EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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THE PROJECT

This report is the Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek, commissioned by Albury City Council. It aims to facilitate a coordinated approach to land development, now and into the future.

The project has been undertaken in four stages:

1. Strategic Investigations (Sep 2014-Feb 2015);
2. Draft Strategy (Jan-Feb 2015);
3. Public Exhibition (May 2015);
4. Final Strategy (Nov 2015).

This report is a product of Stage 4.

Context

Splitters Creek and Table Top were previously part of the former Hume Shire Council. In 2004, municipal boundaries were revised to include these areas in the Albury Local Government Area. At the time, large areas of each locality were subject to a Rural Living Zone (*Hume Local Environmental Plan, 2001*) that provided for the subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 2 hectares with an average of 8 hectares. These controls enabled ad-hoc and uneven land fragmentation to occur. This development pattern has contributed to land use conflicts, compromised future development capability and poses significant challenges for equitable and sustainable service provision.

As part of AlburyCity's review of planning policies in preparation of the *Draft Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010*, Council introduced controls to prevent any further subdivision in these areas. In Splitters Creek, the former Rural Living areas were rezoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone with an 80 hectare minimum lot size or E3 Environmental Management with a 100 hectare minimum lot size. In Table Top, these areas were zoned RU4 with a 40 hectare minimum lot size.

During public exhibition of the *Draft Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010* numerous submissions were received opposing the zoning and minimum lot size changes. Council resolved to undertake further investigations to reconsider these provisions in the future. The current project fulfils that commitment.

SPLITTERS CREEK

Approximately seven kilometres to Albury's west, Splitters Creek is highly valued by residents for its local beauty and environmental significance.

Splitters Creek Road and the creek itself, located at the base of the valley, form the backbone to the area and vehicular access is limited. Roughly 250 people live in Splitters Creek.

Splitters Creek Vision

The following vision has been developed to guide planning objectives for Splitters Creek.

Splitters Creek is highly valued by its residents for its picturesque hills and valleys, densely vegetated ridges and its high quality rural lifestyle. The strong sense of community in Splitters Creek is enhanced by landowner involvement in water infrastructure management, environmental restoration, and bushfire prevention and readiness.

The high levels of amenity and environmental values of Splitters Creek will be maintained by limiting new rural residential development. A small number of new subdivision and dwelling opportunities will be accommodated in locations that have good access to infrastructure and which avoid areas of environmental sensitivity.

Improvements to access and environmental management will reduce risks associated with bushfire and protect sensitive environmental and landscape values.

Future Settlement in Splitters Creek

Based on a detailed assessment of the **supply and demand, urban land capability, agricultural quality, land use conflicts,** and **infrastructure** a settlement pattern plan was produced (as shown, opposite). This plan identifies land within Splitters Creek as either 'marginal' or 'moderate' suitability for urban development (refer to Map 7 'Urban Land Capability').

Marginal Urban Land

Land designated as having 'marginal' suitability for urban development is environmentally sensitive, prone to bushfire hazard, and has limited access to infrastructure services. The current rural and environmental zones that apply remain appropriate.

Moderate Urban Land

It is recommended that the minimum lot size of 'Moderate' land in Splitters Creek is reduced to 2, 4 and 8 hectares as illustrated on the Splitters Creek Settlement Plan.

This approach achieves the most appropriate balance in responding to the characteristics, values and hazards of the area, while providing opportunities for greater housing diversity within the rural areas of Albury and avoiding the need for extensive infrastructure upgrades.

It is also recommended that the majority of subject land remain within the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone, with the exception of land proposed to have a 2ha minimum lot size which will be rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential.

Land with more intensive development opportunities in the lower parts of the catchment has been reduced to 2ha as it is below 20% slope, is less heavily vegetated, has a lower bushfire risk, has

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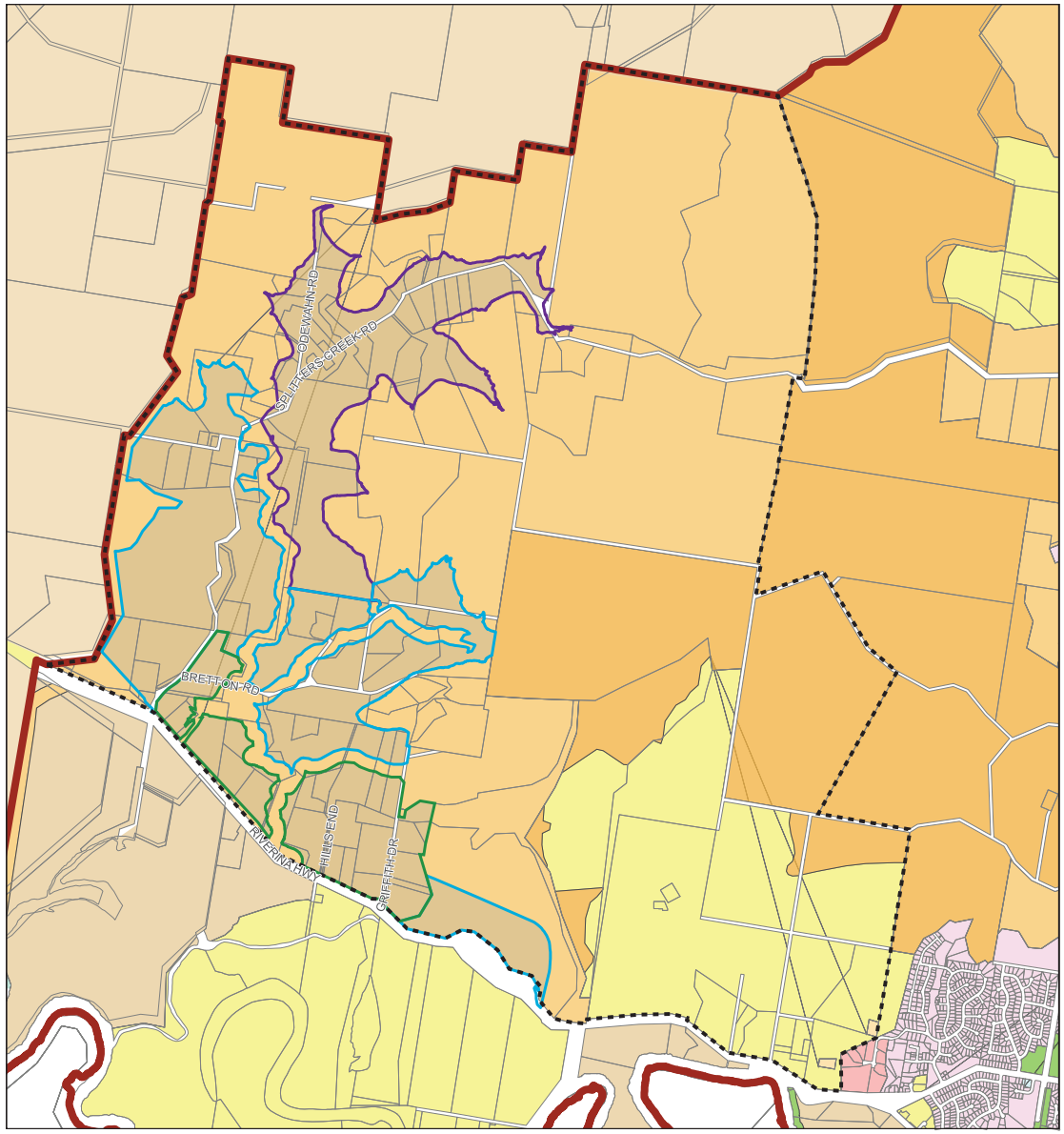
SPLITTERS CREEK SETTLEMENT PLAN



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Property Boundary

Splitters Creek Zones & Minimum Lot Size

- E2 Environmental Conservation (300ha minimum lot size)
- E3 Environmental Management (100ha minimum lot size)
- E4 Environmental Living (0.4ha minimum lot size)
- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots (80ha minimum lot size)
- SP2 Infrastructure (no minimum lot size)

Proposed Controls

- R5 2ha Minimum Lot Size
- RU4 4ha Minimum Lot Size
- RU4 8ha Minimum Lot Size

Land Budget

ZONES	R5	RU4	RU4	SUM TOTAL
Prop. Min Lot Size	2ha	4ha	8ha	-
Total Area (ha)	93	271	149	513
Prop. New Lots	**12**	**29**	**3**	**44**

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direct access, or is in close proximity to the Riverina Highway and can be designed and developed to adequately accommodate a dwelling, effluent disposal area and vehicle access, as well as being generally consistent with the existing development of the area.

A Bushfire Risk Management Plan and associated bushfire protection measures will be required prior to any works or development in Splitters Creek.

TABLE TOP

Table Top is a predominantly rural and rural lifestyle area located approximately 16 kilometres north of Albury and adjacent to the Thurgoona-Wirlinga growth front.

The Table Top area is relatively fragmented, with agricultural activities located mainly to the north. Approximately 1,200 people currently live in Table Top.

Table Top Vision

The following vision has been developed to guide planning objectives for Table Top.

Table Top, with its undulating landscapes and open long-range views, is characterised by agricultural activity and increasingly popular rural residential and rural lifestyle opportunities.

Adjacent to the Thurgoona-Wirlinga growth front, and with excellent access to the Hume Highway and Albury, the southern and central areas of Table Top provide a strategic opportunity for very long-term future urban growth. This potential will be protected into the forseeable future by maintaining buffer areas around the Norske Skog paper mill.

Productive farming pursuits will be encouraged and protected to the north of Table Top by managing land fragmentation and development, while offering the growing community broad hectare rural lifestyle opportunities. Improved road networks will increase road user safety and cater for the demand of rural living style lots.

Future Settlement in Table Top

Based on a detailed assessment of the **supply and demand, urban land capability, agricultural quality, land use conflicts,** and **infrastructure**, a settlement pattern plan was produced (as shown, opposite).

This plan identifies land within Table Top as either 'marginal', 'moderate' or 'prime' land, for urban development (refer to Map 13 'Urban Land Capability').

Marginal Urban Land

This report provides an options analysis for retaining the 100ha minimum lot size in the 'Marginal' land to the north of Table Top to allow for commercial agricultural pursuits or alternatively amending the minimum lot size to 40ha, which would cater for broadacre lifestyle farming.

It is recommend that the minimum lot size for subdivision be set at 40ha with a dwelling entitlement for each lot accompanying the subdivision. This would result in the creation of approximately 11 lots in the northern area of Table Top.

Moderate Urban Land

It is recommended that the minimum lot size of 'Moderate' land in Table Top is amended in the manner illustrated by the Table Top Settlement Plan, which provides a strategically balanced response to the characteristics, environmental values and hazards of the area. This plan avoids land use conflicts with surrounding land uses; avoids the need for extensive infrastructure upgrades; and provides opportunities for greater housing diversity within the rural areas of Albury.

It is recommended that the majority of the subject land remain within the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone, with the exception of land proposed to have a 2ha minimum lot size, which will be rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential. Several other discrete areas are proposed to be rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential and RU5 Village consistent with adjoining land.

Moderate urban land will consist of a mix of minimum lot sizes, ranging from 2ha to 8ha depending on location.

Prime Urban Land

The area identified as 'prime' urban land provides a strategic opportunity to cater for the long term urban expansion of Albury. The area represents a logical northward expansion of the Thurgoona-Wirlinga growth area and the only remaining area of undeveloped broadacre land that directly abuts the existing urban area of Albury.

It is recommended that existing zone controls and associated minimum lots sizes be retained until a separate structure planning process is undertaken to determine the optimal future use and associated development pattern for the area.

Infrastructure service provision in Table Top will require upgrading, especially in relation to water supply mains and enhancing stormwater systems. The staging of infrastructure upgrades will ultimately provide the staging for growth and development in Table Top, which is likely to be incremental and in multiple locations.

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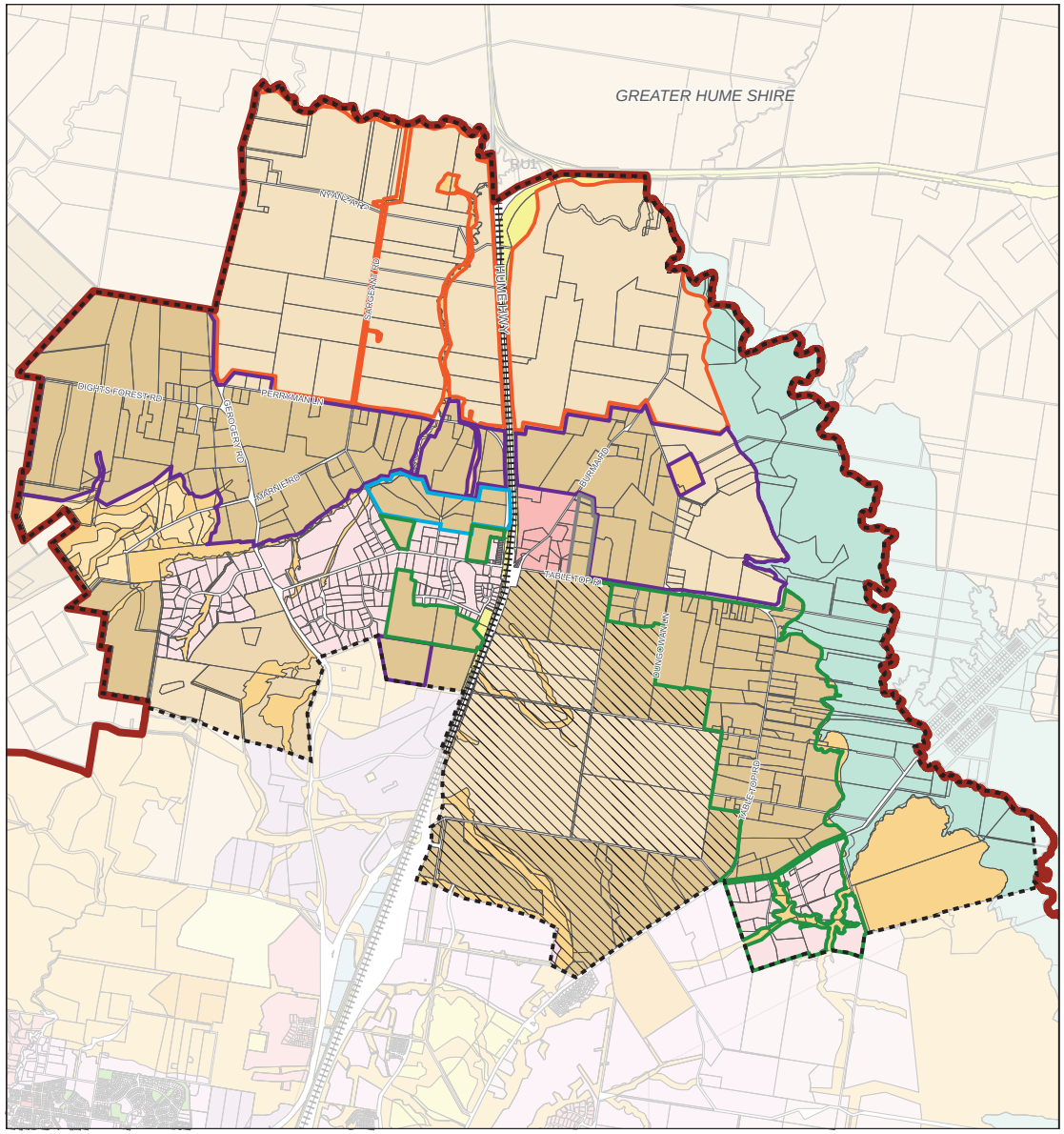
TABLE TOP SETTLEMENT PLAN



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Property Boundary
- Prime Land (retain existing controls)

Table Top Zones

- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots
- E4 Environmental Living
- E3 Environmental Management
- RU1 Primary Production
- RU2 Rural Landscape
- RU5 Village
- R5 Large Lot Residential
- SP2 Infrastructure
- W2 Recreational Waterways

Proposed Controls

- RU5 2ha Minimum Lot Size
- R5 2ha Minimum Lot Size
- RU4 4ha Minimum Lot Size
- RU4 8ha Minimum Lot Size
- RU1 40ha Minimum Lot Size

Land Budget

ZONES	RU5	R5	RU4	RU4	RU1	SUM TOTAL
Prop. Min Lot Size	2ha	2ha	4ha	8ha	40ha	
Total Area (ha)	24	703	75	1,472	1,889	4,163
Pop. New Lots	7	263	10	76	11	367

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NEXT STEPS

Final Report

The Draft Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek was publicly exhibited from 2 May 2015 to 1 June 2015 and was subsequently endorsed by Council on Monday 26 October 2015, subject to a number of amendments being made in response to submissions received and issues raised. These amendments have now been incorporated into this Final Report.

AlburyCity acknowledges however that the recommendations of the Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek were largely based on high level investigations. The very nature of the Rural Lands Strategy as a broad based strategic plan means that the localised and especially site specific issues and characteristics have not been considered in detail. Site specific investigations may identify issues that support further consideration of development opportunities outside or beyond that provided in the Rural Lands Strategy.

On this basis, AlburyCity is willing to consider site-specific conditions/circumstances via an independent Planning Proposal where more intensive development outcomes are sought above and beyond that provided by the recommendations of the Rural Lands Strategy and any subsequent amendment to the Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010. Consideration of any such proposals would be contingent upon a detailed assessment and response that demonstrates the site and/or locality provides specific characteristics or circumstances that support future development that is consistent with the principles and provisions of the Rural Lands Strategy.

Future Planning Changes

The Rural Lands Strategy provides a systematic and documented investigation of both Splitters Creek and Table Top to inform and substantiate recommendations relating to future settlement patterns and service infrastructure (including utilities, transport and staging).

Whilst the Rural Lands Strategy provides much of the background information and supporting rationale to substantiate future planning directions and priorities for Table Top and Splitters Creek, as with any strategy document, adoption of the this Strategy does not require the approval of relevant government agencies and/or result in an immediate change to planning policy.

Following the finalisation of the Rural Lands Strategy, it is now the intention of AlburyCity to implement the recommendations of this Strategy through an amendment to the zoning and minimum lot size provisions of the Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010 via a Council initiated Planning Proposal. This Planning Proposal will be subject to a separate consultation and reporting process and will include any informal and formal consultation with relevant government agencies required to establish information requirements and address any issues or concerns raised.

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1 INTRODUCTION

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1.1 THE PROJECT

PURPOSE

Albury City Council (AlburyCity) commissioned a multi-disciplinary team lead by Planisphere to prepare a Rural Lands Strategy for the settlements of Table Top and Splitters Creek. The consultant team comprised:

Planisphere – Project Management, Town Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture & Community Consultation
RMCG – Rural Land Use Planning
TGM Group – Infrastructure & Servicing
GTA Consultants – Traffic & Transport

THIS REPORT

This report is the Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek. It aims to facilitate a coordinated approach to land development, now and into the future.

It contains detailed land use, agricultural land capability, transport and service infrastructure analysis to justify settlement structures for Splitters Creek and Table Top and, where appropriate, amendments to current planning controls.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Splitters Creek and Table Top were previously part of the former Hume Shire Council. In 2004, municipal boundaries were revised to include these areas in the Albury Local Government Area. At the time, large areas of each locality were subject to a Rural Living Zone (*Hume Local Environmental Plan, 2001*) that provided for the subdivision of land to a minimum lot size of 2 hectares with an average of 8 hectares. These controls enabled ad-hoc and uneven land fragmentation to occur. This development pattern has contributed to land use conflicts, compromised future development capability and poses significant challenges for equitable and sustainable service provision.

As part of Albury City's review of planning policies in preparation of the *Draft Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010*, Council introduced controls to prevent any further subdivision in these areas. In Splitters Creek, the former Rural Living areas were rezoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone with an 80 hectare minimum lot size or E3 Environmental Management with a 100 hectare minimum lot size. In Table Top, these areas were zoned RU4 with a 40 hectare minimum lot size.

During public exhibition of the *Draft Albury Local Environmental Plan 2010* numerous submissions were received opposing the zoning and minimum lot size changes. Council resolved to undertake further investigations to reconsider these provisions in the future. The preparation of this strategy fulfils that commitment.

STUDY AREA

The settlements of Splitters Creek and Table Top are the focus of the Albury Rural Lands Strategy. Map 1 illustrates the study area.

Splitters Creek is situated immediately to the west of the urban area of Albury. The study area is centred on the Splitters Creek Valley, which is accessed via the Riverina Highway. The highway forms the southern boundary of the study area, with the municipal boundary and Crown land forming the western, northern and eastern boundaries.

Table Top is situated to the north of Albury and is generally bound by Lake Hume to the east, the municipal boundary to the north and west, and Thurgoona and Ettamogah to the south.

METHOD

The project was undertaken in four stages:

1. Strategic Investigations (Sep 2014-Feb 2015);
2. Draft Strategy (Jan-Feb 2015);
3. Public Exhibition (May 2015);
4. Final Strategy (Nov 2015).

This report is a product of Stage 4.

A Background Report (April 2015) was prepared as part of Stage 1. It includes detailed analysis that informed the preparation of this report.

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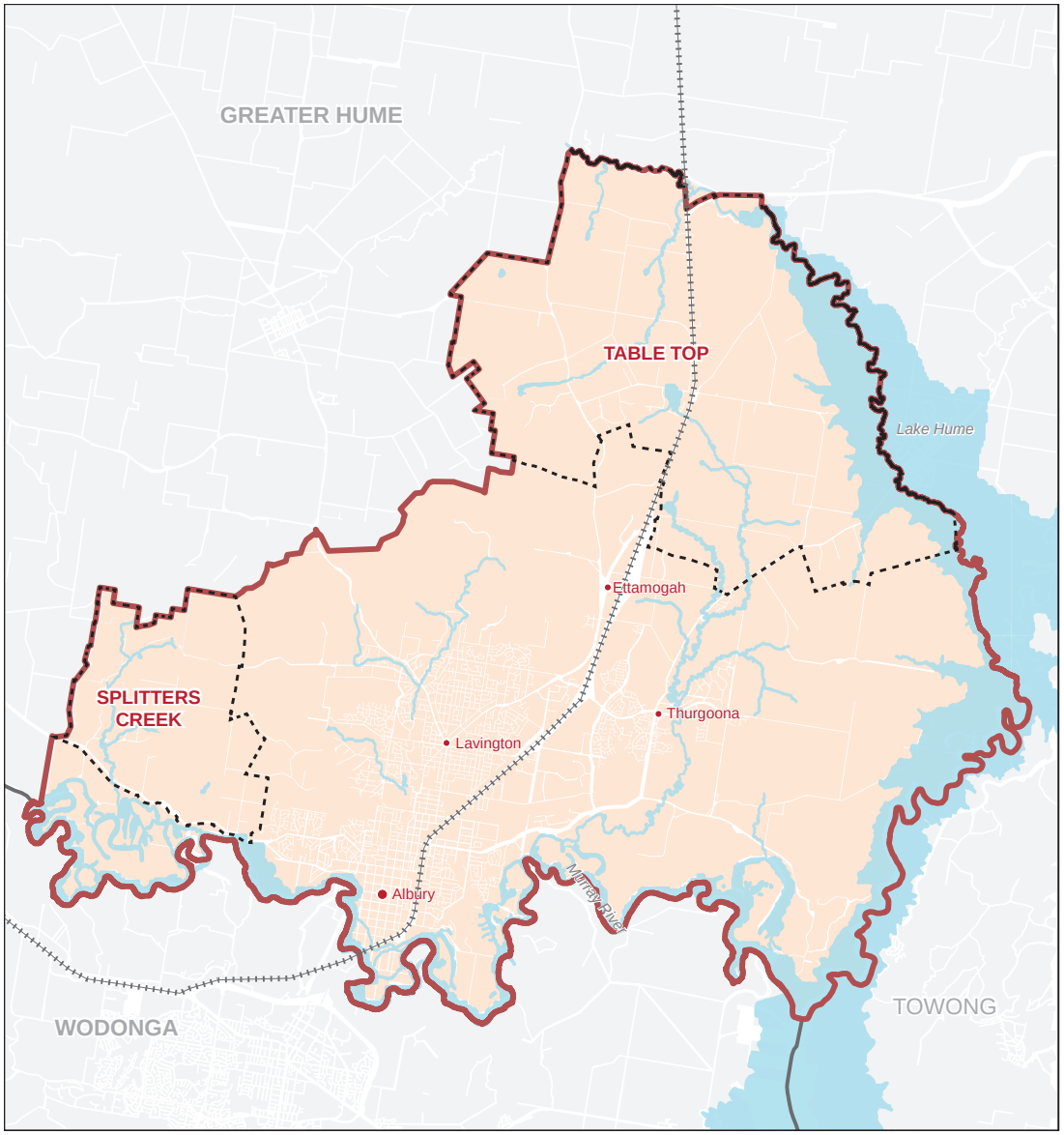
Map 1 Study Area



LEGEND

- Albury Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Property Boundary
- Train Line
- Waterbody

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1.2 ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Engaging landowners, government agencies and other key stakeholders, has been an important input into this Strategy.

The objectives of engagement for this project were:

- To inform the stakeholders and the community about the Rural Lands Strategy.
- To provide stakeholders and the community with the opportunity to contribute towards a vision for the Table Top and Splitters Creek areas and identify issues and opportunities for the Draft Rural Lands Strategy to address.
- To gather feedback on the Draft Rural Lands Strategy and consider all submissions in its finalisation.

The following provides an overview of consultation activities and outcomes undertaken as part of the preparation of this Strategy.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

What we did

The following government agencies and Council departments were consulted as part of the Rural Lands Strategy Project:

- NSW Department of Planning & Environment
- NSW Office of Environment & Heritage
- NSW Primary Industries
- NSW Roads & Maritime Service
- NSW Murray Local Land Services
- Rural Fire Service
- Essential Energy – Electricity
- APA Group – Gas
- Albury City engineering, assets, transport and traffic, environment and planning departments

Three workshops with key government stakeholders were undertaken, the purposes of which are summarised below:

- **Issues & Opportunities Meetings** - to identify issues and opportunities associated with land use, development, environmental features and hazards and infrastructure provision and capacity in Splitters Creek and Table Top.
- **Draft Background Report Workshop -** to discuss the key findings of the Background Report including the existing conditions, analysis and land capability assessment.
- **Draft Report Workshop** – to discuss the key findings and recommendations of the Draft Report including the Draft Settlement Plans for both Table Top & Splitters Creek.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

What we did

Community members were invited to participate in the project through workshops held in November 2014 and May 2015; and a public hearing in August 2015.

Letters with an attached community bulletin were sent to all landowners and occupiers in the study area with invitations to the workshops. The project and workshops were also advertised via media release, in the local newspaper (Border Mail) and on Council's website.

Over 230 community members attended the workshops, with the following attendances recorded:

- Approximately 65 people at the Table Top community centre on Tuesday 25 November 2014;
- Approximately 40 people at the Splitters Creek community centre on Wednesday 26 November 2014;
- Approximately 12 people at the Albury City Council, Council chambers on Wednesday 26 November 2014;
- Approximately 70 people at the Table Top community centre on Tuesday 5 May 2015;
- Approximately 35 people at the Splitters Creek community centre on Wednesday 6 May 2015;
- Approximately 10 people at the Albury City Council, Council chambers on Wednesday 6 May 2015.

A number of written informal submissions were also received following the workshops for further consideration whilst preparing the Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek.

Formal public exhibition of the Draft Rural Lands Strategy took place in May 2015. A large number of submissions and public presentations were received prior to the adoption of the Strategy (as amended) on 26 October 2015:

- 29 submissions were received during public exhibition;
- 21 additional/late submissions were received post public exhibition, following Council's decision to defer consideration of the Strategy on 27 July 2015;
- Approximately 75 people, including 10 presenters, attended a public hearing held on 10 August 2015;
- An additional round of consultation was undertaken with both the Rural Fire Service and Local Planning Consultants prior to Council's decision to adopt the Rural Lands Strategy (as amended) on 26 October 2015.

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WHAT WE HEARD

The following sections provide a short summary of the key messages from the community workshops.

Splitters Creek

Splitters Creek residents indicated that they valued their area because of the environment, sense of community, privacy, and safety; and its proximity to services. Residents expressed their strong preference for Splitters Creek Road to remain a no through road.

Services and infrastructure were highlighted as key issues in Splitters Creek, particularly water supply and telecommunications. The area is currently serviced by private water supply schemes that have capacity constraints and are costly to maintain and augment.

Bushfire hazard was raised as a key issue influencing the development potential of the area. Fire fighting water supply, communication and vehicle access were raised as important considerations.

Residents seeking further development opportunities highlighted existing/approved 2ha land elsewhere in Splitters Creek, suggested improved impacts on environmental values through intensive land management, identified existing infrastructure capacity and noted minimal fire risk through proximity to the Riverina Highway.

Some residents objected to a 2ha minimum lot size due to an increased strain on infrastructure, amenity and lifestyle impacts associated with greater population, bushfire risk and inhibited opportunities to provide passive recreation links to Crown land and Nail Can Hill Reserve.

Generally speaking, residents indicated that a modest level of additional development would be acceptable, including along the Riverina Highway.

Table Top

Table Top residents valued their area because of the environment, sense of community, privacy, views, country lifestyle and good access to services.

Significant concerns were raised about the ongoing viability of large agricultural land holdings in the northern and north-eastern areas of Table Top. Farmers indicated that current land holdings were too small to be commercially viable, yet expansion was not feasible due to high land values. Poor land productivity and Council rates were also identified as impacting on viability. It was reported that off-farm incomes were required to sustain agricultural activities.

Several land use conflict issues were also identified. These included restrictions on B-Double access, restrictions on disposing of large animals, competition for water supply, concern about pesticide spraying, and impacts from poor land management by new rural lifestyle owners (e.g. weed, pest and domestic animals management).

In response to these concerns several landowners advocated that the rural areas of Table Top should be rezoned to allow further subdivision and rural lifestyle development.

Although these concerns were strongly expressed by several people, contrary points of view were also recorded. For example, one farmer indicated that no interface issues exist between land uses as people know what to expect when they move into the area.

The Tynan Road intersection with Hume Highway was identified as a key issue. A grade-separated overpass was suggested to address this problem.

Some concerns were raised about conserving environmental values and protecting waterways from inappropriate development.

Further subdivision and development in Table Top was generally supported in order to sustain existing services and make additional services viable. Table Top Village was seen as a logical focus for additional development.

In terms of infrastructure improvements, a desire for safe bicycle paths and lanes was expressed. Dights Forrest and Gerogery Roads were identified as priorities.

The need to maintain a substantial buffer around the Paper Mill was affirmed.

Several queries were raised about current minimum lot sizes for subdivision. These included questions as to why land could not be subdivided down to 8 hectares or less; and why urban-style subdivision could not be extended to the north of the Thurgoona-Wirlinga Master Plan area.

The Rural Lands Strategy for Table Top and Splitters Creek seeks to facilitate a coordinated approach to land development, now and into the future, and accordingly, address many of the key issues raised and discussed in this section.

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1.3 POLICY CONTEXT

The key policy documents that are relevant to this strategy are:

State Relevance
- Rural Lands State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 2008
- SEPP No.30 Intensive Agriculture
- SEPP No.55 Remediation of Land
- Murray Regional Environmental Plan No.2-Riverine Land SEPP
- Rural Lands SEPP Planning Circular

Regional Relevance
- Draft Murray Regional Strategy

Local Relevance
- Albury Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2010
- Albury Land Use Strategy (2007)
- Albury Development Control Plan (DCP) (2010)
- Albury Biodiversity Certification Report
- Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Structure Plan (2013)
- Albury Land Monitor 2013-2014 (2014)
- Albury Economic Indicators (2014)
- Albury Ranges Threatened Species Conservation Strategy (2004)
- Rural Lands Working Papers (1991)
- Albury Biodiversity Strategy 2012-2016

OVERVIEW OF POLICY

A planning assessment of rural land in Splitters Creek and Table Top must take into account any relevant State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP), Albury's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP).

The Rural Land SEPP 2008 and its associated Planning Circular are of key importance to this project. The principles for rural planning (Part 2), as well as the principles for rural subdivision (Part 3, Clause 8) reinforce this and are outlined on the following page at Figure 1. This Rural Lands Strategy seeks to reinforce and implement these principles.

The SEPP seeks to protect agricultural land by providing rural planning and subdivision principles and detailed matters for consideration in assessing development applications for rural subdivisions and dwellings. It provides for subdivision below the minimum lot size for primary production purposes (without allowance for a dwelling). Any changes to the zones or minimum lot sizes in the study area will need to be in keeping with the intentions of this policy.

Key controls that apply in the area, mostly found in the LEP, are:

- Land use zones
- Minimum lot size provisions
- Flood, fire and heritage controls

A full review of the policy context is provided in the Background Report (April, 2015).

PLANNING CONTROLS

The following provides an overview of the planning controls that apply to Splitters Creek and Table Top. Detailed descriptions of the purpose and details of the various planning controls are provided in the Background Report (April 2015).

Map 2 and Map 3 illustrates the current planning controls in Splitters Creek and Table Top.

Splitters Creek

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone and **E3 Environmental Management Zone** apply to private holdings.

E2 Environmental Conservation Zone applies to Crown land.

SP2 Infrastructure Zone, as well as a small portion of **E4 Environmental Living Zone** apply to the waste water treatment plant.

Minimum lot sizes associated with these zones generally range in size from 80 hectares to 300 hectares with two allotments at 0.4 hectares (E4), as described at Map 2.

The whole of Splitters Creek is bushfire prone.

Table Top

RU1 Primary Production Zone applies to the rural areas to the north and north-east of Table Top.

RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone applies to a large proportion of Table Top where a substantial degree of land fragmentation has occurred.

W2 Recreational Waterways Zone applies along the eastern edge of Table Top, abutting Lake Hume. **R5 Large Lot Residential Zone** applies to residential estates on the western side of Hume Highway and an area abutting the Thurgoona Wirlinga growth area.

Table Top village is zoned **RU5 Village**.

A pocket of land at the south western edge of Table Top is zoned **RU2 Rural Landscape**.

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Hilly terrain at the western edge is zoned **E4 Environmental Living**.

E3 Environmental Management Zone applies to environmental features throughout Table Top.

SP2 Infrastructure Zone applies to the Hume Highway and railway corridor.

Minimum lot sizes associated with these zones range in size from 0.4 hectares to 100 hectares, as shown on Map 3.

Discrete parts of Table Top are affected by flood and bushfire controls.

Maryvale Vineyard, established in 1861 (*Albury City Wide Heritage Study*, 2003, Vol. 1, p.28) is the only location with the study area identified as a heritage item.

IMPLICATIONS

Any changes to the zoning or minimum subdivision sizes of rural land need to meet the requirements of the Rural Lands SEPP and will be the subject of a separate Planning Proposal.

Any changes to zoning or minimum subdivision sizes of environmentally zoned land need to consider impacts on Council's biodiversity certification.

Bushfire hazard and infrastructure provision are major considerations affecting the development potential of Splitters Creek.

Figure 1: Rural Subdivision & Rural Planning Principles

RURAL PLANNING PRINCIPLES (PART 2)

- The promotion and protection of opportunities for current and potential productive and sustainable economic activities in rural areas,
- Recognition of the importance of rural lands and agriculture and the changing nature of agriculture and of trends, demands and issues in agriculture in the area, region or State,
- Recognition of the significance of rural land uses to the State and rural communities, including the social and economic benefits of rural land use and development,
- In planning for rural lands, to balance the social, economic and environmental interests of the community,
- The identification and protection of natural resources, having regard to maintaining biodiversity, the protection of native vegetation, the importance of water resources and avoiding constrained land,
- The provision of opportunities for rural lifestyle, settlement and housing that contribute to the social and economic welfare of rural communities,
- The consideration of impacts on services and infrastructure and appropriate location when providing for rural housing,
- Ensuring consistency with any applicable regional strategy of the Department of Planning or any applicable local strategy endorsed by the Director-General.

RURAL SUBDIVISION PRINCIPLES (PART 3, CLAUSE 8)

- The minimisation of rural land fragmentation,
- The minimisation of rural land use conflicts, particularly between residential land uses and other rural land uses,
- The consideration of the nature of existing agricultural holdings and the existing and planned future supply of rural residential land when considering lot sizes for rural lands,
- The consideration of the natural and physical constraints and opportunities of land,
- Ensuring that planning for dwelling opportunities takes account of those constraints.

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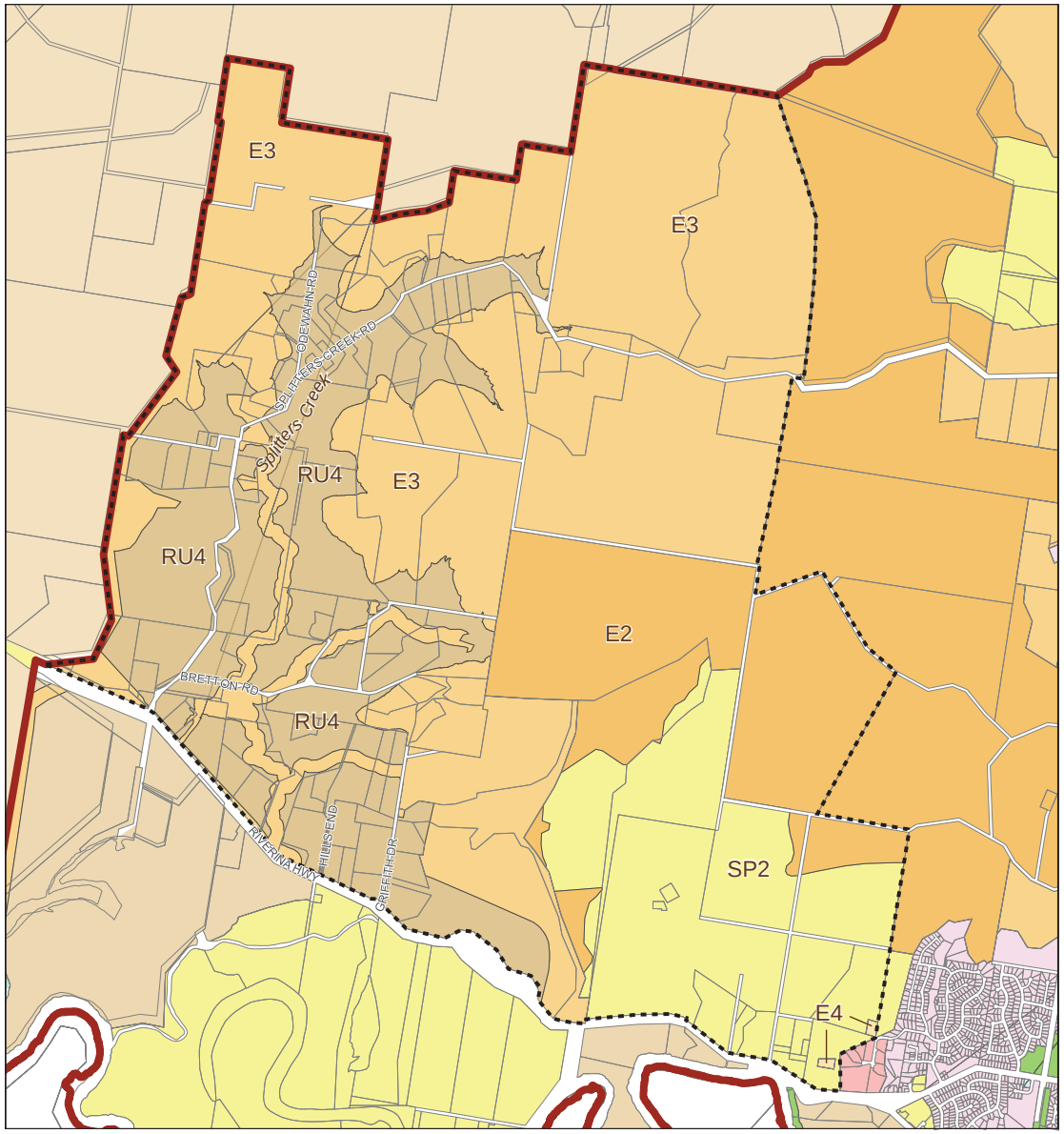
Map 2 Planning Controls in Splitters Creek



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary*
- Property Boundary

Splitters Creek Zones

- E3 Environmental Management (100ha minimum lot size)
- E2 Environmental Conservation (300ha minimum lot size)
- E4 Environmental Living (0.4ha minimum lot size)
- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots (80ha minimum lot size)
- SP2 Infrastructure (no minimum lot size)

*Note the whole subject area is prone to Fire Hazard

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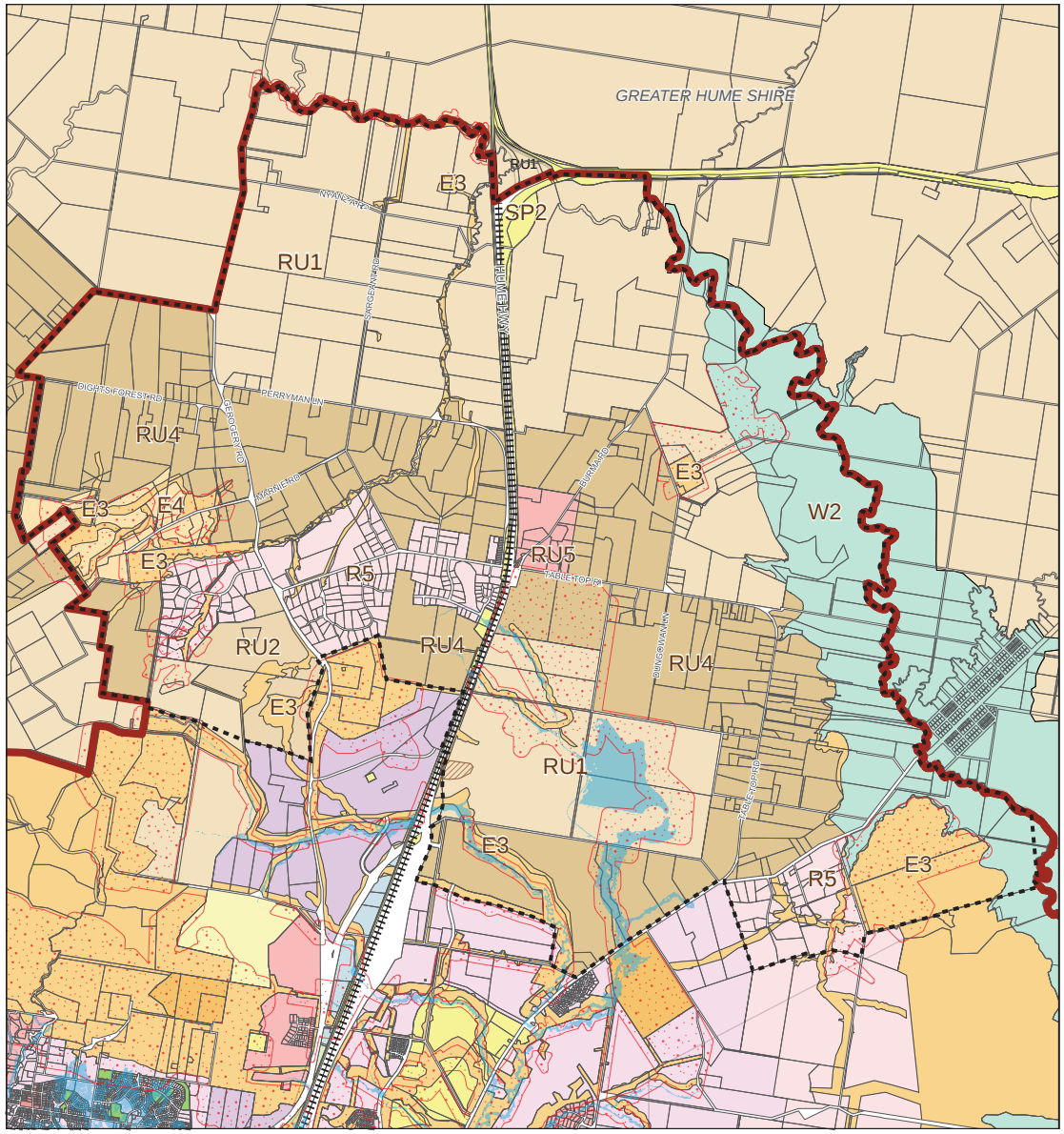
Map 3 Planning Controls in Table Top



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Study Area Boundary
- Property Boundary

Table Top Zones & Minimum Lot Size

- RU4 Primary Production Small Lots (40ha minimum lots size)
- E4 Environmental Living (80ha minimum lot size)
- E3 Environmental Management (100ha minimum lot size)
- RU1 Primary Production (100ha minimum lot size)
- RU2 Rural Landscape (100ha minimum lot size)
- RU5 Village (0.4ha minimum lot size)
- R5 Large Lot Residential (0.5ha minimum lot size)
- SP2 Infrastructure (no minimum lot size)
- W2 Recreational Waterways (no minimum lot size)

Other Controls

- Fire Hazard
- Flood Inundation
- Heritage Site

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1.4 LAND SUPPLY & DEMAND ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

Albury City has an extensive supply of **Residential Land** (zoned General, Low Density and Medium Density Residential). At present there is a steady supply position, with over half of the residential lot supply located in Thurgoona. The Thurgoona-Wirlinga growth front is expected to accommodate 50,000 people or 20,000 dwellings in the long term.

In addition to land in the residential zones, Albury also has a supply of vacant land in a number of **non-urban zones**, which are the focus of this report. These lots provide for different segments of the residential market on a variety of lot sizes.

Non-urban land supply and demand analysis has been undertaken to inform the strategy and respond to community queries about land availability in adjoining municipalities.

Precise comparisons cannot be made between municipalities because of differing planning scheme definitions, zones, minimum lot size provisions and data collection procedures. In order to address this variability so that reasonably accurate comparisons can be made, lots have been categorised as either:

- **Large Lot Residential** with a minimum subdivision size of 0.2-0.5ha or 2-4ha
- **Rural Residential** with a minimum subdivision size of more than 4ha to 10ha.

In each locality land supply has been calculated by determining the 'potential lots' available according to the minimum lot size provisions of the relevant zone(s). **'Potential lots'** are lots forming part of previously approved subdivisions; and lots that could potentially be created if larger lots were subdivided down to the minimum lot size.

Demand for lots is also difficult to compare as data collection procedures differ between municipalities. For the purposes of this study, demand has been measured by the annual rate of development of vacant lots in recent years (the 'take up' rate).

The 'years supply' of land is calculated by dividing the 'potential lots' by the 'take up' rate. This provides a general indication of the amount of land capable of being subdivided and developed within each zone or locality. Caution needs to be exercised in interpreting these supply figures because some land may never be further subdivided; and some lots may not be capable of subdivision down to the minimum lot size.

Large agricultural holdings (e.g. land in the RU1 Primary Production Zone in NSW and the Farming Zone in Victoria) have been excluded from the municipal comparisons on the basis that the purpose of these zones is to provide for agriculture rather than housing.

This analysis demonstrates that there is an abundant supply of Large Lot and Rural Residential land in and around Table Top and Splitters Creek, as illustrated by Map 4.

Approximately 2,100 potential large and rural residential lots are available in the City of Albury and adjoining municipalities. This is discussed in further detail in the Background Report. An overview of supply and demand for large lot and rural residential land is provided below. Figures and analysis are based on data from April 2015.

SUPPLY & DEMAND BY LOCALITY

In **Splitters Creek**, the total supply of potential lots zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone is 19. The majority of these lots have been created through previous approvals, some of which may have expired. These lots are expected to provide 9 years supply of land, based on a take up rate of 2 lots per annum. This is explained in more detail in Chapter 2.

In **Table Top**, the total supply of potential lots, including large lot residential, rural residential and rural land is 198 lots. These lots are expected to provide approximately 19 years supply of land, based on a take up rate of 10 lots per annum.

The majority of potential lots in Table Top fall into the category of large lot residential. There are approximately 20 lots (zoned R5) that have access to sewerage and therefore have a minimum lot size of 0.5ha. The remaining 91 lots in this category (zoned R5 and RU5) are unsewered and have a minimum lot size of 2ha.

In the main section of Table Top, which is zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone, a total of 81 potential lots are available, most of which are approved lots with an average lot size of 8ha. This is explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

Elsewhere in **Albury City**, the potential supply of large lot residential properties is considerable. At Lavington and Springdale Heights there are 184 potential lots with a minimum lot size of 0.4ha. An additional supply of rural residential land is also identified in the Thurgoona/Wirlinga Structure Plan, yielding 93 potential lots with a minimum lot size of 10ha.

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The total number of potential non-urban lots in Albury City is approximately 468. These lots are expected to provide 19 years supply, based on a take up rate of 25 lots per annum.

The City of Wodonga provides the greatest supply of large lot residential land in close proximity to the study area:

- 407-427 lots with a minimum size 0.2 or 0.4ha
- 129 lots with a minimum size of 2-4ha.

The total number of potential large lot residential properties in the City of Wodonga, over 500 lots, is expected to supply the City for at least 50 years.

Greater Hume Shire has a total of 4,384 potential village and rural-zoned lots across the municipality, excluding large agricultural lots. This represents approximately 75 years supply. Of these, 1,126 are potential large lot and rural residential lots.

Of most relevance to Splitters Creek and Table Top are Gerogery and Jindera which are both located within about 30 minutes drive of Albury.

Jindera has a similar number of potential large lot residential properties to the City of Wodonga:

- 308 lots with a 0.4ha minimum lot size
- 95 lots with a 2ha minimum lot size.

Jindera also provides the greatest supply of rural residential land in the immediate area - 265 lots with an 8ha minimum lot size.

Gerogery, north of Table Top, has a more modest supply of large lot and rural residential land than other nearby areas:

- 39 large lot residential lots
- 43 rural residential lots.

The available supply of large lot and rural residential land within approximately 30 minutes commute from Albury has been analysed to emphasise the variety of options available for purchasers. Data on lot sales and vacant lot take up demonstrates a steady demand for large lot and rural residential land within Albury City itself.

SUPPLY & DEMAND BY LOT TYPE

Large Lot Residential (0.2-0.5ha)

There are up to 940 potential lots that fall within the category of Large Lot Residential (0.2-0.5ha) within close proximity to the study area. Many of these lots have access to reticulated sewerage. In order of greatest to smallest supply, these lots are located as follows and shown in **green** on Map 4:

- City of Wodonga (407-427)
- Jindera (308)
- Springdale Heights (Ettamogah Rise) (138)
- Lavington (46)
- Table Top (approx. 20)

It is noted that the sewerage system at Table Top has limited capacity for additional dwellings.

Large Lot Residential (2-4ha)

There are up to 328 Large Lot Residential Properties within areas that have a minimum lot size of 2-4ha. Lots falling within this range do not have access to reticulated sewerage and therefore must be large enought to accommodate waste water disposal on site. These lots are located as follows and shown in **light blue** on Map 4:

- City of Wodonga (129)
- Jindera (95).
- Table Top (65)
- Gerogery (39).

Rural Residential (8-10ha)

Approximately 400 potential Rural Residential lots (with minimum lot sizes of 8-10ha) shown in **blue**, on Map 4, are located in proximity to the study areas. These are located as follows:

- Jindera (265)
- Thurgoona / Wirlinga (93)
- Gerogery (43).

The preceding figures exclude the potential lots in the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots Zone in Table Top (107) shown in **purple** and Splitters Creek (19) shown in **red**, as these lots vary considerably in size. Map 4 shows these in addition to potential Large Lot and Rural Residential properties in close proximity to the study area.

IMPLICATIONS

There is an abundant supply of potential Large Lot and Rural Residential properties in the region. Therefore there is no empirical evidence supporting the need to boost supply to meet unmet demand.

Notwithstanding, this Rural Lands Strategy provides an opportunity to improve housing choice and diversity in the region through the identification of appropriate and sustainable rural residential opportunities in Table Top and Splitters Creek in locations that are already highly fragmented and in close proximity to Albury. Map 4 shows these in addition to potential Large Lot and Rural Residential properties in close proximity to Albury.

There is no need to expand large lot and rural residential development into productive agricultural or environmentally zoned areas. Rather, the preferred approach is to accommodate further subdivision within areas that are already highly fragmented.

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This approach aims to reduce land use conflicts by consolidating large lot and rural residential development within areas already zoned for these purposes or where land is already affected by fragmentation.

Due to the fragmented nature of the areas in question, subdivision opportunities will tend to be dispersed rather than consolidated in development fronts. As new housing will be provided on an infill basis in established rural living areas it is likely to have a marginal impact on existing residential amenity and infrastructure capacity.

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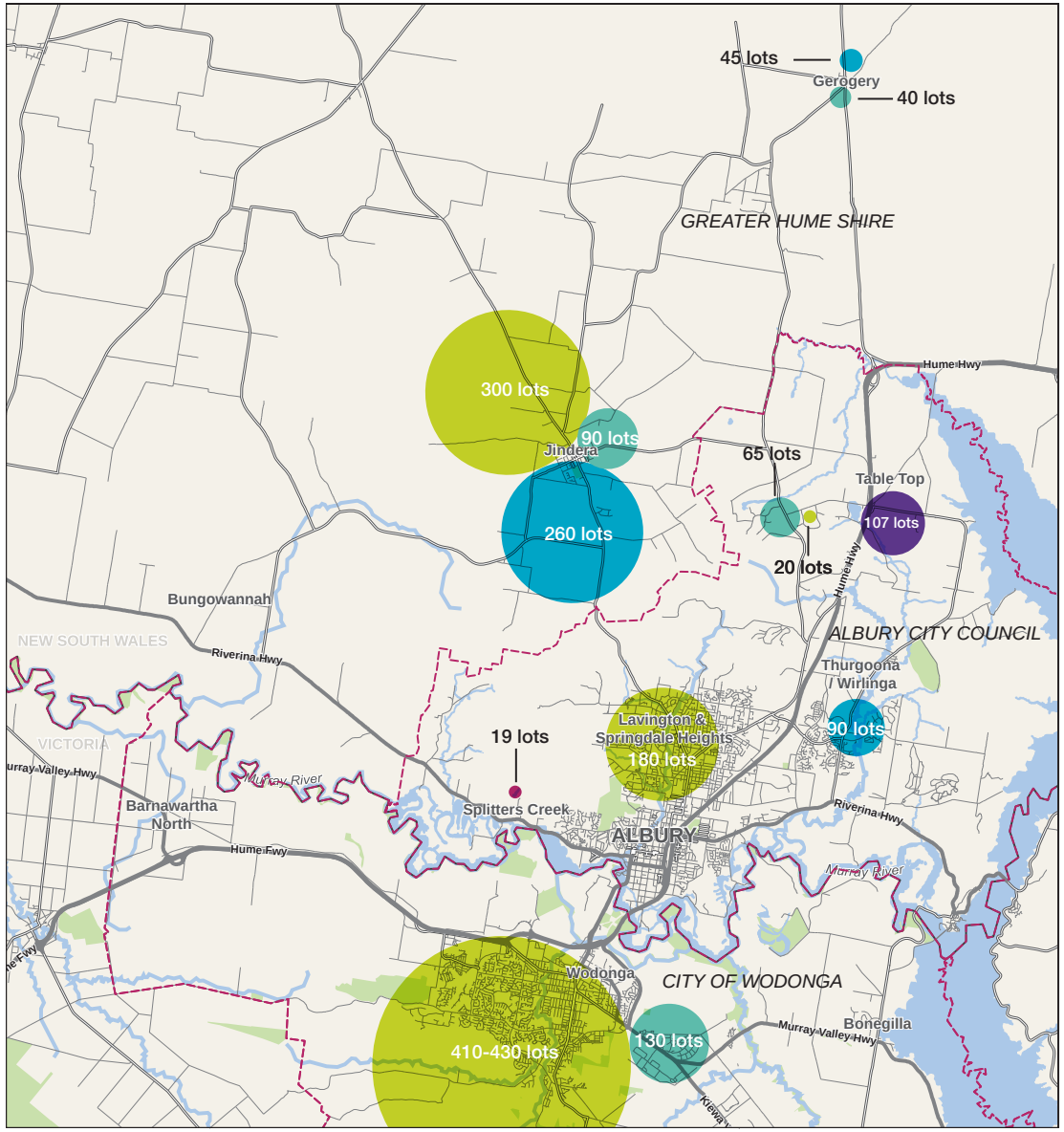
Map 4 Potential Large Lot & Rural Residential Supply



LEGEND

- State Boundary
- LGA Boundary
- Highway
- Train Line
- Waterbody

Potential Lots

- 0.4-0.5 ha minimum lot size areas
- 2-4 ha minimum lot size areas
- 8-10 ha minimum lot size areas
- Table Top RU4 Zone areas
- Splitters Creek RU4 Zone areas

N

0 5

kilometres

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