89.33	89.33	152	0
Tamworth Land Zoned 1(d)	3.91	7.39	11.30	16	5
Tamworth Land Zoned 1(h)	95.81	59.15	154.95	58	73
Tamworth Land with	21.00	0.00	21.00	0	5



Location and Zone	Land Unconstrained Under Consent (ha)	Land Unconstrained available & not under consent (ha)	Total Unconstrained Land Available (ha)	Land Unconstrained available & not under consent (Lot Yield)	Lots approved - yet to be released
Mixed Zones					
Subtotal	120.71	66.54	187.25	74	83
PARRY Land Zoned 1(r)	195.1988	2643.83	2839.03	1125	90
PARRY HILLS PLAIN 1(r)	166.72	430.62	597.34	1251	274
Subtotal	361.91	3074.45	3436.36	2377	364
TOTAL	482.63	3230.32	3712.95	2603	447

Whilst there are significant areas of potential land available for rural residential development, it is a costly development form. In order to accommodate growth in a sustainable fashion, it is necessary to identify constraints to development and to determine the highest and best use of developable land so that its economic potential is realised within its environmental limits. However, it should be recognised that market forces including land ownership will play an important role in influencing the rate and location of development. Future allocation decisions should take into account the existing availability of land allocated for rural residential purposes and the environmental constraints that exist within already zoned areas.

Demand

It has been calculated from building approvals that there will be a demand for approximately 58 dwellings per year or 1,160 dwellings over the life (20 years) of the Strategy.

Given that there is currently a supply of 2,603 unconstrained lots available in the Tamworth Region, this represents a significant over supply of rural residential land.

This Strategy recommends the consolidation of the existing rural residential land and the selection of sites and application of minimum development criteria to address the above issues.

5.3 Built Form and Urban Design

Each community during the consultation period supported development that is designed to suit the character of existing development with good connections to public open space. This should be encouraged in new developments in order to avoid the mistakes of past urban design practices that limit mobility and restrict the development of communities.

It is also proposed that medium-density residential development be encouraged adjacent to the Tamworth CBD and other town centres throughout the Region. This provides more opportunities for residents to walk or cycle to the town centre for shopping, community services or entertainment.

5.4 Land Use Outcomes

This Strategy identifies the preferred location of residential expansion areas, rural residential development, in addition to infill, consolidation and mixed-use opportunities offered by the existing settlement hierarchy. Development should be integrated with the district and regional open space networks outlined in this Strategy and include local open space networks that create appropriate connections. Local structure planning is required to clarify the detailed local road and infrastructure networks, lot layouts, land use and urban form outcomes. Local area strategies contained in this Strategy should also guide the future preparation of local structure plans, subdivision and development approvals.

5.5 Strategic Directions and Actions

5.5.1 Housing Choice

1. Ensure that opportunities exist for a variety of housing types across the Region.

- A range of housing types, tenures and styles should be available to meet the needs of people at different stages of their life cycle and those in difficult economic circumstances.
- Dwellings should be appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the household in terms of the number, size and configuration of rooms; safety considerations; the versatility of indoor/outdoor spaces, and ease of physical access, regardless of the physical capacity of household members.
- Planning should seek to facilitate the provision of housing for a range of income earners.
- Allow for greater densities adjacent to the CBD and other town centres (preferably within 400m of those town centres).
- Encourage medium density development adjacent to the Tamworth CBD and ensure development complements the existing heritage character of the area.
- Encourage mixed use development within the B3 Commercial Core zone under the new LEP.
- Introduce DCP controls in Residential and Subdivision DCPs in relation to dwelling and hard-stand site coverage ratios in various zones. This will address the issue of large dwellings on smaller lots as well as sustainability and urban design considerations.
- Provide incentives to developers to build housing to adaptable design standards.
- Identify and promote appropriate sites for aged care facilities and seniors living developments.

2. Ensure that opportunities exist for housing in a choice of locations across the Region.

- Housing should be well located in relation to places of employment and to the range of services, facilities, communication and transport networks required to meet other household needs.
- Maintain adequate supply of residential zoned land across the Tamworth urban area and throughout the towns and villages to suit a range of buyers' tastes and economic



Housing Choice: A range of lot sizes and dwelling types should be provided in an integrated manner, which better responds to changing demographic and lifestyle demands.



Investigation of neighbouring lots, streets and blocks is required to understand the elements that contribute to neighbourhood character.

circumstances.

- (c) Planning and design should ensure that residential neighbourhoods and buildings are compatible with adjacent land uses.

3. Ensure housing is sustainable.

- (a) House planning and design should be responsive to local microclimate and environmental conditions by incorporating energy and water efficient design principles, in line with the requirements of the BASIX SEPP.

5.5.2 Housing Affordability

4. Investigate mechanisms to increase the availability of affordable housing in the Tamworth Region.

- (a) Prepare an affordable housing strategy that offers a variety of options and incentives for the provision of such housing by both the public and private sectors.
- (b) Develop planning provisions that provide density bonuses and development concessions to provide a proportion of affordable housing in new housing developments.
- (c) Investigate the development of an incentive system / developer agreements to facilitate affordable housing (eg. reduced car parking requirements, density bonuses, rate reductions for welfare organisations).
- (d) Encourage the development of shop-top housing development within the commercial centres to provide an alternative housing choice close to services, to increase vitality and viability of the retail centres and improve security through casual surveillance.
- (e) Consider joint venture housing projects for the provision of affordable and social housing with non-profit housing providers/managers.

5.5.3 Housing Supply and Demand

5. Ensure adequate supply of residential and rural residential land for future generations.

- (a) Zone all residential land identified as unconstrained and available for development either R1 General Residential, R2 Low Density Residential or RU5 Village under the new LEP.
- (b) Zone all identified rural residential land R5 Large Lot Residential under the new LEP.
- (c) Investigate development strategies for Woolomin, Woolbrook and Hanging Rock for any future housing potential. Consideration needs to be given to the heavily constrained land restricting future development.

6. Minimise the impacts housing may have on the surrounding environment.

- (a) Discourage location of rural residential development in areas of environmental, natural resource or prime agricultural significance.
- (b) Utilise watercourses in new development areas to improve water sensitive urban design. This improves existing drainage schemes by accommodating additional loads. An urban design approach that contains run-off will minimize pollution of

affected watercourses; and

- (c) Implement a range of water sensitive urban design initiatives for urban expansion and infill areas. The initiatives would reduce the size of the structural stormwater system required to accommodate flows and place no additional loads into the existing system. They would include a combination of conventional closed pipes and alternative drainage approaches based on local rainfall volumes, and include:
 - Integration of natural drainage lines into the landscape;
 - Flush kerbing and or porous road surfaces to facilitate run-off;
 - Grassed and vegetated swales and localised small retention areas within some nature strips and road reserves, including provision for car parking on nature strips using permeable surfaces; and
 - Water infiltration and pollution filtration techniques.
- (d) Rural housing shall be limited to only one dwelling per lot. Rural Manager's residences or 'granny flats' will only be considered in association with a land use that is permissible in the zone.

5.5.4 Built Form and Urban Design

7. Ensure housing is in keeping with the desired character of each settlement.

- (a) Prepare desired character statements and DCPs that reinforce the design of housing and subdivision within each settlement.
- (b) Housing should fit into and enhance the neighbourhood, ensure privacy to residents and neighbours, and incorporate the principles of crime prevention through environmental design. Maximise sustainable use of resources, including water, energy, transport and community service delivery.
- (c) Neighbourhood design should promote safe and convenient pedestrian access to local services and facilities.
- (d) Develop public open space, as multi-purpose corridors that include passive and active recreation opportunities, storm water retention, drainage lines, floodways, riparian vegetation, water features and habitat protection and conservation.
- (e) Provide for open space corridors and linkages, encouraging integration of existing and future open spaces.
- (f) Encourage local community and commercial centres to co-locate and shared use of spaces, buildings and viable public transport nodes.

8. Promote high quality design in housing.

- (a) Promote the benefits of good urban design through development industry seminars and newsletters.
- (b) Investigate the feasibility of running a regular Urban Design Awards program.



Patterns of street planting, front gardens and fences and the massing and architectural style of built form all contribute to streetscape character.



Smart Urban Design: Retention of existing trees and generous planting in front setbacks makes a positive contribution to the streetscape.

6. Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Supporting and protecting rural futures is measured through the three principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

6.1 Strategies

There is significant economic diversity among the rural sector in the Region including agriculture, horticulture, organic farming, commercial forestry and grazing. In addition there is a significant value adding, processing and packaging sector for local commodities. The rural sector is also of indirect but essential significance to the Region's tourism and recreation sectors. Both sectors gain considerable benefit from the landscapes and rural character generated by primary industry.

6.1.1 Managing Primary Production

The Tamworth Region has a healthy, expanding primary industry sector with potential for further growth. The majority of primary industries within the Region are able to generate high returns per hectare, and are capable of using their proximity to markets and transport terminals to their advantage. Besides the recent strong growth of poultry in the Region, there are a number of other industries expected to prosper. The most significant of these will be the equine, olives, and lot feeding of lamb and cattle.

Throughout the Region a number of traditional primary industries such as dairy farming and intensive animal keeping are relocating to areas where land is cheaper, competition for water resources is lower, and primary producers have more choices for their businesses. In some cases primary producers have closed operations and sold land for urban development to take advantage of the high market prices for residential development. As urban areas have expanded, in particular large allotments or rural living areas adjacent to productive areas, conflict between uses at interfaces has been exacerbated. This has led to further relocation as producers seek land without such conflicts.

It is vital for the growth of the Regions economy that existing viable primary industries are retained and further investment in primary production in suitable locations is supported. The Tamworth planning system needs to support high levels of new investment and to protect existing investment. In areas where there is limited pressure from urbanisation, it is also important to provide flexibility, particularly to facilitate changes in land use. This will enable primary industry to invest and develop as a result of changes in technology, markets, production constraints and economies of scale.

One way to achieve that flexibility, while maintaining adequate certainty for investment decisions, is to base decisions on development for primary production in rural areas on performance-based policies. Performance based policies should be objective and measurable and be based mainly on the effect of a proposed land use on the site, off-site and on other planning objectives on a particular site. They can be derived from land capability criteria for land uses, environmental targets and various natural resource plans and should be applied to the needs of the industry sectors in specific rural zones.

The localised circumstances in Tamworth will determine how performance-based policies are applied in each area. The performance-based approach should be adapted and differentiated to recognise the unique circumstances of Tamworth. These should then take into account factors such as economic and industry trends and threats, information about land and water resources and infrastructure availability and capacity. An appreciation of likely impact on local circumstances should ensure the potential for land use conflict does not exceed the capacity for its management.

6.1.2 Broadacre Farming and Intensive Agriculture

Farming, and the industries associated with it, is an important employment and income generating activity. Land use planning needs to understand and accommodate changes in agriculture such as export market opportunities, diversify product range, add value by brand processing and improve production, processing and marketing techniques. Better market signals and better research are also needed to enable rural producers to respond quickly to changes in consumer patterns and to encourage sustainable practices.

Intensive agriculture can still be permissible with consent in a primary production zone. Many types of intensive agriculture are also designated development, and therefore must be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement, which assists Council in assessing applications on their merits.

Intensive agriculture must be a genuine business, based on economic and environmental assessment. Intensive agriculture is not the same as a boutique/hobby industry, which is not likely to be the sole or major source of income for a landholder. Such uses may be more appropriate in the Rural Small Holdings Zone. Excessive fragmentation of rural land with dwelling potential contributes to a price inflation, which limits the ability for farm adjustment or new farmers to enter the industry. There is also a cost to the community in terms of provision of services and infrastructure, particularly road maintenance, and competition with residential neighbourhoods.

6.1.3 Rural Small Holdings

The new LEP template specifies that this zone must only be used for small farms in particular emerging industries. It is not to be used where the main purpose of the allotment is for a dwelling.

The use of this zone raises several questions: Where should these farms occur? How does Council determine what is a genuine small farm? How can that be enforced? Can it rely on off-farm income to support, including retirees and pensioners.

Rural Small Holdings does result in land fragmentation, which influences land prices, places demands on services, can cause land use conflicts and may increase water demands.

Current Rural Small Holdings (holdings less than 40 ha) are located throughout the region however, there is a small concentration around the regional centre, towns, villages and rural centres.

Niche agriculture (such as horticulture, intensive agriculture etc) historically utilizes smaller holdings within the Tamworth Region. Given that there is already a variety of existing holding sizes throughout the Region (51.6% of holdings are under 40 hectares) it is



considered the current supply is sufficient to support this industry. In addition, the LEP will ensure other mechanisms are in place which will ensure the supply of this industry is maintained, such mechanisms include farm boundary adjustment clauses, subdivision with-out dwelling potential clauses and rural worker dwelling provisions. These provisions should facilitate flexibility and opportunity yet prevent fragmentation in the rural zone meeting Tamworth Council's Rural Zone objectives, community concerns and create an environment, which will foster niche agriculture.

Under the current Tamworth LEP 1996 the 1(h) zone Rural small holdings is for closer rural settlement in the Hills Plain East Area. The current objectives of this zone do not transfer into the standard LEP template - RU4 Rural small holdings and will need to be included into a separate rural residential zone.

6.1.4 Protecting Primary Production

As outlined in the Issues Paper, protecting primary production includes maintaining the availability of land for agriculture, avoiding unnecessary limitations on the use of the land and promoting agricultural enterprises that are consistent with the principles of ecological sustainable development.

In developing a LEP it is important that that the plan identifies clearly the importance of agriculture to the LGA's economy including, but not limited to:

- ▶ Promote the continued use of agricultural land, particularly prime crop and pasture land for agricultural purposes, where that form of land use is sustainable in the long term.
- ▶ Recognise the significance of prime agricultural land and the need to protect this resource.
- ▶ Recognition for small and family farm operations and the need to protect this resource.
- ▶ Recognise the significance and protection of value adding industries.
- ▶ Maintain capacity of farmers to respond to the pressures of the international economy and globalisation.

The Government protects agricultural land by supporting landholders and developing partnerships between Council, state government agencies such as the Department of Primary Industries, Department of Natural Resources and Catchment Management Authorities, and community organisations such as Landcare.

A Local Environmental Plan (LEP), including zoning and development controls, is one tool available to Councils to protect agricultural land. Council is currently working towards a new LEP, based upon the Standard Instrument Order, which has been prepared by the State Government. The Order prescribes a standard form and content of a principal LEP. Councils then tailor the detail of the LEP to meet their needs.

The Order provides standard zones for Councils to use and gives guidance about the intended uses for zones. Councils then apply the zones to land by making locally appropriate decisions.

6.1.5 Poultry

The poultry industry is a significant contributor to the regional economy. The industry comprises both meat and egg production and is a well established and mature industry in Tamworth. Tamworth has the exciting prospect of becoming a major stakeholder in

fulfilling the growing demand for poultry products in Australia and internationally. Its natural resources and market based cost competitiveness creates the opportunity to further expand its poultry industry. To achieve growth of this scale, significant cooperation between industry and local and state governments is essential. It is critical that development is well planned to ensure both security and confidence with industry investors as well as managing community–industry interactions.

Broiler farms are dispersed throughout the Region however the largest concentrations tend to be at Wallamore, Moonbi, Somerton and Attunga, however operations are also located at Manilla. In the past 10 years, there has been an expansion of the poultry uses to the North Western parts of the Region in the Wallamore, Gidley, Bective, Winton and Somerton areas.

The poultry industry is a may cause potential land use conflicts. The impacts of poultry are may include odour, dust and noise. The most effective mechanism to avoid the impacts is to have an adequate buffer around the sheds.

Poultry farms therefore need to be located on large properties. The locational requirements for poultry farms include a good source of water (usually directly extracted from the rivers), good road access for the delivery of feed and transportation to the processing plant.

There are many opportunities for growth in poultry farming in Tamworth Region. However, this sector needs careful planning in terms of pollution controls and timely development of infrastructure in support of industry expansion. The planning must also ensure the separation of these uses from residential activities and producers should be able to have confidence in the planning system to retain the integrity of such buffers between potentially incompatible uses. Therefore planning strategies must consider requirements such as sensitive siting, substantial separation distances and major infrastructure requirements in zones or areas appropriate for this high impact industry. It is important to maintain a merit-based approach to accommodating landuse relating to the poultry industry across the LGA.

6.1.6 Equine

The equine industry is a strong and growing industry and a major contributor to the regional economy. The equine and livestock industry is estimated to be worth about \$45 million a year to the area and the development of the Equine Centre will be a further catalyst to increased demand for small to medium sized lots for recreational and commercial users alike. There is a substantial opportunity to further develop this key sector of the economy and building an internationally recognised equine industry area.

The Tamworth Region has a number of key strengths in terms of equine industry development and opportunities. These include the rural setting and availability of suitable land for equine industry activities, the concentration of investment and major events in Tamworth and existing facilities in Tamworth Region for equine use.

However, the equine industry faces several challenges. Perhaps the single most important challenge in relation to land use planning for equine related development is that of water supply (for drinking, cleaning and washing) as there will be a significant increase in water demand for both stock intake and for small acreage irrigation. Small acreage subdivisions may, if inappropriately planned, result in competition for limited water resources. Overstocking can also denude paddocks, increase seasonal fly populations and create dust nuisance. Furthermore ancillary issues such as the ability to dispose of solid waste and the necessity of providing adequate areas for trail riding off properties will require due consideration.



Given the potential impacts of this form of development, 'equine estates' or cluster developments where joint working facilities such as stockyards and arenas may be shared between landowners within a designed subdivision, may represent a better land use planning solution. Such developments would assist in limiting congestion, overstocking and expensive duplication of capital works. They would also group like-minded people to ensure greater community acceptance and minimise potential land use conflicts. Cluster equine industries will also reduce the impact on the residential amenity of adjoining properties, particularly where adjoining properties are not used for equine. The development of a Tamworth Regional Equine Industry Development Strategy and the subsequent formation of an equine industry cluster in the Region will support economic growth in this sector of the economy

This strategy will seek to rationalise the location of the equine industry, and to encourage such uses to group together within well-defined areas, based on the location of infrastructure. This will be achieved through the use of zoning overlay or a Special Activities Zone for equine industry and related activities. Discussions with local development industry representatives reveal that the demand for small to medium sized lots is likely to be experienced in locations relatively close to Tamworth and around Piallamore. In addition to these designated areas, it is important to maintain a merit-based approach to accommodating landuse related to the equine industry across the LGA.

6.1.7 Extractive Industries

New mines have the potential to affect water resources, native vegetation, human health and adjacent land uses and, therefore, should be established only after relevant investigative and approval processes have been undertaken and managed carefully.

The EP&A Act requires mining companies to undertake a detailed planning process before they seek development consent from the Government to construct a mine on a particular site. Companies must also satisfy the requirements of the NSW Mining Act 1992 before they can obtain a lease on the site and commence operations.

The conditions placed by the State Government on the consent and the lease ensure that the site is managed in an environmentally responsible and accountable way during the life of the mine, and that the site is rehabilitated when the mine closes.

The DoP amended the EP&A Act in August 2005 and is proposing to amend the Mining Act to streamline these processes. In accordance with DPI recommendations, future potential mining development needs to consider the following:

- Operating mines and quarries should be protected from sterilisation or hindrance by encroachment of incompatible adjacent development;
- Known resources and areas of identified high mineral potential should not be unnecessarily sterilised by inappropriate zoning or development; and
- Access to land for mineral exploration and possible development should be maintained over as much of the planning area as possible.

6.1.8 Forestry

Forestry in the form of tree plantations and agroforestry, has become an important part of rural land use activities. This is occurring as a result of structural changes within the agricultural and forestry sectors of the economy, and the benefits of tree planting for land care, salinity and erosion issues.

This Strategy recognises the potential economic and environmental benefits of forestry and supports this where it would not adversely affect agriculture, remnant vegetation, the visual resource or constitute a fire hazard to settled areas.

Existing State Forests and possibly forest plantations registered under the *Plantation and Reafforestation Act 1999* should be recognised to allow the identification of interfaces between forestry and other land uses. This could be achieved either through the RU3 Forestry zoning under the new LEP template or development control mechanisms built into this zones. The intent of these policies is to protect stock, crops and soil and water resources.

6.1.9 Land Use Conflicts

The most significant source of conflict is the introduction of residential uses into rural areas, which can result in significant conflict between the new residents and adjoining primary producers. However, land use conflict also occurs between different types of agricultural activities, such as between viticulture and broadacre cropping, and should be addressed through appropriate development controls such as buffer zones.

Although most of the impacts result from what are regarded as legitimate and acceptable farm management practices; public pressure from residents and tourists can be a constraint to adjacent or nearby farming operations.

Separation areas, buffers, compatible use areas, and other mechanisms can be established to reduce the likelihood of conflict. These mechanisms can also protect conservation areas and separate infrastructure (e.g. a sewerage plant) or recreation (e.g. a speedway) from other incompatible uses.

Buffers are one of the most important land planning strategies to mitigate conflicting land uses and reduce the potential impact of one activity on an adjoining activity. The effectiveness of buffers depends on site variables, requiring a detailed site investigation. Development within nominated buffer areas should require a detailed land use conflict risk assessment.

Impact from spray drift and dust can be substantially minimised by the creation of a vegetative buffer. Use of appropriate vegetation can reduce the desirable buffer distance, for example from more than 300 metres to between 40 and 60 metres to deal with spray drift and dust. Buffers can also be used to stabilise creeks and drainage lines. This can be achieved by use of a 25 metre buffer zone on both sides and the exclusion from grazing in the short term.

There are currently no NSW guidelines for buffers. The recommended buffers are based on the Victorian Planning Provisions and the Queensland Department of Natural Resources (QDNR) planning guidelines. These are intended as a guide only and should be reduced, and/or increased, based on case-by-case analysis. The type width and location of an appropriate buffer depends on the morphology of the crop, spray application, proximity and orientation to sensitive areas.

Improving farm design and farm management are other mechanisms for reducing land use conflicts. Farm design requires forward planning at the property level, in the siting and layout of crops, fences, infrastructure etc. 'Best Practice' guidelines for acceptable agricultural operations need to be prescriptive. Therefore, the endorsement of 'farming best practice' guidelines from the Department of Primary Industries and other relevant state agencies is therefore important to ensure that they adequately address conflict issues from a planning perspective.



Methodology and Recommendations contained in the exhibited draft Strategy

6.1.10 Rural Land Evaluation

This section analyses a minimum holding size for the proposed Tamworth Region LEP. This is necessary for subdivision purposes and has been developed to suit local needs and conditions. Setting the minimum holding size is necessary for a potential building and is a commonly used tool to influence land uses in agricultural zones.

The objective of developing an appropriate holding size for Tamworth is to:

- ▶ Reduce opportunities for conflict with commercial agricultural enterprises by minimising residential uses that are not directly associated with commercial farms;
- ▶ Setting a minimum lot size needs to allow for entry by young farmers where appropriate;
- ▶ To provide greater security for all forms of agriculture and to facilitate opportunities for diversification and farm expansion;
- ▶ To minimise the fragmentation and loss of agricultural land;
- ▶ To reduce the uncoordinated demand for roads, infrastructure and services on the wider community that can be caused by inappropriately located settlement for lifestyle purposes;
- ▶ To enhance the natural resource outcomes associated with sustainable management of rural lands; and
- ▶ To minimise settlement of rural areas for lifestyle purposes and encourage such development to be located after broad strategic land use assessment.

The basic long term aim of Government in strategic land use planning in the rural zones of the Tamworth Region is to protect and encourage sustainable agricultural production. State Government policies now reinforce this objective.

A key issue in minimum holding size is of maintaining an efficient sustainable agricultural industry in a global market. The evidence is that for smaller lot sizes such as 40 to 200ha, the dwelling potential is a major component of the land price. Land is lost to agriculture in many cases where this occurs as the land is used more for lifestyle purposes than genuine agriculture (which is not to say all the land is lost to agricultural production). The adverse effects on traditional agriculture will continue if this situation is not rectified. The minimum lot sizes, (with dwelling potential) in agricultural areas needs to reflect the agricultural value of the land.

The size of rural holdings in Tamworth is a reflection of the degree of fragmentation and is also an indicator of potential rural land use conflicts. One matter to be considered is the differences between holdings and individual lots. In an area such as the Tamworth Region, there are a number of large holdings that are made up of a number of smaller lots. These are mainly agricultural uses and not the rural residential uses, which are nearly all in single ownership.

The NSW Department of Planning and NSW Department of Primary Industries methodology was used to determine minimum lot sizes for the Tamworth Region. The data used to input into the methodology was obtained from public sources (DPI Gross margins, ABS Ag data and ABARE). The Issues Paper identified the key agricultural industries enterprises and agricultural land use characteristics. The key enterprises were analysed to obtain the gross margins and the existing production levels of farms.

The Tamworth Region Issues Paper determined that the key enterprises in Tamworth include the cattle meat industry as the most valuable livestock industry, wheat and lucerne

as historically the most valuable cropping industries and small berry and fruit as the most valuable horticultural industry. It should be noted that it has been identified that care is needed when generalising on the types of key enterprises that are suitable throughout the Region because of the complexity of resource conditions (topography, soil types, slopes) that can occur at the local level. However, State government departments recognises this difficulty but considered that it was important to use broader classifications with this planning exercise.

The Tamworth Region Issues Paper identified the agricultural land use characteristics across the Region. The differences between the agricultural areas were determined by soil, topography and climate (especially rainfall). The combined area can be roughly divided in two with the south and eastern half of the Region as being considered as upper slopes and tablelands and the western and central half considered as flat and undulating land. The more elevated tablelands generally have higher rainfall but also cooler temperatures and higher frost risk. Land slopes are variable but can limit cultivation because of soil erosion risks. Enterprises most significant on the upper slopes and tablelands include beef cattle, prime lambs and wool enterprises.

The lower western slopes and flats have lower elevation as well as lower rainfall and higher temperatures with less frost risk compared to the upper slopes. Although the slopes are variable there are large areas of land suitable for cultivation for winter grain crops. Enterprises of most significance include wheat, lucerne and canola and to a lesser extent beef cattle, lamb and wool production.

Given the different patterns of agricultural enterprises the Region can be divided into two sectors and it is considered appropriate to determine different minimum lot sizes for each of these sectors. The sectors were determined using topography; land capability, soil geology and existing agricultural land uses.

The two sectors include:

Sector A: Cropping with some grazing; and

Sector B: Extensive grazing

Niche agriculture (such as horticulture, intensive agriculture etc) historically utilizes smaller holdings within the Tamworth Region. Given that there is already a variety of existing holding sizes throughout the Region (51.6% of holdings are under 40 hectares) it is considered the current supply is sufficient to support this industry. In addition, the LEP will ensure other mechanisms are in place which will ensure the supply of this industry is maintained, such mechanisms include farm boundary adjustment clauses, subdivision without potential dwelling clauses and rural worker dwelling provisions. These provisions should facilitate flexibility and opportunity yet prevent fragmentation in the rural zone meeting Tamworth Council's Rural Zone objectives, community concerns and create an environment, which will foster niche agriculture.

It is also understood that one of the biggest constraints to genuine niche agriculture is the start up costs. Speculation on land prices and planning decisions, force niche agriculture to pay land prices that are comparative to lifestyle values rather than their potential returns. For niche agriculture to be a successful industry in Tamworth several factors need to be considered these include the room to achieve economies of scale, occasionally unique climate or soil types (such as for berries) and the freedom from land use conflict. Niche agriculture in Tamworth also has to compete with other areas, which may be more suited to the particular industry, for example, other countries (cheap imports), or other Regions (better climate, soils, transport and access to labour and markets) (DPI: 2006).



The methodology and calculations for the gross margins and the existing production levels of farms are contained in the Issues Paper. The determined gross margins production and variable costs for cropping and grazing are shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Production, Gross Margins, Costs and Proportion of Enterprises

Enterprise	Cropping (Sector A)	Grazing (Sector B)
Production	3.5t/ha	3.07 DSE/ha
Variable Costs	\$339.61/ha	\$7.13/ DSE
Gross Margin	\$220.39/ha	\$85.98

For each sector, it has been assumed that 5% of the total farm area is non – productive because of dwellings sheds, roads etc. Within sector A it has been assumed through land use analysis that 40% of the productive land is utilized for beef and prime lambs and 55% of the land has been utilized for lucerne, wheat and canola etc. The gross margins and variable costs are based on DPI average figures (see Issues Paper).

The next step in the methodology is determining the target income level for a commercial farming unit including overhead costs. The reasonable estimate of the level of net income needed to indicate economic sustainability is required to for the minimum holding size. A farm business should generate an acceptable rate of return on invested capital and assets. A break-even income is considered a acceptable rate of return. The break even point occurs when farm business profit is zero, that is, when income covers production costs, family labour and overheads. For the purposes of this strategy the break even income (\$) is calculated by estimating Farm cash income (\$) minus the profit at full equity (\$).

The above approach was completed using ABARE farm data for livestock and crops. The breakeven income was calculated for grazing (sector b) by using the ABARE Beef Lamb and Sheep Industry database (2006) for North West Slopes and Plains (all beef industries combined). The breakeven income was calculated for cropping (sector a) by using the ABARE Agsurf database for wheat and other cropping (2006) for NSW. The calculations used the averages for the last five years. Table 6.2 shows the target incomes selected for the two sectors.

Table 6.2 Target Incomes for Farms in Each Sector

Sector	Target Income
A. Cropping	\$44,393
B. Grazing	\$37,315

Gross margin budgets do not include many farm fixed costs or costs that incurred regardless of which crop or enterprise in undertaken. These costs are referred to as overhead costs. The DPI methodology suggests choosing a range between 30 and 40 percent depending on whether enterprises are mostly livestock or cropping based respectively. The DPI suggests the higher percentage for cropping enterprises is due to

higher depreciation costs for cropping equipment. The overhead costs were assumed to be 40% of the total costs for all sectors.

The next step involved calculating the area needed to generate break-even level of income. A computer model based on the calculations as in the DPI methodology, discussions with DPI and the above variables were imputed into the model for each four sectors. The final result involves the deducting the overhead costs from the gross margin (Table 6.1) to estimate the net farm income. This income level can then be compared with the break-even income (Table 6.2) as being required for break-even point, the benchmark above which a commercial operation can be considered profitable. The break-even income is then compared with the gross margins to calculate the area needed to generate the break even level of income.

The resulting areas of land required to generate a breakeven income are summarized in Table 6.3. It should be noted that the areas have been rounded to the nearest 100 to reflect the fact the methodology does not generate an exact outcome.

Table 6.3 Summary of Break-even Farm Areas for Each Sector

Sector	Break Even Area (hectares)
A. Cropping	200
B. Grazing	400

Based on the DPI methodology, these breakeven areas are considered to be the minimum lot sizes in each of the sectors. These minimum lot sizes are based on an economic analysis of the typical enterprise mixes in each sector.

As a result of public exhibition of the draft strategy, an Inter-Agency Workshop was held on 17 July 2007 with Council staff and representatives from the Department of Planning (DoP), Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Department of Water and Energy (DWE) and Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), with Council's Mayor (James Treloar) and Deputy Mayor (Phil Betts) also attending. The purpose of the all-day collaborative workshop was to consider issues raised by the various Agencies in response to public exhibition of the draft Strategy and to formulate a coordinated response to these issues within the Tamworth Region. Many of the issues raised by the Agencies related to the future use and management of rural lands.

6.2 Strategic Actions

Responses to issues discussed at the Inter-Agency Workshop has resulted in amendments to the draft Strategy for the sustainable management of rural land. In summary, the following amended strategic actions were identified:

(i) Minimum lot sizes for subdivision of Rural Land

During preparation of comprehensive LEP, a minimum lot size map will need to be prepared which will form part of the LEP and will identify the range of lot sizes considered at the Inter-Agency Workshop. Essentially, the map will be based upon minimum lot sizes which reflect the existing holding patterns/sizes across the Local Government Area (LGA). This approach represents a departure from the current recommendation in the draft Strategy, which proposes minimum lot sizes of 200 ha and 400 ha across the Region. These lot sizes are based upon financial modelling to estimate a typical 'commercial farm



size' for agricultural activities undertaken in the LGA. In this regard, extensive further consultation will need to be carried out with the community and government agencies following preparation of a draft minimum lot size map. Representatives of the Agency workshop suggested that potential minimum lot sizes for the draft map should range from 10 – 300 ha in areas that currently have an existing subdivision pattern comprising smaller, fragmented holding sizes through to 600 – 800 ha for localities which currently have significant holdings for primary production.

It is recommended that this minimum lot size map and associated commentary be removed from the draft Strategy and that a revised map be developed during preparation of the LEP to reflect the methodology agreed at the Inter-Agency Workshop on 17 July 2007. The revised minimum lot size map will comprise a companion map to the LEP and will incorporate minimum lot sizes ranging upwards from 10 ha in the rural small holdings areas through to 800 hectares in significant primary production areas. Further extensive consultation with Agencies and the community will need to be undertaken following preparation of the revised minimum lot size map.

(ii) Future potential zones and minimum lot sizes for land to the north of Tamworth City which is currently zoned 1(c) under Parry LEP 1987

Representatives of the Agencies present at the workshop on 17 July generally agreed that the area to the north-east of Tamworth required further analysis and investigation during preparation of the LEP to establish the following zoned precincts:

- (a) *Environmental Protection Zone* – for areas constrained by bushfire hazard, slopes in excess of 20% and significant stands of native vegetation.
- (b) *Large Lot Residential Zone* – for areas already subdivided into 2 ha lots plus vacant unconstrained land which is available for future rural-residential subdivision (lot sizes will vary from 2000 – 4000m² in the Hills Plain precinct to 2 ha in the other areas). As it will be predominantly a 'residential' zone, future lots will need to have access to the Tamworth Water Supply Service.
- (c) *Rural Small Holdings Zone* – to cater for living opportunities and agriculture (Hobby Farms) within the area. It is anticipated that the current minimum lot size of 40 ha would be appropriate for this precinct.
- (d) *Primary Production Zone* – to cater for existing agricultural enterprises on larger holdings within the area (particularly near areas affected by flooding). It is suggested that a minimum lot size of 100 ha might apply in this precinct.

1. Provide for the economic growth of the rural area and maintain and enhance rural job opportunities

- (a) Ensure agriculture is given priority in planning and decision making
- (b) Facilitate closer examination of the impact of an ageing population on Tamworth Regional Council finances (revenue and expenditure) and service provision (infrastructure, community support, health promotion and aged care services).
- (c) Encourage a wide variety of agricultural activities within the agricultural zones.
- (d) Encourage the development of intensive agricultural industries where they can be

serviced with necessary infrastructure and in appropriate locations to avoid land use conflicts.

2. Promote sustainable management of natural resources for primary production

- (a) Ensure agriculture is given priority in planning and decision making
- (b) Ensure planning policy supports efficient and sustainable irrigation practices on farms.
- (c) Provide opportunities for primary production to take advantage of non-traditional water supplies, in particular the re-use of treated stormwater and wastewater from urban development, to replace or augment traditional water supplies.
- (d) Investigate with industry the potential for re-use and recycling of waste products from primary industry and associated industries.
- (e) Locate and design primary industry and associated uses to minimise potential hazards, such as chemical spills, particularly onto productive land and watercourses.
- (f) Develop programs with primary industries to address drainage and management of irrigation wastewater to prevent adverse impacts on wildlife habitat including watercourses.
- (g) Provide guidelines on property management for environmental outcomes (i.e. agricultural production, weed management, flora and fauna habitat protection/enhancement).

3. Prepare management guidelines for land uses in rural areas

- (a) Prepare a separate Development Control Plan for specific land designations that require consent, to provide effective and appropriate land use management guidelines for rural land such as economic management plans and environmental management plans.
- (b) Provide controls and management requirements for specific land uses that are considered to be non-sustainable or problematic.

4. Protect agricultural land resources

- (a) Adopt the following land use designations:
 - RU1: Primary Production
 - RU2: Rural Landscape
- (b) Prohibit inappropriate land uses from locating on agricultural land.
- (c) Include for each land use designation a set of desired future character statements in the DCP, which will provide the basis for the objectives of each zone.

5. Minimise land use conflict and ensure farmers/producers can carry out farming activities with long term security

- (a) Where agriculture, particularly intensive agriculture, or forestry is located adjacent to residential or village zones, consider using the Transition zone under the Standard Instrument to provide a buffer between agriculture and residential development.
- (b) Prepare specific controls for the agricultural land uses and regulate them through the LEP or DCPs.
- (c) Provide education resources to ensure awareness of new land and house purchasers of the activities to be expected when moving to a rural area and their responsibilities



- as landholders.
- (d) Prevent potentially conflicting land uses from locating adjacent to agricultural activities. Where this is not possible, manage the conflicts through implementation of development controls.
 - (e) Develop controls for development near agricultural activities and rural industries, including buffer zones and setbacks.
 - (f) Develop controls for vegetation buffers to reduce conflicts such as spray and noise. Adopt the Queensland state government, *Guidelines for Separating Agriculture and Residential Land Use* for vegetative buffers. These provide technical advice and guidance on reducing the potential for conflict between farming activities and residential development.
 - (g) Encourage development of on-farm management practices that limit or mitigate potential impacts on urban areas.
 - (h) Notify neighbours of significant development proposals on adjoining properties.

6. Maintain viable farm sizes, the capacity to continue farming practices, minimise the fragmentation of the agricultural land resource and encourage the consolidation of small holdings.

- (a) Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to towns and villages within the region to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.
- (b) Prohibit subdivision for the Purposes of lifestyle blocks (including concessional or retirement allotments) in the Primary Production and Rural Landscape zones.

6.2.1 Poultry

7. Minimise the impact of Poultry Farms and ensure environmentally sustainable development

- (a) Adopt development controls plans for Poultry Farms to minimize impacts, ensure sensitive siting, substantial separation distances and sustainable infrastructure requirements.
- (b) Develop a Poultry Industry Strategic Plan for the possible expansion of the industry and the development of environmental efficiencies such as water reuse and new technologies.
- (c) Create ongoing communication within the industry and with state government about the strategic directions on a local level.
- (d) Encourage the location of the Poultry industry in areas that reduce land use conflicts, have access to infrastructure such as water and located close to transport and other value adding industries. This will be achieved through the use of zoning overlay or a Special Activities Zone for poultry industry and related activities. It is also important to maintain a merit-based approach to accommodating land use related to the poultry industry across the LGA.

6.2.2 Equine

8. Support equine industry development and promote sustainable management of its development

- (a) Position Tamworth as a recognized equine industry hub by producing a Tamworth

Regional Equine Industry Development Strategy.

- (b) Identify areas that support an Equine Industry Cluster and are environmentally sustainable. Develop a master plan for these areas to provide direction in relation to the types of development and subdivision that would be appropriate for these areas. The master plan must recognize and address the proposed 'heavy vehicle bypass' status of Burgmann's lane.
- (c) Ensure any new equine industry development has a water management strategy.
- (d) Support an equine industry cluster and implementation of the equine industry cluster action plan. The plan will focus on the development of a register/directory of equine businesses, business and capacity building activities, collaboration on equine industry events and activities.
- (e) Develop planning guidelines for equine related industries.
- (f) Develop property management plan guidelines for the preparation of a property management Plan addressing; measures to prevent soil erosion and water pollution from all areas where horses are kept and exercised, water management strategy, management of waste and the management of feed.

6.2.3 Extractive Industries

9. The preservation and protection of mineral resources

- (a) Include a clause in the LEP for the protection of future mineral resources.
- (b) Prevent land uses near or on future mineral resources which could prevent mining.
- (c) Determine the extent of potential mineral resources and its planning implications with the Department of Mineral Resources.

6.2.4 Forestry

11. Protect and enhance forestry resources

- (a) Existing State Forests and forest plantations registered under the *Plantation and Reafforestation Act 1999* should be rezoned RU 3 Forestry under the new Standard LEP template
- (b) Encourage the development of forestry in locations where:
 - The impact on water resources is appropriately managed
 - The impact on threatened species and their habitats is manageable
 - Existing freight routes can be utilised.



12. Promote the forestry industry in Tamworth with regard to maintaining and enhancing job opportunities in forestry

- (a) Encourage State Forests, existing private forestry operators and landowners to expand existing forests or introduce new commercial forestry.
- (b) Encourage State Forests to better promote the benefits of forestry.
- (c) Encourage landowners to use vegetation when planting windbreaks and other stands of trees where appropriate that will encourage a future farm forestry industry in the Tamworth Region.



Figure 6.1 Proposed Equine Industry Areas

7. Supporting Employment and Economic Development

The following section details how Tamworth will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in chapter 2. Supporting employment and economic development is measured through the four principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

7.1 Strategies

7.1.1 Economic Growth

Economic growth is an important component of this Strategy, because the Region must have a vibrant and diverse economy to survive. The major economic contributor to the local economy is agriculture. Other principle economic generators in the Region are retail and commercial services, tourism and industry. These are discussed in further detail in this document.

Economic growth in Tamworth depends on a number of factors including the availability of local skilled labour; population growth; availability and health of environmental resources; tourist expenditure; transport infrastructure; and national and global fiscal policies and markets.

7.1.2 Employment

The regional economy is dominated by two key industries, retail trade and agriculture, each employing approximately 15% and 11% of the population respectively. These industries are supported by health & community services (11%) and education (8%). Manufacturing and Construction also employ a considerable proportion of the population (9% and 6% respectively). The proportion of total employment generated by all industries in the Tamworth region is illustrated in the figure below (The combined percentages accurately reflect the proportion of employment by sector in the region).

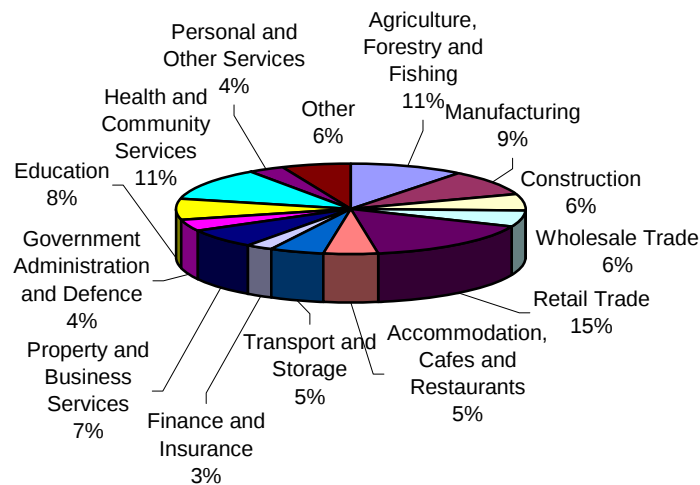


Figure 7.1 Employment by Industry

Retail trade has shown strong growth across the region since 1991. Positive growth has also been experienced by the health and community services and manufacturing industries leading to a strong diversification in industry activity, particularly in Tamworth City. Less diversification exists within the remaining settlements and as such sustainable and varied local employment opportunities need to be developed, particularly in the centres with high unemployment. An ageing population, combined with coastal and “tree change” movements, means that some towns will experience major service and infrastructure challenges in the next two decades. A highly developed economic base is more likely to be able to provide for future community needs through increased local spending. A strong local employment base will also provide opportunities for youth to stay where they grew up thereby reducing the need to commute long distances or outside the Region to work. Accordingly, the Region’s capacity to create economic growth and support the preferred pattern of development requires specific regional strategies and initiatives.

These strategies and initiatives will focus attention on encouraging skills to support industry and regional growth; developing a more outward looking, entrepreneurial culture including increased integration into the global economy; continuing to provide land for industry and economic activity that encourages employment close to where people live; preserving the Region’s natural economic advantages; and diversifying the Region’s economic base.

The economic development initiatives reflected in this strategy are underpinned by NSW state government policies.

7.1.3 Retail and Commercial Services

This strategy focuses on employment and community services in well-planned, vibrant and accessible towns and villages. Tamworth’s towns and villages are a concentration of business, employment, research, education, services, and social interaction. A strong and successful network of regional activity centres provides a community focus and can help create compact, self-contained and diverse communities. Regional centres facilitate an efficient public transport system, provide a focus for government investment in infrastructure and services, promote commercial confidence and encourage complementary private sector investment. Strategies aimed at increasing the viability of the Region’s commercial potential are discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.

However, this strategy also focuses on creating towns and villages that enhance economic growth. This may be achieved by:

- A more efficient concentration of goods and services in the Tamworth City;
- Identifying appropriate locations for government investment in public transport, health, education, cultural and entertainment facilities;
- Providing a focus for community and social interaction; managing private travel demand by encouraging multipurpose trips and shorter travel distances;
- Providing better opportunities for land use and transport integration, particularly walking, cycling and public transport;
- Accommodating residential development and land uses that support high levels of employment and trip generating activities and facilitate transit oriented development; and
- Providing a focus for delivering a range of services to rural communities.



In addition, developments that provide concentrated employment opportunities or generate significant community patronage should be located within activity centres.

Out-of-centre development is inconsistent with the strategic intent of the Strategy. It can diminish town vitality and detract from economic growth by diluting public and private investment in centre related activities, facilities and infrastructure. However, some development may be more appropriately located on the periphery of town centres. These developments may include large format premises involved in bulk goods retailing, and single purpose non-food retail activities occupying large sites. Whilst in most cases these uses should ideally be located within centres, their location out of centre should be assessed on community need and potential impact on the primacy and functionality of surrounding centres; maintenance of pedestrian convenience and transportation system efficiency; and standard of amenity with surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

Strengthening Tamworth's CBD as the main activity centre is an important component to enhancing the structure of the Region and this plays a key role in providing goods and services, employment and a cultural focus for the community, particularly within towns and villages. The CBD is vulnerable to market competition from other retail centres in Tamworth City such as Tamworth Shopping World. Strategies to strengthen the CBD and the retail hierarchy are therefore needed to ensure the CBD remains the 'heart' of Tamworth. Adding to this the retail and commercial core is trading well and is at virtually full occupancy. With the new Town Hall development reducing land zoned for business, consideration needs to be given to the expansion of the CBD. The Tamworth City strategies are discussed in more detail in Chapter 11

7.1.4 Tourism

Tamworth's tourism vision is to be an inspirational leader in innovative and sustainable tourism. Tourism is a major contributor to the Region's economy and is also an important employer. This section provides a framework and direction for achieving sustainable tourism growth in the Tamworth Region. The aim of the strategy is to facilitate sustainable tourism development in appropriate locations, assessed against land and environmental capabilities, to achieve economic as well as social and environmental benefits for the Region.

The Tamworth Region is well known for its country music, equine-related activities and paragliding events. As discussed, adding value to existing attributes will contribute to a richer tourism experience and help to diversify the local economy. Value adding could include ecotourism accommodation, horseback trips along historic Travelling Stock Routes, geological tours, fishing, fossicking and visiting National Parks and Reserves in the Region, conference facilities and dining, in association with established industries. These additional opportunities could provide spin-off multiplier effects leading to greater demand for accommodation, retail outlets and dining facilities

The key components for tourism development and growth within the Region are:

- Small to medium-scale sustainable nature based tourism accommodation in strategic locations such as Nundle, Hanging Rock, Manilla and Barraba. This type of accommodation should have a high quality design emphasis and showcase the natural environment; and
- Add value to existing established industries. For example wine tourism and new developments such as horseback trips along historic Travelling Stock Routes.

Achieving these outcomes will require careful policy development addressing issues of location, operation and management of the development. The development of Strategic Tourism Plans for regional areas will inform more detailed policy development at the local

level.

7.1.5 Industry

The provision of well-located and suitable serviced land is vital in ensuring that land is available for industrial development when needed. Future industrial development must take a longer term strategic approach; maximise value-adding opportunities; focus on 'service industries' within the townships they serve; avoid land of high primary production potential; use existing transport networks and infrastructure wherever possible; and cluster industry development on currently vacant industrial zoned land and suitable land near such zones. The scale and location of industrial development is also important because many towns and localities have significant scenic qualities that should be protected. There are well-defined opportunities for industrial development within the region, including south of Tamworth city. There has been an identified demand for business park development in Tamworth. This will be investigated further in Chapter 11.

Existing and proposed industrial areas within Tamworth City will be zoned for industrial purposes, in accordance with the new LEP. In Kootingal the land identified as 4 Industrial under the draft Parry LEP2004 will also be identified for industrial purposes.

7.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

7.2.1 Economic Growth

1. Ensure planning policy facilitates and supports business development.

- Ensure planning policy facilitates the establishment of new businesses based on the competitive advantages of the Region, including providing access to major road and rail access routes, land and separation distances from adjoining land uses.

2. Align land use planning with regional economic development priorities for key industry sectors.

- Provide for the location and land needs of key industry sectors by changing Development Plans to include performance-based policies based upon land capability assessment.
- Encourage greater flexibility into rural zones to encourage the processing of local agricultural products, tourist accommodation and facilities and other forms of value-adding through the use of performance-based policies.

3. Provide for the economic growth of the rural area and maintain and enhance rural job opportunities

- Ensure agriculture is given priority in planning and decision making.
- Encourage the development of intensive agricultural industries where they can be serviced with necessary infrastructure and in appropriate locations to avoid land use conflicts.
- New forms of agriculture should be encouraged in the LEP.
- Sustainable energy production forms need to be encouraged in the LEP.
- Encourage sustainable rural tourist facilities in rural zones including farm stays, ecotourism resorts and associated facilities through the development of a DCP.



7.2.2 Tourism

4. Promote and enhance those qualities of the Region that attract tourists

- (a) Ensure that the rural sector, industries and other urban development do not impair the landscape character of key scenic routes.
- (b) Protect the natural landscapes of the Region along designated scenic routes and town approaches.
- (c) Ensure tourism development is of a scale, design and form that will not overwhelm, over-commercialise or detract from the intrinsic values of the land on which it is sited.
- (d) Identify the appropriate scale, character and design criteria that will enhance the amenity and landscape character of the locality.
- (e) Reinforce the unique character of towns with tourism development that complements their desired cultural, built and landscape character.
- (f) Discourage promotional buildings and signage for tourism that detracts from the scenic qualities of important landscape areas.
- (g) Develop an open space network that enhances the tourist product and visitor appeal.
- (h) Ensure that land use policies for key tourist towns and city precincts accord with their desired future character.
- (i) Develop and use relevant tourism strategies and plans to inform planning policy.

5. Ensure tourism development is ecologically sustainable

- (a) Identify areas where tourism is discouraged or encouraged.
- (b) Review planning guidelines and criteria for assessment.
- (c) Encourage tourism development to be located to support and utilise facilities in existing settlements.
- (d) Encourage innovative and sustainable design solutions in tourism development.
- (e) Require rigorous site analysis and innovative design for any tourism development in environmentally sensitive areas.

6. Align land use planning with specialty tourism development

- (a) Facilitate small to medium tourism accommodation that is part of the natural and cultural experience of the Tamworth Region (e.g. bed and breakfasts, farm stays, backpacker lodges, guesthouses).
- (b) Facilitate the development of innovative and environmentally sensitive nature retreats in appropriate natural areas.
- (c) Provide for flexibility in land use policy to enable the establishment of complementary uses that form part of a tourism experience.
- (d) Encourage the restoration and commercial use of appropriate heritage assets for tourism.

7.2.3 Commercial

7. Ensure planning policy facilitates and supports business development

- (a) Ensure that planning policy facilitates the establishment of new businesses based on the competitive advantages of the Region, including providing access to major roads and rail access routes, land, and separation distances from adjoining land use.
- (b) Develop infrastructure that improves trading and commercial opportunities.
- (c) Encourage spin-off value added commercial activity in synergy with the current economic base.
- (d) Allow for a mix of related and complementary land uses in employment areas to provide services to local employees, while not undermining the key role and function of the area or zone.
- (e) Monitor commercial land supply.

8. Protecting and enhancing the Tamworth CBD

- (a) Zone the existing commercial core as B3 Commercial Core Zone under the Standard LEP Template.
- (b) Investigate the expansion of the commercial core (see Chapter 11).

7.2.4 Industry

8. Identify land that is appropriate for industrial development

- (a) Zoned land currently under the Tamworth LEP 1996 and draft Parry LEP 2006 as 4 Industrial to IN1 General Industrial.
- (b) Prohibit inappropriate land uses from locating on land zoned for industrial purposes.
- (c) Provide a range of allotment sizes for industrial uses.
- (d) Rehabilitate and make available underutilised industrial land for new development.
- (e) Any new development must include WSUD principles including effluent reuse, stormwater harvesting.

9. Ensure the location of industry and surrounding land use does not jeopardise future industrial expansion and efficiency

- (a) Encourage the co-location of industry to achieve a demand that warrants the provision of infrastructure.
- (b) Encourage industries to locate where other industries could benefit from the use of their by-products.
- (c) Prevent residential encroachment onto land that would limit the efficient and safe operation of industrial activities.

10. Prepare management guidelines for land uses in industrial zones

- (a) Prepare a development control plan to support the LEP and provide additional detailed guidelines for development.
- (b) Prepare and adopt landscaping requirements (including implementation and maintenance requirements) for all new industrial sites and estates.



- c) Protect and enhance industrial amenity and reduce the visual dominance of industrial estates/sites on the gateways to Tamworth City through the provision of adequate buffers, landscaping and appropriate building form and design.
- d) Ensure that industry is compatible in terms of its scale and physical character with its rural and urban surroundings.
- e) Ensure land use policy clearly describes the appropriate scale of industrial development in a locality or Region.
- f) Design landscaping, built form, access and services in a way that assists the appearance of industry.

12. Prevent and manage land use conflicts

- a) Prepare specific controls for industrial land uses and regulate them through the LEP or DCPs.
- b) Prevent potentially conflicting land uses from locating adjacent to industrial activities. Where this is not possible, manage the conflicts through implementation of development controls.
- c) Allow for expansion of industry when defining separation distances from other uses.
- d) Notify neighbours of significant industrial development proposals on adjoining properties.



8. Caring for the Natural Environment

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth will achieve the natural environment vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Progress for caring for the environment is measured through the six principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

8.1 Strategies

8.1.1 Climate

The climate of the Tamworth Region can be generally described as mild; however, climatic extremes do occur. During these climate extremes the Tamworth Region can suffer severely. This is particularly the case for the agricultural sector. Drought disrupts cropping programs, reduces breeding stock, and threatens the capital and resource base of farming enterprises. Drought conditions can also result in serious environmental damage such as vegetation loss, soil erosion, threats to animals and reduced water quality. Bushfires and dust storms also occur more frequently during these dry times.

Future development needs to acknowledge the role of climatic conditions and the potential impacts of climate extremes. Policies need to be developed that seek to minimise the potential impacts to the environment and to land uses which rely on natural resources, such as agriculture.

8.1.2 Water Management

Healthy water resources and catchments are critical to the wellbeing of the Tamworth Region. The Region extends over three catchment areas, the Gwydir, the Namoi and the Manning. The majority of the Region is located within the Namoi Catchment with only small areas of the Region being located within the Gwydir and Manning catchments.

Water quality in the Namoi River catchment is variable. Things that affect water quality in the catchment include nutrients, particularly phosphorus and nitrogen. High salinity levels are also a problem for a number of the major Namoi River tributaries, including Goonoo Goonoo, Mooki, and Upper Manilla Creeks. Pesticides (including insecticides, herbicides and defoliants) in surface water also have the potential to impact on water quality.

Ecologically sustainable development relies on a balanced interdependency between quality of life, healthy ecosystems and economic growth. The supply and quality of water strongly influences that interdependency and is one of the most significant limiting factors to achieving sustainable development in the Tamworth Region. Therefore, protection of water quality and quantity is one of the highest priorities for the LGA and attention must be given to the cumulative impact of land uses on this resource. Sound land use planning can play an important role in the protection of water quality.

8.1.3 Biodiversity

In recent years there has been an increased understanding of the value of ecosystems and their contribution to the environment. Conserving biodiversity is about protecting and managing native animals and plants and the ecosystems they inhabit, as well as controlling the causes of their decline. The maintenance of biodiversity enables ecosystems to withstand pressures from cyclical natural events (e.g. drought) thus

improving the resilience of an area to cope with such pressures.

The Region has a diverse vegetation base; however, the majority of native vegetation located in the Tamworth Region is very sparse due to land clearing which has occurred to make way for various land uses such as agriculture, residential and rural-residential. The exception to this is the steep hills located to the north-east of Tamworth, which contain large bands of vegetation. For much of the Region the remaining native vegetation occurs in small pockets on properties and in National Parks/Nature Reserves/Community Reserves as well as road reserves and riparian zones.

To ensure that the ecosystems of the Region continue to contribute to the environment in a positive way, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced. To achieve this, the planning process needs to integrate ecological objectives for the landscape based on current biodiversity values, risks to those values and a future vision for the landscape. It should also be recognised that some types of ecosystems and species are more vulnerable to degradation than others and therefore should have a higher priority for targeted management.

8.1.4 Air Quality and Noise

Air quality and noise can have a significant impact on the amenity of an area and can also harm the health of residents. The air quality in the region is considered to be of a reasonably good quality with the main impacts being attributed to wood smoke from domestic wood heaters, odours from a variety of agricultural activities, petroleum storage and wholesaling, beer and malt manufacturing and aircraft refuelling. Likewise, noise is not considered a significant issue, although there are regular neighbourhood, rural and industrial noise related complaints. The impact from these activities should be minimised through appropriate planning controls, regulation and education.

8.1.5 Environmental Hazards

Environmental hazards have the potential to make land unproductive and render it unsuitable for development and living. There are a number of environmental hazards that occur throughout the Region which include bushfire, flooding, salinity, contaminated land and land degradation. Such hazards can cause loss or harm to the community and to the environment. Land use planning is an effective management tool in minimising the impact of these hazards. Emphasis should be on risk avoidance and, therefore, land that is prone to environmental hazards should not be developed.

8.11.6 Natural Landscape/Scenic Quality

The unique landscape character of the Tamworth Region plays an important role in promoting environmental awareness and well being for residents and visitors. It also generates tourism, and development. The varying topography and landform of the Tamworth Region is the dominant visual feature of the landscape. The valley floors and flat to undulating plains of the Region are characterised by a mixture of intensive agriculture (lucerne and poultry mainly) and cropping and grazing, whilst the hills are heavily vegetated. The floodplains associated with the Peel River have been heavily grazed while the northeastern and southeastern parts of the Region consist of more rugged areas and remain densely vegetated. The overall objective in relation to scenic quality is to allow suitable development while maintaining the desirable character of the area. Planning controls should protect natural landscapes for current and future residents.



8.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

8.2.1 Climate

1. Encourage innovative approaches to energy consumption to reduce the impacts of climate change

- (a) Investigate the possibility of providing wind power to the Region. To assess the potential for using this technology consideration could be given to conducting a survey of wind corridors.
- (b) Investigate the possibility of providing solar energy to the Region for the operation of public utilities such as street lights.
- (c) Educate and promote to the community/industry the benefits of energy conservation.
- (d) Investigate the likely impacts of climate change for the Region and prepare a strategy on how best to manage the change.

2. Minimise the affects of climatic conditions on agricultural production

- (a) Reassess crop varieties and livestock types to determine if those currently grown in the Region are appropriate for the location.
- (b) Requests could be made to research bodies to develop and commercialise crop varieties that are tolerant of the Region's climate.

8.2.2 Water Management

3. Ensure development does not have a detrimental impact on nearby water bodies

- (a) Performance criteria should be developed and applied to all development to ensure that impact on water bodies is minimised.
- (b) All development should utilise best practice management for soil and water management on the site.
- (c) On –site effluent disposal is to be in accordance with an adopted DCP for On-Site Sewage Management and the NSW Government's Environment and Health Protection Guidelines (On-site Sewage Management for Single Households).
- (d) Promote water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and integrated water cycle management (IWCM) in Development Plans and development proposals to achieve catchment water management objectives.
- (e) Riparian zones should be protected and revegetated to improve the water quality of waterways by reducing erosion and removing pollutants before they reach the river.
- (f) Monitor water quality, particularly in relation to salinity levels, so that the location of pollution sources can be determined and the clean up can be targeted to specific areas.
- (g) Investigate water use and develop a plan on how to reduce it.
- (h) Clauses that address and restrict land use activities in the vicinity of waterways should be incorporated in the LEP.

4. Control development in drinking water catchments

- a) Restrict the type and intensity of development permissible in the drinking water

catchment.

- b) Develop specific performance criteria to be applied to all development in the drinking water catchment to further minimise adverse impacts.

5. Increase community awareness and involvement in water quality and catchment issues

- (a) Develop an education program informing the community on typical water quality and quantity problems.
- (b) Report water quality and quantity information annually.
- (c) Provide incentives to the community for improving their water management.
- (d) Promote best practice in riparian corridor management.
- (e) Provide assistance to Landcare groups and primary producers in obtaining grants for restorative works.

8.2.3 Biodiversity

6. Recognise the biodiversity and conservation values of the Region

- (a) Develop a data management process to ensure that the best available data is being used and is made available to decision makers within Council and development proponents. Mapping information needs to be updated in response to changing information, including incorporating findings of future studies.
- (b) Identify significant areas of native vegetation and wildlife corridors. Areas that are mapped as containing potential EECs will need to be confirmed. Potential growth areas identified by Council have been given priority in the process of confirming EECs, however confirmation of EEC status will also be required for the remaining landscape so that these areas can be managed within the LEP. The vegetation map provided in the biodiversity study should serve as a trigger for this process.
- (c) Identify and map environmentally sensitive land, being land with significant native vegetation (particularly Crown land) in accordance with landscape categorisation system identified in the Biodiversity Study.
- (d) Examine areas where potentially unique and important habitat may have been overlooked. For example, 'non-vegetation' elements such as rock outcrops, wetlands, swamps, small remnants etc.

7. Integrate the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem processes into development and planning policies and processes.

- (a) Review each zone in the current LEP to ensure that they provide for the protection of biodiversity as well as the maintenance of ecological processes where applicable. Areas of land currently zoned 7 Environment pursuant to the Tamworth LEP 1996 and the Parry Draft LEP 2004 should be zoned E2 Environmental Conservation under the new LEP. Areas of land currently zoned 8 (a) National Parks and Nature Reserves under the provisions of the Manilla LEP 1988, the Barraba LEP 1990 and the Nundle LEP 2000 should be zoned E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves under the new LEP.
- (b) Prepare general performance criteria relating to biodiversity and vegetation to be applied to all development.
- (c) Establish a land use management approach consistent with State, regional and local



- biodiversity goals, including Regional Vegetation Management Plans and Catchment Blueprints
- (d) Implement a specific zoning for National Parks, Nature Reserves and State Forests.
 - (e) Incorporate into the planning process the ecological landscape categorisation system developed as part of the Biodiversity Study. Utilise the ecological landscape categories to guide appropriate land use, planning and management decisions.
 - (f) Revise definitions in the LEP to ensure that they encompass the concepts, pertaining to the protection and management of biodiversity, and that these are used consistently throughout the LEP.
 - (g) Review zoning of land in light of land categorisation mapping to identify which areas are of high significance. Where possible apply a conservation protection zone to these lands
 - (h) Ensure that planning policy and development assessment processes are informed by ecological investigations and impact assessments specific to the affected area and its biodiversity, particularly when it is proposed to rezone land for more intensive use.
 - (i) Develop model conditions for development consents that can be consulted and applied by Council planners to address protection, maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity values.
 - (j) Assess and take into account the potential cumulative impact over time of land uses and land division on native habitats when developing planning policy by taking into account the potential, intensity, scale and size of development.
 - (k) Protect native vegetation within town boundaries by including it in reserves and open space. Prioritise future acquisition of reserves to reflect the significance ranking set out in land categorisation mapping – i.e. use this as a guide to acquire lands with a high priority for conservation.
 - (l) Prepare a Biodiversity development control plan to support the LEP and provide additional detailed guidelines for development. Ensure Biodiversity objectives are reflected in existing Council DCPs. Consideration to be given to providing:
 - Approaches to offsetting actions;
 - Riparian corridor and regional connectivity area provisions and landscaping requirements;
 - Provisions for the restoration of degraded areas; and
 - Guidance for development and decision making that may impact on biodiversity and lands with high biodiversity value.
 - (m) Once the biodiversity certification process and requirements have been identified and developed bio-certify the LEP.
 - (n) Develop an approval system that gives emphasis to incentives for conservation.
 - (o) Ensure that land use changes and development are located and designed to minimise: the breaking up of existing areas of native vegetation; edge effects around areas of remnant native vegetation by reducing the length of the overall edge (or boundary) as a proportion of the area to be protected; the impact on water-dependent ecosystems, groundwater recharge areas, surface water flows and flows within watercourses; the introduction of pest plants and animals near areas of biological significance; and the number and length of allotment frontages to areas of biological significance, including water-dependent ecosystems.
 - (p) Prevent incompatible activities from occurring within buffer zones to protect areas of

biological significance and threatened species.

8. Increase the viability of areas of biological significance by identifying and protecting them and creating linkages between them.

- (a) Use land categorisation mapping to identify priority bushland and corridor areas to be targeted for Council restorative works, community bush regeneration projects, and threatening process management activities. Give priority to these areas.
- (b) Protect, maintain and link road reserves that contain areas of biological significance. Consider the development of a road reserves management plan.
- (c) Maximise the use of key public transport corridors and arterial road corridors for revegetation programs and linear parks.
- (d) Promote the use of locally indigenous species in landscaping to create buffers and linkages; to maintain genetic integrity, minimise water consumption; and to reduce the potential for the spread of pest plants or other non-indigenous plants.
- (e) Prioritise the development of plans of management to ensure that protection and appropriate management of environmentally significant areas identified as part of the land categorisation are given priority.

9. Increase community awareness and involvement in identifying, protecting and enhancing biodiversity

- (a) Develop an education program informing the community on the values of native flora and fauna, habitat and corridors, and the threats to these from feral animals, weeds, grazing and clearing.
- (b) Provide assistance to Landcare groups and farmers in obtaining grants for restorative works.
- (c) Liaise with neighbouring councils, Department of Planning, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) to promote the adoption of compatible biodiversity objectives and mechanisms in all regional planning instruments and policies.
- (d) Provide a community nursery or partnership with a local native nursery to provide local provenance seed collection services and provide stock to Council's (and others) rehabilitation programs.
- (e) Encourage landholders of ecologically significant land to enter a Voluntary Conservation Agreement.

8.2.4 Air Quality and Noise

10. Minimise future air quality and noise related impacts

- (a) Consider possible air and noise impacts during the development assessment process to ensure future developments are located appropriately and that appropriate controls and/or mitigating measures are conditioned.
- (b) Ensure appropriate controls are implemented to reduce the potential air and noise impacts from future developments.
- (c) Prohibit domestic wood heaters, especially in urban areas.

11. Implement strategies to minimise air and noise related impacts

- (a) Develop a register of noise complaints so that continual breaches can be identified



- and penalised if necessary.
- (b) Enforce and monitor implementation of noise and air controls.
 - (c) Educate residents on how to minimise air pollution by the appropriate use of wood heaters.
 - (d) Educate residents on the impacts associated with air and noise pollution.

8.2.5 Environmental Hazards

- 10. Identify bush fire prone lands and minimise bushfire risk**
- (a) Identify bushfire prone lands and implement the strategic fire protection zones as contained in Planning for Bushfire Protection.
 - (b) Restrict development in bushfire prone areas.
 - (c) Provide information on the bushfire regulations covering the LGA.
 - (d) In consultation with the Rural Fire Service, develop an Emergency Services Disaster Management and Response Plan.
 - (e) Development Control Plans that apply to areas containing bushfire prone land should include provisions addressing the required Performance Standards and Controls on development within bushfire prone areas.

- 11. Minimise the risk of flood damage to personal property and public infrastructure**
- (a) Prepare Floodplain Management Studies and Plans for areas of the Tamworth Region, which are currently not mapped.
 - (b) Prevent inappropriate development in flood prone areas.
 - (c) Reduce the chance of flooding where development exists within a floodplain through flow alteration e.g. levee banks or channel engineering.
 - (d) Consideration should be given to the provision of flood-free access throughout the Region to minimise the isolation of certain communities.
 - (e) Establish financial incentives to encourage the relocation of development from flood prone areas.

- 12. Develop policies to manage salinity**
- (a) Identify areas affected by salinity and those potentially affected by salinity.
 - (b) In consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders, develop a Salinity Management Plan for the Region.
 - (c) Develop a DCP that includes provisions on how to manage development on land affected by salinity.
 - (d) In areas affected by salinity promote and encourage land uses that will assist to reduce dryland salinity, irrigation-induced salinity and water salinity.
 - (e) Educate the community on how to manage salinity.

- 13. Protect land from contamination and encourage the progressive restoration of contaminated land**
- (a) Retain and/or develop a list of sites known to have a history of use that may result in site contamination.
 - (b) Encourage industry to identify, assess and remediate land or groundwater that is contaminated due to previous industrial or agricultural activity.
 - (c) Ensure that land identified as presenting an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment (including surface and groundwater) is properly assessed and remediated.
 - (d) Develop performance-based policies to protect land from contamination.
 - (e) Encourage existing potentially contaminating activities or premises to implement a regular monitoring program that will provide an early indication of contamination.
 - (f) Maintain a database that records all reported pollution incidents.

8.2.6 Natural Landscape

- 14. Preserve, conserve and enhance major landscape features**
- (a) Identify significant natural and modified landscapes.
 - (b) Use planning controls to protect significant natural and modified landscapes.
 - (c) Require landscape and visual impact assessment for development in these identified areas.
 - (d) Prepare a general performance criteria for inclusion in a DCP relating to scenic quality and visual impact to be applied to all development.
 - (e) Develop guidelines for the design and siting of residential dwellings and ancillary buildings, lot sizes, the retention of roadside vegetation, the screening of undesirable elements, the incorporation of buffers to significant environmental communities and the siting of advertising.
 - (f) Development should be restricted to below the ridgelines in all areas.
 - (g) Urban development should be designed to take advantage of views and scenic amenity. Development should be located and designed so that the visual amenity of significant features and viewpoints is maintained.
 - (h) The concept of view sharing should be adopted in planning controls, to ensure that the views of both existing and future residents are protected.



9. Improving Transport and Accessibility

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Improving transport and accessibility is measured through the three principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

9.1 Strategies

An effective, integrated network of roads, railways and an airport in Tamworth supports the competitiveness of industry and business and is an essential component of urban development and land use planning. Maximising coordination between land use and transport planning and processes plays an important role in delivering sustainable outcomes.

9.1.1 Road Networks

The Region's road network is a critical asset that provides for the movement of people and goods, and is an essential component of the transport system. Transport supply in the Tamworth Region is dominated by the use of the private vehicle. There are many factors that encourage the use of the private vehicle, including dispersed low-density land uses, ease of parking, lack of traffic congestion and the low level of public transport services provided, particularly in areas outside of Tamworth City.

An extensive road network services the Tamworth Region. The major road corridor that runs through the Region is the New England Highway, which links Tamworth with both Sydney and Queensland. The New England Highway runs in a north-south direction and also links Tamworth City with Kootingal, Moonbi, Bendemeer and Armidale to the north and Muswellbrook to the south. The Oxley Highway also runs through the Region and links Tamworth City to the Tamworth Regional Airport, Somerton, Gunnedah and Coonabarabran to the west and Port Macquarie to the east. Manilla Road runs in a north-west direction and links Tamworth City to Manilla and Barraba in the north. Nemingha, Nundle, Dungowan and Woolomin are connected to Tamworth via Dungowan Road to the west. Given the Region's proximity to national transport corridors road transport also dominates the Region's freight industry for short distances.

The high utilisation of the Region's road network inevitably leads to pressure being placed on the existing network. Strategies should be developed that aim to improve and manage the existing and future road network in order to cater for the efficient movement of vehicles, and goods and to enhance the economic development of the Region. Land use planning must also consider the location of development on major roads.

9.1.2 Rail Network

Rail in the Tamworth Region has experienced gradual decline similar to that experienced in other rural/regional areas, due largely to increasing levels of private car ownership. There is also evidence that the convenience of the service and existing train journey times may discourage some patronage. Rail, however, remains significant to the Region for long distance freight and passenger services.

The Northern Rail Line is the only railway line that runs through the Tamworth Region. This line links Tamworth to Armidale in the north-east and Tamworth to Sydney in the south, through a daily service. This service also provides a bus link to Wyallda from Tamworth stopping at Attunga, Manilla, Barraba and Cobar.

These train services are particularly important to people who have very few long distance travel options, such as the elderly and the young. To maintain an adequate level of service, strategies need to be developed which present the rail network as an attractive alternative for both private travel and freight.

9.1.3 Air Transport

Air transport is important to the Region in terms of providing linkages to government, health, business and professional services, particularly in metropolitan areas. The Tamworth Regional Council owns and controls the airport, which ensures that local needs are considered in the decision making process by elected representatives and senior staff.

Tamworth Regional Airport offers daily flights to Sydney. Feeder services from Glen Innes and Inverell are also provided by Airlink to meet the regional services. Also located at the airport is a flight training centre.

The airport operations are vitally important to the future growth of the Region's economy, consequently, future land use planning decisions need to acknowledge the role of the airport and protect its current and future operations.

The availability of development land at and surrounding the Tamworth Airport provides extensive opportunities for regional economic development. With a 100 hectare fully serviced industrial area adjacent to the airport plus more than 200 hectares of level land within the airport perimeter available for development, many opportunities exist for Tamworth to lead the NSW rural aviation sector. Therefore, strategies that encourage commercial ventures within the aviation industry or that complement the industry, have potential as a great economic strategy.

In conjunction with land availability, educational opportunities for aircraft service professionals exist through the local colleges. This combination makes a strong case for development of strategies to capitalise on these assets and encourage innovative commercial ventures.

9.1.4 Public Transport

Public transport plays an important role within the Tamworth Region for people without access to other transport modes, due to geographical or social circumstances. Typically teenagers, younger adults and the elderly are the primary users of public transport.

Within the Tamworth City public transport is provided through two private bus companies and a taxi company. With the exception of school buses, no other form of public transport is provided for the other centres within the Tamworth Region.

For public transport to benefit the community it must become more attractive to a larger proportion of the community for at least some of their trips. The lack of a quality public transport system can lead to car dependent travel patterns and can significantly disadvantage those who rely on it for access to work, shopping, recreation opportunities and other community facilities and services. However, without a large population base, providing a quality public transport system to some of the more remote parts of the Tamworth Region, it is not always economically viable. Consequently, a multi-faceted approach to public transport that acknowledges existing and future constraints is required.



9.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

9.2.1 Road Networks

1. Ensure that road conditions are maintained to an appropriate standard as a result of the new and changing priorities

- (a) Undertake detailed feasibility investigations into road improvement options.
- (b) Undertake Cost/benefit analysis between various road improvement options.

2. Maintain a functional hierarchy of road types throughout the Region to ensure safe and convenient vehicular movement.

- (a) Segregate residential and non-residential traffic where possible.
- (b) Ensure that residential subdivisions provide a clear road hierarchy, where appropriate, to minimise through traffic, reduce speed and provide a safe and attractive residential environment.
- (c) Provide ready controlled access to the arterial road system.
- (d) Maintain the efficiency and integrity of major roads by minimising the number of direct access points.
- (e) Make provision for future road links as part of development approvals.
- (f) Control intersections at a level commensurate with their carrying capacity.
- (g) Require buffers between major arterial roads and residential areas by means of physical separation, alternative land uses, or an appropriate zoning.
- (h) Adopt the following roads hierarchy for Tamworth as adopted from RTA guidelines;

Arterial Roads	New England Highway
	Oxley Highway
Sub Arterial Roads	Nundle Road
	Manilla Road
Local Roads	All other roads in the Region

3. Enable the safe and efficient movement of people

- (a) Minimises the incidence for accidents by undertaking regular road safety audits and developing a response program to implement safety improvements.
- (b) Ensure that the design of future roads, subdivisions, boundary realignments, and developments make safety of the existing road infrastructure a priority, including incorporating new technology.

4. Ensure the road network is efficient and competitive to provide for ongoing sustainable economic regional development

- (a) Target improvements that reduce the cost of road transport.
- (b) Investigate, through RTA grants, the possibility of upgrading timber bridges throughout the Region to provide for improved access for cross-regional trips and to raw materials.
- (c) Investigate the possibility of sealing any unsealed roads throughout the Region.
- (d) Encourage the development of handling and processing facilities in areas that reduce the demand for freight movement.
- (e) Locate compatible land uses and development adjacent to freight routes to facilitate freight movement while minimising the impact on the community and the environment.
- (f) Set up a working group with the freight/haulage industry to understand likely future directions and priorities.
- (g) Council lobby the RTA to prepare DCPs and Traffic Management plans for the New England Highway, Oxley Highway and Manilla Road.

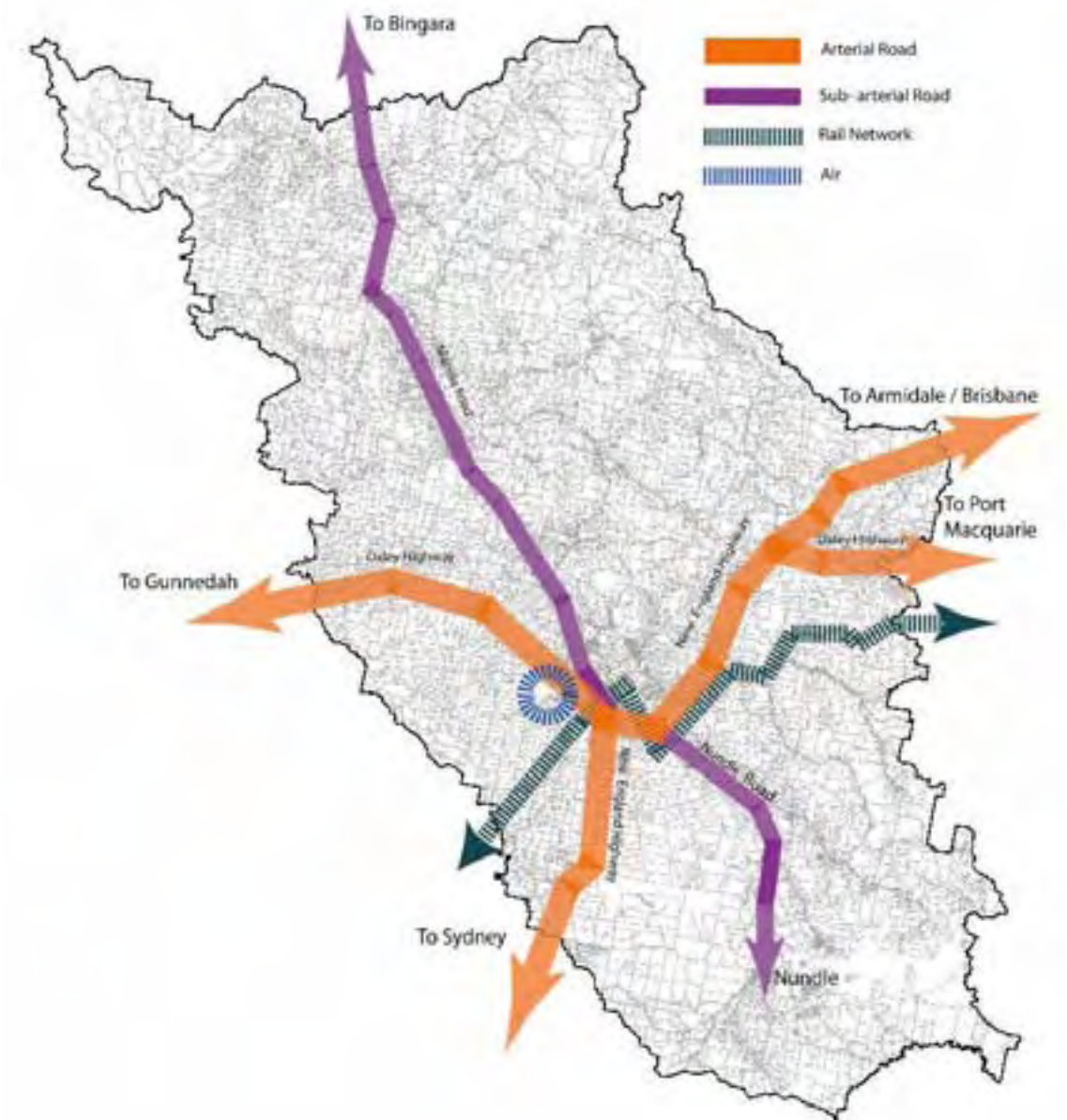


Figure 9.1 Transport Network

9.2.2 Rail

5. Provide for and promote adequate levels of rail service

- (a) To maintain current rail services between Tamworth and Sydney, Council and local business groups should lobby the NSW State Rail Authority to ensure an ongoing commitment to this service.
- (b) Lobby the NSW State Rail Authority to ensure that timetables are appropriate to the needs of the Tamworth Regional population (given the importance of day return travel).
- (c) To protect the existing rail corridor, the corridor should be zoned SP2 Infrastructure under the new LEP.
- (d) Lobby the NSW State Rail to provide timely investment in rail equipment and infrastructure within the Region.
- (e) Continue to review the adequacy of transport concessions with the view of increasing patronage.
- (f) Use education campaigns to promote the benefits of utilising train travel.
- (g) Investigate and encourage the development of tourist train services that take advantage of and showcase the attributes of the Region.

9.2.3 Air

6. Develop integrated, efficient and competitive air transport that supports the Tamworth Region

- (a) Facilitate market support for the maintenance of existing air services and seek additional air services, which will benefit the Region.
- (b) Investigate opportunities to introduce new service providers.
- (c) Work with operators to facilitate the improvement of air access to the Region through market research, route evaluation and liaison with airlines, airport operators and other relevant Government and industry stakeholders.
- (d) Ensure that the airport and airstrips are operated, maintained and developed in accordance with social and economic needs.
- (e) Continue to support and encourage training opportunities at the airport.
- (f) Facilities co-ventures between graduates of local aviation college courses and potential commercial investors.
- (g) Aim to develop the aviation industry in the Region into the strongest in rural NSW.

7. Ensure land use policies allow and enhance the efficient operation of airports while minimising their impacts on surrounding communities.

- (a) Review the adopted Airport MasterPlan.
- (b) The airport operations should be protected through the application of restrictions on building height, materials and lighting to land adjoining airport operations.
- (c) Zones the land that is currently 3(b) Special business (Airport) as SP1 Special Activities Airport.
- (d) Examine the possibility of expanding the existing airport.

- (e) Any new development must include WSUD principles including effluent reuse, stormwater harvesting.
- (f) The buffer zone around the airport needs to be maintained to ensure that incompatible land uses do not impact upon the function of the airport.

9.2.4 Public Transport

8. Improve coverage, hours of operation and reliability of service of fixed route bus services.

- (a) Improve communication and collaboration between public transport stakeholders to better understand the needs and shortfalls of the public transport system.
- (b) Ensure there is clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of those involved in delivering the public transport system.
- (c) Ensure timetables are appropriate and investigate potential future opportunities to extend the hours of operation where demand requires and revenue allows new services to areas.

9. Promote community inclusion by providing an equitable, affordable and accessible public transport system.

- (a) Facilitate community participation in needs based planning and service design to identify local transport solutions (eg more flexible bus services such as dial a bus, community taxis).
- (b) Assist operators to identify and implement cost-savings and to turn these savings into strategic improvements in service quality.
- (c) Assess the adequacy of bus shelters and taxi ranks with a view to increase the utilisation of public transport. Bus stops should provide shelter, adequate seating, lighting, timetable information and security (by placing near buildings overlooking the bus stop).
- (d) Examine opportunities to promote & distribute available information on public transport services.
- (e) Continue to review the adequacy of transport concessions for those most vulnerable.

10. Ensure that public transport issues are considered in formal land use planning and development control processes.

- (a) Monitor and plan for current and predicted growth to ensure the public transport system is prepared to address future opportunities and challenges.
- (b) Ensure that public transport requirements are considered in the future planning and construction of the road network.
- (c) Ensure that public transport requirements for different road and street classifications are incorporated into the road hierarchy.
- (d) Ensure that the street layout of new residential developments provide for efficient bus routes.
- (e) The current bus routes and frequency of service will need to be assessed in conjunction with Council and reviewed to meet changing demands.



10. Improving Infrastructure Provision

10.1 Strategies

The following provides the detail on how Tamworth will achieve the vision and guiding principles set out in Chapter 2. Progress for improving transport and accessibility is measured through the four principles which the following strategic directions and actions are based upon.

10.1.1 Water

The provision and timing of water infrastructure can have a significant impact on the pattern and rate of future urban development within the Tamworth Region. The Region's water supply comes from a variety of sources, including various rivers and dams located throughout the Region. Much of the Region is currently provided with a reticulated water supply. In some parts of the Region, however, the security of this supply is an impediment to future development.

To meet the basic needs of the community and to foster the future economic development of the Region a secure and reliable water supply system is required. How efficiently the community uses and manages its water resources should also be addressed.

10.1.2 Sewer

Tamworth City and most of the larger towns within the Region have reticulated sewerage systems. A significant proportion of properties, however, still have onsite septic systems. Many of these are located in the rural areas of the Region, where the cost of providing conventional sewerage schemes is relatively high due to small and dispersed settlement patterns.

Strategies for the future provision of sewer should focus on ensuring that appropriate sewer services are provided to all areas where it is required to meet health, safety and environmental requirements. Strategies should also acknowledge the potential environmental impacts of inefficiently treated wastewater being discharged into natural waterways and sensitive environmental areas.

10.1.3 Electricity

Electricity supply is vitally important for the day-to-day functioning of the Tamworth Region. Country Energy currently supplies electricity to the Region. Natural gas has also been recently extended to the Region via a pipeline from Dubbo, and a reticulated supply is now being planned for domestic and industrial uses. It is expected that this will provide a competitive alternative energy source.

A secure, cost-effective and efficient supply of electricity is essential for the future economic growth of the Region. Strategies should focus on meeting the electricity needs of the current and future population, whilst providing for future economic growth.

10.1.4 Stormwater

The management of stormwater is an important issue for the Tamworth Region. As the Region has developed, the accompanying growth of impervious surfaces has resulted in increased volumes of stormwater. Poor management of stormwater can

lead to the degradation of natural ecosystems and can allow stormwater to become a conduit for the transport of sediments, pollutants and nutrients to receiving waters. The management of stormwater flow begins on the land where such flows originate. To effectively manage stormwater, strategies should focus on reducing the volume and pollutant loads of stormwater at its source. Adequate stormwater infrastructure should also be provided.

10.1.5 Telecommunications

Telecommunications is an area of increasing significance for economic and social participation in our society. The range of telecommunications services and their uses continues to expand every year. The way we live and work increasingly depends more and more on telecommunications.

Telecommunication services vary throughout the Tamworth Region, with more restricted services being available to certain parts of the Region. The provision and upgrading of services to these areas may be restricted by costs and the commercial returns available.

For the Tamworth Region to enhance and further develop its economic position it is essential that telecommunication infrastructure is upgraded and services are provided at a reasonable price. The Region should continue to assess the needs of the community and industry as a basis for establishing telecommunication infrastructure and services.

10.1.6 Waste Management

The increasing quantity and complexity of waste needs careful planning in the Tamworth Region. The storage, collection, transport and disposal of waste requires high standards to safeguard public health and safety, and to minimise environmental impact. The overall reduction in waste is also essential for the Region, where waste treatment and disposal should be viewed as the least preferred methods of waste management. The Tamworth Regional Council currently operates thirteen waste disposal sites across the Region, of which some provide for reuse and recycling.

The ability of the Region to support different waste services is influenced by factors such as the size of the rate base, location and distribution of households and transport costs. Despite these constraints, consideration should be given to the consolidation of landfills across the region in order to focus management and control.

10.2 Strategic Directions and Actions

10.2.1 Water

- 1. Ensure that an adequate water supply is available to meet community needs and foster economic development**
- (a) Base the expansion of towns and settlements on potential water availability and quality.

(b) Encourage private investment in alternative water supply and harvesting.

(c) Investigate the use of recycled water to reduce demand on potable water supplies.



- (d) To provide a more secure water supply to Barraba investigate opportunities to extend a pipeline from Split Rock dam to the township.

2. Manage the demand for and the consumption of the water supply

- (a) Develop community and industry education programs on water management and demand management issues.
- (b) Enforce the requirements of BASIX.
- (c) Develop a water management policy that encourages all new development to adopt sustainable water management strategies.

10.2.2 Sewer

3. To provide all urban and rural residential communities with access to appropriate, safe, effective and environmentally sustainable sewerage collection, disposal and treatment

- (a) Develop Development Servicing Plans for the main settlements within Region, particularly Tamworth, Barraba and Manilla.
- (b) Base the expansion of towns and settlements on the availability of reticulated sewer services or sustainable on-site disposal methods.
- (c) Develop a policy that will require all new development to include provision of a suitable sewage treatment and disposal system that meets the relevant health and environmental guidelines and regulations or connection to Council's reticulated sewerage system where practicable.
- (d) Review the performance of existing septic tanks and unsewered urban and rural residential areas to identify potential environmental and social problems, and develop appropriate strategies to alleviate these conditions on a priority basis.
- (e) Educate the community about the maintenance of septic systems.
- (f) Enforce a regular monitoring program of septic tanks to ensure they continue to function correctly with the frequency of the monitoring based on distance from sensitive environments.
- (g) Investigate funding provided under National and State programs to assist in providing or upgrading community sewerage schemes and/or sewerage treatment plants to comply with DEC requirements.
- (h) Incorporate consideration of whole-of-catchment and cumulative impact assessments in consideration of sewerage reticulation, treatment and disposal projects.
- (i) Review the environmental and health performance of existing sewerage treatment plants and industry discharges, and facilitate improved performance and accountability where appropriate.
- (j) Encourage the use of 'best practice' standards for the planning, design and operation of sewerage collection, transport, treatment, disposal and re-use schemes, including compliance with State and regional environmental standards and regulations.

- (k) Investigate effluent reuse opportunities across the Region.

10.2.3 Electricity

4. Meet the Region's electricity needs in a cost-effective, secure, equitable and timely manner

- (a) Continue to monitor and review the security and capacity of electricity supply to the Region in order to maintain a safe and secure power supply, sufficient to meet current and future consumer demands at an equitable cost.
- (b) Review Council's energy consumption and implement reduction strategies where appropriate.
- (c) Reduce energy demand by enforcing the requirements of BASIX.
- (d) Educate the community about how to conserve energy.
- (e) Develop an energy efficiency policy that encourages all new development to adopt sustainable energy management strategies.

5. Plan for current and future electricity infrastructure

- (a) Support the continued development and implementation of 'best practice' guidelines for location, construction and maintenance of electricity lines and facilities.
- (b) In consultation with Country Energy/Transgrid, develop guidelines and procedures for improving separation of urban/residential developments and other non-compatible land uses from existing and future high voltage power lines and major electricity installations.
- (c) Develop strategies with Country Energy/Transgrid to protect existing and future electricity corridors.

6. Provide opportunities to develop viable and sustainable non-electricity energy systems in the Region

- (a) Investigate and promote the use of renewable energy sources such as wind farms, solar, biofuels and other forms of renewable energy supply.
- (b) Support and facilitate increased use of renewable energy systems for providing or supplementing domestic and commercial electricity supplies.
- (c) Raise community awareness about the benefits of utilising natural gas to increase interest throughout the Region.

10.2.4 Stormwater

7. Manage and reduce stormwater

- (a) Identify existing problem areas in urban drainage systems, including adverse impacts on natural waterways and environmental values.
- (b) Develop stormwater management plans for each of the urban areas of the Region.
- (c) Develop and adopt 'best practice' guidelines for the provision and operation of



urban stormwater systems based on water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles.

- (d) Develop and implement appropriate stormwater guidelines and practices for land use activities likely to give rise to stormwater runoff problems.
- (e) Work with and consult the Catchment Management Authority to address stormwater runoff in rural areas.
- (f) Investigate opportunities for raising a stormwater management service charge for the long-term funding of stormwater projects throughout the Region.
- (g) Investigate grants available for certain stormwater projects under the NSW Government's Urban Sustainability Program.
- (h) Investigate opportunities to utilise stormwater runoff as an alternative water resource for meeting urban, agriculture and industry water demands.
- (i) Incorporate consideration of stormwater systems into development assessment decisions.
- (j) Install stormwater pollution traps in appropriate places throughout the Region and regularly clean out any existing traps to filter pollution from stormwater before it reaches waterways.
- (k) Implement a water quality monitoring program to assess and report on the effectiveness of stormwater management strategies.

8. Promote opportunities for, and benefits of, pollution reduction in stormwater

- (a) Develop, implement and maintain public awareness of best practice in stormwater management.
- (b) Educate Council operational, planning, engineering and environmental staff on the appropriate management of stormwater.

10.2.5 Telecommunications

9. Ensure appropriate access is available to telecommunication services within the Region

- (a) Review existing telecommunication infrastructure within the Region and identify potential constraints and future needs.
- (b) Raise industry awareness and knowledge of the opportunities provided by the existing and emerging telecommunication services.
- (c) Coordinate/assist stakeholders to lobby Telstra to improve broadband services and mobile phone coverage across the Region.
- (d) Protect existing telecommunications infrastructure from adverse development.

10.2.6 Waste Management

10. Minimise waste through a range of approaches including avoidance, reduction, recycling, re-use and recovery of materials

- (a) Investigate the economic advantages to recycling and waste disposal provided by consolidating landfill sites within the Region.
- (b) Support kerbside recycling, recycling drop-off centres and reuse and repair services.
- (c) Promote a zero-waste to landfill approach by encouraging both a shift from waste disposal to resource recovery, and avoidance and reduction of waste materials produced.
- (d) Establish regional recycling targets and monitor and report on performances in meeting these targets.
- (e) Encourage and promote composting as a means of reducing green waste disposed to landfill.
- (f) Investigate new markets and strategies for the re-use of specific materials including waste oil, waste tyres, organic waste and demolition waste.
- (g) Encourage industry to improve waste management practices focusing on waste avoidance, minimisation, and reuse and recycling.
- (h) Encourage waste minimisation by developing incentive schemes.
- (i) Encourage the use of life-cycle analysis and cleaner production process at all levels of the production and distribution chain to avoid or minimise waste creation.
- (j) Review charging regimes for disposal of wastes to landfills in order to reflect the true long term costs of operating and maintaining landfill sites, and to encourage maximisation of diversion of recyclable materials from landfills.

11. To ensure that landfills are appropriately sited and managed to minimise harm to the environment, public health and community values

- (a) Establish processes for the ongoing auditing and monitoring of the performance of existing and future landfills, including post closure monitoring.
- (b) Progressively upgrade or close landfills which are environmentally unacceptable, having regard to the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act* (EPA) and other relevant legislation and standards.
- (c) Investigate opportunities to access State funding programs to assist in upgrading existing landfill sites to comply with EPA requirements.
- (d) Develop guidelines and performance criteria, for the siting, design, operation and management of new and existing landfills, based on meeting EPA requirements, achievement of industry best practice and incorporating regional environmental and climatic conditions.
- (e) Investigate opportunities for the consolidation and rationalisation of landfill sites within the Region.



12. Manage industrial, commercial and household waste

- (a) Facilitate the extension of kerb-side collection services to areas currently not serviced, where commercially viable and requested by the community.
- (b) Reduce the discharge of industrial waste into the sewerage system.
- (c) Ensure that government and industry manage listed wastes effectively and efficiently.
- (d) Ensure the safe and efficient transport of listed wastes to protect the community and the environment.
- (e) Collect and treat hazardous household and agricultural chemicals.
- (f) Investigate opportunities to reduce the cost of collecting and disposing waste.
- (g) Support and facilitate the development and implementation of specific industry waste management strategies relevant to the region's industries e.g. tourism and agriculture.

13. Achieve commitment and involvement of government, industry and the community in improving waste management practices

- (a) Develop a coordinated ongoing community information and awareness program to improve public awareness and participation in waste management processes.
- (b) Provide mechanisms to involve the community and the waste management industry in waste management planning processes.



11. Local Area Strategies

The local area strategies provide guidance for areas that have significant opportunities. Actions for specific land uses outcomes are implemented through the LEP/ DCP framework. The strategies may contain actions that require further local structure planning.

Due to the complexity of the Region the actions are divided into key components or principles. Principles are intended to address the key issues and opportunities that are described in the regional analysis section and that emerged through the preliminary stakeholder consultation processes. For each Urban Design Principle includes a simple graphic image has been prepared to convey the design intent of the strategy.

11.1 Tamworth City

11.1.1 Community Views

The purpose of the consultation program was to understand the issues and constraints, develop a vision for Tamworth and formulate solutions for the future of Tamworth City. The consultation program involved phototalk and newsletter responses, a community, environment, developer and equine industry workshop. The following is a consolidated outline of the issues raised by the community and stakeholders.

General Comments

- Attractions to the City include Golden Guitar as a tourist attraction, Tamworth City has great views, Tamworth Shopping World, Little Athletics Centre, Bicentennial Park as a place to relax, Anzac Park to ride bikes, the Tamworth Regional Entertainment Centre (TREC), Library, the Northern Daily Leader building, the Tamworth Olympic Pool, Velodrome, Tamworth Basketball Stadium, and the Hockey.
- Unpopular characteristics of Tamworth City include the Gaswell building, the corner of Armidale Road and Johnson Street, the broken bench seat at the Nemingha fruit shop, Tamworth Home Space due to its vacant appearance, Kyoomba Park has broken children's equipment, Peel River as it is polluted, the Old Rosary School, Alton Park, Acacia Park, Graffiti on the causeway, the Tamworth Gaol and the railway line.
- Significant Characteristics of Tamworth City include Bicentennial Park, Botanic Gardens, Tamworth Railway Station, John Oxley lookout, Peel River, Tamworth Town Hall, Marsden Park, Endeavour Park, Tamworth Sporting Fields, Post Office building, Anzac Park, Belmore Park, Karuah Park, Tamworth Showground, Regional Conservatorium of Music, Tamworth Railway Station, shopping facilities in the CBD, the Community Centre, the Tamworth Regional Entertainment Complex (TREC), The Longyard, Schools , Oxley Anchor, Library and the Airport.
- However participants suggested that the following facilities are needed in Tamworth City; Indoor aquatic centre, a multi-purpose stadium, a theatre/dramatic arts centre; cycleways; additional public transport, a recreational park in Oxley Vale, a community centre in South Tamworth, a water supply for Nemingha Sport and Recreational Ground and educational facilities.

- Tourism, agriculture, industry, retailing and health services are important local industries and businesses in Tamworth.

Planning Comments

- Council needs to manage the provision of efficient infrastructure (water and sewer).
- Upgrade the local road network in order to improve transport linkages throughout the region.
- Appropriate provision of affordable housing.
- Water and electricity upgrades were essential to cater for additional growth in industry. There is potential for growth in industry once gas is piped to the area.
- The region would prosper with additional poultry and equine development in appropriate areas, in addition to other forms of intensive agriculture.
- There is a need for additional industrial land to allow for large employment generating industries to locate in Tamworth. Many felt that the gas pipeline would provide value-adding opportunities for agriculture.
- The region as being very important for birds with many vulnerable and endangered species located around Tamworth, particularly along vegetated road reserves and Travelling Stock Routes (TSRs).
- Participants suggested that the ambience and appeal of the future Equine Centre would be greatly enhanced by the maintenance of the rural surrounds, rather than progressive urban encroachment.
- Participants identified access to water (for drinking, cleaning and washing) as the main issue facing equine related development. The ability to dispose of solid waste and the need to provide adequate areas for trail riding were also identified.
- It was anticipated that the greatest equine-related growth would be in the 'recreation' field. Participants believed that demand for equine related lifestyles may also see the development of "equine estates" where joint working facilities i.e. stockyards and arenas, may be shared between landowners within a designed development.

11.2 Identity and Form

Tamworth City is the hub of the Tamworth Region and the New England North West. It is contained within an area of approximately 184 square kilometres and in 2001 had a population of 35,465 persons. The city is the region's largest central business district and is surrounded by low scale residential neighborhoods with well-defined characteristics.

The urban form of Tamworth has been influenced by the Peel River and its associated floodplain, as it dissects the city. The Wentworth Mounds and Woolomol Hills areas are a pronounced feature of the landform and provide a prominent green backdrop to the City's urban area. The road and rail networks through the City have also dictated the location of various forms of development.

Tamworth similar to most other towns within the region has been developed with many streets exhibiting long and wide characteristics. The urban area comprises a mix of rectilinear "grid" road patterns in the older areas of the City (predominantly the areas



of Tamworth's heritage.



Peel Street remains the retail / commercial core of the CBD.

north of the Peel River and the inner southern areas) and the “spaghetti” road pattern of more recently developed urban areas (in the southern and outlying satellite areas).

The spatial character of Tamworth has been described as having good street spaces, with the CBD (the retail core) generally well defined. Commercial buildings line the street with minimal or non-existent setbacks. It exhibits a two storey retail character of dominant shop fronts, awnings and advertising signage. The core presents an emerging alfresco character, which gives the centre a sense of place and a ‘heart’ as well as providing a gathering place. The centre displays its unique history and culture through its integration of its historic buildings and modern refurbishments. There are few large expanses of car parking areas with the exception of potential redevelopment sites to the rear (northeast) of Peel Street. However, where car parks exist they are relatively barren, devoid of landscaping and erode the streetscape character of the area.

Industrial areas and highway oriented showroom/commercial areas, such as Longyard and Bridge Street, buildings are separated from the street by large setbacks and thus exhibit poor spatial character that offers no comfort to the pedestrian/street user (Tamworth UDS, 2002).

The streets in the majority of the residential areas consist predominantly of a residential environment. They demonstrate a domestic spatial quality characteristic of low-density residential development comprising large front and side setbacks. Garden landscapes and street trees generate the edge to space.

The main characteristics of development within Tamworth are as follows:

- The road and rail network together with the river floodplain and hills have dictated the form of the City and are also visual and physical edges that contribute to a sense of containment within the City.
- The City comprises a number of precincts including:
 - The CBD,
 - The inner urban areas to the southwest and north east of the CBD,
 - The outer urban areas in the southern part of the City and the satellite areas of Nemingha, Oxley Vale, East Tamworth, Westdale and Calala,
 - The new release area of Hills Plain in the north,
 - The industrial areas of Taminda, West Taminda and Glen Artney,
 - The motel “strip” along the New England Highway in the southern part of the City,
 - The commercial strips along Bridge Street and the New England Highway on the approaches to the CBD,
 - The existing Rural Residential areas at Kingswood off the New England Highway and
 - The Impala Estate off Werris Creek Road.
- Landmarks throughout the City provide memorable focal points. Some of the landmarks throughout the City include distinctive heritage buildings in the CBD

such as the old post office and art deco Central Hotel in Peel Street; large-scale commercial and industrial premises such as the TREC (Tamworth Regional Entertainment Centre) on the New England Highway at Longyard, the grain mills and silos in West Tamworth, the Goodman Fielder mill on Marius Street and the Millmaster Feed Silos on Murray Street.

11.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Tamworth City is the vibrant heart of the region, providing diverse experiences, harmony between its heritage and modern elements, economic benefits and services in a friendly atmosphere.

11.4 Strategic Actions

Principle: Strengthen the Region and Supporting Existing Centres

Protecting and enhancing the Urban Centre

Strengthening Tamworth City as the main activity centre is an important component to enhancing the structure of the Region and this plays a key role in providing goods and services, employment and a cultural focus for the community, particularly within small towns. Activity centres at the local level play a key role in strengthening neighborhoods and communities (such as Manila, Nundle and Barraba).

As identified in Chapter 3, the CBD is vulnerable to market competition from other retail centres in Tamworth City such as Tamworth Shopping World. Strategies to strengthen the CBD and the retail hierarchy are therefore needed to ensure the CBD remains the ‘heart’ of Tamworth. Adding to this the retail and commercial core is trading well and is at virtually full occupancy. With the new Town Hall development reducing land zoned for business, consideration needs to be given to the expansion of the CBD. Therefore the followings actions should be considered:

- Expand the new B3 Commercial Core Zone north-west and south-east of the existing CBD.
- Investigate urban design improvements for the area between Peel Street and Kable Avenue on Fitzroy Street. The improvements will create an identifiable ‘place’ for the CBD.

The subject area is one of those interesting and special places in the CBD which has the wonderful curved, heritage facades running around Peel Street and the close proximity of “the Vault” create a special juxtaposition of elements. Unfortunately the place is dominated by the motor vehicle, lacks a visual anchor and a sense of enclosure and some of the adjacent buildings make a negative contribution to the space. It is a perfect opportunity for a significant partnership involving major capital improvements in the public spaces and a matching investment in all of the adjacent private properties.

The concept at this location is to form a ‘heart’ of the CBD. The possibility of traffic claming measures, patterned paving, street furniture and lighting will all assist in creating a meeting place and a central focus for pedestrian activity in the town centre. A portion of this area may be closed for events such as markets or festivals. The investigation of the town centre should involve a masterplanning



Tamworth City entry feature.



Bicentennial Park plays a significant role in the CBD’s links and visual appeal.



Peel Street to Kable Street on Fitzroy Street; possible ‘heart’ of the CBD.

process including a public art design competition.

- Reduction and eventual elimination of bulky goods showrooms in the Centre.
- Opportunities to enhance the role of Peel River and Bicentennial Park by improving linkages to the CBD.
- Improving the transport links to the CBD
- Maintain continuous ground floor retail frontage in the key retail areas but allow other uses in upper levels that do not impact on and are compatible with function. Incorporate planning controls into a DCP to require active building frontages at street level to encourage pedestrian activity transport connections. A retail hierarchy needs to be developed to ensure retail development in Tamworth City is commensurate with its function.
- Encourage a dynamic mix of uses in Tamworth City and other towns and villages, which will strengthen and revitalise the community and provide a suitable range of activity throughout the day and evening. Creating the right mix of uses can extend activity after hours, making the center more interesting and active. It encourages more efficient and equitable use of resources, more vibrant and diverse urban environments, more opportunities to love and work more closely, and can achieve environmental objectives through the reduction of private vehicle travel and energy use. That mix will depend on existing uses and desired character will vary within the location of the centre.
- Ensure that important clusters of land uses within the centre, such as retail areas or areas providing live music, are not adversely affected by the introduction of a mix of uses within or adjacent to the clusters.
- Ensure the provision of public spaces and facilities that are attractive and accessible to people of all ages.
- Promote outdoor dining and extended licensing schemes within Peel Street Precinct to reinforce its sense of place.
- As identified, enhance the city approaches and gateways.
- Undertake an audit of Council owned property and identify potential sites that could be used or redeveloped for cultural purposes such as performance spaces.
- Undertake an audit of Council owned property and identify potential sites that could be used or redeveloped for cultural purposes such as performance spaces.
- Incorporate the history of Tamworth into the 'branding' of the CBD.
- Incorporate in the CBD Section 94 Contributions Plan requirement for contributions from developers towards public art.
- Investigate methods of 'branding' Tamworth City to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the CBD, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Tamworth City as a vibrant and active community focused centre
- Prepare and implement an annual calendar of events for Tamworth City, which increases visitation to the CBD (especially out of normal business hours).

- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus etc.
- Investigate the install of smart poles throughout the Tamworth City in strategic locations to amalgamate signage and lighting structures to reduce clutter.
- Encourage the area north of the CBD on Peel Street/ Bligh Street and O'Connell Street, Bridge Street and Long Yard on the New England Highway and Neminga, as the City's enterprise corridors.
- Establish Northgate and Southgate as Neighbourhood Centres.

Protecting the Retail Hierarchy

- A retail hierarchy provides a framework for understanding the relationships between retail uses in the region as well as between neighbouring settlements. This is required to strengthen their overall function and operation and to ensure that they are satisfactorily integrated with surrounding uses and transport connections. A retail hierarchy needs to be developed to ensure retail development in Tamworth City is commensurate with its function.
- Retain and expand the commercial core (as above)
- Establish Shopping World as a Regional / District Centre Centre.



Public Domain Improvements on Fitzroy Street will create an identifiable 'place' for Tamworth



Retain and Enhance the Peel Street Character: *active, vibrant, harmony between its heritage and modern elements, economic benefits and services in a friendly atmosphere*

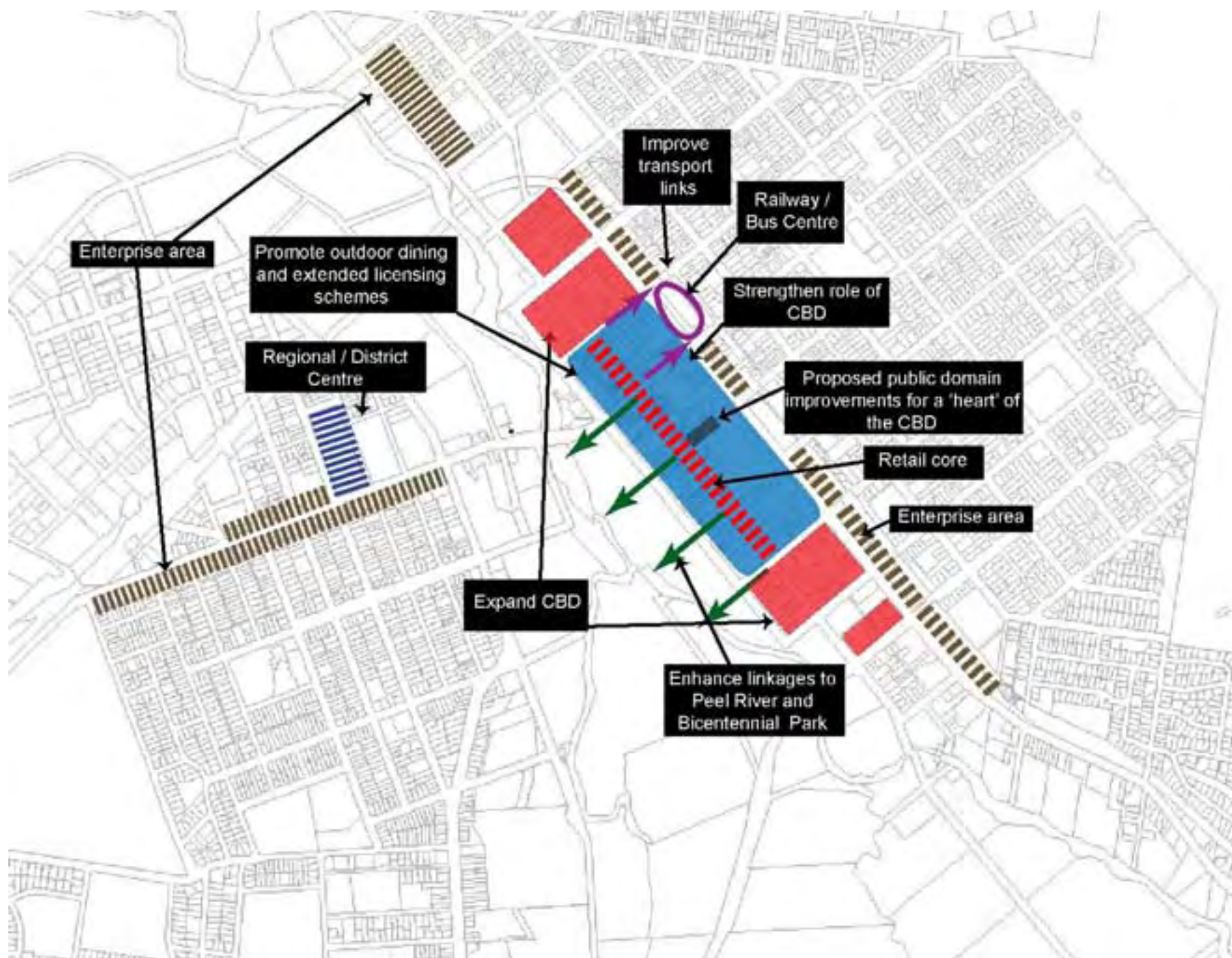


Figure 11.1 Protecting and Enhancing the CBD

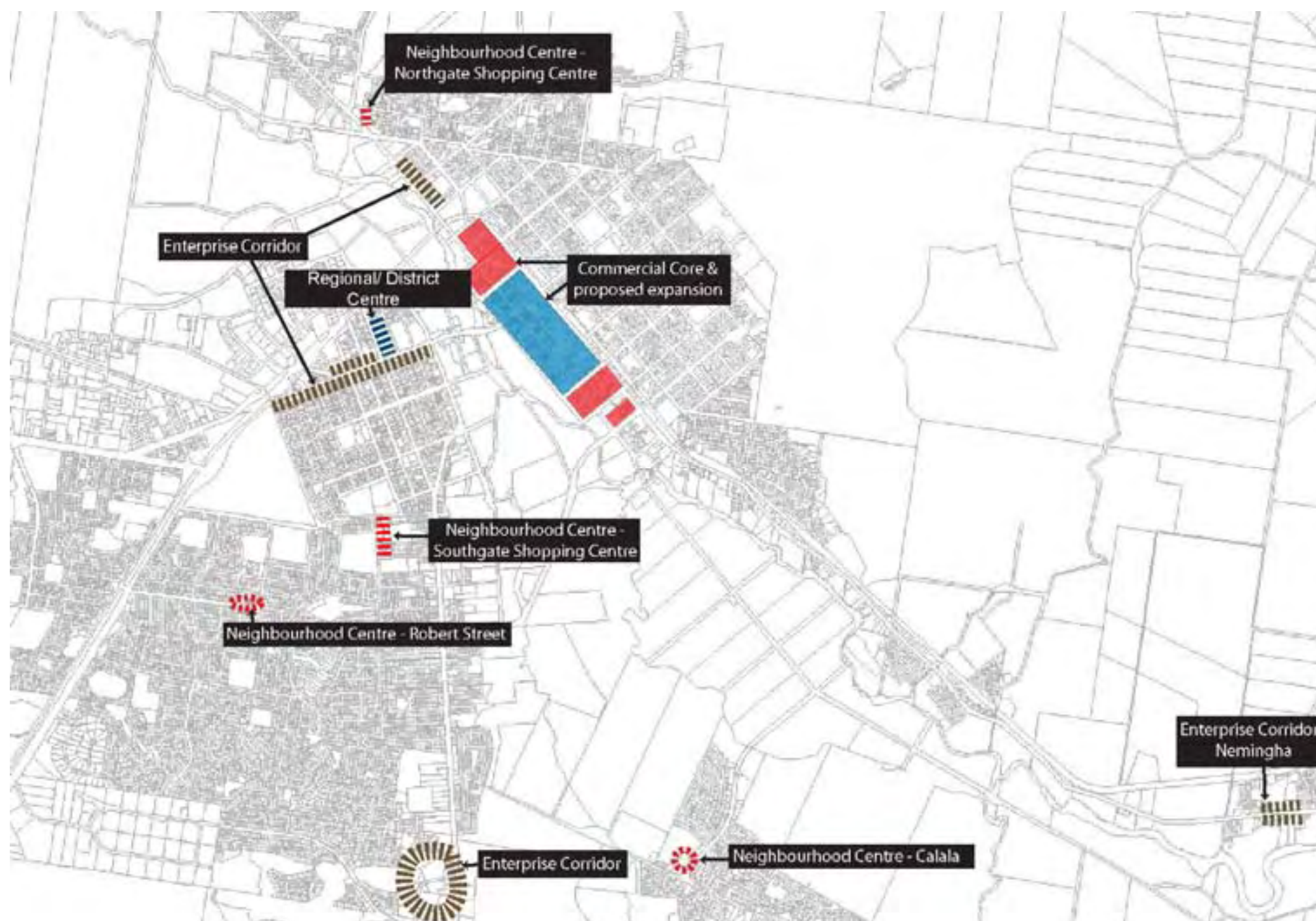


Figure 11.2 Protecting Retail Hierarchy

Principle: Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Encourage mixed-use development such as 'shop top' housing. Any affordable housing strategies need to include viability of using redundant floor space and converting it to housing catering for a wide range of income levels. The Strategy needs to develop viable options that Council could implement to promote and facilitate shop-top development.
- Allow for greater densities adjacent to the CBD and other activity centres (preferably within 400m).
- Prepare precinct plans, which clearly identify areas where residential and mixed use development is encouraged. The precinct plan should also incorporate area character statements for each precinct to be inserted into a comprehensive DCP.
- Work with public housing providers to identify opportunities for the provision, management and ongoing maintenance of low cost housing within the Tamworth City.
- Ensure potential land use conflicts are considered through precinct planning.
- Investigate the areas in East Tamworth, Calala, North Tamworth and Oxley Vale (as shown in figure 11.3) as potential housing.

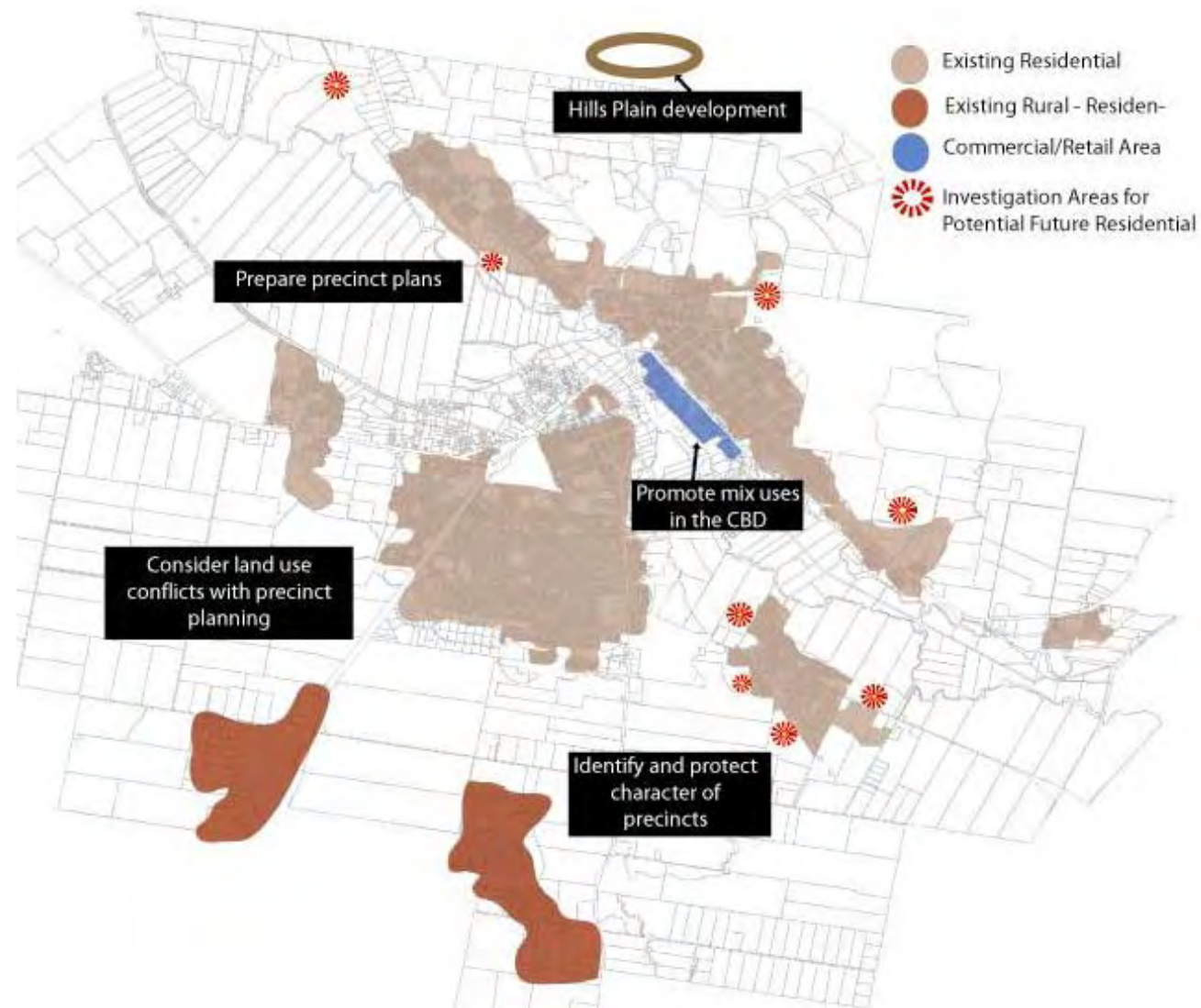


Figure 11.3 Meeting Future Housing Needs

Principle: Supporting Employment and Economic Development

The two main factors central to economic growth in the region are population growth and the ability for the Tamworth community to attract new economic activity. The following actions are designed to retain and enhance economic development.

- Support an equine industry cluster which is environmentally sustainable. This will be achieved through the use of zoning overlay or a Special Activities Zone for equine industry and related activities.
- Encourage the expansion of the Taminda Industrial areas following the completion of levy banks.
- A significant amount of industrial land exists around the airport and has the potential to accommodate general and heavy industry, aviation based industries or offensive industry that could utilise the airport without impacting upon adjoining land uses.
- The concentration of industrial activities in two precincts within the City's urban area contributes to the development of distinctive conveniently located industrial precincts in close proximity to the CBD and places of residences. These precincts may also be attractive to further showroom development and thus should be protected from further encroachment by non-industrial uses to preserve their function.

Principle: Caring for the Environment

The Wentworth Mounds and Woolomol Hills areas are a pronounced feature of the landform and provide a prominent green backdrop to the City's urban area.

- Any urban development should be designed to take advantage of views and scenic amenity.
- Zone the existing 7 Environmental Protection zone to E2 Environmental Protection to protect and manage the areas of high cultural and scenic value.
- Update the Street Tree Master plan (1994) to include areas adjacent to the CBD.

Principle: Improving Transport and Accessibility

- Regularly review the CBD Parking and Traffic Study to ensure any new development and streetscape proposals address concerns regarding the supply / demand of carparking. When any new redevelopment occurs in the CBD, there will be a need for additional shopper/commuter parking. The additional shopper/ commuter parking would need to cater for future and existing shoppers to the CBD and ideally could be provided at all of the redevelopment sites nominated.
- Require all new development proposals within the CBD to provide all necessary car parking in accordance with Council's car parking standards.
- Prepare a bicycle and pedestrian plan for the CBD which links surrounding residential, open space and car parking areas. Identify new links where required to improve accessibility and require that these be accommodated in any development proposals.

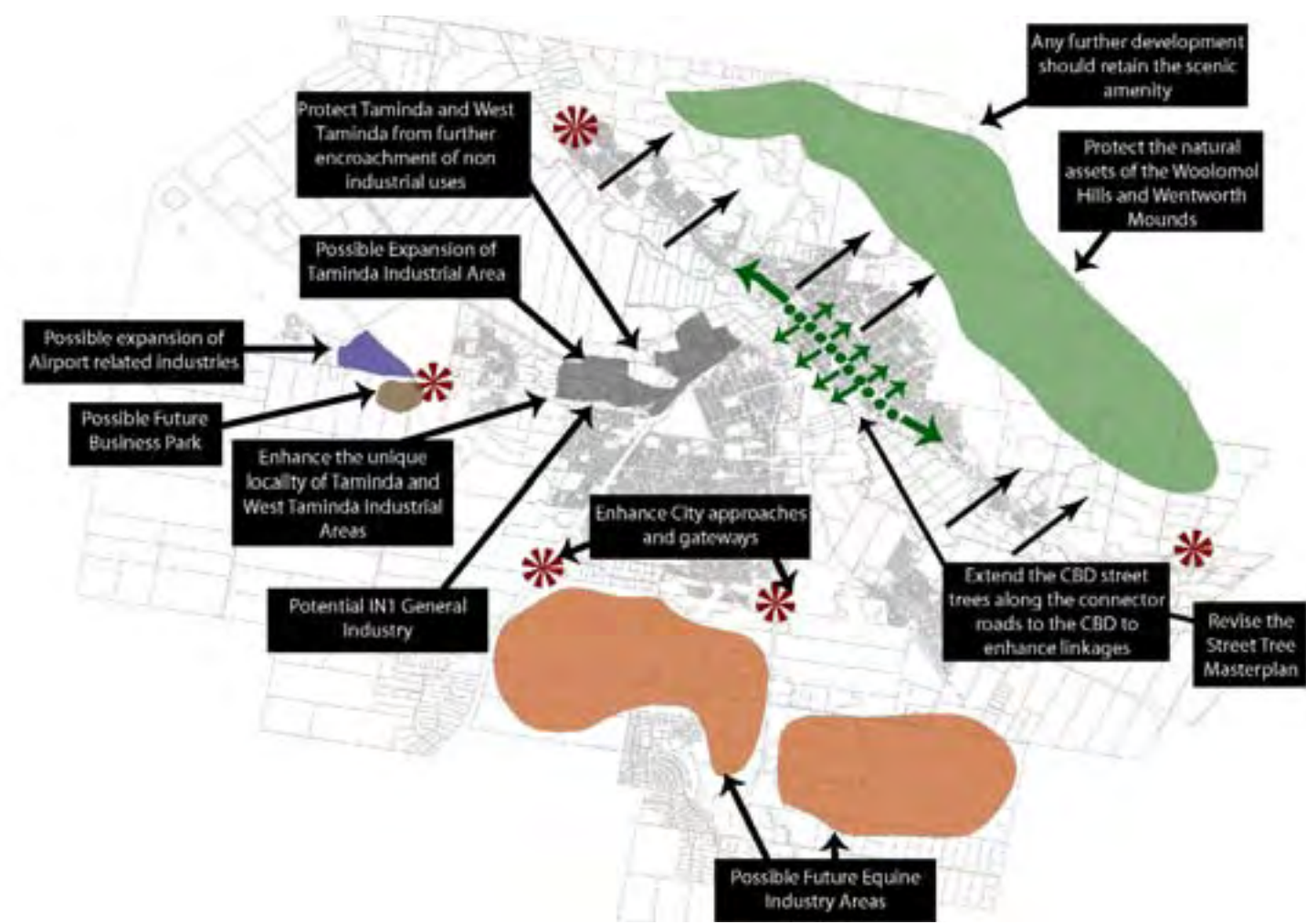


Figure 11.4 Supporting Employment and Economic Development

Create bicycle parking spaces in conjunction with/near parks, civic spaces and areas for active uses.

- ▶ Require secure bicycle parking in major new developments for use by residents and workers.
- ▶ Prepare an Accessibility Action Plan to identify appropriate short, medium and long term actions to improve access to the CBD based on travel demand management principles.
- ▶ Provide well-defined and visually appealing pedestrian linkages from the surrounding residential areas which are part of the broader legible pedestrian and cycle network.
- ▶ Improve the amenity and safety of existing informal pedestrian links.
- ▶ Incorporate pedestrian and cycle networks in CBD improvements.
- ▶ Investigate and improve accessibility within the public domain.
- ▶ Investigate second road access to Calala. Extend Campbell Road in Calala north to King George Memorial Avenue across Calala Creek. The access will reduce the isolation of Calala and enhance access to the CBD from an easterly direction. The road should accept and accommodate periodic flooding to enhance the financial feasibility of the project.
- ▶ Improve road access to Moore Creek Road, which leads to the Hills Plain development area.
- ▶ 'Internal' residential road networks should be developed to allow for bus servicing to provide access to the CBD from any future development areas.
- ▶ The NSW State Rail Authority should be lobbied by Council and business groups to confirm a commitment to maintain rail services between Tamworth and Sydney.
- ▶ Undertake an audit of existing bus facilities within Tamworth with a view to identifying and overcoming immediate deficiencies in the areas of patron shelter and seating at stops, timetable information at stops, lighting around stops and the provision of footpaths and rubbish bins.
- ▶ Identify new opportunities for public transport based on community consultation.

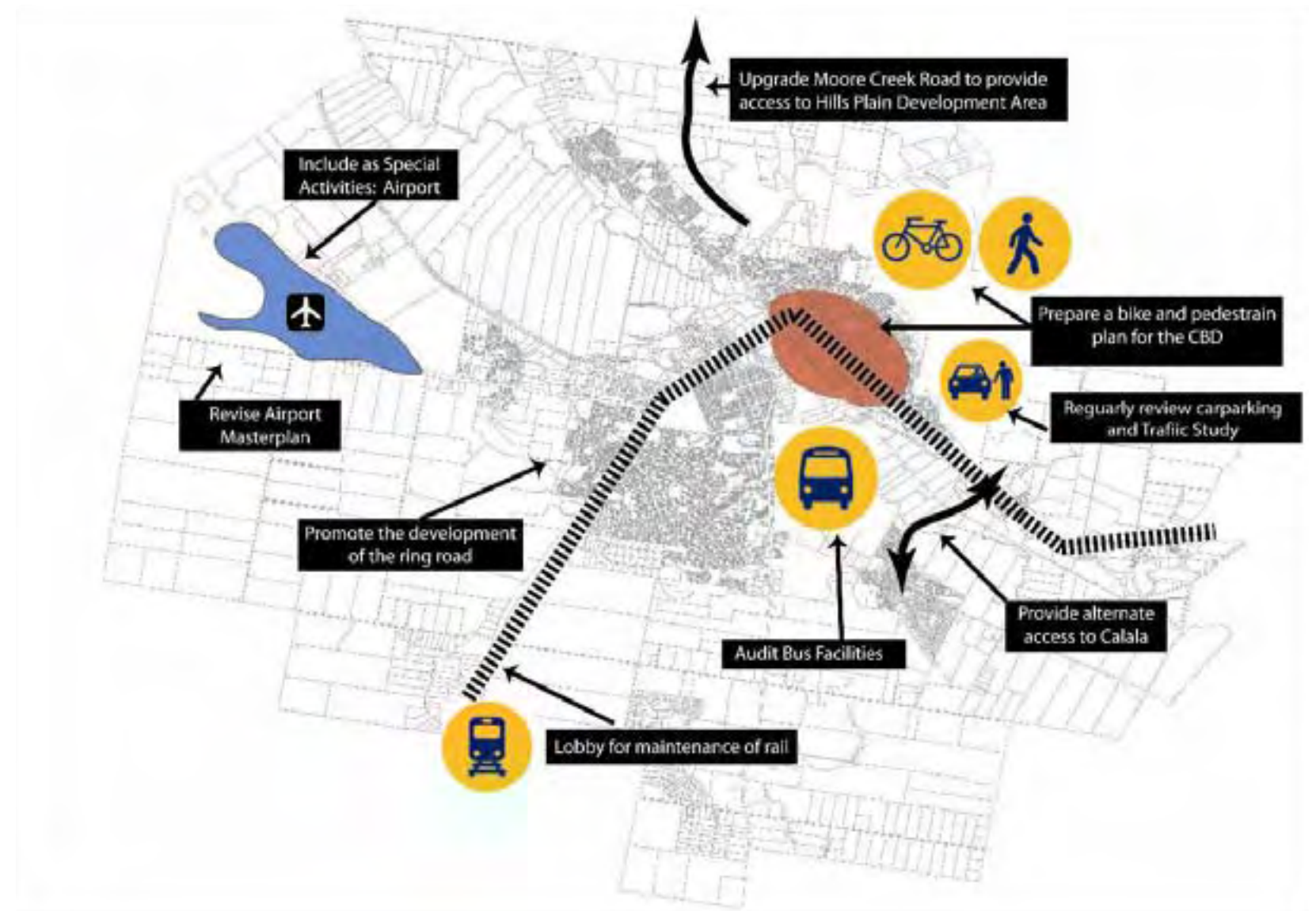


Figure 11.5: Improving Transport and Accessibility

11.5 North-Eastern Rural-Residential Land

11.5.1 Community and Stakeholder Views

- ▶ Kootingal/ Moonbi/ Bendemeer Participants felt that equine-related development is important for the future development of the area.
- ▶ The Moonbi Nature Reserve, Moonbi Common and the surrounding mountain ranges have been identified as the most important natural areas for Moonbi and are regularly used for recreation.
- ▶ Participants from the development industry felt that there was a need for a variety of lot sizes with many newcomers to town requiring rural residential lots. It was felt that there is current demand for ½ and 1 acre lots with slackening demand for 2 ½ acres but felt that lot sizes less than 20 acres was not sufficient for horses
- ▶ Comments with regards to rural residential development include; need to protect farmland from rural-residential development; concern re rural-residential and residential sustainability and affordability – can't keep wasting water – need to look at water and power re-use; There are advantages and disadvantages relating to rural-residential development – need to strike a balance between providing sufficient blocks and not letting it run away.
- ▶ In regard to industry, participants from the development industry felt that the region would prosper with additional equine development.
- ▶ Participants from the equine industry identified the main issue for equine related development was to provide access to water (for drinking, cleaning and washing), with the ability to dispose of solid waste and the need to provide adequate areas for trail riding off the property.
- ▶ Participants from the equine industry identified demand for equine related lifestyles may also see the development of "equine estates" where joint working facilities i.e. stockyards and arenas, may be shared between landowners within a designed subdivision. This may assist in limiting overstocking and expensive duplication of capital works.
- ▶ The DEC indicated that the population growth and corresponding need for housing has a potential adverse impact on threatened species and biodiversity banking will assist the recovery of species.

11.5.2 Identity and Form

The subject land is located to the north-east of Tamworth City and includes the settlements of Moore Creek and Daruka and land surrounding the town of Kootingal and the village of Moonbi. Two rivers, being the Peel and Cockburn Rivers, run through the area (refer to Figure 11.6). The landform ranges from low-lying land associated with the rivers and creeks to more mountainous terrain. Parts of the area are already developed and these are primarily located in the north-east, south-east and south-west.

The locality is bounded in the north-east by rural land, to the south by agricultural land, to the south-west by Tamworth City and the Wolomol Hills and Wentworth Mounds and in the north-west by rural land. The surrounding areas are primarily zoned 1 (a)

General Rural under the Parry LEP 1987 and 1 (l) Agricultural Landscape under the Parry Draft LEP 2004. A land use survey undertaken by Edge Planning as part of the Parry Rural Lands Study in 2003 revealed that the former Parry Shire comprises approximately 9.3% of rural-residential development and over 28% of the holdings in the former Shire have areas of 0.8 – 3 ha.

The locality is currently zoned 1 (c) Hobby Farms under the Parry LEP 1987 and 1 (r) Rural Living under the Parry Draft LEP 2004. The purpose of the 1(c) Hobby Farms zone is to allow for the creation of hobby farms and rural-residential development, whilst the 1 (r) Rural Living zone aims to preserve the rural landscape and cultural heritage values. Rural-residential development is permissible under both zones. The village zones, Hills Plain area and the environmental protection areas (Wolomol Hills and Wentworth Mounds) are not included in the subject area.

11.5.3 Strategic Actions

Principle - Meeting Future Housing Needs

If increases in rural residential development occur in the subject area, a number of issues will need further investigation including on site effluent capability, other issues relating to bush fire protection, native vegetation and flooding will also need consideration. In addition, as a principle development in the locality should not be intensified on land identified as containing EEC's nominated in the Biodiversity study.

- ▶ Discourage location of rural residential development in areas of environmental, natural resource or agricultural significance.
- ▶ Site and plan for new development to avoid causing potentially conflicting land uses such as intensive agriculture, eg. keep incompatible uses separate, or new land owners to acknowledge the possible impacts of nearby use.
- ▶ Develop locational guidelines to assist in more sustainable efficient and effective locating, planning, design and management of rural residential developments having regard to regional, environmental, social and economic factors.

Principle- Caring for the Environment

- ▶ The Wentworth Mounds, Woolomol Hills and the New England Ranges of the Great Dividing Range are a pronounced feature of the landform and provide a prominent green backdrop to the area. Any urban development should be designed to take advantage of views and scenic amenity.
- ▶ Identify significant areas of native vegetation and wildlife corridors. Areas that are mapped as containing potential EECs will need to be confirmed. Potential growth areas identified by Council have been given priority in the process of confirming EECs, however confirmation of EEC status will also be required for the remaining landscape so that these areas can be managed within the LEP. The vegetation map provided in the biodiversity study should serve as a trigger for this process.

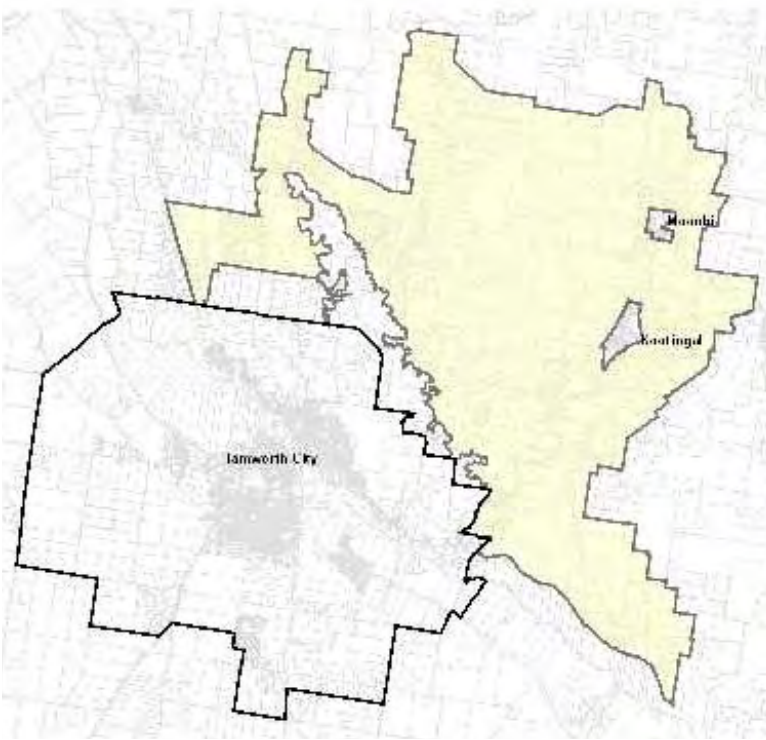


Figure 11.6: Study Area



- Identify and map environmentally sensitive land, being land with significant native vegetation (particularly Crown land) in accordance with landscape categorisation system identified in the Biodiversity Study.
- Examine areas where potentially unique and important habitat may have been overlooked. For example, 'non-vegetation' elements such as rock outcrops, wetlands, swamps, small remnants etc. Identify the areas within the subject land, which will be constrained by environmental considerations such as National Parks, State Forests, DEC potential faunal habitats and corridors.
- Restrict development in environmentally sensitive land.
- On-site effluent disposal is to be in accordance with an adopted DCP for On-Site Sewage Management and the NSW Government's Environment and Health Protection Guidelines (On-site Sewage Management for Single Households).
- Identify bushfire prone lands and implement the strategic fire protection zones as contained in Planning for Bushfire Protection.
- Restrict development in bushfire prone areas.
- Prevent inappropriate development in flood prone areas.
- Reduce the chance of flooding where development exists within a floodplain through flow alteration e.g. levee banks or channel engineering.
- Development should be restricted to below the ridgelines in all areas.
- Promote water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and integrated water cycle management (IWCN) in Development Plans and development proposals to achieve catchment water management objectives.

Principle- Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

- Consideration should be given to the location of any existing Poultry farms. Ensure a buffer distance around the poultry farms is considered to prevent possible land use conflicts with rural residential development.

Principle- Improving Transport and Accessibility

- Provide ready controlled access to the New England Highway.
- Ensure that residential subdivisions provide a clear road hierarchy, where appropriate, to minimise through traffic, reduce speed and provide a safe and attractive residential environment.

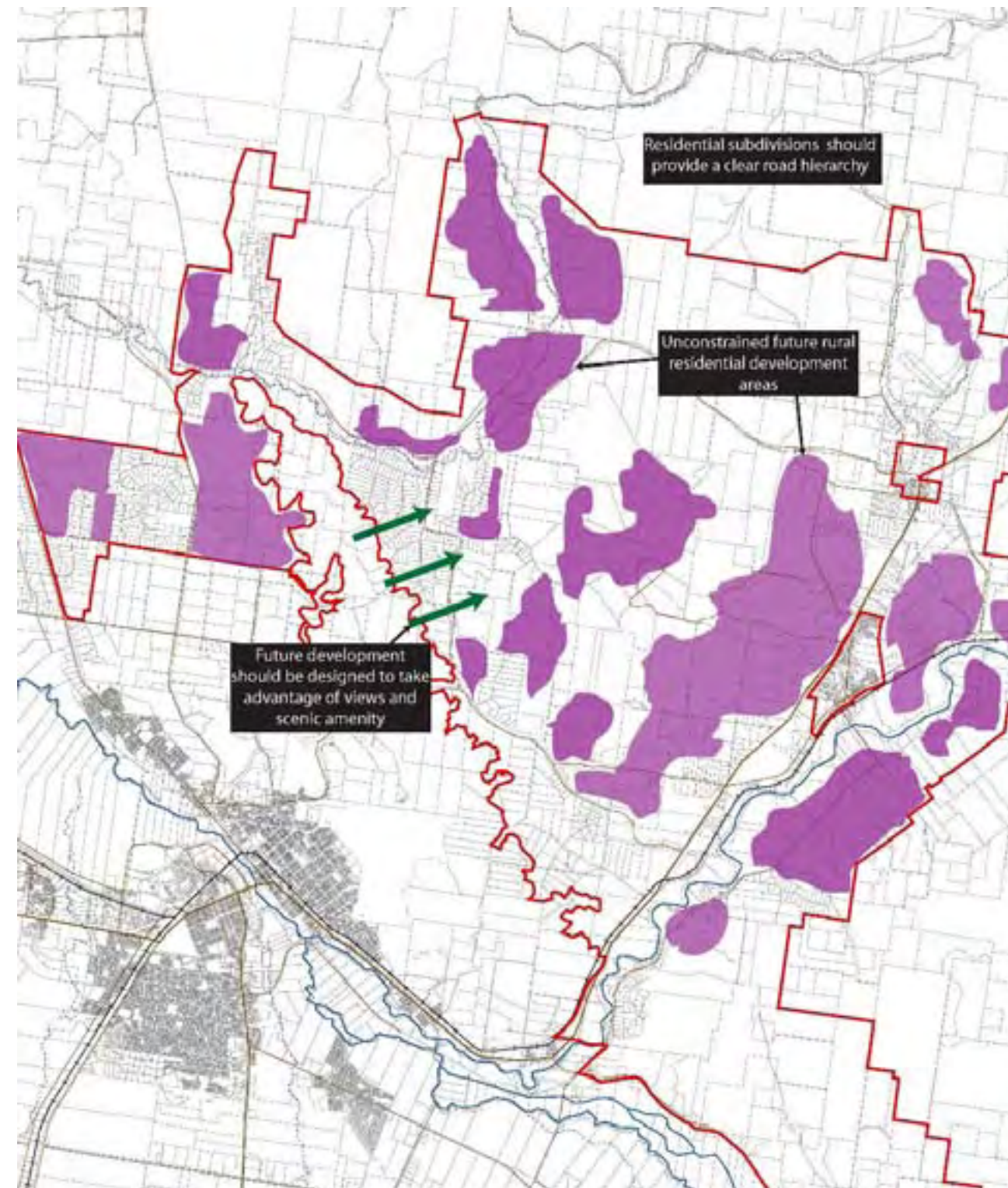


Figure 11.7 North-Eastern Rural-Residential Land

11.6 Attunga

11.6.1 Community Views

The community indicated that the reasons for moving to Attunga included lifestyle, the Attunga General Store & Post Office and close proximity to the community services and facilities offered in Tamworth. Residents characterised Attunga as having an active community, being friendly, having clean air and four seasons with good uncluttered roads.

The community cited the Attunga Primary School and Attunga Hall as providing meeting places and a focus for community spirit.

The community felt that Attunga lacked recreational facilities for young children and teenagers. Attunga Hall was identified as requiring upgrading.

Important environmental features within the area included the Peel River and Attunga Creek.

In regard to industry, the community felt that agriculture particularly cattle, sheep and poultry farms were important for the future development of the area. Health and education were also considered important.

11.6.2 Identity and form

Attunga is a small village located to the north-west of Tamworth City on the Manilla Road. Residential development is contained by, Attunga Street to the south, Ridge and Reservoir Street to the North and Manilla Road to the East. The village 'heart' is centred on Attunga Street where the main activities occur. The village contains a primary school, community hall, convenience store and a hotel. It is made up of predominantly detached housing with modest community and commercial facilities. The village is characterised by the Peel River and Attunga Creek to the south east.

Attunga is characterised by:

- It is currently zoned 2(v) under the draft Parry LEP 2004.
- The village is surrounded by 1(a) zoned land under the draft Parry LEP 2004.
- First Police Boys Club in NSW.
- Movie called The Picture Show Man was filmed there.
- Small village surrounding agricultural land.
- Close knit community.

11.6.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Development in Attunga will enhance the village's rural character to create a liveable and energetic community supporting viable agricultural pursuits.

11.6.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- Investigate methods of 'branding' Attunga to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the village, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Attunga as a vibrant and active community focused village.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- Investigate opportunities for improved and integrated commercial and community facilities.
- Investigate options for the provision of facilities for youth
- Maintain the Attunga Hall as a meeting place for the community.

Principle – Supporting and protecting Rural Futures

- Attunga should be maintained as a small satellite village to Tamworth.
- Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Attunga to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.
- Acknowledge the ongoing agricultural pursuits in the area and retain separation between village area and future intensive agricultural pursuits.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Allow for the growth and development of Attunga within existing zone boundaries.
- Encourage development that contributes to a low key village settlement pattern, which provides for a variety of lifestyle needs.
- The identified 16.55 hectares of unconstrained vacant land to be retained for future urban development and zoned Village under the new LEP.
- Maintain the village zoning within Attunga under the new LEP.

Principle – Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Recognise the employment opportunities offered by the Attunga Limestone Mine.

Principle – Caring for the Natural Environment

- Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values that may contribute to habitat corridors should be protected and included as considerations in the detailed design of development and land management outcomes for Attunga.
- Ensure future development, particularly urban stormwater runoff, does not pollute the Peel River.
- Facilitate a program of rejuvenating Attunga Creek involving the community.
- Maintain Attunga State Forest, Stock Routes and Reserves as both natural and recreational areas.



Attunga Community Hall provides a meeting place for the community.



Attunga Rural Fire Brigade provides an essential service for the area.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- ▶ Program adequate provision of utility, transport and community infrastructure in conjunction with programmed development.
- ▶ Investigate the potential to for alternative mechanisms for sewage management such as package treatment plants.



Attunga Youth Centre provides a meeting place for younger residents



Recreation area



Attunga Hotel provides a meeting point



Figure 11.8 Attunga Strategic Actions

11.7 Barraba

11.7.1 Community Views

Residents indicated that the reasons for moving to Barraba included the good quality of life, employment, retirement and long-term residents. Residents characterised Barraba as being safe, clean and green, peaceful and quiet with four distinct seasons.

Residents cited the various heritage buildings and recreation facilities and areas around Barraba as having cultural significance. Particular buildings and areas identified included the Hospital, sports grounds, Horton Falls, the Old Court House and the Memorial Hall. Queen Street was identified as having appeal for residents and visitors to the area.

Residents felt that the biggest deficiency within the town was the lack of water supply and sewerage services. They also believed that there were insufficient cultural facilities to attract professional people and encourage the retention of younger people. However they recognised that the village offered good recreational facilities including golf, bowling, dams, rugby and tennis. A retirement village was identified as an essential facility for the town.

11.7.2 Identity and Form

The town of Barraba is situated at the junction of the Manilla River and Connors Creek. The town has been set out on a grid pattern with long and wide streets dominating the streetscape offering an uncomplicated and legible urban structure. The urban area is generally confined to Bridge Street in the north, Cherry Street in the east, Range Street in the south and Bullied Street in the west. Lot sizes within the township are large, generally in the order of 1,100m².

The main street of Barraba (Queen Street) presents an ordered retail and commercial focus for the town with a large number of heritage listed buildings showcasing its history and heritage. The town is characterised with several facilities such as a showground, saleyards, community centre, cemetery, a Primary School and a Secondary School, Hospital and a Caravan Park. Barraba suffers from a poor entry in the south as a result of an electricity substation.

11.7.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Development in Barraba will respect the town’s climate, heritage, structure and rural character. The town will offer a choice of housing, employment, community and commercial facilities to encourage investment and promotion of the area. The town centre will be a vibrant and active focal point for the town linking with the Manilla River as its principal public place.

11.7.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- Retain existing village zone.

- Investigate methods of 'branding' Barraba to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the town, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Barraba as a vibrant and active community focused town.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.
- Improve the gateways of the town to make them more visually appealing.
- Provide landscaping adjacent to the existing electricity substation and water treatment plant on the southern entry to town to improve the aesthetics on the approach to town.
- Improve access and vistas to Manilla River.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- Investigate opportunities for improved and integrated commercial and community facilities.
- Investigate options for the provision of facilities for youth.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- The identified 14.59 hectares of unconstrained vacant land is to be retained for future urban development and zoned residential under the new LEP.
- Retain current village zone.
- Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Barraba to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.
- Encourage development that contributes to a low key settlement pattern which provides a variety of lifestyle needs, including medium density development close to community and commercial precinct and rural lifestyle lots.
- Encourage development that does not impact upon the water quality of the Manilla River
- Ensure all new residential development is serviced with telephone, electricity and water and sewer services.
- Investigate options for the provision of aged care developments between the hospital and the town centre.

Principle – Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Promote the development of the poultry industry around Barraba for future employment generation subject to water licenses from Split Rock Dam.

Principle – Caring for the Natural Environment

- Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values that may contribute to habitat, should be protected and included as a consideration in the detailed design of development and land management outcomes for Barraba.



A Barraba gateway gives a “sense of place” to the village



Barraba swimming pool



Barraba Hospital provides an essential service to the area.

- ▮ Ensure future development, particularly urban stormwater runoff, does not pollute the Manilla River.
- ▮ Embellish the area between the Barraba Swimming Pool and the riverbank of the Manilla River with landscaping and picnic facilities to encourage greater public use.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- ▮ Investigate alternative water supply options to allow for future development in the short term.
- ▮ Investigate funding for a pipeline between Split Rock Dam and Barraba to augment the existing town water supply and provide opportunities for future employment generating development.

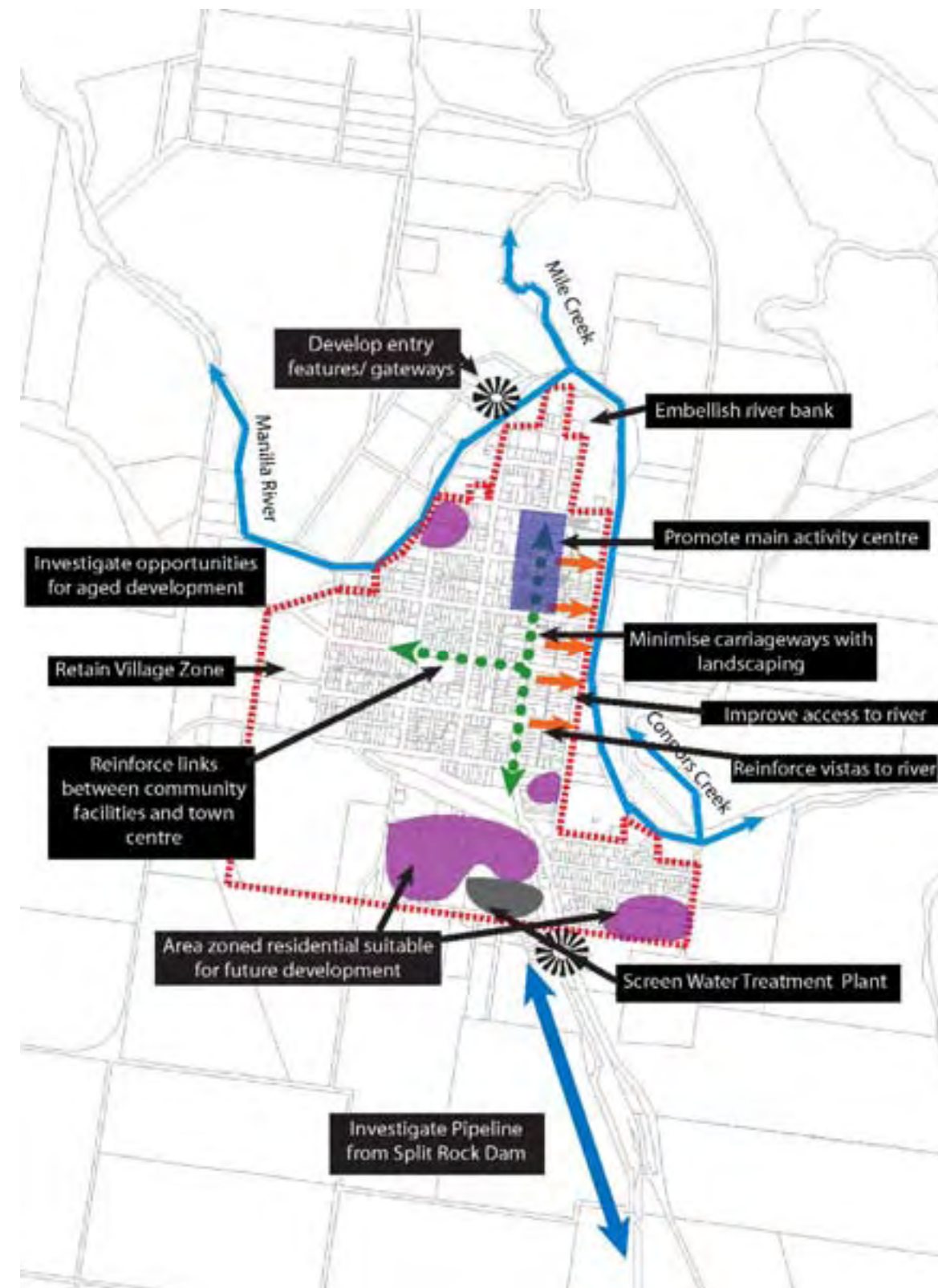


Figure 11.9 Barraba Strategic Actions

11.8 Bendemeer

11.8.1 Community Views

- Significant places are the Bendemeer Town Hall, Bendemeer Hotel, Bendemeer Rodeo ground, McDonald River and Memorial.
- The MacDonald River is the most important natural area within the town.
- The MacDonald River is used for recreation such as swimming and picnics.
- The industries/businesses in Bendemeer are the Bendemeer Hotel, Sawmill, Craft Shop, Caravan Park and shop, Coffee Shop, Back to Bridge and Grey Fergie Tractor Muster and Banalasta.
- Community facilities are adequate.

11.8.2 Identity and Form

Bendemeer is a small village located to the northeast of Tamworth. The village is bounded by, New England Highway and MacDonald River to the east, Home Street to the North and Fanny Street to the South. Some of the village lies on the flat terrain of the MacDonald River and some of the village is on sloping land with picturesque of the Moonbi Range to the West.

The village has been set out on a grid pattern with long and wide streets dominating the streetscape offering an uncomplicated and legible urban structure. The village is subject to frequent flooding from the MacDonald River.

The village is characterised by:

- It is currently zoned 2(v) under the draft Parry LEP 2006.
- The village is surrounded by 1(l) Agricultural landscape zoned land under the draft Parry LEP 2004.
- Proactive community.
- MacDonald River traverses through the centre of the village.
- The junction of the New England and Oxley Highway.

11.8.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Development in Bendemeer will enhance the village’s rural character to create an attractive and appealing community with the MacDonald River providing a focus for the village’s activities.

11.8.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- Investigate methods of ‘branding’ Bendemeer to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the village, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Bendemeer

as a vibrant and active community focused village.

- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities. The plan should also include tourism and recreation development and improved commercial and community centre precinct.
- Improve the gateways of the town to make them more visually appealing.
- Encourage Macdonald River to remain as a focal point.
- Ensure Caroline Street is the main activity centre or ‘heart’ of Bendemeer

Principle – Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

- Acknowledge the ongoing agricultural pursuits in the surrounding area and maintain a separation between the village area and agricultural pursuits.
- Protect the Macdonald River and surrounding land used for recreational/ environmental purposes.
- Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Bendemeer to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- Investigate opportunities for improved and integrated commercial and community facilities.
- Increase and maintain the level of community facilities for the youth in Bendemeer.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Encourage development that contributes to a low key village settlement pattern, which provides for a variety of lifestyle needs.
- Orient development away from the Highway.
- Encourage development that does not impact upon the water quality of the MacDonald River.
- New subdivision to be confined to the more gentle slopes adjacent to the village.
- 8.61 hectares of unconstrained vacant land is located to the north and south of Bendemeer
- 25.23 hectares of constrained vacant land is located to the south and north of Bendemeer. Generally the land is constrained due to flood.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- Program adequate provision of utility, transport and community infrastructure in conjunction with programmed development.
- Investigate the potential to connect Bendemeer to a sewerage reticulation system subject to future development, to prevent water quality impacts on Macdonald River.

Principle - Caring for the Natural Environment

- Ensure the protection of the scenic values of the Moonbi Range.



Bendemeer gateway



Bendemeer Caravan Park provides the village with a tourist attraction



McDonald River provides unique scenic values for the village



Bendemeer Hotel should be promoted as the “heart” of the village.

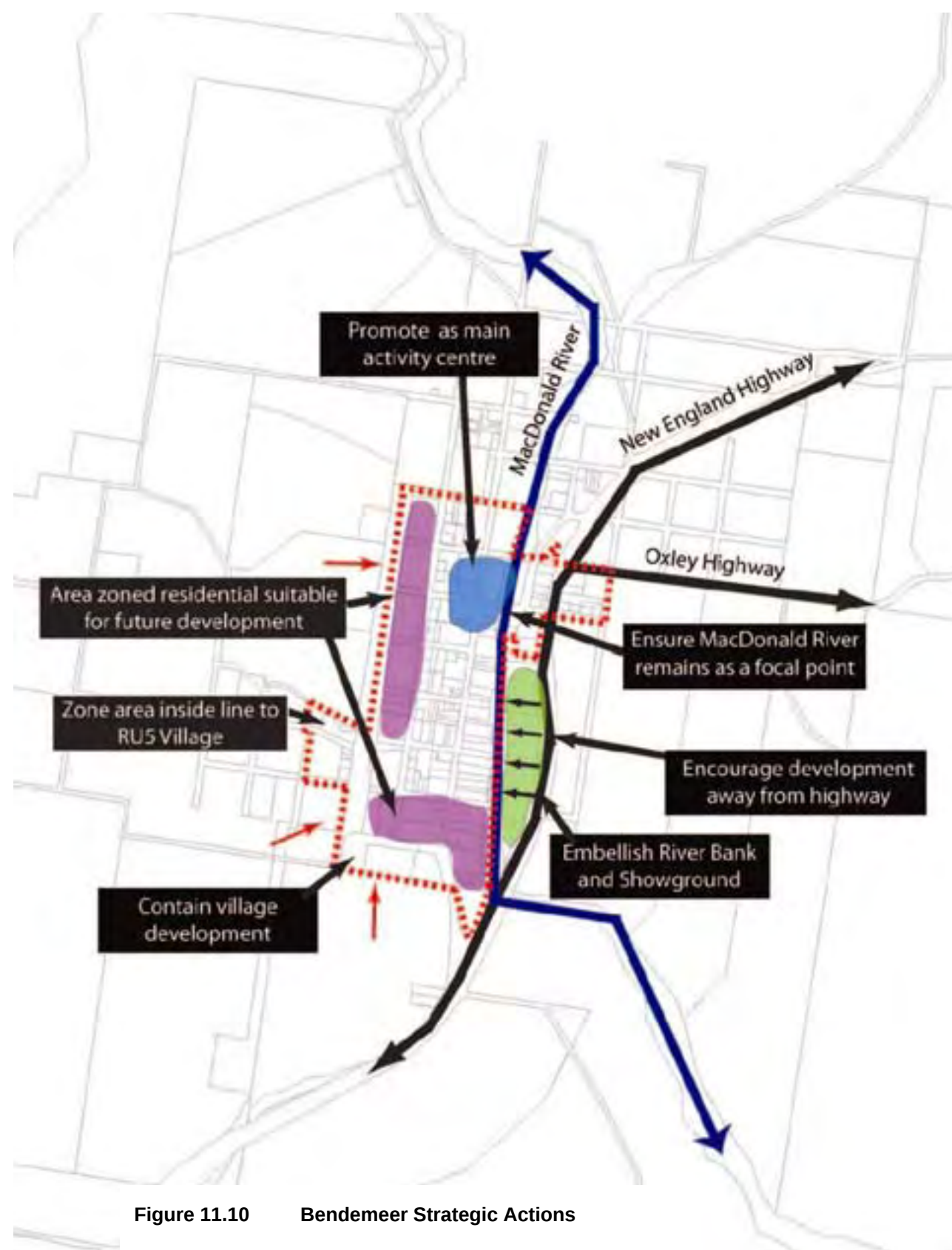


Figure 11.10 Bendemeer Strategic Actions

11.9 Kootingal

11.9.1 Community Views

The purpose of the consultation program was to understand the issues and constraints, develop a vision for Kootingal and formulate solutions for the future of Kootingal. The consultation program involved phototalk, newsletter responses and a community workshop. The following is a consolidated outline of the issues raised by the community.

- Students liked Federation and Denman Avenue Parks for playing, however, they did not like the lack of public toilets and lights in Denman Avenue Park. Students also disliked that there were no paths on some streets and that gravel lies on roadsides.
- Participants identified the Cenotaph in Denman Park, Sandy Creek and its environs, Kootingal Reserve, Parry Park and Cockburn River as significant places/ features in Kootingal. Cockburn Cottage, Kootingal Memorial Hall and the Police Station were also identified as having significance for the town.
- Most participants felt that there were adequate facilities within Kootingal, however, some felt that the swimming pool should have longer operating hours, and that improved playing grounds were necessary.
- The sporting fields, parks and the Cockburn River were identified as the most important natural areas.
- Participants regarded the IGA, doctor's surgery, hotel, takeaway, hairdresser, vegetable shop, post office and chemist as important local industries and businesses in Kootingal. Participants felt that tourism particularly the Country Music Festival, equine-related development, retail development and health facilities (doctors and chemists) were important for the future development of the area.
- Participants indicated that the reasons for moving to Kootingal included the facilities, cheap land, lack of social problems, good community spirit, educational opportunities, peaceful atmosphere, good access and long term residents. Residents characterised Kootingal as having a caring community, low density living, forward planning and sufficient water.

11.9.2 Identity and Form

Kootingal is located in the foothills of the Moonbi Ranges, north of Tamworth on the New England Highway. Due to its proximity to Tamworth City it is a popular residential area for people who work in Tamworth but are seeking a rural lifestyle. The town is bounded by the Northern Railway Line to the east and the New England Highway to the west. Kootingal contains various land uses including residential, rural-residential, commercial and light industrial. Commercial and community services and facilities are primarily located along Gate Street and Denman Avenue.

Reticulated sewer and water services are available to the area and all vacant land can be connected to these systems.

11.9.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Development in Kootingal will respect the town's structure and rural character. The town will offer a choice of housing, employment, community and commercial facilities to encourage investment and promotion of the area. The town centre will be a vibrant and active focal point for the town.

11.9.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- Zone area zoned for retail under the Draft Parry LEP 2006 as B2 Local Centre
- Investigate methods of 'branding' Kootingal to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the village, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Kootingal as a vibrant and active community focused town.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.
- Protect the views and vistas of the town by ensuring that future development remains below ridgelines and is appropriate in terms of bulk and scale.
- Improve the gateways of the town to make them more visually appealing.
- Improve the streetscape of Gate Street and Denman Avenue with the use of vegetation.
- Use street furniture in Denman Avenue and Gate Street to enhance and reinforce the centre of town.
- Improve pedestrian links throughout the town by providing footpaths where appropriate, such as between community facilities.
- Improve access to Sandy Creek and the Cockburn River.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- Identify any existing community facilities that may need upgrade works, for example, the sports grounds and Denman Avenue Park and prioritise these works.
- Encourage public art in the development of existing and future open space.
- Maintain the existing open space and reserve areas.
- Ensure that existing and future open space is accessible and safe for all people with the use of things such as pathways and lighting
- Protect the heritage values of Kootingal.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Zone current village zone (not including the local centre) as R1 General Residential.
- Discourage ribbon development from occurring along the New England Highway.



The streetscape of Kootingal lacks vegetation.



Kootingal gateway.

- ▶ Allow for the growth and development of Kootingal within the existing zone boundaries.
- ▶ Kootingal currently has 19.13 hectares of unconstrained vacant land located within the town boundaries, which requires further investigation for the purposes of future residential development.
- ▶ Encourage development that contributes to a low key village settlement pattern which provides a variety of lifestyle needs, including medium density development close to community and commercial precinct and rural lifestyle lots.

Principle – Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- ▶ Maintain the commercial core of the town and encourage mixed-use development within the centre, by retaining separation between existing and future commercial uses and other land uses such as residential and agricultural.
- ▶ Encourage initiatives that will facilitate and support tourism in Kootingal, such as those that will provide for the equine industry and the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Principle – Protecting Rural Futures

- ▶ Protect high quality agricultural land from incremental development.
- ▶ Acknowledge agricultural pursuits in the area and retain separation between town land uses and future agricultural activities.
- ▶ Promote equine related development in locations, which will not impact upon low density housing.
- ▶ Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Kootingal to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.

Principle – Caring for the Environment

- ▶ Conservation and open space networks should connect the town to surrounding natural features, particularly the Cockburn River.
- ▶ Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values should be included as considerations in the detailed design of development and land management outcomes for Kootingal.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- ▶ The vacant land in the eastern part of the township can be connected to the existing water and sewerage systems.
- ▶ Investigate the drainage issues in Kootingal.

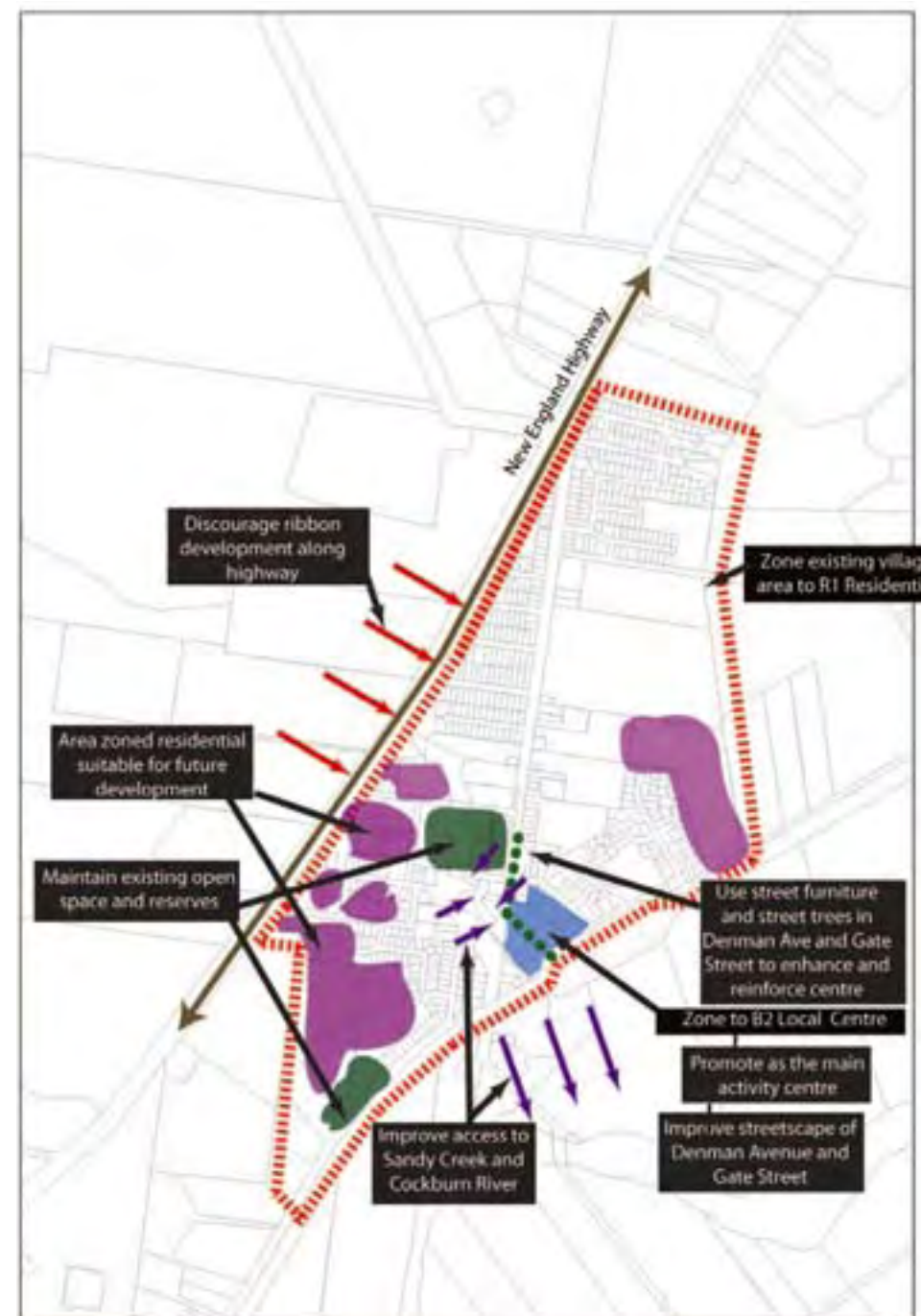


Figure 11.11 Kootingal Strategic Actions

11.10 Manilla

11.10.1 Community Views

Respondents identified the Town Hall complex, Namoi River and environs, Chaffey Park, Strafford Street, Manilla Street, Mt Borah, Manilla Weir and Pool, Royce Cottage, Museum, Old Court House as significant places/ features in and around Manilla.

Respondents were divided regarding the adequacy of facilities within Manilla. Those that believed facilities were adequate quoted the good sports grounds, parks and clubs, whilst those who felt facilities were inadequate raised the lack of youth facilities, Chaffey Park needs an upgrade and the Town Hall needs air-conditioning.

Chaffey Park and the weir area have been identified as the most important natural areas for Manilla and are regularly used for swimming, picnics and recreation. Mt Borah was also identified as being a key natural area.

Respondents regarded the farming industry, shopping facilities, nursing home, post office, doctors and hospital as important local industries and businesses in Manilla.

11.10.2 Identity and form

Manilla is a town located approximately 42 kilometres north-west of Tamworth and is situated on the junction of the Manilla and Namoi Rivers. The population of the town is 2,300 with approximately 600 in the surrounding area.

The town has been set out on a grid pattern with long and wide streets dominating the streetscape offering an uncomplicated and legible urban structure. The urban area is generally confined to the south-eastern side of the Manilla River bound by Dewhurst Street in the north, Kanangra Road to the east, Sailsbrook Lane to the south and River Street to the west. The urban area has however extended to the north and west of the Manilla River. Lots sizes within the township are large generally in the order of 1,200m². Manilla Street is the core business area for the town with most retail and commercial development located between Market and Court Streets. This area presents an ordered focus for the town with heritage listed buildings illustrating its history and heritage. Land directly adjacent to the Manilla River is constrained due to flooding. Manilla continues to play a role in poultry production and market gardening.

11.10.3 Desired Future Character Statement

As outlined in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006

Manilla is a community that supports its people and businesses to grow and prosper and values its friendly, easy lifestyle.

11.10.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- Zone existing activity node as B2 Local Centre.

- Establish a Tourism Marketing and Signage Plan and Manilla Marketing Co –operative as identified in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006.
- Improve the gateways and signage of the town to make them more visually appealing as outlined in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006. Develop a logo and slogan for the Manilla Matters Program
- Establish streetscape improvements such as improving the garden pool entrance, street tree planting and cycle tracks as identified in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006.
- Establish a Main Street Working Bee to clean / green up the main street as identified in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- Develop Youth facilities and programs such as a youth committee, Skate and Bike Park as identified in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Zone current village zone (not including the local centre) as R1 General Residential.
- The identified 25.42 hectares of unconstrained vacant land is to be retained for future urban development and zoned residential under the new LEP.
- Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Manilla to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.
- Encourage development that contributes to a low key settlement pattern, which provides for a variety of lifestyle needs
- Encourage development that does not impact upon the water quality of the Namoi River
- Ensure all new residential development is serviced with telephone, electricity and water and sewer services.
- Investigate options for the provision of aged care developments between the hospital and the town centre.
- Additional vacant land located adjacent to the existing town boundary should be identified for the purposes of residential development.

Principle – Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Develop business and training programs such as a business data base, trade shows and training workshops as identified in the Manilla Matters Program Draft Community Strategic Plan 2006.
- Promote the development of the poultry industry and other suitable agricultural industries around Manilla for future employment generation subject to water licenses from the Namoi River/ Split Rock Dam.



Gateways to Manilla can be improved



Principle – Caring for the Natural Environment

- ▶ Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values that may contribute to habitat, should be protected and included as a consideration in the detailed design of development and land management outcomes for Manilla.
- ▶ Ensure future development particularly urban stormwater runoff does not pollute the Namoi River.
- ▶ Embellish the area between the town centre and the river bank of the Namoi River with landscaping and picnic facilities to encourage greater public use.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- ▶ The vacant land in the northern and southern parts of Manilla Township can be connected to the existing water and sewerage systems, however, the vacant land to the west of the Namoi River has not yet been connected.

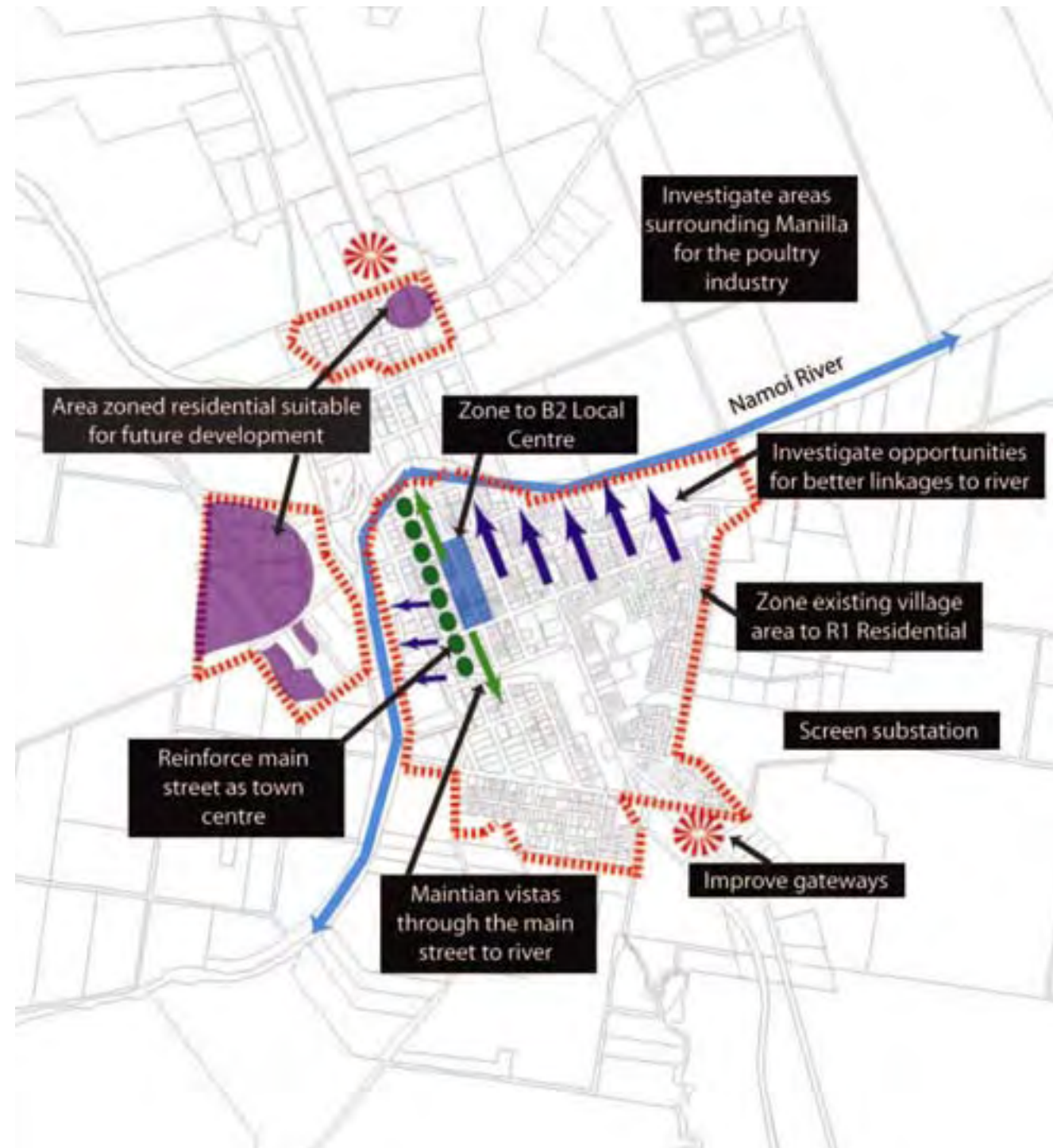


Figure 11.12 Manilla Strategic Actions

11.11 Moonbi

11.11.1 Community Views

The purpose of the consultation program was to understand the issues and constraints, develop a vision for the village of Moonbi and formulate solutions for the future of Moonbi. The consultation program involved newsletter responses and a community workshop. The following is a consolidated outline of the issues raised by the community.

- Participants identified the Moonbi Lookout, Moonbi School, Pony Club Area, Moonbi Hall, Moore Creek Dam reserve and Fred Hilliers Pottery Gallery, as significant places/features in Moonbi.
- Most participants felt that the recreational facilities within Moonbi, particularly for young people, were not adequate citing the need for tennis, courts, cricket grounds, and a football field. Participants also suggested that creek banks should be improved for recreational purposes. In addition, Moonbi Hall was identified as requiring an upgrade.
- The Moonbi Nature Reserve, Moonbi Common and the surrounding mountain ranges were identified as the most important natural areas in Moonbi. Other important environmental features identified included the parklands and the Moonbi Lookout.
- Participants regarded the farming industry, local shop, post office, and Andromeda Engineering, as important local industries and businesses in Moonbi.

11.11.2 Identity and Form

The village of Moonbi is an established community located at the foot of the Moonbi Ranges 25km north-east of Tamworth City on the New England Highway. Given its location on the Highway, Moonbi maintains excellent access.

Although the Village of Moonbi is within close proximity to Tamworth City, it is sufficiently distant to retain its local community character. The village contains a mixture of land uses residential, rural-residential, commercial, agricultural and light industrial. There are also several items of heritage significance within the village. Halfway up the Moonbi Ranges is the Moonbi Lookout, which provides extensive views of the district.

Moonbi is serviced by a reticulated water system, which all vacant land can be connected to. No reticulated sewer, however, is available to the area.

11.11.3 Desired Future Character Statement

Development in Moonbi should enhance the village’s rural character in order to promote a strong community identity.

11.11.4 Strategic Actions

- Allow for the growth and development of Moonbi within the existing zone boundaries.
- Discourage ribbon development from occurring along the New England Highway.
- Protect the views and vistas of the village by ensuring that future development remains below ridgelines and is appropriate in terms of bulk and scale.

- Improve the gateways of the village to make them more visually appealing.
- Improve the streetscape of Gill Street through the use of vegetation

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs.

- Investigate opportunities to provide additional community facilities, particularly recreational facilities.
- Identify any existing community facilities e.g. the Moonbi Hall that may need upgrade works and prioritise these works.
- Ensure that existing and future open space is accessible and safe for all people.
- Maintain the existing recreation reserve.
- Protect the heritage values of the village.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Encourage development that contributes to a low key settlement pattern, providing for a variety of lifestyle needs.
- The identified 6.69 hectares of unconstrained vacant land is to be retained for future urban development and zoned Village under the new LEP.

Principle – Protecting Rural Futures

- Protect high quality agricultural land from incremental development.
- Acknowledge agricultural pursuits in the area and retain separation between village land uses and future agricultural activities.
- Investigate opportunities to protect the poultry industry around Moonbi.

Principle – Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Maintain the commercial core of the village, by retaining separation between existing and future commercial uses and other land uses such as residential and agricultural.

Principle – Caring for the Environment

- Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values that may contribute to habitat corridors should be protected and included as considerations in the detailed design of development and land management in Moonbi.
- Improve creek beds to encourage their use for recreational purposes.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- To foster future development investigate opportunities to extend a reticulated sewerage system to the Village.
- Ensure that the performance of all onsite septic systems within the village is reviewed to avoid potential environmental and social problems.



Gateways to Moonbi can be improved by giving the village a sense of place.



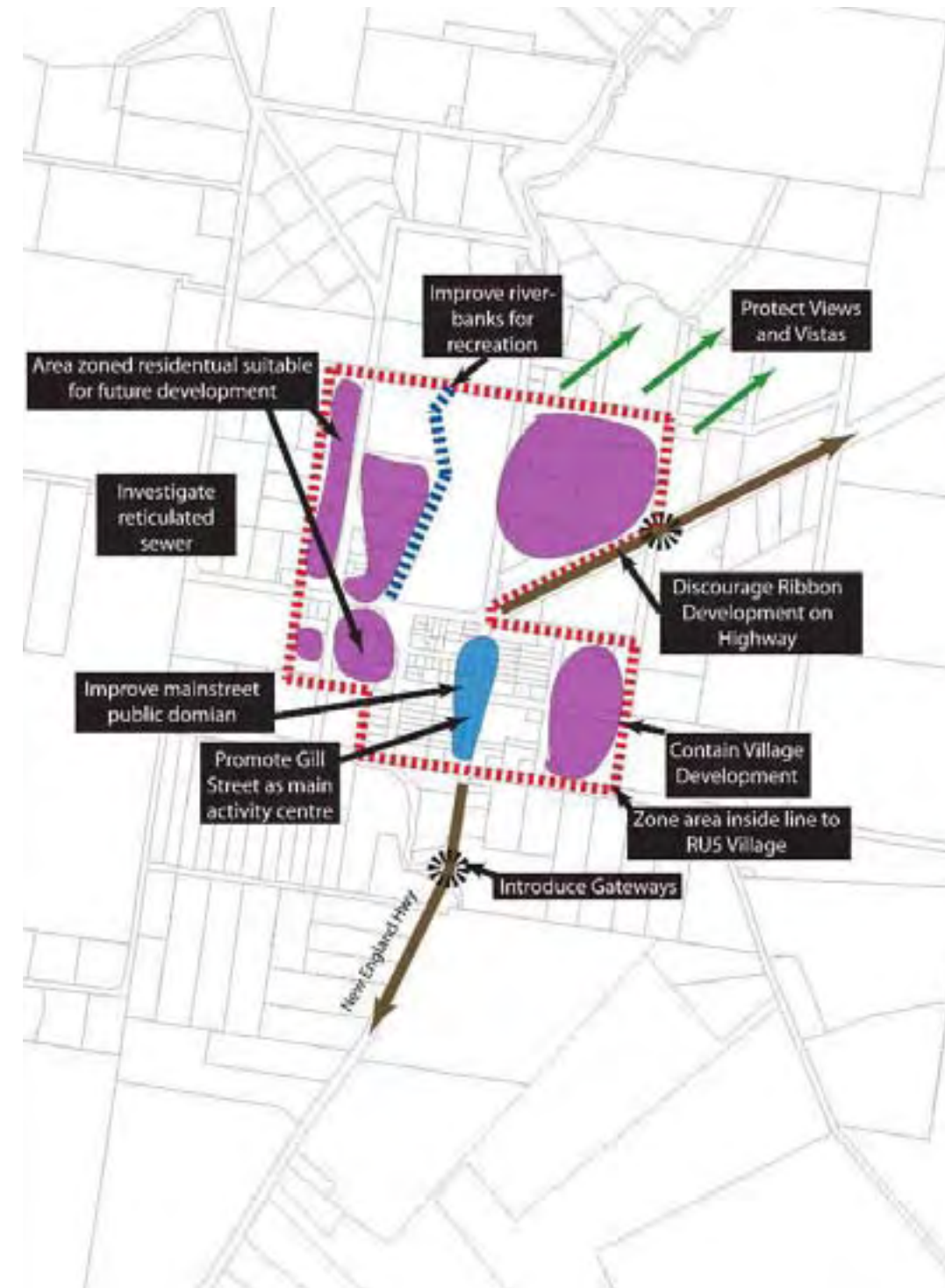


Figure 11.13 Moonbi Strategic Actions

11.12 Nundle

11.12.1 Community Views

During the consultation period phototalk and newsletter responses were received and a workshop was conducted. The results of consultation revealed the following issues:

- ▮ Students liked the Memorial Hall, Old Church, Pool, Post Office, Furniture Shop, Art Gallery, Woollen Mill and the beautiful views. Students didn't like the public toilets, play equipment and gardens, as they require more frequent maintenance.
- ▮ Participants identified Sheba Dam, the Hanging Rock Community Hall, Nundle Memorial Hall, Nundle School of Arts, Nundle Swimming Pool, Nundle Woollen Mill, Hanging Rock, Jenkins and Oakenville Streets as significant places/ features in Nundle and Hanging Rock.
- ▮ Most participants felt that the facilities within Nundle were adequate with the exception of health and youth facilities. Participants also suggested that Sheba Dam requires an upgrade and that new public toilets are necessary.
- ▮ The Peel River, Sheba Dam, the forests and Bowling Alley have been identified as the most important natural areas in Nundle/Hanging Rock. Ben Halls Gap National Park and Barnard Valley were also identified.
- ▮ Participants regarded the Nundle General Store, Woollen Mill, Peel Inn, timber industry, Nundle Sports and Recreation Club and tourism as important local industries and businesses in Nundle. Residents felt that agriculture, tourism (e.g. Woollen Mill and festivals like the Chinese Go for Gold Festival and B&Bs), retail facilities and intensive agriculture were important for the future development of the area.
- ▮ Participants indicated that the reasons for moving to Nundle/Hanging Rock included climate, affordable land, lack of traffic, good social life, services for retirees and its small community minded nature. Residents characterised Nundle/Hanging Rock as being visually appealing and proud of its heritage.
- ▮ Participants felt that the majority of vacant land in Nundle is being held in abeyance by landowners who have no intentions to develop it. Therefore, it was suggested additional land is required for development.

11.12.2 Identity and Form

Nundle is a small town settled at the base of the mountains. It has a typical small rural town character with a number of landmark buildings, wide-open streets and large lot sizes. It is also characterised by its attractive surrounding landscapes and associated views. The landmark historic buildings include Nundle General Store, Woollen Mill, Peel Inn, Nundle Memorial Hall and Nundle School of Arts. The commercial area is confined to a few shops in the main street and generally focused around the general store. The services and public amenities within the town are limited.

11.12.3 Desired Future Character Statement

The historic, open character of the town will be maintained and enhanced with areas of public open space and services improved.

11.12.4 Strategic Actions

Principle- Strengthening the Region

- ▮ Zone existing activity node as B2 Local Centre.
- ▮ Investigate methods of 'branding' Nundle to create a unique marketable image which has relevance to the town, its community / environment and its history and develop a marketing strategy. Develop the marketing strategy to promote Nundle as a vibrant and active community focused town.
- ▮ Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.
- ▮ Improve the gateways of the town to make them more visually appealing.

Principle – Meeting Future Housing Needs

- ▮ Zone current village zone (not including the local centre) as R1 General Residential.
- ▮ Ensure all new residential development is serviced with telephone, electricity and water and sewer services.
- ▮ Consolidate residential development around the town centre while maintaining large lot sizes.
- ▮ The identified 14.93 hectares of unconstrained vacant land is to be retained for future urban development and zoned Village under the new LEP.
- ▮ Investigate the possibility of rezoning small quantities of land to RU4 (and/or R5) in close proximity to Nundle to provide an opportunity for the creation of serviced lifestyle blocks.

Principle – Meeting Social and Cultural Needs

- ▮ Promote the town's historic and visual attractions.
- ▮ Consolidate commercial business in Jenkins Street.
- ▮ Maintain and enhance the historic character of the landmark buildings.

Principle – Caring for the Environment

- ▮ Areas identified in the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Study with natural values that may contribute to habitat corridors should be protected and included as considerations in the detailed design of development and land management in Nundle.
- ▮ Conserve significant features of the surrounding landscapes.
- ▮ Review stormwater management in Nundle to ensure minimal impact on the Peel



Nundle Woollen Mill promotes the village as a significant tourist attraction



River.

Principle – Improving Infrastructure Provision

- Investigate the potential of installing a reticulated sewer system in Nundle.

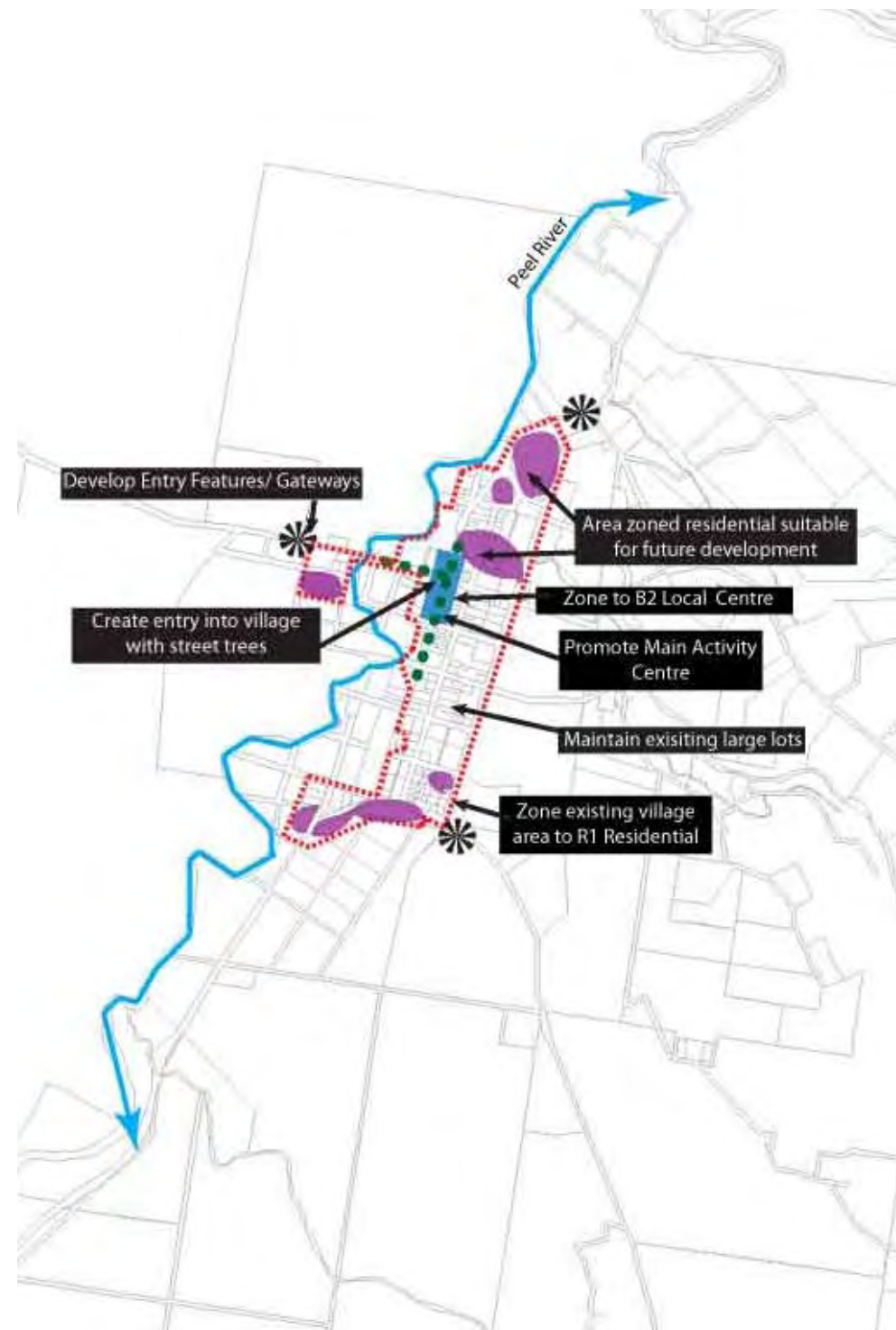


Figure 11.14 Nundle Strategic Actions

12. Implementation and Monitoring

The success of the Strategy in meeting the objectives and vision for the Tamworth Region will depend on the on-going commitment of the Tamworth Regional Council in engaging the community and government agencies.

12.1 Strategic Implementation

Various actions contained in this Strategy require further strategic attention by the Tamworth Regional Council and other stakeholders, and are not necessarily associated with the LEP/DCP framework or related land use planning decisions. These are also important in achieving the vision and objectives identified in this Strategy. The Strategy should be regularly reviewed incorporating changes in the circumstances affecting the future of the LGA. The Tamworth Regional Council is committed to on-going involvement of the community and stakeholders in land use planning decisions.

12.2 Statutory Implementation

The strategic directions specified in this strategy are translated into statutory provisions through the development of an LEP and subsequent DCP framework. The LEPs and DCPs provide the means of ensuring that the development of the Tamworth Region is consistent with the long-term land use vision and objectives identified for the LGA.

This Strategy identifies key actions, recommendations and associated reference documents to be considered when assessing development applications for development and subdivision approval and proposals to rezone land. In the event that there are inconsistencies between reference documents and this Strategy, detailed recommendations of reference documents should only be implemented if the broad directions of the Strategy can be achieved.

Local Environmental Plans

The New South Wales Government has recently introduced a range of reforms to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979; one of which requires each local government area within NSW to prepare a new comprehensive Local Environmental Plan in accordance with the Standard Instrument for Local Environmental Plans that took effect on 31 March 2006.

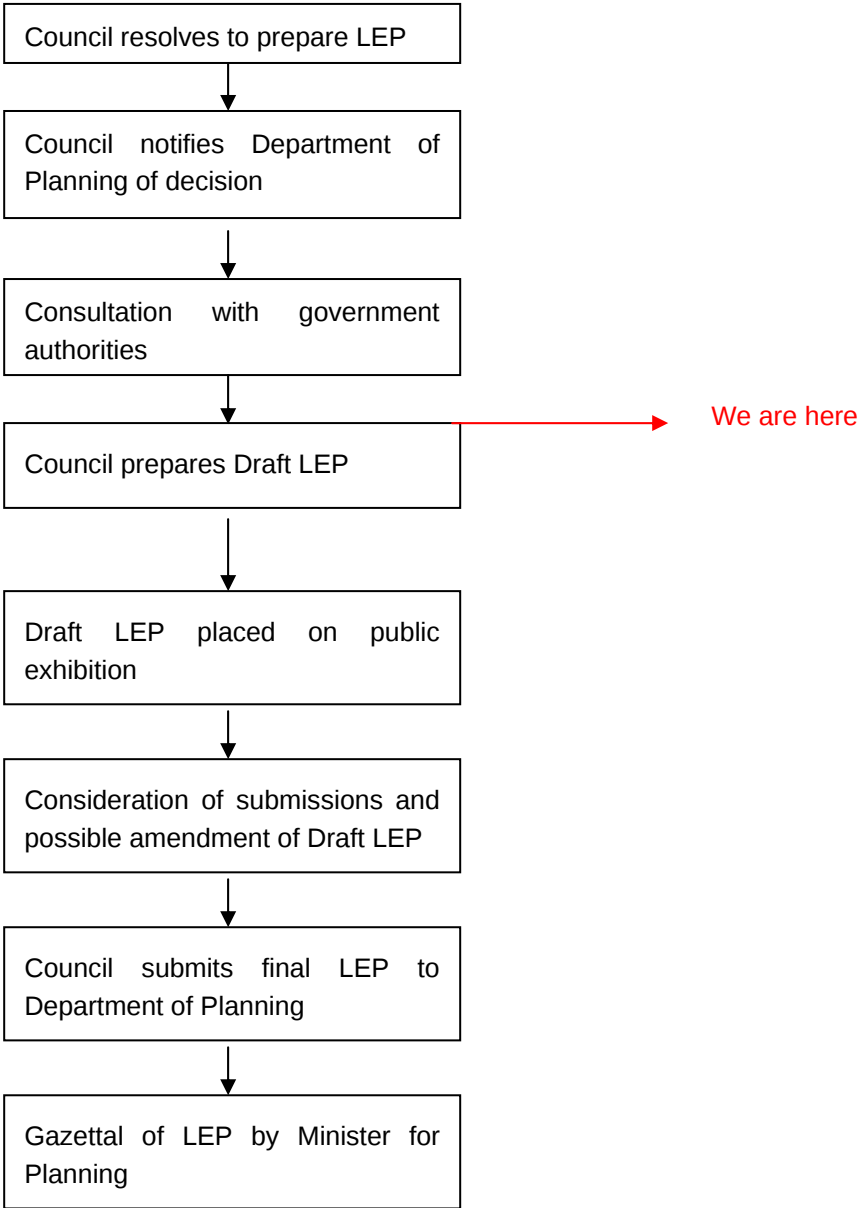
The major initiative of the reform package is to develop a unified system for the delivery of land use controls by enabling all mandatory requirements for development to be identifiable by reviewing local environmental plans. The application of a common LEP template, common planning provisions, common definitions and common zones will provide a robust structure to give effect to regional strategies. It provides a framework within which each LEP asserts a leading role in environmental planning and management.

In response to these reforms and recommendations from the Local Profile and Issues Paper, a new LEP is required for the LGA to accommodate recent changes in planning practice, and new economic, social and environmental pressures. Therefore, a new Local Environmental Plan for the Tamworth Region will be prepared, that will be consistent with the Standard Instrument.

The draft Local Environmental Plan will implement the Strategy and in particular will set out the development potential and key planning principles for development of the area. Based on the Standard Instrument, the draft LEP will do the following:

- Rezone land to reflect the strategic actions. A range of new zones (based on the Standard Instrument for LEPs) will be included such as rural, residential, business, industrial, special purpose, recreation and environment protection zones;
- Identify appropriate land uses which may be carried out within each zone;
- Stipulate subdivision and density controls;
- Identify and protect items of heritage significance, and
- Introduce measures to ensure protection of sensitive environmental areas.

The major steps involved in the preparation of the LEP are set out below.

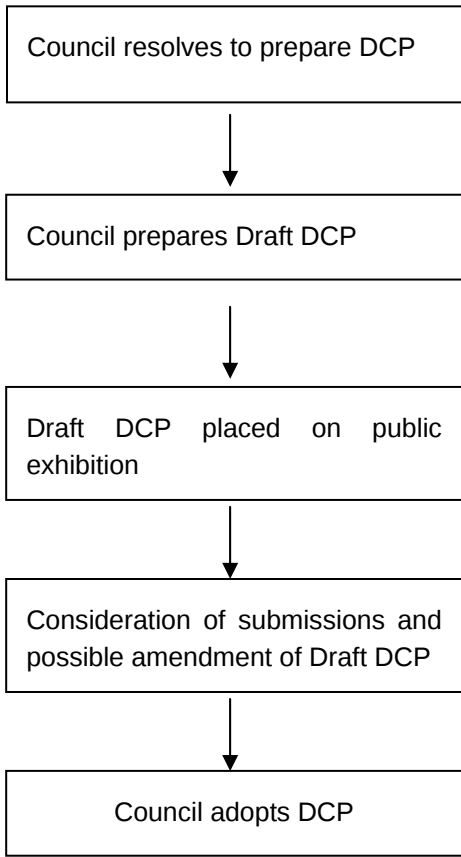


Comprehensive Development Control Plan

On 30 September 2005, the Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Amendment (Infrastructure and Other Planning Reform) Act 2005 (the Reform Act) commenced. The Reform Act includes changes to Part 3 of the EP&A Act 1979. The Reform Act contains a number of new provisions that require that only one Development Control Plan (DCP) apply to any site. It is therefore recommended that preparation of a comprehensive DCP should follow the preparation of the new LEP for the Tamworth Region.

The DCP should be a single document, which contains guidelines of detailed provisions on all aspects of development. The DCP should supplement the provisions of the LEP and provide detailed design controls for residential, rural and industrial development as well as development of a heritage item or within a conservation area. The DCP should adopt a "performance based" approach to development control, focusing on development design outcomes as well as providing minimum standards for different types of development. This approach allows flexibility and innovation in design whilst ensuring development meets key site planning and design objectives.

The major steps involved in the preparation of a DCP are set out below.



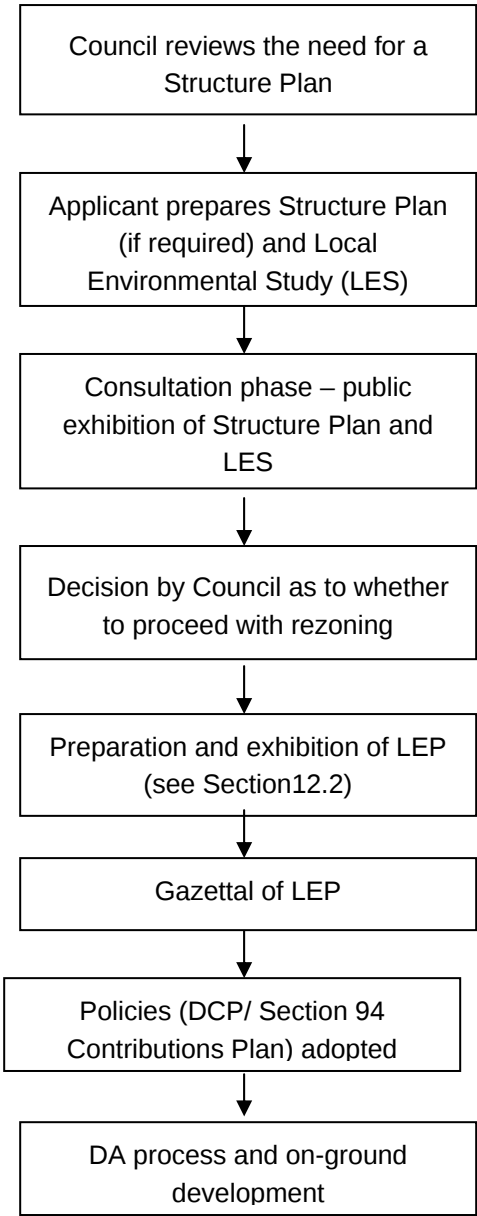
12.3 Staging

Council will determine the timing and staging of Tamworth. It involves balancing the objectives of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, overall Strategic Planning objectives for Tamworth and the competition and choice in the market place. Opportunities for public involvement will occur during the preparation of a Strategic Plan for each growth area and the introduction of new development controls.

Process for rezoning of areas

The Strategy has identified a number of areas that are suitable for infill development. As the Strategy only sets out broad strategic directions for development, in many cases further investigation will be required of those areas identified for future development in order to ascertain their suitability for that development.

The process by which the identified investigation areas are implemented is as follows:



Structure Plans

The Planning reform legislation replaces masterplans with DCP and staged DA's. It allows an environmental planning instrument to require that a DCP should be prepared by, or on behalf, of an owner of land before development may occur.

The preparation of a master plan will be necessary in some investigation areas either due to the range of issues, the number of landowners and/or the need for increased community consultation prior to rezoning and development occurring. A master plan may also be deemed to be necessary for other investigation areas as the implementation of the Strategy progresses.



A master plan is essentially a broad planning study of an area to provide planning principles and direction for a whole investigation area or planning locality. The contents of the master plan will vary depending on each site but might include coordinated transport planning, water and sewer infrastructure planning, guidelines for development density, community service planning and/ or environmental outcomes. The master plan will generally be undertaken up-front, prior to more detailed investigations for the land in question to set a broad planning framework.

The importance of the master plan is to ensure that planning does not take place in an ad-hoc, piecemeal fashion. The process involves landowners, Council and other relevant government agencies to produce a plan, with input from the community to form the basis of land use decisions for a particular locality.

In instances where multiple landowners are involved, the initial coordination may need to be carried out by Council. For example, it may be necessary that Council facilitate a workshop of interested parties and/ or assist landowners to determine a fair and equitable system of distributing the cost of studies and planning between affected parties.

Council's role could also be related to the preparation of studies relevant to Section 94 of the EP&A Act in relation to developer contributions. This could include studies to determine the appropriate types of development in a locality (e.g. residential, open space, neighbourhood facilities or studies related to traffic planning, drainage and cycleways).

Council may also play a role in coordinating consultation with the community and the exhibition of plans. The distribution of costs for Council's involvement will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis by Council. However, as a general principle, the cost of undertaking master planning should wherever possible be distributed between landowners who stand to gain from the expected outcomes of the master planning, bearing in mind that there are no guarantees regarding the outcomes of this process.

Any costs incurred by Council in preparing the master plan will be recouped through increased fees (such as rezoning fees) or as part of a Section 94 Contributions Plan.

Landowners are therefore encouraged to undertake the preparation of a master plan for these areas, with guidance from Council.

Local Environmental Studies

Prior to any urban development occurring in the Investigation Areas, a local environmental study (LES) would be required to be carried out.

Whilst Council will retain control of the LEP and DCP process, proponents of the rezoning proposals will be required to fund all necessary studies, including the LES. The NSW Department of Planning are the lead State Government agency involved in the rezoning process.

The process of investigation will be required to be undertaken holistically, irrespective of the size of an area that is proposed to be rezoned. Council will expect that the design of the area proposed for rezoning will be considered in the context of any master plan including consideration of future development patterns, constraints and sequencing to ensure that successive developments are not fragmented and uncoordinated.

The LES would investigate such matters as follows:

- Traffic generation and the standard of the road surface for the anticipated increase in vehicular movements;
- Ecological investigations to identify the presence of any species listed under the provisions of the Threatened Species Conservation Act;
- Drainage investigations to identify the 1% AEP flood;
- Bushfire risk. An assessment will have to be carried out of the potential bushfire risk to the land. Reference should be made to the recently published *Planning for Bushfire Protection* document.
- Effluent Disposal Study to identify the most efficient means of disposing of domestic effluent on the site. This will need to be done in accordance with the NSW Government *Environment and Health Protection Guidelines – On-site Effluent Management for Single Households*, published in 1998.
- Scenic and landscape analysis of the area to identify the important landscape

features.

- The staging of the release of land to ensure that it occurs in a timely and efficient manner.
- Protection and management of riparian zones
- Flooding and access.
- Staging for the release of the land.
- The preparation of DCPs to highlight the overall subdivision pattern and the ways that it will blend into the landscape.

12.4 Development Applications

In their role as the consent authority for development applications within the LGA, the Tamworth Regional Council also has an ongoing role in the implementation of the Strategy through the development assessment process.

The council when determining development applications for development within the Region should take the vision, principles, strategies and actions of this Strategy into consideration.

12.5 Section 117 Directions

Under section 117 (as at 30 September 2005) of the Act the Minister for the Department of Planning may direct councils to prepare draft Local Environmental Plans in accordance with certain principles and to include provisions that will achieve or give effect to certain principles or aims, objectives or policies specified.

The following directions are likely to be relevant in the preparation of any draft Local Environmental Plan to rezone land for urban purposes:

Direction No. 2 – Approval, Concurrence and Consultation; Aims to ensure that state agencies are appropriately involved in consultation and concurrence roles. Council must not prepare a draft LEP unless it contains provisions requiring concurrence, consultation or referral of a Minister or public authority.

Direction No. 3 - Business Zones; A draft LEP must not alter the location of existing zonings, alter the area of existing zonings or create, remove or alter provisions applying to land zoned for Business that will result in a reduction of potential floor space.

Direction No. 5 – Coal, Other Minerals, Petroleum and Extractive Resources; In preparing draft LEPs, Councils must consult the Director-General of the Department Primary Industries.

Direction No. 8 – Community Use of Educational Establishments; A draft LEP shall permit the development of land reserved or zoned for educational establishments for a community use, whether or not the community use is of a commercial nature or is a use ancillary to an educational establishment use.

Direction No. 9 - Conservation and Management of Environmental and Indigenous Heritage; This direction requires that a draft LEP contain provisions to facilitate the conservation of items of heritage significance, Aboriginal objects, areas of Aboriginal heritage significance or Aboriginal places.

Direction No. 10 – Designated Development; A draft LEP shall not identify development as designated development.

Direction No. 12 - Development near Licensed Aerodromes; This direction requires that in preparation of a draft LEP, consultation is carried out with the Civil Aviation Authority and the lessee of the aerodrome and that consideration be given to the Obstacle Limitation Surface.

Direction No. 13 - Environmental Protection Zones; Draft LEPs shall not alter or remove existing zonings, or identification of land for scenic protection areas, except that these may be altered or increased where justified by an Environmental Study.

Direction No. 15 - Flood Prone Land; A draft LEP shall not rezone flood liable land from a Special Area, Rural or Environmental Protection Zones to Residential, Business, Industrial or Special Area Zone;



Direction No. 16 – Industrial Zones; A draft LEP must not alter the location of existing zonings, alter the area of existing zonings or create, remove or alter provisions applying to land zoned for industrial purposes that will result in a reduction of potential floor space ratio or height.

Direction No. 17 - Integrating Land Use and Transport; Aims to improve access to housing jobs and services, increase choice of available public transport, reduce travel demand, support efficient and viable operation of public transport, and provide for efficient movement of freight. This direction requires that a draft LEP locate zones for urban purposes and include provisions that give effect to and are consistent with the aims, objectives and principles of the planning policies and guidelines contained within the document *'Integrating Land Use and Transport'* (DUAP 2001).

Direction No. 18 - Manufactured Home Estates and Caravan Parks; Draft LEPs must retain existing zoning of land that permit caravan parks and define MHE and caravans in accordance with SEPP 36 and SEPP 21.

Direction No. 19 - Planning for Bushfire Protection; This direction requires consideration of the document *'Planning for Bushfire Protection'* and shall impose asset protection zones where bushfire hazard is present.

Direction No. 21 - Residential Zones; Aims to ensure the orderly and economic use or development of residential land. The draft LEPs shall contain a requirement that residential development is not permitted until the land is adequately serviced with water and sewerage (or arrangements satisfactory to the Council have been made to service it). Draft LEPs shall, as much as practicable, be compatible with the environmental quality of the area, provide for a variety of housing forms and increase the permissible residential density on the land.

Direction No. 22 – Rural Zones; A draft LEP shall not rezone rural land for an urban purpose unless such action is justified by an environmental study.

Direction No. 23 - Savings; Aims to ensure that all Crown and public utility undertakings are dealt with uniformly under the Act and that small business in the form of home occupations carried on in dwellings are not over regulated.

Direction No. 25 – Site Specific Zoning; Aims to make the range of uses permissible in zones as flexible as possible.

Direction No. 26 – Special Area Zones and Recreation Zones; A draft LEP shall not create, alter or reduce existing reservations or zonings of land for public purposes, provide for the creation of zones and reservations for public purposes or provide for land to be acquired by the crown or any other public authority.

12.6 Implementation: Short Term Priorities

Strengthening the Region and Supporting Existing Centres
- Adopt the settlement hierarchy set out in Chapter 3. - Contain urban growth within current town and village boundaries and discourage further residential growth in towns, which do not have sufficient infrastructure capacity. - For towns such as Barraba, Nundle and Manilla and Kootingal adopt residential, commercial, industrial, special use and open space zoning that matches the existing land use mixture within each town. - Prepare desired future character statements to guide development in order to retain the special character of communities within the region.
Meeting Cultural and Social Needs
- Ensure that land currently used and earmarked for future recreation and sport activities is appropriately zoned and protected from incremental development. - Include a list of heritage items, conservation areas and Aboriginal areas (where appropriate) in the new LEP.

Promote opportunities for retirement villages, nursing homes and similar accommodation to free up family housing.
Meeting Future Housing Needs
- Investigate the inclusion of a medium density residential zone adjacent to the Tamworth CBD. - Encourage mixed use development within the Tamworth CBD and other local centres. - Ensure all new residential development is serviced with telephone, electricity, water and sewer services. - Maintain an adequate supply of residential zoned land throughout the Region to suit a range of buyers' tastes and economic circumstances. - Zone all residential land identified as unconstrained and available as either R1 General Residential, R2 Low Density Residential or RU5 Village. - Ensure rural residential development is not located in areas of environmental, natural resource or prime agricultural significance by only zoning that unconstrained land with suitable attributes.
Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures
- Encourage a wide variety of agricultural activities within the agricultural zones. - Adopt the RU1 Primary Production and RU2 Rural Landscape zones for all rural land. - Investigate the possibility of rezoning existing holdings less than 40 hectares to RU4 Rural Small Holdings in a radius of 10 km around Tamworth City and 5kms around towns including Barraba, Kootingal, Nundle and Manilla and 2 kilometres around villages Bendemeer, Somerton, Duri, Attunga, Moonbi and Woolomin - Provide buffers between agricultural activities and residential development through the use of the transition zone under the new LEP. - Prepare specific controls for agricultural land uses and regulate them through the LEP or DCPs. - Prevent potentially conflicting land uses from locating adjacent to agricultural activities. - Adopt minimum holding sizes for rural zones based on the area required to sustain a farming enterprise typical for that locality. Sector A: Cropping: 200 ha and Sector B: Grazing: 400 ha. - Prohibit subdivision for the purposes of lifestyle blocks in the Primary Production, Rural Landscape and Rural Small Holdings zones. - Position equine related development close to Tamworth City where resources such as water will be available and possible impacts are minimised through the use of a zoning overlay or a Special Activities Zone. - Prevent land uses in the vicinity of mineral resources that could compromise future mining activities. - Under the new LEP apply the RU Forestry Zone to existing State Forests and forest plantations registered under the <i>Plantation and Reforestation Act 1999</i>.



Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Take steps at Glen Artney to unlock land for future industrial development through incentives/ directives in the LEP.
- Investigate opportunities for general and heavy industry, aviation based industries or offensive industry that could utilise the airport through the implementation of a special uses zone.
- Investigate the development of a business park area in South Tamworth or near the airport to provide a range of office and light industrial such as high technical industries.
- Investigate the expansion of the Taminda Industrial areas following the completion of the flood levy banks.
- Prepare specific controls for industrial land uses and regulate them through the LEP or DCPs.

Caring for the natural Environment

- Clauses that address and restrict land use activities in the vicinity of waterways should be incorporated in the LEP.
- Restrict the type and intensity of development permissible in drinking water catchments.
- Identify significant areas of native vegetation and wildlife corridors and protect from future development through zoning and development controls.
- Identify bushfire prone lands and implement the strategic fire protection zones as contained in the document 'Planning for Bushfire Protection'.
- Prepare Floodplain Management Studies and Plans for areas of the Tamworth Region, which are currently not mapped to prevent inappropriate development in flood prone areas.

Improving Transport and Accessibility

- Prepare a Pedestrian, Access and Mobility Plan and Bicycle Plan for Tamworth to improve linkages and connections within the City and encourage alternative transport forms.
- Investigate the upgrading of Moore Creek Road to ensure that future development within the Hills Plain area is adequately serviced.
- Undertake an audit of existing bus facilities within Tamworth with a view to identifying and overcoming immediate deficiencies in the areas of patron shelter and seating at stops, timetable information at stops, lighting around stops and the provision of footpaths and rubbish bins.
- Apply the SP2 Infrastructure Zone to the existing rail corridor under the new LEP.
- Lobby the NSW State Rail to provide timely investment in rail equipment and infrastructure within the Region.
- Review the adopted Airport Master Plan to investigate opportunities for additional development.
- Under the new LEP apply the SP1 Special Activities Airport Zone to land that is currently zoned 3(b) Special business (Airport).

Improving Infrastructure Provision

- Investigate alternative water supply options to allow for future development in Barraba in the short term.
- Investigate the potential of installing a reticulated sewer system in the smaller towns and villages, where it is warranted with development demand.
- Develop Development Servicing Plans for the main settlements within Region, particularly Tamworth, Barraba and Manilla.

12.7 Implementation: Medium Term Priorities

Strengthening the Region and Supporting Existing Centres

- Create opportunities for cultural expression in neighbourhoods through urban design, the inclusion of art into public spaces, appropriate landscape treatments and other design techniques.
- Implement actions that build healthy communities through assisting the people within those communities to become involved in small town renewal projects such as facilitated by the handbook *Small Town Renewal – Change the Future of your Community* for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2001.

Meeting Cultural and Social Needs

- Investigate opportunities to expand existing and/or create additional Council managed community services and facilities (via Section 94 funds, if required).
- Facilitate improved community access and delivery of health and community services and facilities, particularly in areas with disadvantaged communities.
- Develop a Public Art Strategy that provides a framework and conceptual guidelines for the implementation of public art.

Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Maintain adequate supply of residential zoned land across the Tamworth urban area and throughout the towns and villages to suit a range of buyers' tastes and economic circumstances.
- Prepare an affordable housing strategy that offers a variety of options and incentives for the provision of such housing by both the public and private sectors.
- Investigate the development of an incentive system / developer agreements to facilitate affordable housing (eg. reduced car parking requirements, density bonuses, rate reductions for welfare organisations).
- Investigate development strategies for Woolomin, Woolbrook and Hanging Rock for any future housing potential. Consideration needs to be given to the heavily constrained land restricting future development.

Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

- Provide opportunities for primary production to take advantage of non-traditional water supplies, in particular the re-use of treated stormwater and wastewater from urban development, to replace or augment traditional water supplies.



- Develop programs with primary industries to address drainage and management of irrigation wastewater to prevent adverse impacts on wildlife habitat including watercourses.
- Develop controls for vegetation buffers to reduce conflicts such as spray and noise. Adopt the Queensland state government, *Guidelines for Separating Agriculture and Residential Land Use* for vegetative buffers. These provide technical advice and guidance on reducing the potential for conflict between farming activities and residential development.
- Adopt development controls plans for Poultry Farms to minimize impacts, ensure sensitive siting, substantial separation distances and sustainable infrastructure requirements.
- Position Tamworth as a recognized equine industry hub by producing a Tamworth Regional Equine Industry Development Strategy incorporating planning guidelines.
- Determine the extent of potential mineral resources and its planning implications with the Department of Mineral Resources.
- Encourage State Forests, existing private forestry operators and landowners to expand existing forests or introduce new commercial forestry.

Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Provide for the location and land needs of key industry sectors by changing Development Plans to include performance-based policies based upon land capability assessment.
- Protect and enhance industrial amenity and reduce the visual dominance of industrial estates/sites on the gateways to Tamworth City through the provision of adequate buffers, landscaping and appropriate building form and design.
- Allow for a mix of related and complementary land uses in employment areas to provide services to local employees, while not undermining the key role and function of the area or zone.
- Prepare a development control plan to support the LEP and provide additional detailed guidelines for development.

Caring for the Natural Environment

- Promote water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and integrated water cycle management (IWCM) in Development Plans and development proposals to achieve catchment water management objectives.
- Develop an approval system that gives emphasis to incentives for conservation.

Improving Transport and Accessibility

- Investigate, through RTA grants, the possibility of upgrading timber bridges throughout the Region to provide for improved access for cross-regional trips and to raw materials.

Improving Infrastructure Provision

- Promote a zero-waste to landfill approach by encouraging both a shift from

waste disposal to resource recovery, and avoidance and reduction of waste materials produced.

- Establish regional recycling targets and monitor and report on performances in meeting these targets.

12.8 Implementation: Long Term Priorities

Strengthening the Region and Supporting Existing Centres

- Develop and implement a marketing plan in stages focusing initially on highly visible aspects such as implementation of branding, public domain improvements, development of key sites, investment prospectus and the improvement and integration of commercial and community facilities.

Meeting Cultural and Social Needs

- Encourage landowners to prepare conservation plans for significant items and places.
- In collaboration with the Department of Environment and Conservation, develop a long-term strategy for the management of Aboriginal heritage items in the Tamworth Region.

Meeting Future Housing Needs

- Consider joint venture housing projects for the provision of affordable and social housing with non-profit housing providers/managers.
- Provide incentives to developers to build housing to adaptable design standards.
- Identify and promote appropriate sites for aged care facilities and seniors living developments.
- Investigate the feasibility of running a regular Urban Design Awards program.

Supporting and Protecting Rural Futures

- Encourage landowners to use vegetation when planting windbreaks and other stands of trees where appropriate that will encourage a future farm forestry industry in the Tamworth Region.
- Develop property management plan guidelines for the preparation of a property management Plan addressing; measures to prevent soil erosion and water pollution from all areas where horses are kept and exercised, water management strategy, management of waste and the management of feed.

Supporting Employment and Economic Development

- Ensure that planning policy facilitates the establishment of new businesses based on the competitive advantages of the Region, including providing access to major roads and rail access routes, land, and separation distances from adjoining land use.
- Sustainable energy production needs to be encouraged in the LEP.
- Identify areas where tourism is discouraged or encouraged.
- Allow for a mix of related and complementary land uses in employment areas to provide services to local employees.



Caring for the Natural Environment

- Provide assistance to Landcare groups and farmers in obtaining grants for restorative works.
- Liaise with neighbouring councils, Department of Planning, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) to promote the adoption of compatible biodiversity objectives and mechanisms in all regional planning instruments and policies.
- Provide a community nursery or partnership with a local native nursery to provide local provenance seed collection services and provide stock to Council's (and others) rehabilitation programs.

Improving Transport and Accessibility

- Set up a working group with the freight/haulage industry to understand likely future directions and priorities.
- Lobby the NSW State Rail to provide timely investment in rail equipment and infrastructure within the Region.
- Work with operators to facilitate the improvement of air access to the Region through market research, route evaluation and liaison with airlines, airport operators and other relevant Government and industry stakeholders.

Improving Infrastructure Provision

- Progressively upgrade or close landfills which are environmentally unacceptable, having regard to the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act* (EPA) and other relevant legislation and standards.
- Develop a coordinated ongoing community information and awareness program to improve public awareness and participation in waste management processes.

- Economic considerations, for example, market deregulation, globalisation, restructuring of the agricultural industry, and market fluctuations e.g. commodity markets all have the potential to affect the identified strategies and actions.
- Environmental considerations, for example, any changes in environmental factors (e.g. changes in climatic conditions such as drought) that may affect the strategies and actions identified.
- Federal, State and Local Government documents/policies may also affect the identified strategies and actions. At a Federal level, for example, this may include things such as government agreements e.g. terms of trade. At a State and Local level this may include things such as amendments to planning reforms, the NSW water reforms, and the provisions of any draft planning policies, and the results of State of the Environment Reports.



12.9 Monitoring and Review

While the Strategy provides a vision for the Tamworth Region to 2026, it is inevitable that the opportunities and constraints affecting the area will change over time. As the vision and actions arising from this Strategy must be responsive to this change, they should be reviewed regularly to ensure that the strategy remains current. This review process will also provide for continued community involvement in the development of the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Monitoring of the actions outlined in this Strategy will be undertaken annually to determine completion or continued compliance. Review of this Strategy will be undertaken every three to five years to ensure the issues covered in the Strategy are still current and comply with State Government initiatives. The key indicators for the monitoring and review of the Strategy include, but are not limited to the following.

- Social considerations, for example, the changing views/and or attitudes of the community. These views will ultimately influence and alter the vision for the Tamworth Region and the guiding principles, as outlined in this Strategy.

13. References

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