



# Gunnedah Shire **Local Housing Strategy**

Open for Growth and Prosperity

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## Acknowledgement of Country

**On presenting this Strategy to the community, Gunnedah Shire Council would like to acknowledge the Kamilaroi Aboriginal Nation as the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work, and in doing so, Council pays its respect to all Elders past and present as well as to the young Indigenous leaders of tomorrow.**

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# Executive Summary

**The Gunnedah Shire is a unique place to live, offering residents an urban lifestyle and a prospering community that is rich in both culture and character.**

**The Shire is experiencing strong economic and infrastructure growth, and a clear strategy to guide and accommodate that growth is essential. The Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy (the Strategy) investigates and identifies areas suitable for the provision of additional housing to assist Gunnedah Shire Council (Council) meet the demands generated by expected population growth and demographic change.**

The objectives of the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy are to:

- Ensure the timely delivery of suitable residential zoned land to meet the current and future needs of the Gunnedah LGA to 2041;
- Provide diversity of choice in residential land and dwelling types in a range of appropriate locations responsive to the demographic needs of the Gunnedah LGA;
- Provide flexibility in zoning and Development Control Plans for high quality urban design outcomes;
- Ensure growth occurs in a contiguous and logical manner concentrating on the central areas of settlements for medium density and on the fringe of settlements (within the investigation areas) for larger lots;
- Ensure future development strengthens the efficient use of existing infrastructure, services and transport networks and not seek to create demand for significant new infrastructure;
- Require future development, particularly at the residential/agricultural and the residential/industrial interfaces to demonstrate that conflict between land uses can be avoided;
- Provide for development that will complement and reinforce existing and future settlement structure, character and uses and allow for the creation of legible and integrated growth;
- Provide and support opportunities for urban intensification through infill and adaptive reuse close to the centre of Gunnedah;
- Encourage large lot residential development where opportunity areas are identified on the Gunnedah Structure Plan Map; and
- Ensure residential development avoids areas of environmental significance, significant natural and/or economic resources, potential hazards, high landscape or cultural heritage value, or potential increased risk associated with impacts of climate change.







The Strategy has included a study of the urban areas of Gunnedah and to some extent the villages, and identifies opportunities for an additional projected 580 dwellings over the next 20 years to 2041.

Land for future release, if servicing and access arrangements are in place, on the fringe of Gunnedah has also been considered within the Project scope.

The Strategy confirms opportunities for:

**Urban residential land** – the typical general or low-density residential land, serviced with reticulated water and sewer and a minimum lot size of 650m<sup>2</sup> or 450m<sup>2</sup> in the medium density zone.

**Future urban land** – investigation areas identified in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy that will be critical in longer term delivery of housing in Gunnedah.

**Large lot residential land** – land suitable for ‘rural residential’ housing, typically serviced with water but not sewer. The minimum lot size of 1.2ha needs to be reviewed to encourage efficiencies in servicing while also achieving on site effluent disposal and amenity.





The following future directions, which are accompanied by 15 Strategies and 32 Actions, are proposed to guide the development of future housing, encourage housing diversity and choice and increase affordability in meeting the needs of its future population.

- Direction 1:** Deliver greater housing diversity to suit changing needs
- Direction 2:** Support healthy, safe, socially engaged and well-connected communities
- Direction 3:** Strengthen community resilience
- Direction 4:** Provide great places to live
- Direction 5:** Deliver well planned rural residential development

The housing vision and guiding principles reflect the outcome of a broad range of community and industry consultation undertaken by Council. Priorities identified support delivery of the vision underpinning the Strategy and inform the housing actions outlined in Section 7 of the Strategy.



# 1. Introduction

The Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy (the Strategy) has been prepared in response to demand for residential land and new housing in the Gunnedah Local Government Area (LGA), and to address the challenges in the delivery of housing stock onto the market, especially key workers in health, education, mining, community services and administration.

The Strategy seeks to identify the future housing needs for the LGA and provide recommendations to guide land use decisions and local policy. The Strategy applies to all residential land in Gunnedah and includes the villages of Breeza, Carroll, Curlewis, Mullaley and Tambar Springs.

As the LGA continues to grow, residential growth will need to be planned and managed in a way that meets the changing needs of the community, maintains the liveability currently enjoyed and fosters additional benefits including:

- A greater housing supply;
- An increase in housing diversity and choice;
- Opportunities for affordable housing;
- Housing for a diverse workforce; and
- Housing that is adaptable to changing needs.

## **The purpose of the Strategy is to:**

- Provide a strategic approach to guide residential land use and development over a 20-year timeframe;
- Present actions and strategies that encourage suitable housing densities, types and range of dwelling mixes;
- Align with NSW Department Planning and Environment (DPE) requirements relating to New England North West Regional Plan 2041 and Local Housing Strategy Guideline 2018 requirements; and
- Align with the priorities and vision outlined in the Gunnedah Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement - Future 2040.

## **To achieve this the Strategy will:**

- Identify projected population and housing demands;
- Direct future housing to residential areas that can deliver infill development, renewal and urban expansion in residential zones with controls to support a broad range of compatible dwelling typologies;
- Provide guidance on key issues such as affordable housing and development standards for changing population needs; and
- Inform policies and planning controls in the Gunnedah Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plans.





## What do we mean by housing?

The Strategy uses different terms to describe housing. The Standard Instrument LEP Dictionary provides planning definitions of ‘dwelling’ and ‘dwelling houses’ and multiple variations under the group term ‘residential accommodation’. Other definitions such as affordable and social housing are found in the NSW Housing Strategy 2041. The definitions for the terms used in this strategy are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Definitions

<b>Affordable rental housing/affordable housing</b>	Housing that households on very low to moderate incomes can afford, as defined by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and SEPP (Housing) 2021: Very low – 50% of median income Low – 50% to 80% of median income Moderate – 80% to 120% of median income
<b>Dwellings</b>	Under the Standard Instrument LEP a ‘dwelling’ is a ‘room or suite of rooms occupied or used or so constructed or adapted as to be capable of being occupied or used as a separate domicile’.  A dwelling house means a building containing only one dwelling.  ‘Residential accommodation’ is a building or place used predominantly as a place of residence, and includes:  Attached dwellings, boarding houses, dual occupancies, dwelling houses, group homes, hostels, multi dwelling housing, residential flat buildings, rural workers dwellings, secondary dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, seniors housing, shop top housing.
<b>Households</b>	The people that live in a home. This may be a person living on their own, a family, group of students for example. Each household’s requirements will change depending on what they collectively earn, how many people live there and the different relationships between those people.
<b>Housing affordability</b>	Housing affordability refers to the capacity of individuals or households to enter the rental and privately owned housing markets.
<b>Social housing</b>	Housing for people on low incomes or people in housing crisis, which the government, public, community and Aboriginal housing providers own or manage. Rents are based on income.
<b>Mortgage stress</b>	A condition that occurs when a household is paying more than 30% of its income in mortgage repayments and associated housing costs.
<b>Rental stress</b>	A condition that occurs when a household has an income in the bottom 40% of regional NSW income distribution and pays more than 30% of this income on housing costs.





## Structure of the document

The initial phase of the Project involved the identification of issues, background research and community and stakeholder engagement. This phase commenced in February 2021 and tested the identified issues with stakeholders and the community in April 2021. This stage also built on the vision for Gunnedah as articulated in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and expanded through the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) – Future 2040

**// A prosperous, caring and proud community reflected in the achievements and aspirations of the people.<sup>1</sup>**

**The idyllic, liveable and close communities are the heart of our beautiful, healthy and unique rural character which attracts residents and visitors who seek a sense of belonging.<sup>2</sup>** //

The Strategy has been developed having regard to the direction provided in the New England North West Regional Plan 2041 (Regional Plan) and the Housing Strategy Guidelines prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). The Strategy will guide land use and planning decisions and inform amendments to the Local Environmental Plan in the immediate and medium term.

The document is structured into seven sections as follows:

**Section 1 –** Introduction.

**Section 2 –** Planning Policy and Context - examines the planning framework in which the Strategy needs to be considered.

**Section 3 –** Villages – provides a snapshot of each village.

**Section 4 –** Evidence - includes demographic and population analysis, housing demand and supply, the opportunities and constraints to the delivery of housing and identification of areas that have capacity for further development.

**Section 5 –** The Priorities - an accumulation of the evidence and sets out the objectives for the Strategy, planning approach mechanisms for delivery and options.

**Section 6 –** Delivery – includes a summary of the methods of implementing the Local Housing Strategy. It also identifies the planning proposal process to rezone land and how the Strategy will be monitored and reviewed.

**Section 7 –** Actions - presents strategies and actions in line with the relevant Policy Directions identified in the Regional Plan and in response to the priorities identified in the Strategy.

<sup>1</sup> Gunnedah Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027

<sup>2</sup> Extracted from Gunnedah Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement - Future 2040

# 2. Planning Policy and Context

**The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) provides the statutory framework for land use planning in NSW. Recent changes to the legislation have strengthened the emphasis on strategic planning, reinforcing it as the basis of the NSW planning system.**

In planning for residential growth in the Gunnedah Shire it is important to understand the strategic policy and planning framework that applies to the area. This framework is set primarily by the NSW Government to a Regional Plan level, Council (subject to NSW Government Agency approval) drives local strategic planning at a local level, set out in Figure 1.

In the context of the planning hierarchy, Council has a role in leading local strategic planning. This includes:

- Local Strategic Planning Statements;
- Local Housing Strategies;
- Local Environmental Plans;
- Development Control Plans; and
- Other strategic plans and policies adopted by Council.

The Local Strategic Planning Statement sets out the land use vision, priorities and actions for the local area. All development is required to take into consideration the relevant strategic plans and local policies adopted by Council.



Figure 1 NSW Strategic Planning Framework

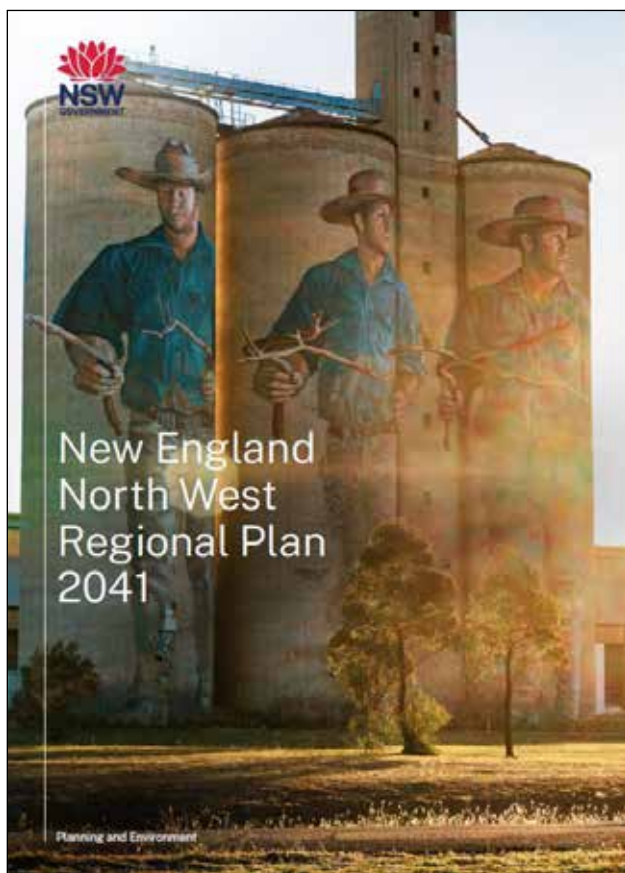




## 2.1 NSW Plans and Policies

The NSW State Government also has a lead role in developing infrastructure plans and policies that guide specific land uses and the interaction between them.

### 2.1.1 New England North West Regional Plan 2041



In 2017 the NSW Government finalised a suite of regional plans. They set a 20-year framework, vision and direction for strategic planning and land use to ensure regions have the housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment, access to green spaces and connected communities to continue to be vibrant places for people to live, work and visit.

The New England North West Regional Plan (NENWRP) 2041 applies to 12 local government areas of Armidale Regional, Glen Innes Severn, Gunnedah, Gwydir, Inverell, Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tamworth Regional, Tenterfield, Uralla and Walcha. It informs all facets of land use planning, including employment areas, town centres, housing and related infrastructure to the natural environment and future hazards such as climate change. By planning for growth, change and opportunity, the Regional Plan aims to provide a framework for decision-making, balancing social, economic, and environmental objectives. The NSW Government has undertaken the first 5-year review of all regional plans to reset priorities and to extend the plans' reach from 2036 to 2041. During this time, the NSW Government has worked closely with councils, other stakeholders and the community to deliver on the plan's key priority actions. The NENWRP 2041 was finalised in September 2022.

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Gunnedah and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Breeza, Carroll, Curlewis, Emerald Hill, Kelvin, Tambar Springs and Mullaley.
- Foster the growth of knowledge-based, education and health-services industries and related activity around Gunnedah District Hospital.
- Support the development of employment lands.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.



There are four goals in the NENWRP aimed at achieving the vision of building resilient and sustainable communities by balancing growth opportunities with protecting the region's diverse environment and lifestyles. The goals are supported by a number of directions and actions. The goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: A strong and dynamic regional economy**
- Goal 2: A healthy environment and pristine waterways**
- Goal 3: Strong infrastructure and transport networks for a connected future**
- Goal 4: Attractive and thriving communities**

The key directions and actions under each of these goals have been considered in the development of the Strategy to the extent that they provide the broad policy direction for the strategies and actions identified in **Section 5.1**. A detailed summary of the directions and actions that relate to the Strategy, how they have been considered in terms of actions in the Strategy and the outcome or implementation measure is expressed in a table in **Section 7**.

**Goal 4: Attractive and thriving communities** references the need to cater for an additional 9,700 homes across strategic centres by 2041. Changes to household make up and average household size will mean that housing demand will be strong. Recommendations are made for Councils to prepare local strategies to comprehensively address broader implications and consequences of locations for future development.

Included in this are the following principles to guide new development:

- Well located supply will create downward pressure on house prices, maximise infrastructure use and protect environmental and agricultural values.
- Focusing growth in existing urban centres, or in areas adjacent to existing urban development will foster liveability and a stronger sense of community. This will support existing commercial areas, reduce infrastructure cost and maximise walking, cycling and other transport connections.
- Interim Settlement Planning Principles are provided to ensure new development is well located, responds to existing urban and rural settlements, addresses land constraints and fosters great places to live, work and play. The guidelines are used when considering proposals for urban expansion and local growth management strategies.
- New growth areas are required to be consistent with the **Interim Settlement Planning Principles** or 'comprehensive settlement planning guidelines once released' and meet projected needs within local growth management strategies endorsed by the Department.

**Direction 19** has the following actions for new release areas:

- Facilitate more recreational walking and cycling paths, linkages with centres and public transport, and expand inter-regional and intra-regional walking and cycling links.
- Deliver crime prevention through environmental design.
- Deliver housing to respond to changing housing needs.
- Promote 'ageing in place'.
- Deliver more opportunities for affordable housing by incorporating policies and tools into growth management strategies and local plans that will incentivise private investment in affordable housing.
- Facilitate housing and accommodation options for seasonal and itinerant workers.
- Enable new rural residential development where identified in a local strategy consistent with the Interim Settlement Planning Principles and endorsed by the Department.
- Ensure Aboriginal communities are engaged throughout the preparation of local planning strategies and local plans. Protect Aboriginal heritage in new land releases.
- Identify and protect heritage items and areas to provide for sympathetic and adaptive use of heritage items and assets.





## **New England North West Regional Plan 2041 Settlement Planning Principles**

### **Land suitability**

- Locate new release areas adjacent to existing urban settlements to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, including water, sewer, road and waste services.
- The location structure and layout of rural residential release areas should promote clustering to encourage a sense of community and facilitate the long-term expansion of existing centres.
- Avoid areas of high environmental value, cultural and heritage significance and areas affected by natural hazards.
- Avoid and manage potential for land use conflicts with existing and likely future adjoining uses and infrastructure, including important agricultural land and productive resource lands.

### **Development structure and form**

- Provide links to adjoining areas to integrate and maximise efficiencies in shared use of services and facilities.
- Ensure compatibility with unique topographic, natural or built cultural features essential to the visual setting, character, identity or heritage significance of an area.
- Support and maintain strong multi-functional central business precincts and support the viability of centres.
- Provide housing diversity to support a variety of dwelling types and choice in location, form and affordability.
- Design and locate land use to minimise the need to travel; maximise opportunities for efficient public transport and pedestrian access options.
- Design and locate development to maximise total water cycle management and promote passive environmental design. Water sensitive urban design techniques should be incorporated into the design of dwellings, streets, parking areas, subdivisions and multi-unit development.
- Create walkable communities .
- Provide for local services that meet the day to day needs of residents and areas for open space and recreation.

The development of a local housing strategy is an important step in addressing the policy directions in the Regional Plan and will ensure a ready supply of well-located land for residential development that maximise the use of existing infrastructure and protects environmentally sensitive areas, including the floodplain and key areas of high biodiversity value.

## 2.1.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

In 2021, the NSW Government has finalised the new State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) which was developed as part of a package of proposed amendments that seek to reform planning policies related to housing.

The new SEPP saw the consolidation of all significant housing related policies into one instrument, incorporating parts of:

- SEPP (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009 (ARH SEPP);
- SEPP (Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability) 2004 (Seniors Housing SEPP);
- SEPP No 70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes); and
- SEPPs 21 and 36, concerning caravan parks and manufactured home estates.

Previous housing policy reforms that introduced planning controls for **build to rent** (BTR) developments has been incorporated into the new Housing SEPP. However, this type of housing is focused on large scale purpose built rental housing that is unlikely to be developed in regional areas.

The Housing SEPP, as well as consolidating development instruments into a single policy, introduces new development controls for various types of housing:

- Significant changes to policy concerning boarding houses will be used for affordable housing and managed by a registered community housing provider;
- Boarding houses are no longer mandated in the R2 Low Density Residential zone, only being permissible in this zone if close to town centres;
- A new ‘co-living’ development type has been introduced, but prohibited in the R2 zone; and
- Seniors living developments must have at least 50% of the site adjoining a residential zone, which will clarify uncertainties to the availability of this type of housing.

In terms of **affordable housing**, new controls are directed at addressing housing inequality and affordability. Housing types include in-fill affordable housing, boarding houses, ‘supportive accommodation’ and residential flat buildings managed by social housing providers, public authorities or certain joint ventures. New controls are around ensuring affordable housing components for at least 15 years, Floor Space Ratios and locational requirements, such as proximity to a E1, E2 or E4 zone in regional NSW. Existing affordable rental housing is protected by the new SEPP (Housing) 2021, with additional provisions for the retention of such development.

In addition to the focus on affordable housing, the Housing SEPP, contains a range of provisions aimed at facilitating the development of ‘**diverse housing**’ as a further direct response to the changing housing needs of communities. The document also complements the complying development regime under the Codes SEPP by providing complying development pathways for a broader range of housing types. Categories of diverse housing include the following:

- **Secondary dwellings** – a self-contained dwelling established in conjunction with a principal dwelling, on the same lot, located within, attached to or is separate from the principal dwelling;
- **Group homes** – a dwelling that is occupied by people in a single household without paid supervision or care and used to provide permanent accommodation for people with a disability or people who are socially disadvantaged;
- **Co-living housing** – a building or place that has at least 6 private rooms, permits occupation for at least 3 months and has shared facilities managed by a 24-hour management service. Co living housing is not permissible in the R2 zone; and
- **Seniors housing** – housing for people over 60 in independent units or residential care. It is proposed to establish new development standards for seniors housing such as setting out land where seniors housing does not apply such as environmentally sensitive land and removing the need for Site Compatibility Certificates.

The Housing SEPP introduces a number of land use definitions into Local Environmental Plans and prescribes new mandatory conditions of development consent of applications concerning certain boarding houses, co-living houses or seniors housing.

The Housing SEPP provides for more opportunity for increased housing choice in Gunnedah through new land use definitions and complying development pathways. Early consultation and anecdotal advice indicate that there is unmet demand for ‘key workers’ and more affordable accommodation in Gunnedah, particularly close to the town centre, the E2 and E4 zones. A review of Gunnedah LEP 2012 zones and land use tables is necessary to ensure that reasonable provision is made for new housing in existing residential zones.





### 2.1.3 Other key documents

There are range of key policy documents and guidelines that support the orderly and economic delivery of housing in NSW. These include:

- Regional Economic Development Strategy
- State Environmental Planning Policies
- The NSW Architects Character and Place Guidelines
- Ministerial Directions

An overview of the key policy documents is provided in the Appendices.

## 2.2 Local Strategic Planning and Policy

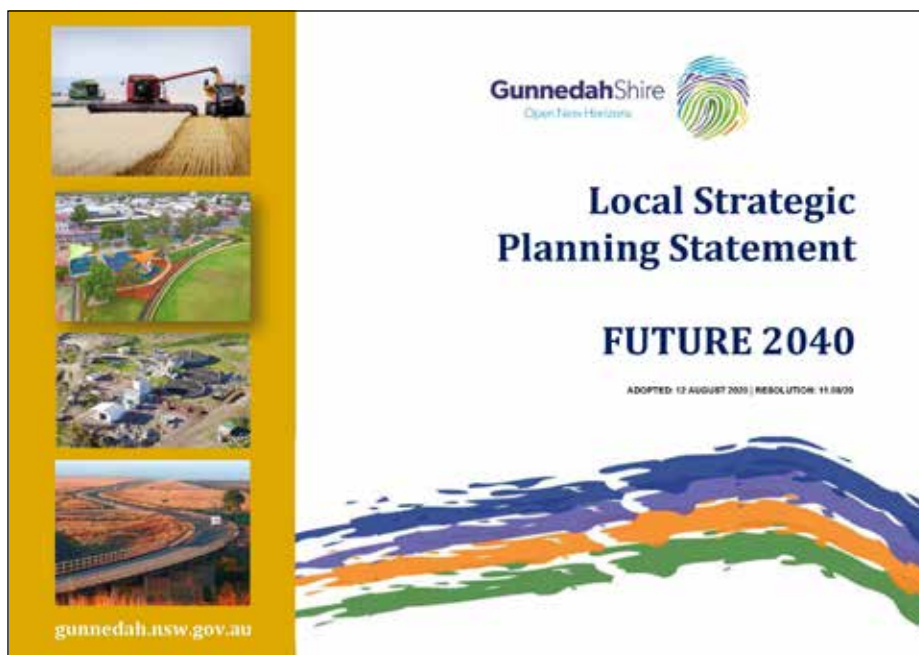
In addition to NSW State Government policies, the development of a Local Housing Strategy needs to have regard to the existing local planning policy framework.

### 2.2.1 Gunnedah Local Strategic Planning Statement - Future 2040

Changes to the EP&A Act introduced in early 2018 require all councils in NSW to prepare Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS). The LSPS sets out the 20-year vision for land use in the local area, the special character and values that are to be preserved and how change will be managed into the future.

The statements shape how the development controls in the LEP evolve over time to meet the community's needs, with the LEP the main tool to deliver the council and community's plan.

The Gunnedah LSPS - Future 2040 was adopted on 12 August 2020.



The key points in the LSPS relevant to this project are found in the following key points and priorities (summarised):

#### Local Planning Priority 6 – Enhance Gunnedah Shire's Liveability

Enhancing the liveability and attractiveness of Gunnedah shire is a vital consideration in promoting future growth opportunities.

Gunnedah has a strong sense of place, with villages valued by residents for their character, community, lifestyle and level of service provision.

Walkable communities tend to be more liveable and help support better quality of life for residents and visitors.

The natural environment and access to open space and outdoor recreation opportunities are widely recognised as contributors to liveability.

A place-based planning approach using community engagement can inform future community infrastructure. Building social capital enhances liveability, enhances access, fosters diversity and strengthens diversity.

**Action 20** provides that Council identify opportunities to enhance the level of infrastructure and services for marginalised and disadvantaged sectors of the community including the aged, people with a disability and families.



## Local Planning Priority 7: Housing types for lifestyle diversity

Gunnedah Shire has over 2,000ha of zoned residential and rural residential land.

Community consultation has identified that large lot housing or rural residential housing, or 'country style' living is preferred.

Rural residential development still requires access to normal services and infrastructure in urban settlements such as schools, healthcare, employment and retail. However, the market often prefers areas away from services and infrastructure. Developing a set of criteria or clear direction and certainty for the location of rural residential land may reduce pressure for ad hoc development of this type.

The majority of new housing built in Gunnedah has traditionally been large, detached homes. However, this preference is changing with growing demand for smaller -lot housing in response to changing demographics, housing preference and affordability. Small lot housing is generally on lots less than 450m<sup>2</sup>. Small housing styles suit a range of people including seniors, lone person and couple only households as well as young professionals and key workers.

Climate change impacts will require using innovative materials and housing design to allow occupants to respond to climate change.

**Action 24** sets out the requirements for this housing strategy that identifies and prioritises areas for growth, having regard to housing demand, growth trends, affordability and existing and likely future housing needs, ensuring the strategy avoids important agricultural land.

**Action 25** sets out the need for investigations into an affordable housing contribution scheme considering the need, current supply and other shortfalls in various housing types and tenures.

**Action 26** requires collaboration with external housing providers of community, disability and aged accommodation to increase supply.

**Action 27** requires investigation of incentives for seniors housing to cater for future needs.

**Action 28** requires planning guidelines for seasonal and itinerant workers accommodation to inform location and transport infrastructure.

## Local Planning Priority 11: Preserving biodiversity and preparing for climate change

**Action 44** requires that the flood risk management plan and planning controls are reviewed.

**Action 46** requires disaster risk reduction techniques are employed in planning strategies to avoid exposure to high risk areas and vulnerability to enhanced climate change impacts.

Passive solutions should be employed to increase energy efficiency for housing.

The provision of quality natural and built shade can be included in planning processes for developments, particularly in urban areas.

**Action 47** requires that water usage be reduced where alternative non-potable supplies are available; with whole of cycle water management to be integral parts of future developments and public realm improvements.

**Action 48** sets out the need to design and provide sustainable places and spaces with consideration to provision of well-designed shade in all public infrastructure.

**Action 49** suggests working with stakeholders to deliver green projects that strengthen biodiversity outcomes including urban heat mitigation strategies such as tree planting in riparian zones, urban areas and retention of wildlife corridor connectivity.





## 2.2.2 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy - Residential Strategy

### Background

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy included a comprehensive review of residential development in Gunnedah with the following conclusions:

- There is 80% capacity for new development within areas zoned and serviced in the precincts of East, East Lincoln Street and South Gunnedah (Mornington Estate).
- Estimates concluded that the existing zoned and serviced areas will cater ('well in excess') for projected demand for new housing.
- At the time of preparation, the DPE population projections indicated that the existing supply of residential land could be exhausted by 2031 and additional R5 zoned land may be required for future residential land use.
- The study suggests there is merit in considering release of additional land for residential purposes primarily to retain housing location options in the market and keep property prices at affordable levels.
- At the time of preparation, the median house price in Gunnedah was \$384,000, which was higher than Tamworth.
- There are a reasonably wide choice of housing options and development sites in Gunnedah. Housing affordability, both to buy and rent, was raised as an issue. It was noted that mining has increased house prices however the progressive release of land has reduced this demand and put some downward pressure on rent levels.
- Within the housing sector there is an under supply of independent living units for the aged.



## 2.2.3 Existing Masterplan Areas

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy provided an appraisal of the existing Gunnedah masterplan areas. A review of each masterplan has been undertaken using Council approvals data to assess land supply and potential in 2021. It is important to note that not all parcels in each masterplan has had development consent sought for subdivision; and this is referred to as 'residue' land. The average annual yield of 38 dwellings set by the New England and North West Housing Monitor is the means of calculating demand.

### East Gunnedah

The East Gunnedah precinct as defined in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy as 40% R2 Low Density Residential and 60% R5 Large Lot Residential land in the eastern side of Gunnedah, straddling Stock Road. The R2 zone has a minimum lot size of 650m<sup>2</sup>, and the R5 zone, 2,000m<sup>2</sup>, 3,000m<sup>2</sup> and 1.2ha. The Oaktree seniors housing development site was identified off Favell Street as yielding 67 dwellings in a community title subdivision (Figure 2), however the development is not in the Masterplan layout in Figure 3. The precinct was estimated in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy as 15% developed, with 67 of 419 potential lots released. The Oaktree development is at 4 Favell Street, Lot 58 DP1208878, being 2.07ha of land. At the time, the Masterplan indicated that the Oaktree site could yield 15 standard lots.

Figure 2 Oaktree seniors housing development





A review of Council subdivision approvals in 2021 indicates that within the precinct, a total of 103 lots have been released, with new dwellings on 23 of these lots (excluding Oaktree). The 'Fire Leap' Estate (36 lots) is the location of most recent development. South of Stock Road, Bindea Place (28 lots) is subdivided but with nominal development (26 lot yield). This leaves approximately 80 subdivided developed lots in the precinct ready for development.

It is conservatively estimated from the Masterplan that the undeveloped 'residue' land in the precinct could yield approximately another 250 lots or 5 years supply, depending on lot sizes. This brings the lot potential for the precinct to 330 lots. The Oaktree development is defined as 'seniors housing' and comprises a retirement village providing a mix of two- and three-bedroom villas in a community title. The Standard Instrument LEP defines Seniors Housing as a range of residential types such as self-contained dwellings or a hostel that provides permanent accommodation for seniors or people with a disability. A retirement village is a form of seniors housing and is permissible in Zone R2 Low Density Residential in Gunnedah LEP 2012.

Figure 3 East Gunnedah Masterplan



Table 2 East Gunnedah Masterplan land summary - available lots

Precinct/ zone 404 lots*	Land description	MLS	Lots released/ developed	Total yield (lots)	Future supply	Years supply
Favell Street R2 11 lots	Lots 2-11 DP 1220191	650m <sup>2</sup>	11 released, 11 vacant	11	11	0.28
Kurrumbede / Rampadells R5 11 lots	Lot 41 DP 1222756	3,000m <sup>2</sup>	11 released, 6 developed	11 less 6	5	0.1
Forrest Way R2 17 lots	Lot 18 DP 1204723	650m <sup>2</sup>	17 released, 0 developed	17	17	0.94
Fire Leap Estate 36 lots	various	3,000m <sup>2</sup>	36 released, 15 developed	36 less 15	21	0.57
Bindea Place 28 lots	various	3,000m <sup>2</sup>	28 released, 2 developed	28 less 2	26	0.68
<b>Estimate 2021</b>		<b>103 lots released/23 dwellings</b>			<b>80</b>	<b>2.10</b>
<b>Residue (estimated based on Master plan)</b>					<b>250</b>	<b>7.9</b>
<b>Total lot potential 2021<sup>^</sup></b>					<b>330</b>	<b>8.6</b>

\*Less the Oaktree development potential equivalent of 15 residential lots, now 404 lots

<sup>^</sup> remaining vacant lots (subdivided + undeveloped residue)

## South Gunnedah: 'Mornington Heights'

'Mornington Heights', being south of Lincoln Street zoned R2 Low Density Residential is the main focus in this precinct, including Siffleet Terrace and nearby Hillcrest Road (Figure 4). There is a future school site in the north west of the precinct and existing residential development fronting Lincoln Road on the northern boundary. The precinct is currently being developed, with the 2016 capacity estimated at around 200 lots. The minimum lot size across the precinct is 650m<sup>2</sup>. The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy reported that a total of 314 lots were available in the subdivision and over 200 lots were to be constructed in the eastern and southern extents of the Masterplan area shown in Figure 5.

A review of Council's subdivision data in 2021 indicates that Mornington Heights Stages 1 to 3A have been constructed, with a total of 125 lots released. The remaining stages 3B to 8 will yield 214 lots, a total of 339 lots, not 314 as reported in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy.

In 2021, there has been recent residential development along Kurrajong Road and Bottle Brush Avenue. Estimates from aerial photography in 2021 indicate that overall 122 lots are developed with housing, which leaves potential of 217 lots shown in Table 2 Mornington Heights and surrounding land summary.

The extension of Hillcrest Road (Figure 6) near Mornington Heights east of Links Road and has also been approved and commenced, yielding a potential 15 lots. The total yield from the Mornington Heights Masterplan area and Hillcrest Road is 232 lots or 6.1 years supply.

Figure 4 Mornington Heights location



Figure 5 Mornington Heights Masterplan layout



Figure 6 Hillcrest Road layout

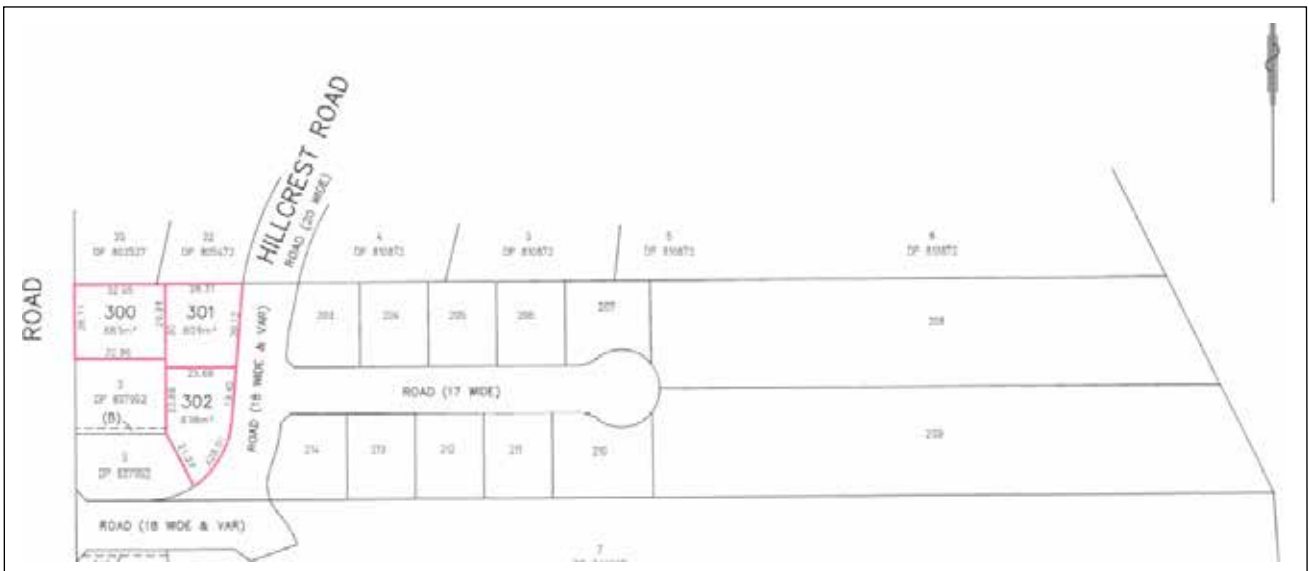






Table 3 Mornington Heights and surrounding land summary

Precinct/ zone 400 lots*	Land description	Area (ha)	Lots released/ developed	Total yield	Future supply	Years supply
Mornington Heights R2 (339 lots)	Lot 334 DP1245207	24 ha	125 released 122 dwellings	339 less 122	217 lots	5.7
Hillcrest Road R2 (15 lots)	Lot 1 DP837952	1.278 ha	15 lots released 0 developed	15	15	0.4
<b>Lots available 2021*</b>			122 dwellings	354	232 lots	6.1

\*Development potential estimated using Council data and DPE Spatial Viewer



## East Lincoln Street

The estate is zoned R2 Low Density Residential and is located on the southern fringe of Gunnedah (Figure 7). It was estimated in 2016 that there was a total capacity of 222 lots with a minimum lot size of 650m<sup>2</sup>. The estate was estimated as 95% undeveloped, with 212 lots yet to be established for future supply, Table 4 East Lincoln Street Masterplan summary. Analysis of subdivision approvals provided by Council since 2016 indicate that 50 residential lots have been released and largely undeveloped.

Table 5. The area is noted as being a key future development area in Gunnedah potentially accommodating 445 people at 2.1 persons/lot.





Figure 7 East Lincoln Street

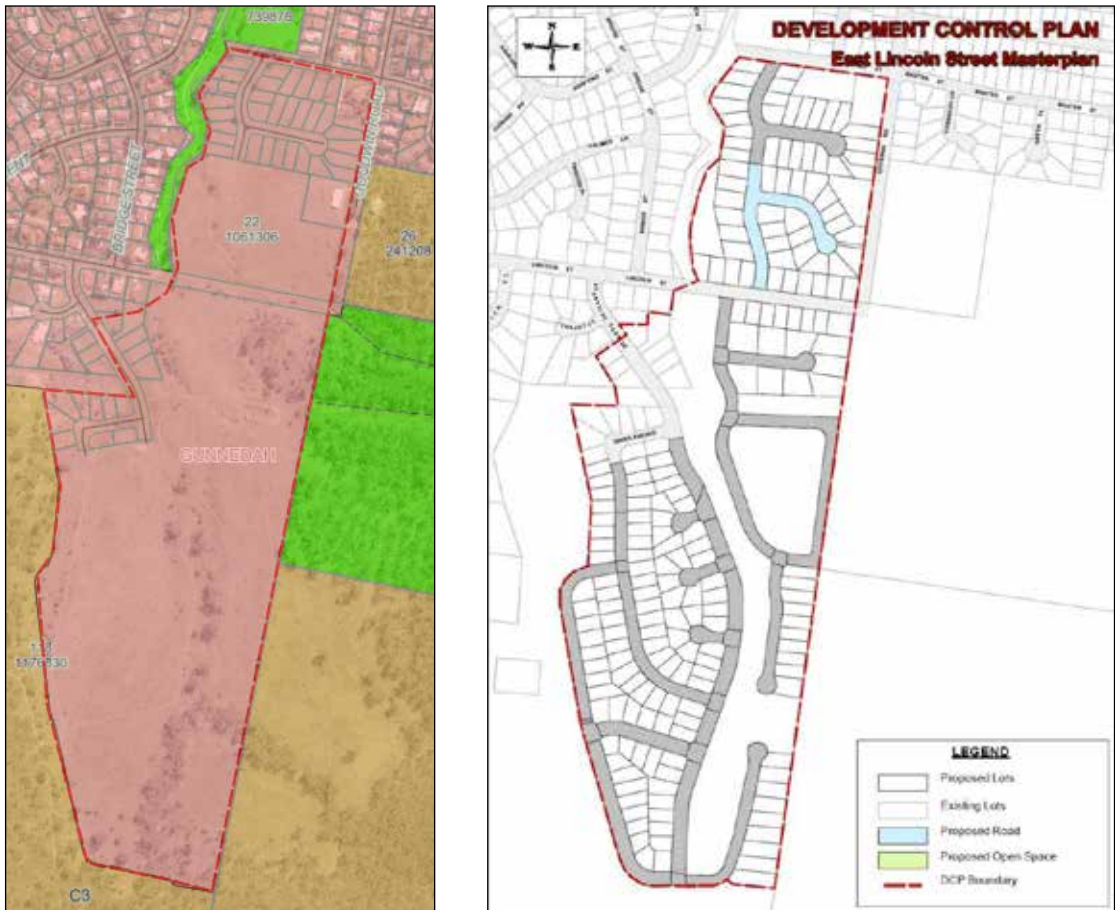


Table 4 East Lincoln Street Masterplan Summary

Precinct (222 lots)	Land description	Area (ha)	No lots released (2021)	Total yield	Future supply	Years supply
Entire estate	Stages 1A-6	35 ha	50 lots	222	212*	5.5

\* Estimated in 2016 as 10 of 222 lots developed

Table 5 Lot Summary East Lincoln Street

Road / Precinct	Vacant lots released	Lot Potential
Sunnyside Farm Road	9 lots	9
Dries Avenue	9 lots	9
Parkview Drive/Turner Close	32 lots	32
<b>Lots available 2021</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
Residue (estimate)		162 not released
<b>Total lots</b>		<b>212</b>

## Kamilaroi Rural Residential

Located on the south eastern edge of the Gunnedah urban area and accessed via Kamilaroi Road, Figure 8. Most of the land is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a 1.2ha minimum lot size. Lots are not serviced with sewer, requiring on-site effluent disposal. The estate was estimated in 2016 as containing 72 lots with 51% undeveloped. It is noted that many of the other lots off Kamilaroi Road south of Stock Road are linear with limited re-subdivision potential. The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy assessment of 72 lots in Table 6 was compared to Council approvals data, of which 68 lots are approved mainly in the south of the precinct. Of this amount, 43 lots have been physically created and 15 of these developed with a dwelling. There is a future supply of 52 lots.

Figure 8 Kamilaroi Rural Residential precinct

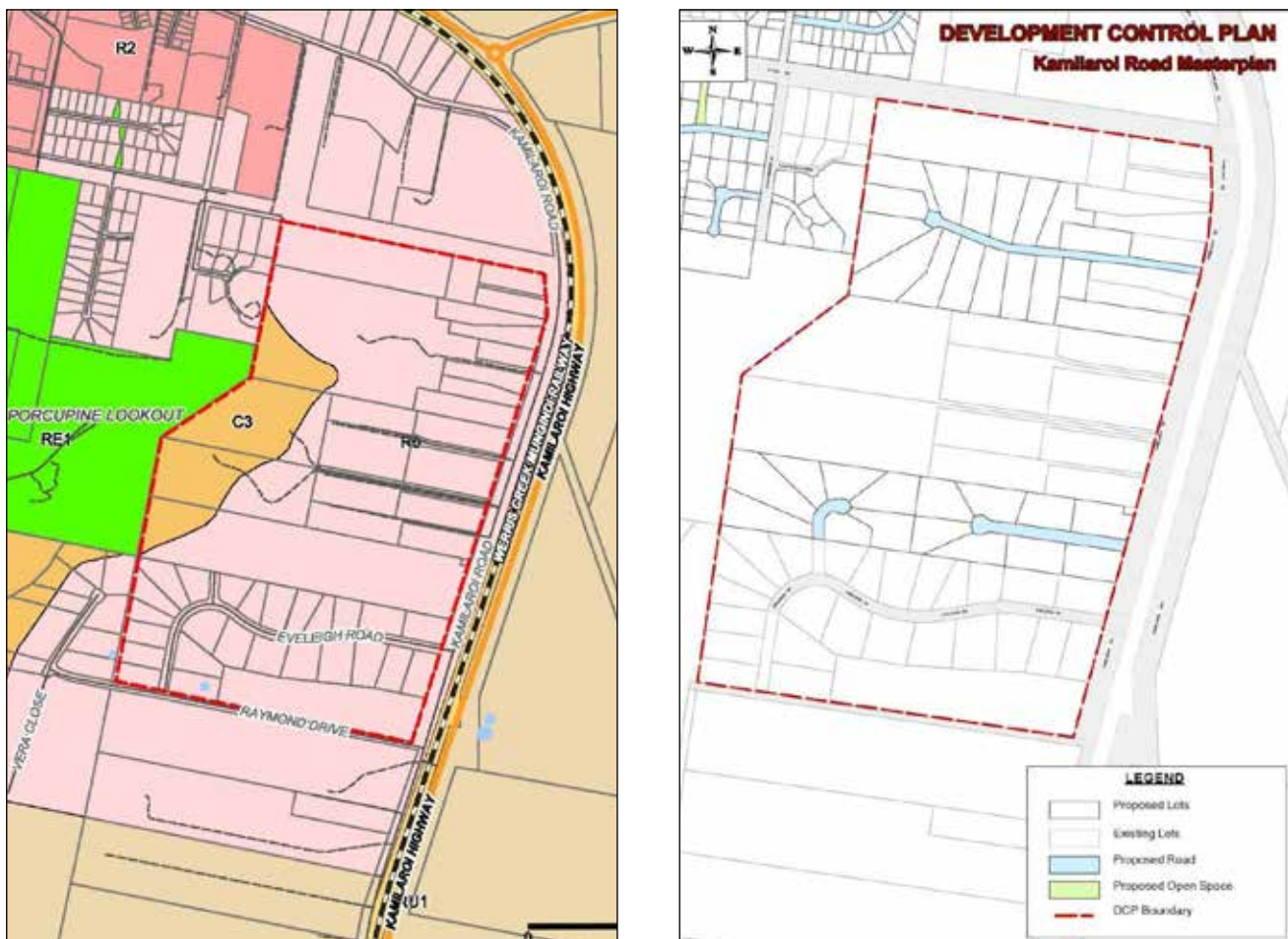




Table 6 Kamilaroi Rural Residential Masterplan Summary

Precinct/Zone	Land description	Area (ha)	No lots/dwellings/developed	Future supply
Vera Close R5	Lot 25 DP1153088 and DP1244571	54ha	11 lots approved unconstructed, no dwellings	11
North Eveleigh Road R5	Lot 892 DP535047	19.8ha	14 lots approved, unconstructed, no dwellings	14
Eveleigh Road R5	various	8.2ha	26 lots, 14 dwellings 11 vacant lots plus residue of 8ha	11
Off Kamilaroi Road	Lot 2 DP 1204290	24ha	17 lots, 1 dwelling 16 vacant lots	16
<b>Total approved lots</b>			<b>68</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Masterplanned lots (Urban Strategy)</b>			<b>72 lots total</b>	
<b>Dwellings constructed</b>			<b>15</b>	
<b>Lot potential 2021</b>			<b>52</b>	
Land supply based on 38 dwellings per year:				1.34 years supply

The Masterplan Estate Supply Summary shown in Table 7 indicates there has been an uplift in development activity across Gunnedah township, particularly in South Gunnedah which aligns with the location of dwelling approvals in the Council data. The supply within the masterplanned estates is also likely to meet population projection requirement of 580 dwellings.

Table 7 Masterplan Estate Supply Summary

Precinct/Masterplan Lots estimated	Developed lots 2021 (dwellings)	Lots undeveloped	Years supply
East Gunnedah (404 total) ^	24	330*	8.6
South Gunnedah (354 total)	122	232	6.1
East Lincoln Street (222 total)	10	212	5.5
Kamilaroi East Gunnedah (72 total)	15	51	1.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>22 years</b>

Source: Council 2021 subdivision and dwelling data, DPE Spatial Viewer

\*Includes assumptions made about yield of unsubdivided residue land

^not including Oaktree retirement village

## Future releases

Other precincts were identified in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy for future development and a staging plan prepared to guide their release. Two areas are zoned R5 Large Lot Residential and are recommended for rezoning to R2 Low Density Residential, being Wandobah Road south of Mornington Estate and land off McCalls Road to Howes Road in West Gunnedah. The third area proposed to be included is land in Maitland Street, which affects the extended area of 9ha (not 4.8ha as per the Urban Strategy). These three areas are illustrated below in Figure 9 and are represented as Phase 1 and Phase 2 areas on the Residential Development Structure Plan 2016 shown in Figure 10.

Figure 9 Areas recommended for future residential development 2016

### North/South McCalls Road



### Maitland Street



### Wandobah Road



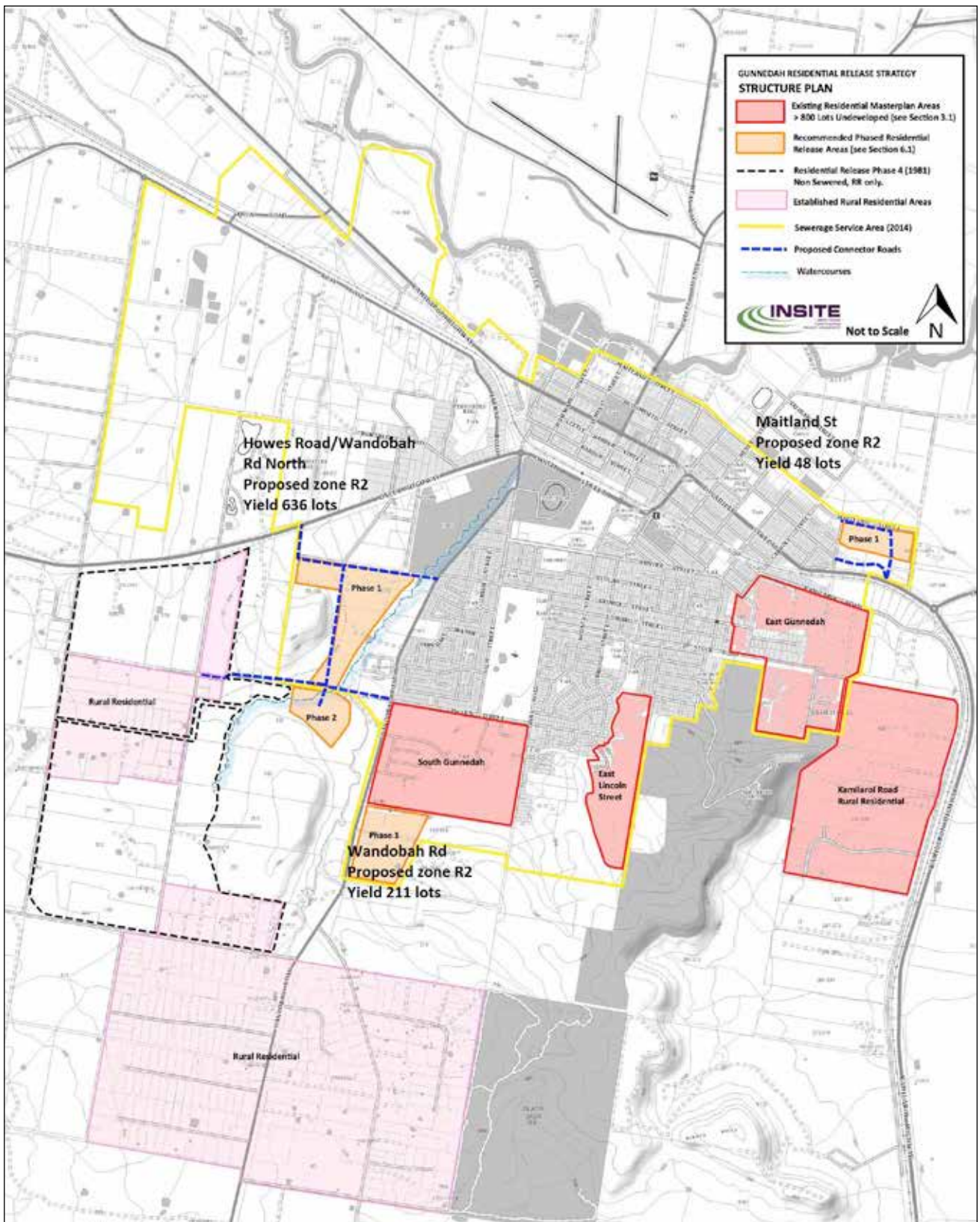
Source: 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy

These areas are noted for future consideration for densification. However the ability to service the land is essential. This must be undertaken before any proposed change to zoning or lot size.

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy concluded that while there was sufficient capacity within the current zoned land to accommodate growth, Council should consider the rezoning of additional land in the short term to accommodate a more ambitious growth scenario (Figure 9 above). This additional land would accommodate an additional 895 lots. The Residential Development Structure Plan and proposed yields is shown in Figure 10 (refer 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy for analysis). The rezoning of these sites has not yet been realised.



Figure 10 Residential Development Structure Plan 2016



Source: 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy

## 2.2.4 Other local plans and policies

The local plans and policies are summarised below.

Table 8 Local Plans and Policies

Description and Objectives	Key Implications for Local Housing Strategy
<b>Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027</b>	
<p>The Community Strategic Plan sets out the community's priorities, aspirations and vision for the next 10 years.</p> <p>Strengths include the availability of serviced and accessible industrial land, the major mining and manufacturing / transport businesses, railway and road infrastructure and proximity to Tamworth and the Hunter.</p> <p>In terms of housing, it determines that housing must be available for individuals and families of all income levels and furthermore that aged care facilities and programs that support ageing in place are supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mix of housing types that are affordable, adaptable, accessible and suited to community needs is encouraged;</li> <li>• Implementing initiatives to deliver attractive, well serviced villages while retaining unique identity of each;</li> <li>• Providing enhanced green space in residential areas and encourage walking and cycling;</li> <li>• Securing a sustainable water supply for the community that allows for growth;</li> <li>• Protecting heritage values; and</li> <li>• Address the local impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategy should identify opportunities for housing and potential for growth that focuses on sustainable servicing provision and accessibility to services and facilities.</li> <li>• The Strategy needs to consider the implications of no sewer services in most villages.</li> <li>• The Strategy will need to account for constrained land and the costs of construction in East Gunnedah.</li> <li>• Housing diversity should be provided through planning mechanisms that encourage quality design outcomes particularly in meeting the demand for smaller dwellings in areas close to the central business district (CBD).</li> <li>• Provision of affordable housing will require investigation and negotiation with agencies, development industry and Council.</li> <li>• Land use zones and lot sizes may need to be reconsidered to create incentive for housing diversity while retaining amenity.</li> <li>• Design of housing and landscaping can help in mitigating the local impacts of climate change.</li> </ul>



Description and Objectives	Key Implications for Local Housing Strategy
<b>Future 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement</b>	
<p>Builds on the Community Strategic Plan by setting out planning priorities and actions to achieve a 20-year vision for land use planning in the Gunnedah LGA. The priorities are consistent with those set out in the NSW Government’s New England North West Regional Plan 2041.</p>	<p>The LSPS includes Strategic Priorities:</p> <p><b>Local Planning Priority 6 – Enhance Gunnedah Shire’s liveability</b></p> <p><b>Local Planning Priority 7: Housing types for lifestyle diversity</b></p> <p><b>Local Planning Priority 11: Preserving biodiversity and preparing for climate change</b></p> <p>Focus of growth is in Gunnedah with consideration as to the role of villages and opportunity for them to continue to contribute to housing supply, affordability and choice.</p> <p>Demand for medium density and retirement living is expected to increase. Greater housing diversity will be required to cater for the changing and growing population.</p>
<b>Floodplain Risk Management Study</b>	
<p>To address the existing, future and continuing flood risk in Gunnedah and villages impacted by flood and develop flood planning levels and floodplain risk management strategies to protect the community.</p>	<p>Flood risk is well documented and acknowledge through the planning policy framework and additional development within high risk areas will be avoided.</p>



## 2.3 Local Environmental Plan

The Gunnedah Local Environmental Plan 2012 (the GLEP) is a statutory instrument that provides for land use planning in the Gunnedah LGA. The GLEP provides the mechanism for the approval of development. It identifies a number of general aims specific to housing and provides detailed land use zones and development permissibility. The GLEP also includes development standards for lot sizes for dwellings and provisions to manage development on certain land or land uses.

### Residential zones

The GLEP includes four primary residential zones; Low Density Residential (R2), Medium Density Residential (R3), Large Lot Residential (R5) and Village (RU5). The R2 and R3 zones apply to the residential areas within Gunnedah town, while other settlements are typically zoned RU5 Village. The Large Lot Residential (R5) zone as depicted in Figure 11 is reserved for land that might otherwise be called rural residential development.

Residential accommodation in the R2 zone is limited to single detached dwellings, dual occupancy and secondary dwellings (often referred to as granny flats). Group homes and housing for seniors are also permissible in the R2 zone. The R5 zone is limited to single dwellings and dual occupancies.

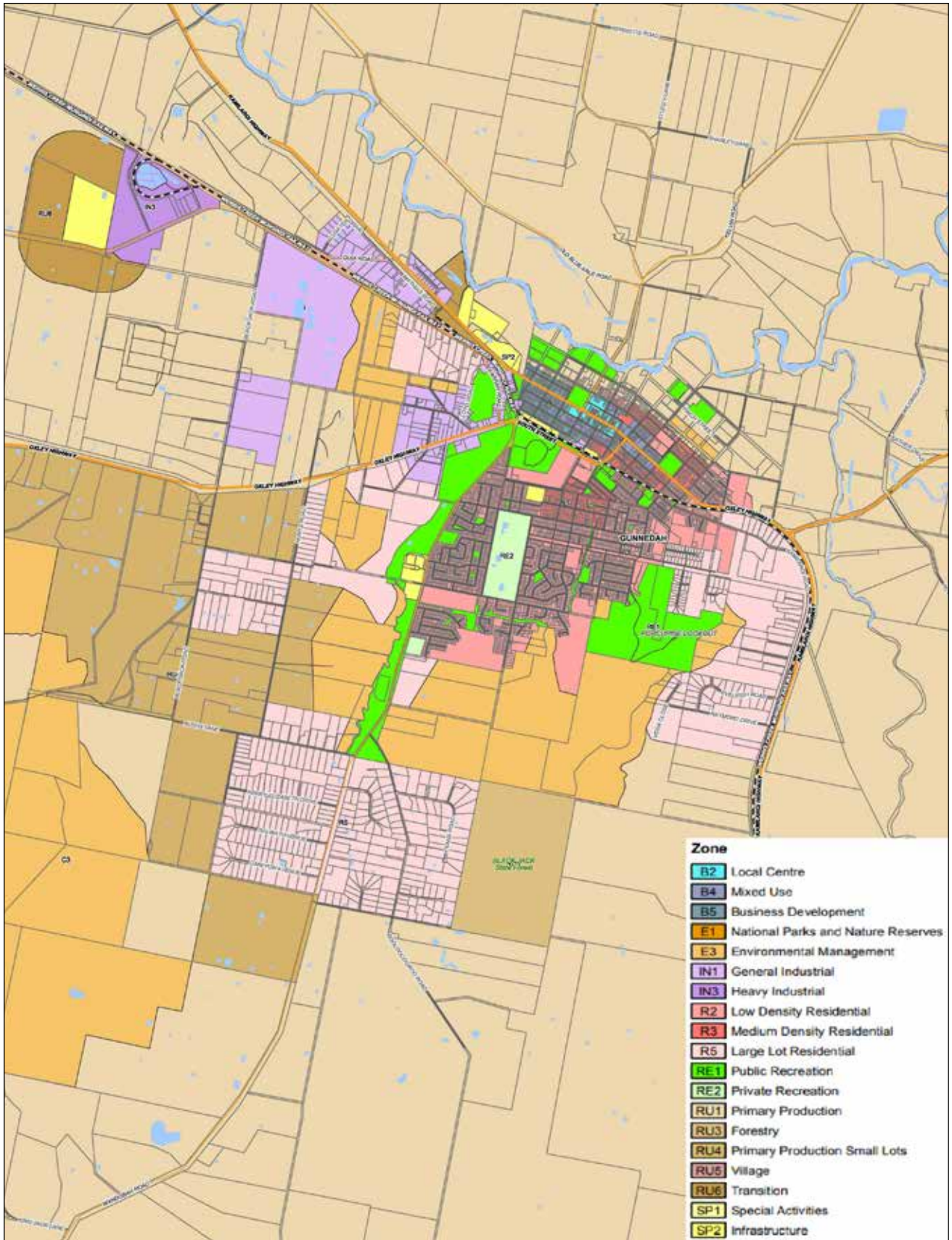
There is a small area in Gunnedah zoned R3. Presumably to accommodate infill and redevelopment of older housing stock closer to the centre of the town, this zone includes residential flat buildings and multi dwelling housing. The LEP zone map as it applies to Gunnedah is shown in the following Figure 11.

The Village zone is more flexible, allowing for more diversity in both residential land uses and other forms of retail, commercial and light industrial development.





Figure 11 Excerpt from Gunnedah LEP 2012 – Gunnedah Town Zones



Source: Gunnedah LEP 2012, [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)

## Minimum lot size

The minimum lot size in the R2 Low Density Residential Zone is 650m<sup>2</sup>.

### Zones that apply to residential land in Gunnedah

#### Zone R2 Low Density Residential

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a low-density residential environment.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To provide for low density housing while maintaining environmental or scenic landscape qualities of land that would not be sustainable with higher densities of development.
- To minimise the impact of non-residential uses and ensure these are in character and compatible with surrounding development.

Residential uses permissible: dwellings, dual occupancies, secondary dwellings, seniors housing, group homes.

#### Zone R3 Medium Density Residential

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a medium density residential environment.
- To provide a variety of housing types within a medium density residential environment.
- To enable other land uses that provides facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To integrate new development with established settlement patterns and landscapes in the neighbourhood by retaining and enhancing —
  - (a) the existing streetscape and significant vegetation, and
  - (b) pedestrian, cycle and vehicular connections and accessibility, and
  - (c) the scale, density and form of existing development.

Residential uses permissible: dwellings, dual occupancies, secondary dwellings, seniors housing, group homes, residential flat buildings, multi dwelling housing.





### Zone R5 Large Lot Residential

- To provide residential housing in a rural setting while preserving, and minimising impacts on, environmentally sensitive locations and scenic quality.
- To ensure that large residential lots do not hinder the proper and orderly development of urban areas in the future.
- To ensure that development in the area does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To provide a restricted range of opportunities for employment, development and community facilities and services that do not unreasonably or significantly detract from—  
(a) the primary residential function, character and amenity of the neighbourhood, and  
(b) the quality of the natural and built environments.

Residential uses permissible: dwellings, dual occupancies

### Zone RU5 Village

- To provide for a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village.
- To promote businesses and neighbourhood activities that serve the needs of the local community.

Residential uses permissible: dwellings, dual occupancies, secondary dwellings, seniors housing, group homes, residential flat buildings, multi dwelling housing, shop top housing.

The R2, R3 and RU5 zones also permit both attached and detached dual occupancy development and the GLEP includes provisions that specifically deal with the subdivision of dual occupancy below the minimum lot size, however, limit the resulting lot size to 450m<sup>2</sup> regardless of the residential typology (e.g. dual occupancy and multi dwelling housing both have a MLS of 450m<sup>2</sup>).

The R5 Large Lot Residential zone is applied to land on the fringe of Gunnedah and has an MLS of 1.2ha. Land zoned R5 in Silversmith Place has an MLS of 2,000m<sup>2</sup> and in Rampadells Rise and Bindea Place, 3000m<sup>2</sup>. There are pockets of land off Stock Road zoned R5 that have a 40ha MLS. There are no provisions for the subdivision of dual occupancies in this zone (other than through strata and community title).



## 2.4 LGA Snapshot

Gunnedah Shire, in the New England North West Region of NSW, is a prosperous agricultural area with extensive coal and gas resources. Agriculture has traditionally been the primary economic driver, underpinning other sectors of the community. 2021 ABS census data for employment, income, property and population are provided below:

### Snapshot Employment and Income



# 6,441

Residents employed  
year ending 2022

### Income

Median household  
weekly income 2020-21

## \$1,625

Agriculture produced  
\$250m in 2020-21

Mining produced  
\$196m in 2020-21

### Industry of Employment

Agriculture 23.3%  
Education & training 9.8%  
Construction 8.4%  
Health & social assistance 8.2%  
Mining 7.2%  
Retail trade 6.5%  
Public administration 4.6%  
Manufacturing 4.2%

20.4% of Gunnedah residents  
travel outside the local  
government area to work

15.6% of workers come from  
other areas



## Snapshot Property

### Gunnedah LGA

Total number of dwellings 2021

# 6,007

Breeza 65  
Carroll 151  
Curlewis 342  
Gunnedah 4,640  
Mullaley 84  
Tambar Springs 157  
Rural area 568

## Median residential housing value 2021

# \$400,000

## Housing stress 2021

### 7.2%

Rent or mortgage greater than 30% of gross household income

## Total private dwellings for the whole LGA in 2021

Detached 87.1%  
Semi detached 11.5%  
Flat or apartment 1.1%  
Other 0.1%

## Approvals 2012-22

Single dwellings approved 470  
Dual occupancies approved 62



Source: [housing.id.com.au/gunnedah](https://housing.id.com.au/gunnedah)

## Snapshot Population

2021 Usual Resident Population (URP)

# 12,691



## Projected Population change over 25 years

# 1,603

Natural change

(Births less deaths)

+

# -828

Net Migration

(Arrivals less departures)

Projected 2041 Population

# 13,466



Source: DPE Gunnedah LGA population projections 2021-2041

## 2.4.1 Economy

Gunnedah Shire's Gross Regional Product was \$.081 billion in the year ending June 2022 growing 3.5% since the previous year. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing was the most productive industry generating \$158 million in 2021-22.

Mining generated \$75 million, Construction \$56.2m, Wholesale Trade \$44.9m, Health Care and social Assistance \$41.5m, Education and Training \$38.6m and Transport, Postal and Warehousing \$34.3m.

In 2021-22, Agriculture, Forest and Fishing were the largest employer with 1052 people (17.8%) while Health Care and Social Assistance employed 614 people (10.4%) and the Education and Training sector employed 550 people (9.3%).

Employment by Key Industry 2021-22

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing employed 1052 people, (17.8%)
- Health Care and Social Assistance employed 614 people, (10.4%)
- Education and Training employed 550 people, (9.3%)
- Retail trade employed 497 people, (8.4%)
- Construction employed 451 people, (7.6%)
- Accommodation and Food Services, employed 402 people, (6.8%)
- Public administration and Safety, employed 302 people, (5.1%)
- Manufacturing employed 242 people, (4.1%)

## 2.4.2 Population and housing

The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted the latest census in August 2021.

On the evening of the ABS' 2016 census, 12,215 people lived in the Gunnedah LGA, in 5,490 dwellings. DPE projects a population of 12,724 people living in 6,123 dwellings in Gunnedah by 2031 and falling to 12,618 to 2041. In 2016, 19% of the Gunnedah LGA population were 65 years and older.

Gunnedah is the focus of some new population growth, though moderate over the past decade. The LGA is projected to reach 12,618 residents by 2041, requiring an additional 580 dwellings. However, population growth rates may increase over time as the effects of COVID-19 and housing affordability issues continue in NSW. Household composition is weighted to families representing 69.3%, however, single or lone person households make up 28.2%. The reduction in housing occupancy over the past 10 years is consistent to the trend across Australia towards an increase in older people. The predominant housing type is detached dwellings, with 89.7% of all dwellings being detached.

2021 NSW DPE Population Projections indicate that by 2041 there will be approximately 3,275 people or 22% of the population over 65 likely needing housing that is smaller, more adaptable and closer to services. This is also reflected in the projected increase of 325 lone person households from 2016 to 2041. These expected changes will exacerbate the current lack of supply of smaller housing types. In addition, there is an ongoing need to provide suitable housing for key workers as well as those attracted to the LGA by employment in mining in the short and medium term.

The shortage of rental accommodation and significant increase in rent is also impacting those within the community with less disposable income, elderly or otherwise at risk. Gunnedah is well positioned to deliver diverse housing opportunities, particularly for an ageing population, as well as improve housing affordability.

## Housing demand

Recent growth since the release of the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy has been in residential subdivisions in Gunnedah, typically providing R2 Low Density Residential zoned land with a minimum lot size of 650 m<sup>2</sup>. Most activity has been in the area in South Gunnedah known as Mornington Estate. Other areas of Gunnedah have been developed with new dwellings including R5 Large Lot Residential land in the fringe areas to the east and west.

Further to the demand for the 'typical' 650m<sup>2</sup> block, there is an emerging trend for more compact living close to the urban core. This has been expressed during consultation in April 2021 where appropriate solutions for relatively higher density development were suggested for the R2 zone.



The R3 Medium Density Housing zone was identified as potentially not delivering supply of alternative housing choice, most likely due to several factors including the costs of redeveloping, the prevalence of older, stately homes and the supply of land and housing available in other zones.

Anecdotal evidence gathered through the initial community and stakeholder engagement process indicated demand for continued R5 lots (2,000m<sup>2</sup>, 3,000m<sup>2</sup> and 1.2ha Minimum Lot Sizes). This is corroborated by Council analysis of the rural residential take up on the urban fringes of Gunnedah over the past 10 years. The relatively low subdivision costs associated with creating these lots as well as the availability of municipal water supply resulted in this typology being preferred by some proponents. The R5 zone product offers lifestyle choice though it is acknowledged that the 1.2ha minimum lot size is inefficient to service for Council and maintain from a resident's perspective, and a lower MLS could be investigated without loss of character or amenity.

## Dwelling approvals

Housing demand has been estimated from the Department of Planning and Environment's housing monitor to 2018 which indicates that for Gunnedah LGA, on average there are 38 dwellings approved per annum. Council's approvals data shows a total of 470 dwellings approved over the 2012-2021 timeframe, with 'peaks and troughs' evident. There have been 241 dwellings and 39 dual occupancies approved in Gunnedah since 2016 (the date of the Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy) according to Council data.

The Oaktree seniors housing development in Favell Street is an example of an alternative housing choice, providing 67 community title lots and dwellings.

The ABS 2021 census data shows that almost 87% of the dwellings in Gunnedah are single detached houses. In terms of location, the R2 and R5 zones in Gunnedah have been the focus for 75% of new dwellings, with the remaining distributed across the other zones.

## Housing supply

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy assessed supply across the master planned precincts of Gunnedah, a range of historic precincts that are subject to an approved subdivision layout. The information in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy indicated there were 801 lots available for development in Gunnedah in 2016. As noted above, there has been 241 dwellings approved in Gunnedah since 2016 including dual occupancies.

A comparison of Council subdivision approval data for the master planned precincts and review of aerial photography in 2021 shows there has been some uplift in subdivision activity with lots developed for release or modified since 2016 mainly in South and East Gunnedah. This provides an explanation for the difference between 801 vacant lots in 2016 and 825 lots in 2021. In summary it is evident that there remains a healthy supply of approved residential subdivisions across Gunnedah, as shown in Table 9 table below.

Table 9 Housing Supply

Precinct/Masterplan lots estimated	Developed lots 2021 (dwellings)	Lots undeveloped	Years supply
East Gunnedah (404 total) ^	24	330*	8.6
South Gunnedah (354 total)	122	232	6.1
East Lincoln Street (222 total)	10	212	5.5
Kamilaroi East Gunnedah (72 total)	15	51	1.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>22 years</b>

Source: 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy; Council 2021 subdivision and dwelling data, DPE Spatial Viewer

Notes: \*Includes assumptions made about residue land yield and lot size split of 40% R2 zone and 60% R5 Large Lot Residential zone

^Not including Oaktree retirement village

\*\*Demand of 38 dwellings per annum is used to calculate years of supply

A common misconception is that if land is zoned, vacant and undeveloped, then it is available for immediate development. In practice, this may not be the case as there is often a 'disconnect' between the amount of land zoned and the actual delivery of housing lots.

Land that is rezoned for residential development may not be necessarily delivered to the market. This could be for a variety of reasons, including planning constraints (statutory requirements, difficulties with infrastructure provision, fragmentation of ownership etc), capacity constraints (bushfire, slope etc) and commercial pressures. Each has the potential to severely impede the supply response to demand pressures.

The adequacy of land release is therefore crucial to the supply of housing which in turn directly impacts the price of housing. A constrained supply of land will drive up landowner expectations and make site assembly a high risk and high resource activity.

Planning controls within the Gunnedah LEP 2012 (GLEP) provide opportunities for infill development for the R2 Low Density Residential zone, RU5 Village zone and R3 Medium Density Residential zone with clause 4.1 (4A) allowing an exception to the minimum lot size for the subdivision of land for a dwelling, either detached or semi-detached or multi dwelling housing or dual occupancies to create a lot of not less than 450 m<sup>2</sup>.

The R2 zone is the most common in terms of spatial extent in Gunnedah, with a corresponding minimum lot size of 650 m<sup>2</sup>. The R3 zone is located generally close to the urban centre of Gunnedah and has a minimum lot size of 450 m<sup>2</sup>. The RU5 zone is applied to all the villages, with Curlewis the only settlement with urban services that could support higher density development. While infill development is not expected to provide a substantial stream of future housing supply, it does present an opportunity to contain some growth within the existing footprint and provide options for those seeking smaller housing typologies.

## R5 Large Lot Residential

The R5 Large Lot Residential zone generally has a 1.2ha minimum lot size except for land in Gunnedah near Stock Road in the East Gunnedah master planned estate with 2,000 and 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> minimum lot sizes. The R5 estates are otherwise located on the eastern and western fringes of Gunnedah. Approvals for R5 zoned dwellings have been consistent over the past decade and it is recognised that there are logical areas for expansion into adjoining areas should demand increase.

## Villages

For the villages in Gunnedah LGA, Curlewis is notable due to reticulated servicing. This means that there is potentially available capacity within the RU5 zone for new housing types. The villages of Breeza, Carroll, Tambar Springs and Mullaley provide an alternative housing choice but due to constraints such as flooding or distance out of Gunnedah are not expected to support substantial new growth. Any uplift in demand for a village lifestyle can be catered in unconstrained areas in existing RU5 zoned land.

## Current and planned housing

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy estimated that housing demand would result in the estimated 801 lots being exhausted by 2025. This is higher than the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) projections of 580 new dwellings being required by 2041. However, it is acknowledged that the DPE projections predate COVID-19 and the end of the 2017-2019 drought with both having observable positive impacts on regional housing markets.

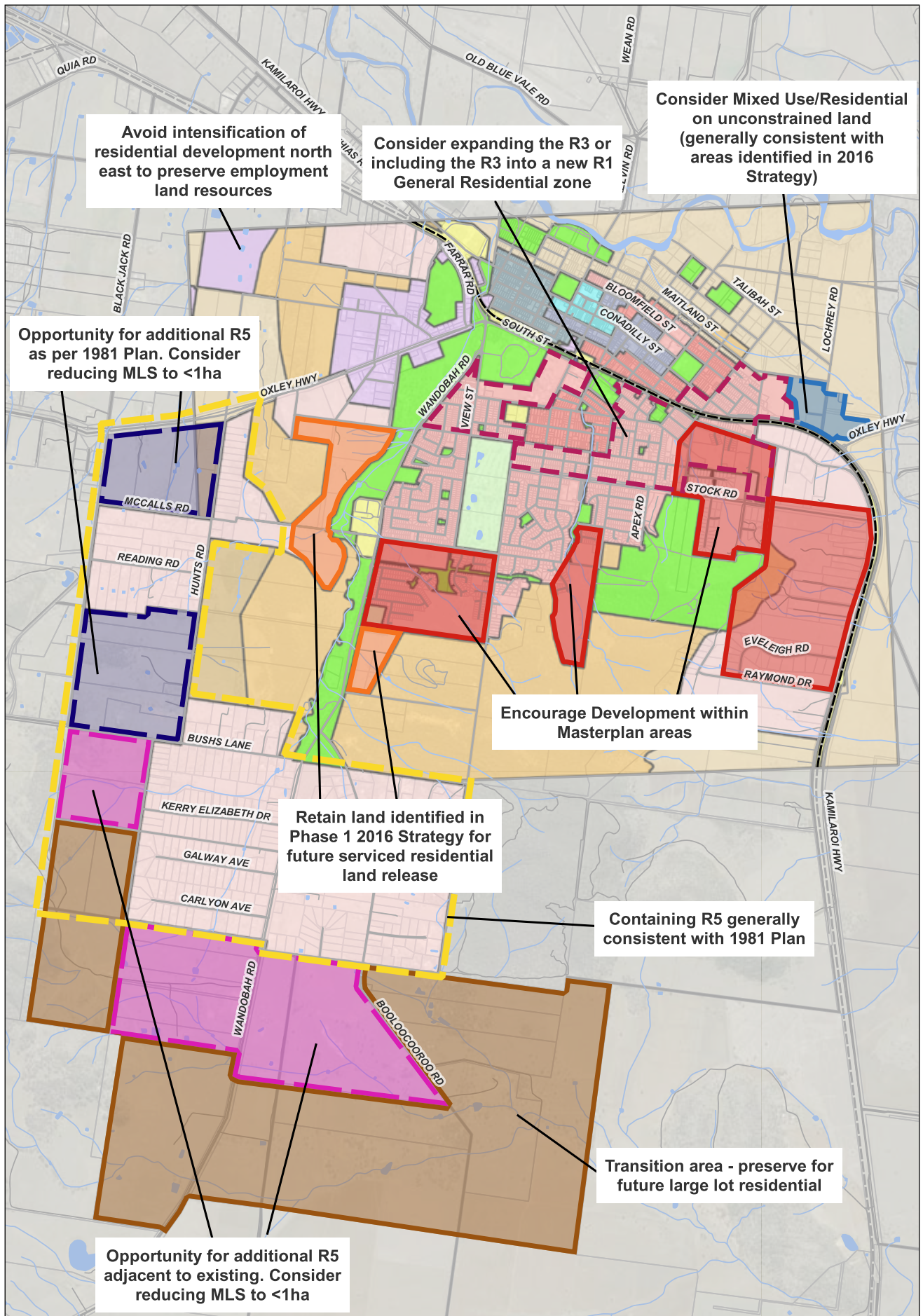
The evidence for Gunnedah LGA supports the town of Gunnedah being the location of the strongest growth with most of the subdivision and housing development occurring on existing zoned land. The analysis of the 2016 master planned estates indicates that there is enough zoned land to comfortably accommodate over 825 lots or 22 year's growth from 2021.

Beyond 2041, the identified future release areas shown in Figure 12 provide close to 900 lots, which could cater for new growth in Gunnedah well beyond 2060. The release areas are set out in Figure 12 and have been selected for accessibility, servicing potential and lack of constraints.

It is noted that the master planned estates do not represent all the vacant land in Gunnedah, and it is reasonable to assume that there is potentially more yield attainable from zoned greenfield and infill development.



Figure 12 Summary of precincts and opportunities in new residential development in Gunnedah





## 2.5 Housing Vision

**Our residents will have access to housing in the Gunnedah Shire that offers choices to suit people no matter their age, occupation or circumstance. New housing typology is well planned, diverse and in keeping with the rural character of the LGA. Our streets are tree-lined and landscaping is a feature of new housing.**





Based on consultation feedback, elements that inform the housing vision for the Gunnedah Shire are:

- The character is a key consideration in the delivery of new housing;
- New development should be sympathetic to the existing character and should offer variety and not impose, rather complement existing housing;
- Housing needs to provide choices to people of all ages, occupations and circumstances;
- Housing also needs to be affordable;
- Street trees, landscaping and footpaths are valued, both for aesthetic reasons and for access;
- Housing should be designed to be energy efficient where possible; and
- Residential lot sizes should cater for a variety of housing typologies.



# 3. Villages

**The villages play an important role in the LGA in terms of providing opportunities not only for housing but fostering social interaction and a sense of community. Villages function as important meeting and connection spaces, particularly when community infrastructure such as a hall, hotel, bushfire shed, playground and school exist.**

There are 5 gateway villages in the LGA shown in Figure 13. These are:

- Breeza
- Carroll
- Curlewis
- Mullaley
- Tambar Springs

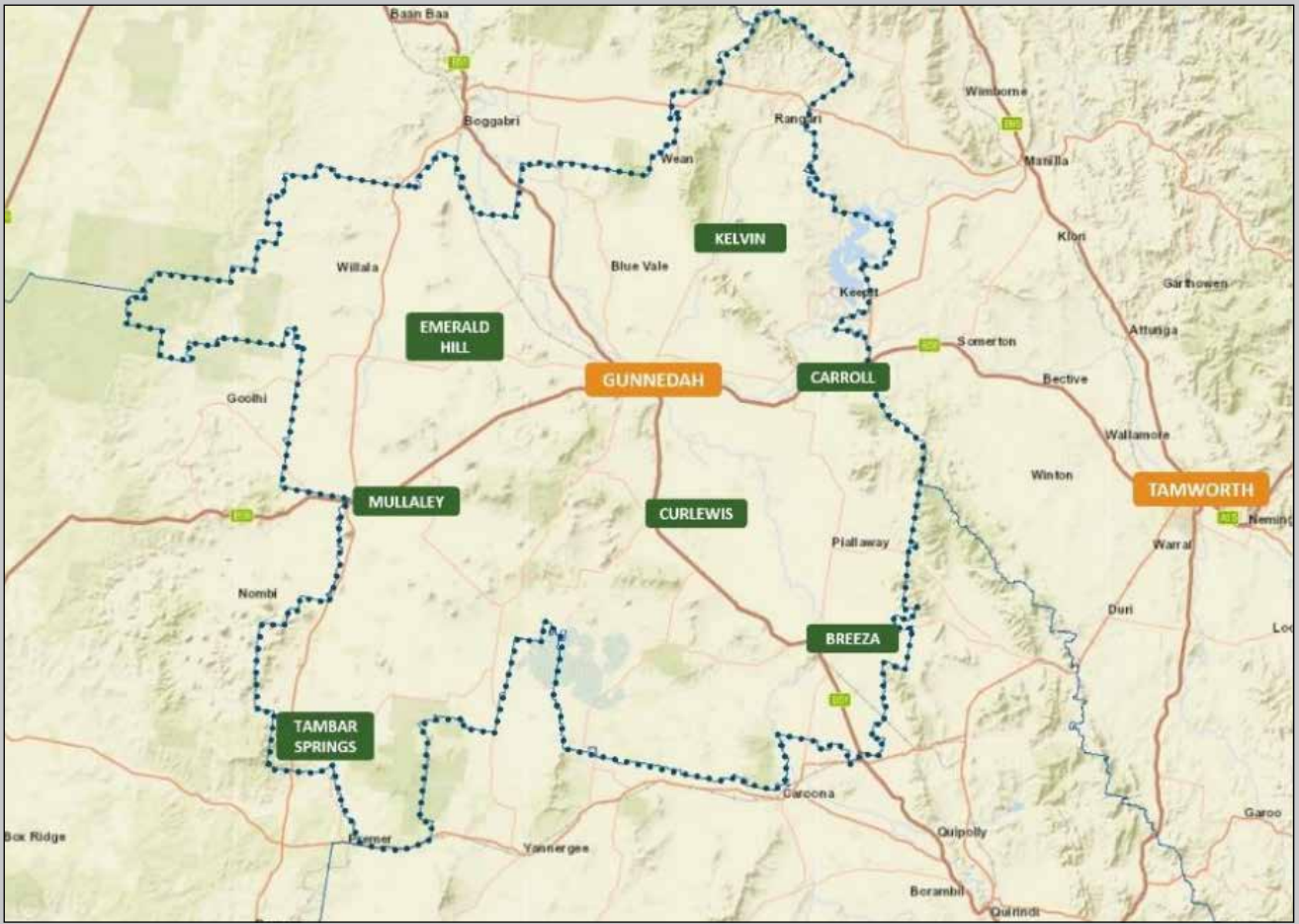
Village snapshots have been prepared for each of these villages.

The localities of Kelvin and Emerald Hill do not have a village structure and have not been included in the Strategy. Curlewis is the largest village and has a two-part snapshot to illustrate LEP provisions applicable to the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone outside the RU5 Village zone.

The RU5 Village zone is applied to Breeza, Carroll, Mullaley and Tambar Springs with a corresponding 1,000m<sup>2</sup> lot size and hence there is no lot size map provided.



Figure 13 Summary of precincts and opportunities in new residential development in Gunnedah



Source: Future 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement

# Breeza

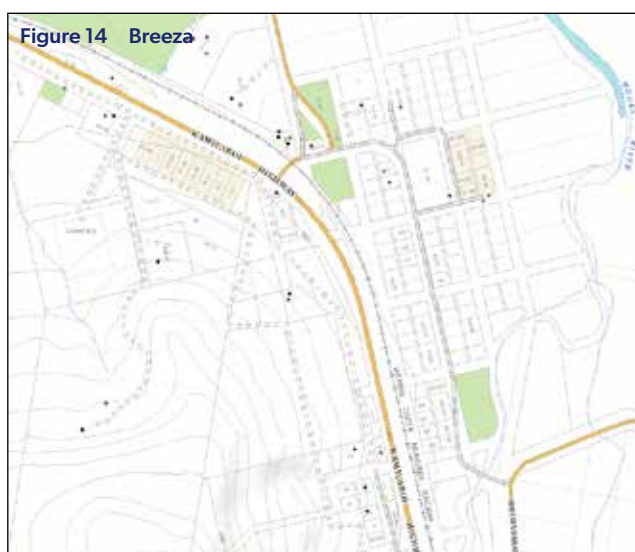
## Who lives here?

In 2021, latest Census data indicates that Breeza and surrounds had a usual resident population of approximately 124 people and there are 65 dwellings. People over 60 made up 29% of the population. Children aged 0-11 made up 21.8% of the population.

## Village Overview

Breeza is about 45km south east of Gunnedah town on the Liverpool Plains. Breeza Mountain is 430m above sea level to the west. The village has a grid structure centred over the Kamilaroi Highway and North West Railway line with settlement in the northern part of the village. The village is close to the Mooki River on the Liverpool Plains and is surrounded by agricultural activities.

Breeza is accessible to Tamworth (60km), Quirindi (40km) and Werris Creek (28km) and provides an alternative housing option for seasonal and agricultural workers.



## Land Use zones

The RU5 Village zone is allocated over the village including vacant land to the south.

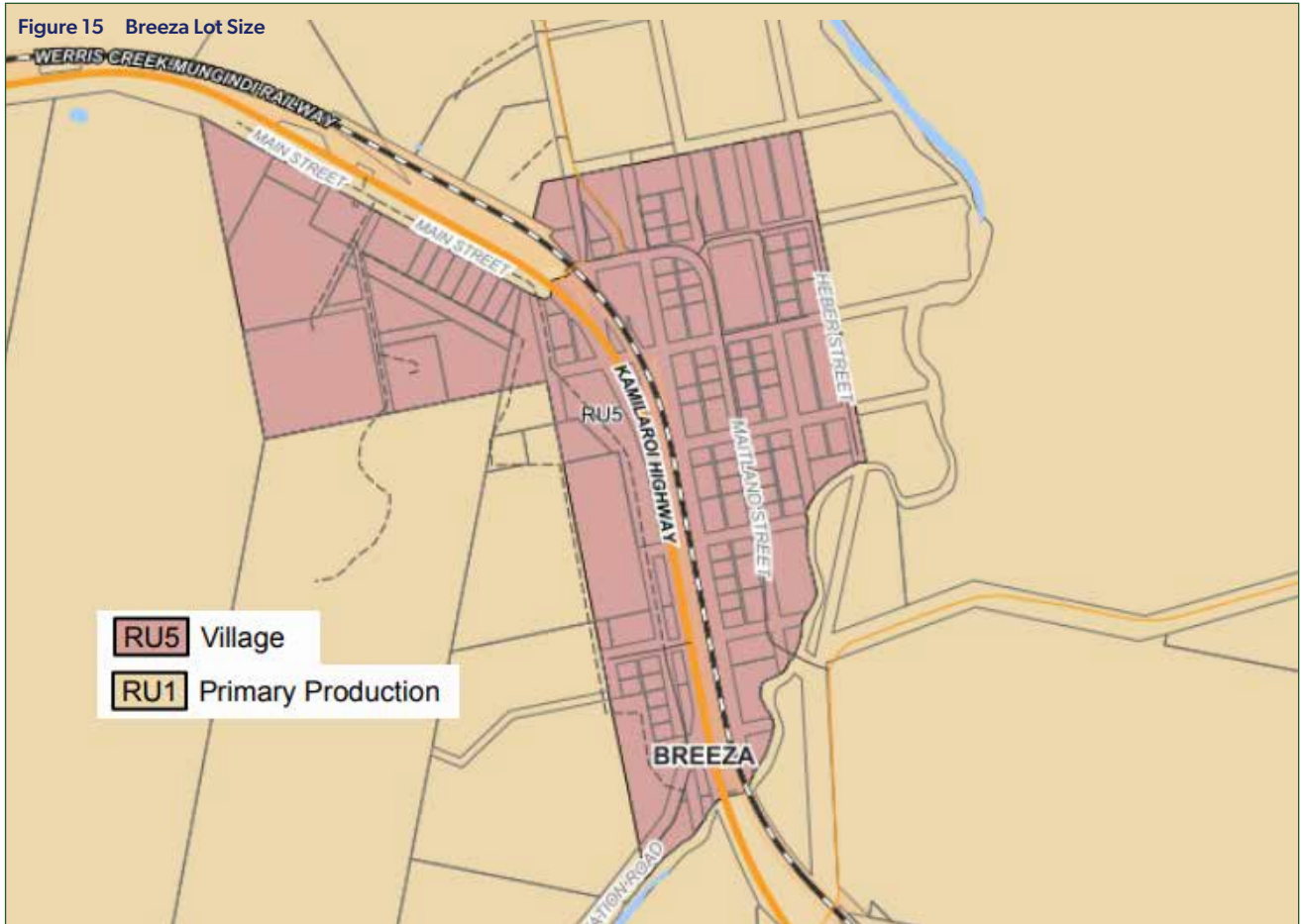
The zone allows for a large range of residential and business uses.

## Character & Planning Controls, Servicing

<b>Key land uses</b>	Detached dwellings, grain handling facilities
<b>Land use zoning</b>	RU5 Village; surrounded by RU1 Primary Production zone
<b>Permitted residential typologies</b>	RU5: Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy, Multi dwelling housing, Residential flat buildings, Attached dwellings, Secondary dwellings, Group homes, Seniors housing
<b>Minimum lot size</b>	1,000m <sup>2</sup> (RU5 zone)
<b>Lot sizes</b>	Varying lot sizes. Majority of lots are 1,800sqm following a traditional grid pattern with rear lanes
<b>Environment Constraints</b>	Eastern edge of village is flood prone
<b>Servicing</b>	No reticulated services Limited community facilities, Rural Fire Services shed



Figure 15 Breeza Lot Size



### Community Strategic Plan objectives for villages:

- Villages are vibrant and sustainable, attractive and well serviced;
- Retain unique identity of villages;
- Enhance village entrances and transport links to Gunnedah; and
- Reduce the impact of flooding on the community.

### Key recommendations

- Access the allocation of the RU1 and RU5 zones over existing residential development;
- Avoid risks of bushfire and flood prone land; and
- Retain the village identity while protecting residential amenity.

# Carroll

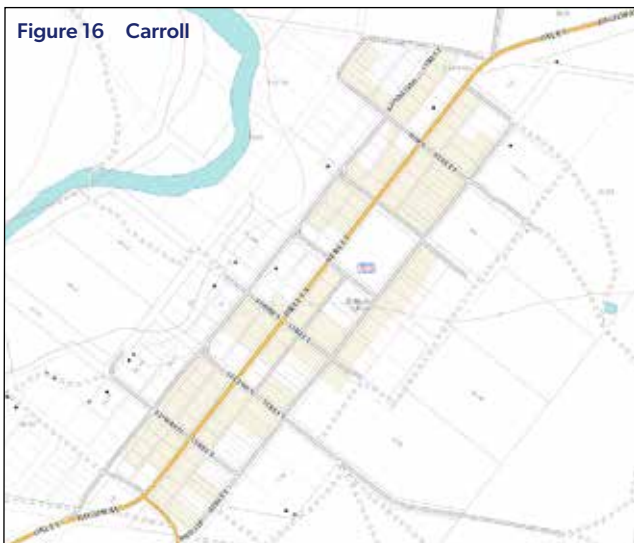
## Who lives here?

In 2021, latest Census data indicates that Carroll and surrounds had a usual resident population of approximately 305 people and there are 151 dwellings. People over 60 made up 21% of the population. Children aged 0-11 made up 19.7% of the population.

## Village Overview

Carroll is on the Oxley Highway between Gunnedah and Tamworth, being about 20km east of Gunnedah town. It has a grid structure centred over the Oxley Highway.

The village is close to the Namoi River. The Peel River confluence with the Namoi River is above Carroll and the village is flood-affected.



## Land Use zones

The RU5 Village zone is allocated over the village including vacant land to the south west. The zone allows for a large range of residential and business uses.

The RU1 Primary Production zone surrounds the village. There may be potential for land use conflict with more intensive cropping activities.

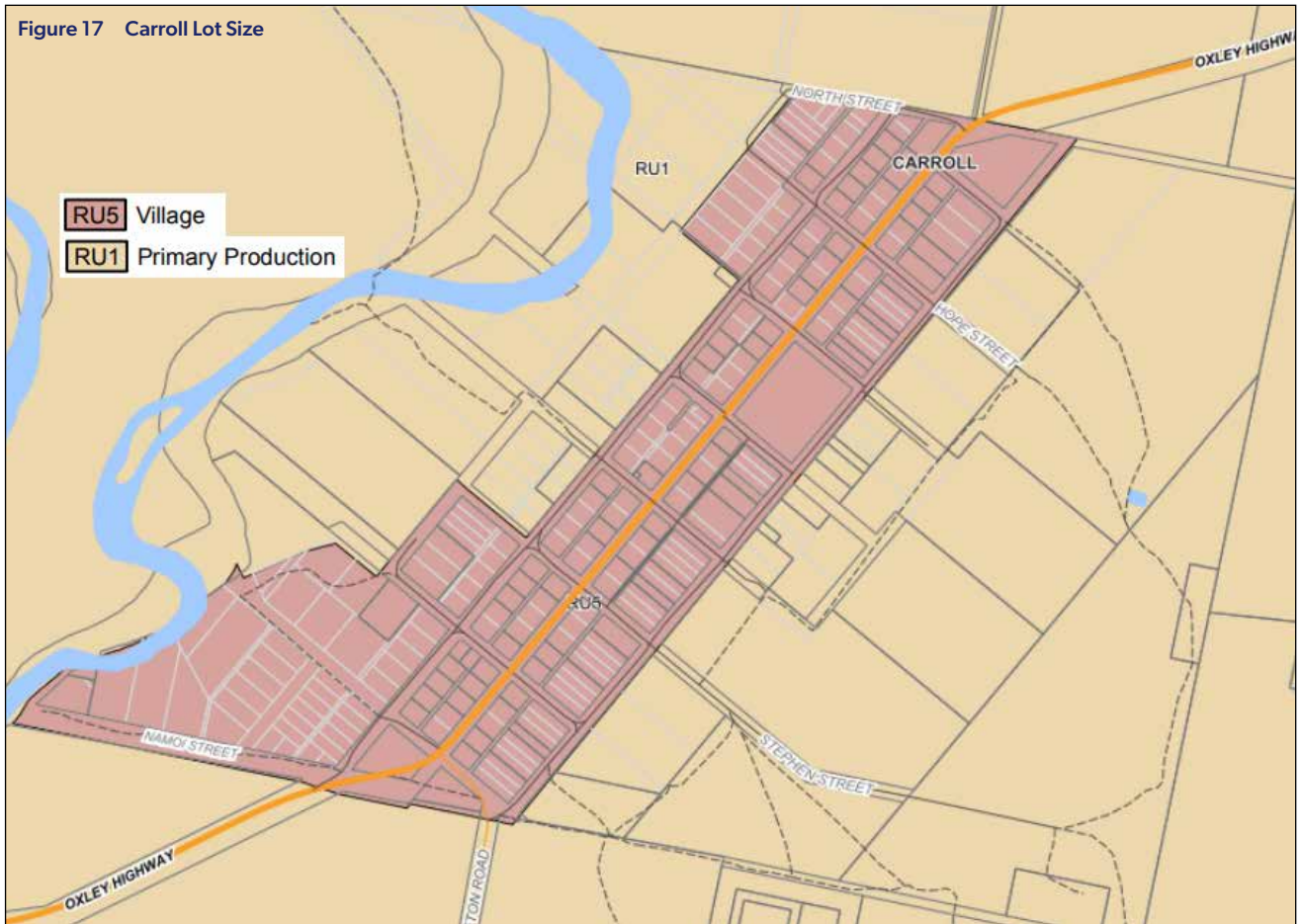
Carroll has limited scope for further development due to flooding.

## Character & Planning Controls, Servicing

<b>Key land uses</b>	Detached dwellings, school, shop, cricket oval
<b>Land use zoning</b>	RU5 Village; surrounded by RU1 Primary Production
<b>Permitted residential typologies</b>	RU5: Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy, Multi dwelling housing, Residential flat buildings, Attached dwellings, Secondary dwellings, Group homes, Seniors housing
<b>Minimum lot size</b>	1,000m <sup>2</sup> (RU5 zone)
<b>Lot sizes</b>	Varying lot sizes from 1,800sqm to 3,900sqm. Most lots are 1,800sqm following a traditional grid pattern with rear lanes
<b>Environment Constraints</b>	Flooding - most of the village is in high hazard floodway
<b>Servicing</b>	No reticulated services, Rural Fire Service shed, Store/post office/fuel



Figure 17 Carroll Lot Size



### Community Strategic Plan objectives for villages:

- Villages are vibrant and sustainable, attractive and well serviced;
- Retain unique identity of villages;
- Enhance village entrances and transport links to Gunnedah; and
- Reduce the impact of flooding on the community.

### Key recommendations

- Consider options to manage informal development in Carroll to improve amenity; and
- Investigate measures to reduce the impact of flooding to residents.

# Curlewis

## Who lives here?

In 2021, latest Census data indicates that Curlewis and surrounds had a usual resident population of approximately 779 people and there are 342 dwellings. People over 60 made up 26.1% of the population. Children aged 0-11 made up 18.1% of the population.

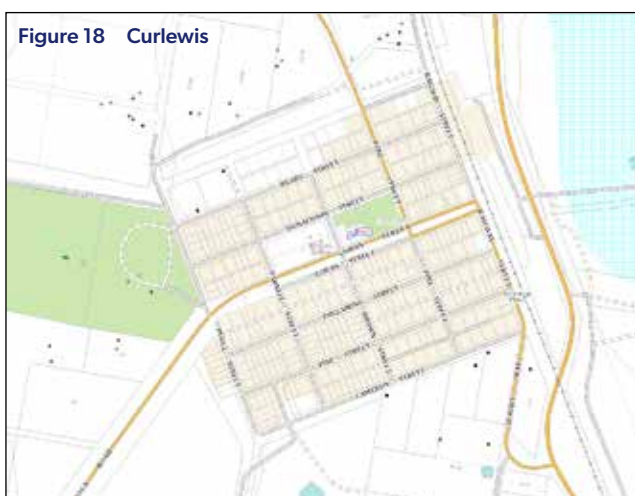
## Village Overview

Curlewis benefits from good accessibility to Gunnedah (16km) and associated services and employment. It has a village structure that is more sophisticated than the smaller villages supporting a range of small business, school and community infrastructure.

The strong sense of community contributes to the attractiveness of Curlewis as an alternative to Gunnedah, although this has not translated into net population growth.

## Land Use zones

The RU5 Village zone covers the urban area of Curlewis. The zone allows for a large range of residential and business uses without differentiation. This can lead to land use conflict between commercial and residential activities.



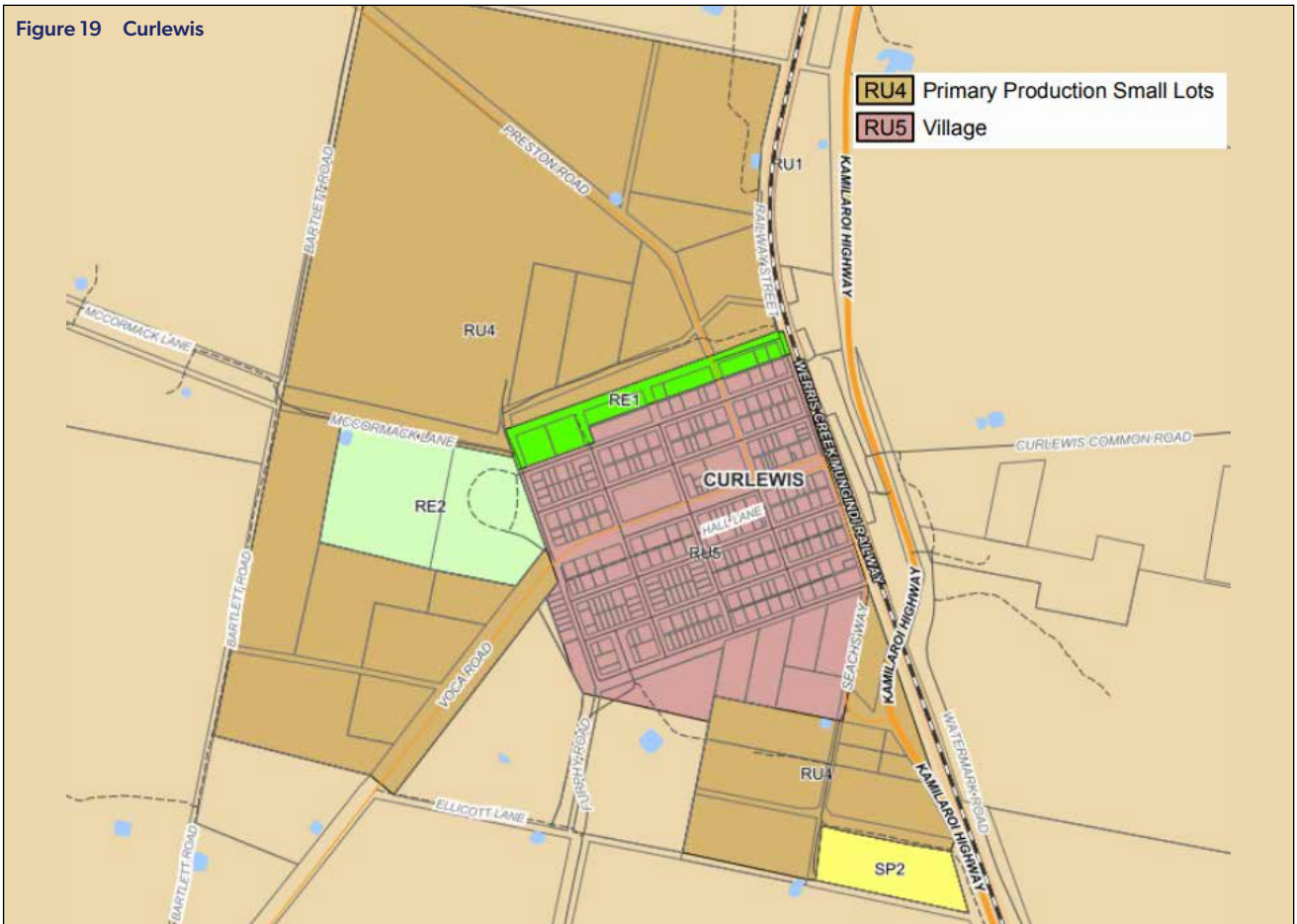
Conversely, the open land use table may be attractive to small business and those operating from home. Regardless, Council needs to be mindful of the needs to manage the potential conflict between incompatible uses. If the village is to continue to grow, Council could consider the application of a residential zone (eg R1 General Residential) and retaining a village centre in a Business zone. The RU4 zone surrounds the village to the north and south; with a 10ha MLS and limited permissibility for dwelling houses only.

## Character & Planning Controls, Servicing

<b>Key land uses</b>	Detached dwellings on single lots
<b>Land use zoning</b>	RU5 Village; RU4 Primary Production Small Lots
<b>Permitted residential typologies</b>	Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy, Multi dwelling housing, Residential flat buildings, Attached dwellings, Secondary dwellings, Group homes, Seniors housing
<b>Minimum lot size</b>	650m <sup>2</sup> (RU5) and 10,000m <sup>2</sup> (RU4)
<b>Lot sizes</b>	Predominantly 1,000 - 2,000m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Dwelling Opportunity Map</b>	A number of existing land titles around Curlewis zoned RU4 have been identified as having dwelling opportunities under clause 4.2A of the LEP
<b>Servicing</b>	Reticulated water and sewer, Rural Fire Service shed, store, post office



Figure 19 Curlewis



**Community Strategic Plan objectives for villages:**

- Villages are vibrant and sustainable, attractive and well serviced;
- Retain unique identity of villages;
- Enhance village entrances and transport links to Gunnedah; and
- Reduce the impact of flooding on the community.

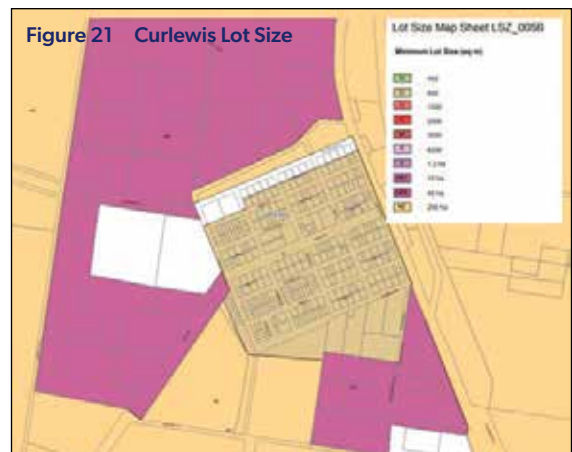
**Key recommendations**

- Assess land uses immediately around Curlewis and consider rezoning the RU4 zone to R5 Large Lot Residential;
- Remove the Dwelling Opportunity map and provide a land use zone/lot sizes for land adjacent to Curlewis;
- Consider potential for future village scale growth to unconstrained, capable and suitable land adjacent to the village; and
- Ensure services have capacity for future growth should it occur.

Figure 20 Curlewis Dwelling Opportunities Map



Figure 21 Curlewis Lot Size



# Mullaley

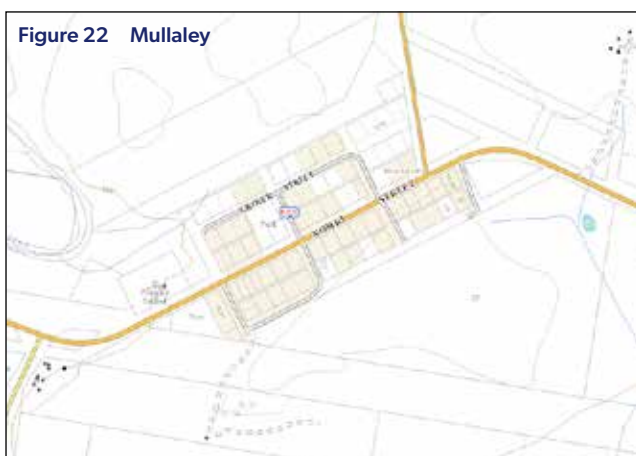
## Who lives here?

In 2021, latest Census data indicates that Mullaley and surrounds had a usual resident population of approximately 273 people and there are 157 dwellings. People over 60 made up 34.8% of the population. Children aged 0-11 made up 9.5% of the population.

## Village Overview

Mullaley is about 38km west of Gunnedah township. It has a grid structure that is centred on the Oxley Highway to Coonabarabran, the Black Stump Way to Coolah and Grain Valley Road to Boggabri. The area is situated in a highly productive cropping area.

Mullaley has a range of shops, post office, police station, hotel, rural supplies store, school and a park. A travelling stock route traverses the village from east to west. Mullaley provides housing choice for local workers and commuters.



## Land Use zones

The RU5 Village zone is allocated over the village extent.

The zone allows for a large range of residential and business uses. The open land use table is appropriate for the scale of Mullaley at this time.

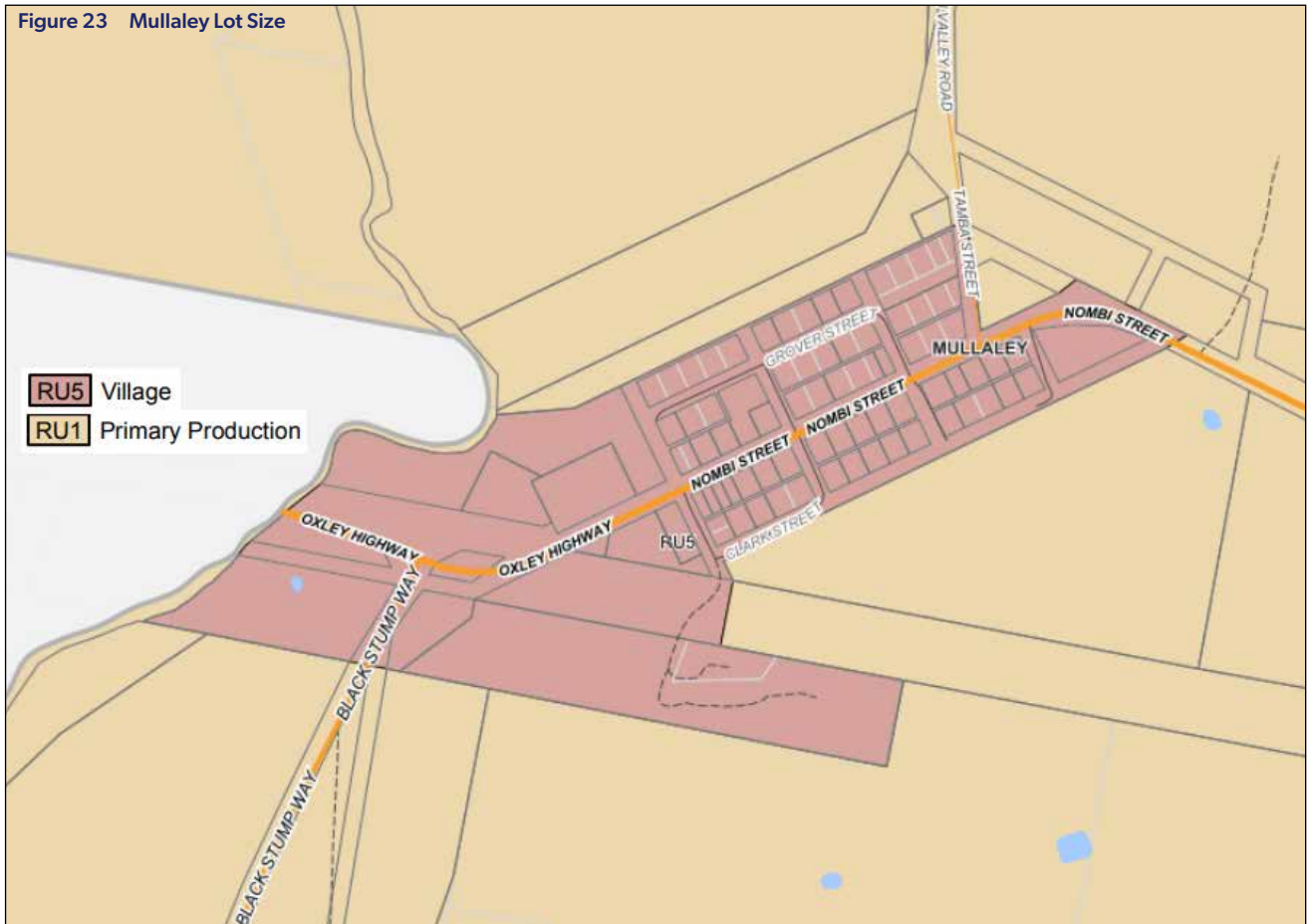
Housing diversity is limited to single detached dwellings.

## Character & Planning Controls, Servicing

<b>Key land uses</b>	Detached dwellings, Hotel, School, public park, commercial and rural service industries
<b>Land use zoning</b>	RU5 Village; surrounded by RU1 Primary Production
<b>Permitted residential typologies</b>	RU5: Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy, Multi Dwelling housing, Residential flat buildings, Attached dwellings, Secondary dwellings, Group homes, Seniors housing
<b>Minimum lot size</b>	1,000m <sup>2</sup> (RU5 zone)
<b>Lot sizes</b>	Varying lot sizes. Majority of lots are 2,000sqm following a traditional grid pattern with rear lanes
<b>Environment Constraints</b>	South western edge of village is both bushfire and flood prone
<b>Servicing</b>	Reticulated water, Rural Fire Service shed, Road-house, store, post office



Figure 23 Mullaley Lot Size



### Community Strategic Plan objectives for villages:

- Villages are vibrant and sustainable, attractive and well serviced;
- Retain unique identity of villages;
- Enhance village entrances and transport links to Gunnedah; and
- Reduce the impact of flooding on the community.

### Key recommendations

- Investigate servicing with water if/when Mullaley grows;
- Investigate promotion of ageing in place with housing diversity;
- Avoid bushfire risk to the west of the village;
- Protect residential amenity; and
- Secure transport to other Gunnedah services for residents.

# Tambar Springs

## Who lives here?

In 2021, latest Census data indicates that Tambar Springs and surrounds had a usual resident population of approximately 174 people and there are 84 dwellings. People over 60 made up 31.6% of the population. Children aged 0-11 made up 18.1% of the population.

## Village Overview

Tambar Springs is about 65km south of Gunnedah, 30km south of Mullaley and 62km north of Coolah. It has a grid structure that is centred on the Black Stump Way. The area is situated on the foot slopes of Tambar Mountain in a highly productive agricultural area. Tambar Springs has a post office, police station, general store, hotel, school and fuel station. The village provides a low density lifestyle for residents.

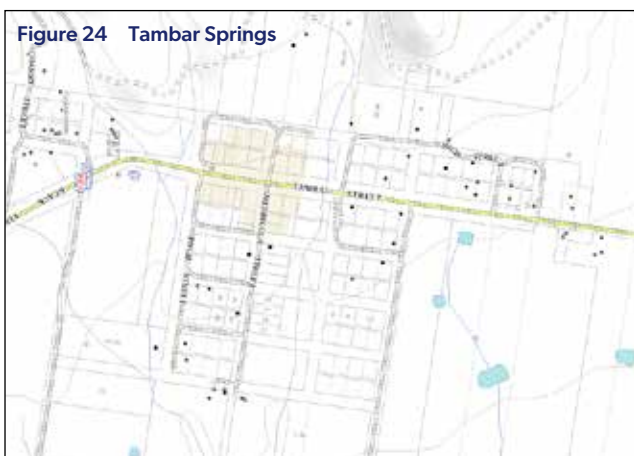


Figure 24 Tambar Springs

## Land Use zones

The RU5 Village zone is allocated over the village extent.

The zone allows for a large range of residential and business uses. The open land use table is appropriate for the scale of Tambar Springs at this time.

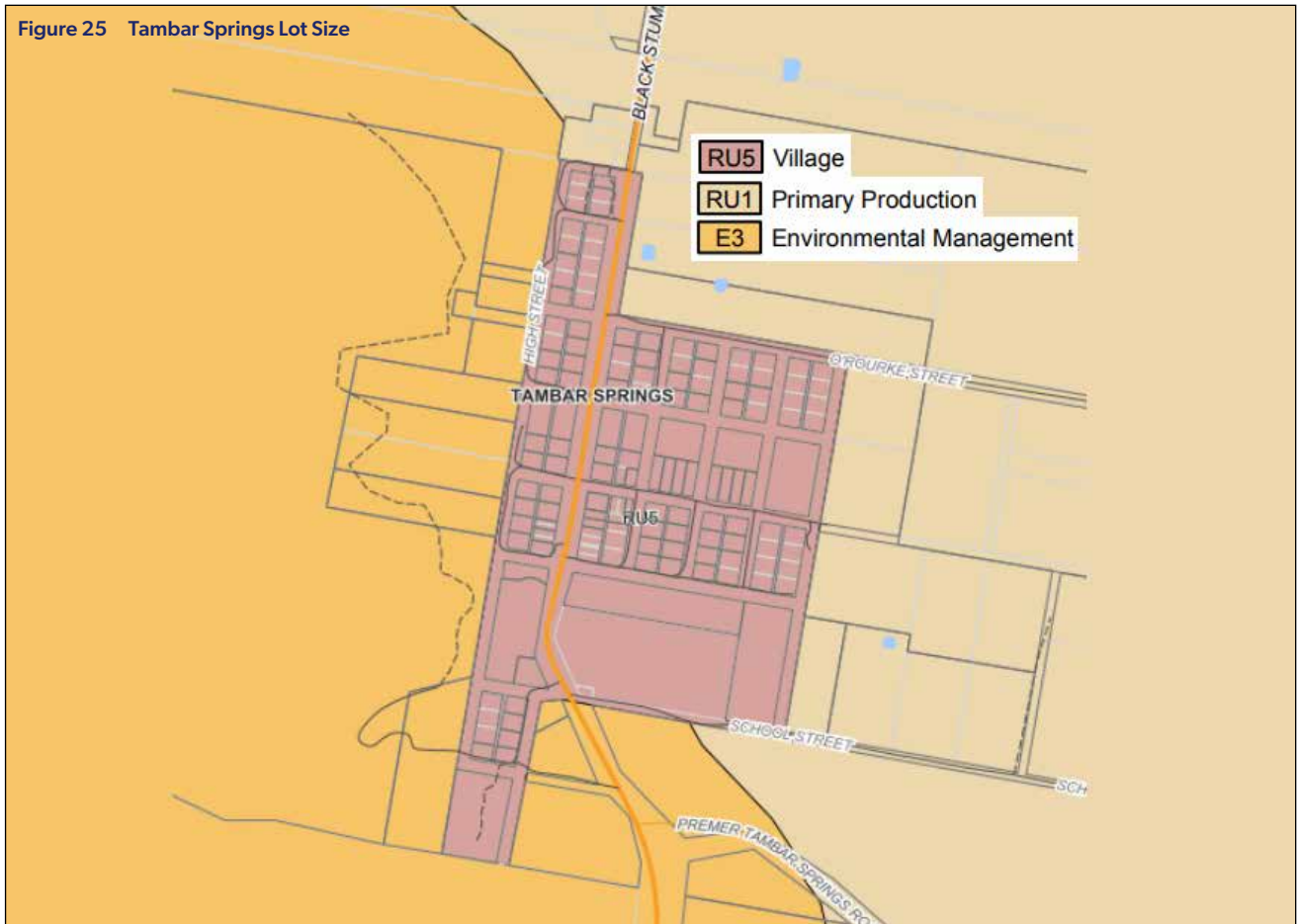
Housing diversity is limited to single detached dwellings.

## Character & Planning Controls, Servicing

<b>Key land uses</b>	Detached dwellings, Hotel, School, public park, some rural service industries
<b>Land use zoning</b>	RU5 Village; surrounded by RU1 Primary Production and E3 Environmental Management
<b>Permitted residential typologies</b>	RU5: Dwelling houses, Dual occupancy, Multi Dwelling housing, Residential flat buildings, Attached dwellings, Secondary dwellings, Group homes, Seniors housing
<b>Minimum lot size</b>	1,000m <sup>2</sup> (RU5 zone)
<b>Lot sizes</b>	Varying lot sizes. Majority of lots are 2,000sqm following a traditional grid pattern with rear lanes
<b>Environment Constraints</b>	Southern and western edge of village is bushfire prone
<b>Servicing</b>	Reticulated water, Rural Fire Service shed, store, fuel



Figure 25 Tambar Springs Lot Size



### Community Strategic Plan objectives for villages:

- Villages are vibrant and sustainable, attractive and well serviced;
- Retain unique identity of villages;
- Enhance village entrances and transport links to Gunnedah; and
- Reduce the impact of flooding on the community.

### Key recommendations

- Tambar Springs provides a quiet village with scenic amenity that should be maintained.;
- Secure transport to Gunnedah services for residents; and
- Limit residential exposure to bushfire risk.

# 4. The Evidence

**The following section provides the evidence base for the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy. It includes a summary of the demographic and population analysis, housing supply and demand, opportunities and constraints to the delivery of housing and the identification of areas that have capacity for further development.**

The ABS has carried out the 2021 Census during the preparation of the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy. During the Draft phase it is noted that 2016 Census data was used, however with the release of 2021 Census data in the latter part of 2022, the Strategy has been updated to include population (births, deaths), development activity and housing figures.





## 4.1 Demographic overview

The Gunnedah Local Environmental Plan 2012 (the GLEP) is a statutory instrument that provides for land use planning in the Gunnedah LGA. The GLEP provides the mechanism for the approval of development. It identifies a number of general aims specific to housing and provides detailed land use zones and development permissibility. The GLEP also includes development standards for lot sizes for dwellings and provisions to manage development on certain land or land uses.

### 4.1.1 Population

The Census usual resident population of Gunnedah LGA in 2021 is 12,929. This population estimate is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data, updated by the ABS in June each year. Population figures in the following settlement summary is sourced from 2021 Census data for State Suburbs or 'SSC'. Gunnedah had the highest concentration of resident population at 10,359 people, followed by Curlewis with 779 people. The villages of Breeza, Carroll, Mullaley and Tambar Springs account for the balance as shown in the Table 10.

Table 10 ABS Usual Resident Population and Dwellings 2011 – 2021

Villages and towns	2011 Population	2016 Population	2021 Population	Dwellings 2021
Breeza	152	146	124	65
Carroll	176	337	305	151
Curlewis	969	771	779	342
Gunnedah	9,340	9,726	10,359	4,640
Mullaley	540	154	174	84
Tambar Springs	540	187	273	157
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>11,717</b>	<b>11,321</b>	<b>12,014</b>	<b>5,439</b>
Rural areas	368	894	915	568
<b>Gunnedah LGA Total</b>	<b>12,085</b>	<b>12,215</b>	<b>13,217</b>	<b>6,007</b>



Table 11 Gunnedah LGA Usual Resident Population distribution and dwellings, 2021

Locality	Population (2021)	Estimated dwellings 2021	Settlement Type
Breeza	124	65	Village
Carroll	305	151	Village
Curlewis	779	342	Village
Gunnedah	10,359	4,640	Town
Mullaley	174	84	Village
Tambar Springs	273	157	Village
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>12,014</b>	<b>5,439</b>	<b>Urban area</b>
Rural areas	1,203	568	Rural locality
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,217</b>	<b>6,007</b>	<b>LGA</b>

Source: 2021 Census data

The State Suburbs Count (SSC) for each locality extends beyond the urban zoned area.

Rural areas refer to localities less than 50 people are too small to provide detail on population and dwellings.

## 4.1.2 Age distribution

Between 2006 and 2021, the age distribution of Gunnedah LGA has changed. In 2006 the population was predominately younger and middle aged. 2016 also saw a reduction in working aged people (as a % of the population) and an increase in people older than 65.

2021 however saw an increase in the number of 0-14 year olds and a marginal decline in people older than 65.

The population age distribution shows a trend to an ageing profile, with residents generally staying in Gunnedah, indicating 'ageing in place' and in turn the need to accommodate housing typologies that will continue to suit the population (Table 12).

Table 12 Age distribution 2006 to 2021

ABS Census	2006	2011	2016	2021
Gunnedah LGA	11,525	12,066	12,215	12,929
Males	5,746	6,033	6,105	6,438
Females	5,779	6,033	6,107	6,495
0-14	22.5%	21.1%	20.6%	22.36%
65+	16.9%	18.1%	19.0%	18.92%

Source: ABS 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 Census data

### 4.1.3 Mobility

Between 2016 and 2021, Australia-wide, 53.1% of people (aged 5 and over) did not change address over 5 years, while 35.3% moved within Australia, and 5.4% moved from overseas. In Gunnedah Shire, a similar rate of people did not change address (53.1%), while a higher rate (36.0%) moved from elsewhere in Australia, and a lower rate (1.4%) moved from overseas. A total of 2,196 people, or 51.0% of those who moved within Australia, moved within Gunnedah Shire. ABS Census of Population and Housing 2021 data indicates that between 2016 and 2021, the LGA with the highest net migration to Gunnedah Shire (+66) was from Narrabri, whilst the highest net loss (-71) was to Newcastle.

### 4.1.4 Population projections

The Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) produced population projections for all LGAs in NSW. The 2019 population projections for Gunnedah LGA suggested a modest population increase from 12,607 people in 2021 to 12,724 people in 2031, then back to 12,618 in 2041 as shown in Table 13 below.

It is noted however that the profile.id estimate for 2021 has exceeded this forecast, with an estimated resident population of 13,085 in the LGA in 2021. The steady population growth coupled with a reduction in household size and an aging population is likely to continue to place upward demand on housing.

Table 13 Population and dwelling projections - Gunnedah LGA

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Totals
Gunnedah LGA	12,491	12,607	12,698	12,724	12,693	12,618	
Increase		+116	+91	+26	-31	-75	+127

Source: 2019 NSW DPE Population Projections

### 4.1.5 Households

#### Households

In 2016, families made up 69.3% of households with lone households making up 28.2% of total households. Separate houses dominated housing in 2016, with 89.7% of all housing or 4,060 being detached single dwellings, 244 being flats or apartments, 157 being semi-detached dwellings and 34 being 'other'.

This trend continued in 2021 with 69.3% of households made up of families and 27.7% lone person households.



## Household characteristics

In 2021 according to the ABS Census there were 6,697 occupied private dwellings in the LGA with a further 632 unoccupied private dwellings.

Separate houses are by far the dominant dwelling structure across the LGA. In 2021, they accounted for 89.9% of all dwellings. 7.6% of dwellings were classified as semi-detached, town house, flat or apartments. The trend in the proportion of single detached dwellings versus other typologies has remained consistent despite a trend that has seen an increase in lone person households and decrease in household size.

Most dwellings in the LGA are either three (38.3%) or four bedrooms (28.8%).

In terms of tenure, 61% of dwellings are owner-occupied, either outright or with a mortgage while 23.1% are rented. Since 2006, the proportion of dwellings owned outright has increased. The proportion of dwellings rented has increased steadily from 24.7% in 2006 to 26.7% in 2021. The number of rental properties has increased from 1,097 in 2006 to 1,383 in 2021, shown in Table 14.

Table 14 Tenure 2006-2021

Tenure	2006	2011	2016	2021
Owned/Mortgage	2953	3017	2932	3,145
Rented	1097	1268	1376	1,383
Other/not stated	392	487	591	654

Source: Gunnedah Community Profile.id

## 4.1.6 Employment

In 2021, Economy ID reported that agriculture was the largest employer of local workers in the LGA:.

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing employed 1052 people, 17.8%
- Health care and Social assistance employed 614 people, 10.4%
- Education and Training employed 550 people, 9.3%
- Retail trade employed 497 people, 8.4%
- Construction employed 451 people, 7.6%
- Accommodation and Food Services, employed 402 people, 6.8%
- Manufacturing employed 242 people, 6.1%
- Public administration and Safety, employed 302 people, 5.1%

The change in employment between 2021/22 and 2020/21 is shown in Table 15.

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2023

Table 15 Change in employment by industry (Total) 2020-21 and 2021-22

<b>Employment (total) by industry</b>							
<b>Gunnedah Shire</b>	<b>2020/21</b>			<b>2021/2022</b>			<b>Change</b>
<b>Industry</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%.</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%.</b>	<b>NSW</b>	<b>2020/21 2021/22</b>
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	822	16.7	2.1	1052	17.8	2.1	+5
Mining	225	4.6	1.0	363	6.1	1.1	+22
Manufacturing	250	5.1	6.6	242	4.1	6.2	-32
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	58	1.2	1.0	117	2.0	1.1	+40
Construction	362	7.4	9.0	451	7.6	8.9	+70
Wholesale Trade	154	3.1	3.4	170	2.9	3.0	-18
Retail Trade	427	8.7	9.5	497	8.4	9..	-40
Accommodation and Food Services	349	7.1	6.5	402	6.8	6.0	+12
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	282	5.7	5.0	247	4.2	5.1	-77
Information Media and Telecommunications	20	.4	2.2	29	.5	2.2	-1
Financial and Insurance Services	48	1.0	5.1	85	1.4	5.5	+16
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	46	.9	1.7	93	1.6	1.8	+18
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	211	4.3	10.1	162	2.7	10.1	-21
Administrative and Support Services	120	2.4	3.3	199	3.4	3.3	+4
Public Administration and Safety	256	5.2	6.1	302	5.1	6.1	+26
Education and Training	482	9.8	8.7	550	9.3	8.6	+5
Health Care and Social Assistance	536	10.9	13.2	614	10.4	14.2	-58
Arts and Recreation Services	10	.2	1.7	44	.7	1.6	+18
Other Services	267	5.4	3.8	305	5.2	3.8	+16
<b>Total industries</b>	<b>4,927</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,924</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>-294</b>

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) 2021  
<http://economy.id.com.au/gunnedah/employment-by-industry>







## 4.1.7 Household income

The 2021 median weekly household income for the Gunnedah Shire is \$1,625 which is higher than that of NSW. The representation of agriculture and mining as key employers is likely to contribute to the relatively high median income (over \$3,000/week) across Gunnedah LGA. Based on the data, there is also a larger proportion of people earning a lower household income (less than \$650/week) in the villages than in the Gunnedah township.

In general, this indicates that the Gunnedah LGA has a dichotomy in household incomes, with both ends of the spectrum represented. This in turn has a bearing on housing affordability.

Source: ABS Census 2021 - Gunnedah Quickstats

## 4.1.8 Cost of housing

For the purposes of the definition of affordable housing in section 1.4 (1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, very low income households, low income households and moderate income households are those whose gross incomes fall within the following ranges of percentages of the median household income for the time being for the Greater Sydney (Greater Capital City Statistical Area) or the Rest of NSW (Greater Capital City Statistical Area) according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics:

- Very low-income household: Less than 50%
- Low income household: 50 or more but less than 80%
- Moderate income household: 80–120%

In 2021, the median household income for the regional NSW was \$1,466 in comparison to the median weekly household income in Gunnedah LGA is \$1,625. (An increase from the 2016 median weekly income of \$1,253). The median household income for the Rest of NSW is currently \$1,434. Affordable housing income and cost benchmarks for Gunnedah LGA are provided in Table 16.

Table 16 Affordable housing cost benchmarks

	Very low-income household	Low-income household	Moderate-income household
Income benchmark	<50% of Gross Median H/H income for rest of NSW	50-80% of Gross Median H/H income for rest of NSW	80-120% of Gross Median H/H income for rest of NSW
Income range*	<\$627	\$627-\$1,002	\$1,002-\$1,503
Affordable rental benchmarks#	\$188	\$188-\$301	\$301-\$451
Affordable purchase^	\$213,600	\$213,600-\$329,400	\$329,400-\$468,500

Source: 2021 Census data for Gunnedah LGA

\*total weekly household income

#Calculated as 30% of total household income per week

^Calculated using Comm Bank Loan calculator, August 2021 interest rate (2.69% p.a) and 20% deposit

The median house price in Gunnedah is \$384,000 ranging from \$292,500 for 3 bedrooms and \$420,000 for a 4 bedroom house. Median rental prices are \$450 per week. Weekly rent ranges from \$295 for a 2 bedroom, \$370 for a 3 bedroom and up to \$490 per week for a 4 bedroom house.

Based on these figures, housing is out of reach of the very low- and low-income households and only just attainable for the moderate income households.

## 4.1.9 Social housing

Social housing is comprised of public and community housing. In 2016 it was reported that in Gunnedah, there is one public housing development, 176 community housing dwellings and 70 indigenous housing dwellings, a total of 247 dwellings.<sup>3</sup> Gunnedah has one of the lowest offerings of public housing and housing provided by the Aboriginal Housing Office, which is of interest as 15.6% of the population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranks Local Government Areas in Australia according to socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The higher the rank, generally the lower the socio-economic disadvantage, which is determined by factors such as domestic violence, income, non-domestic crime, education levels and teenage mothers. Gunnedah is ranked at 943 which indicates there is some disadvantage in the community. By comparison, Armidale is ranked the highest in New England at 976 and Inverell the lowest at 904.

3 New England District Data Profile 2016 p.69

## 4.1.10 Housing stress

A measure of housing stress is the percentage of households who spend more than 30% of their household income on rent or mortgage payments. Table 17 shows Gunnedah mortgage and rent data compared to NSW. All New England North West LGAs had smaller proportions of households in mortgage and rental stress, compared to the NSW average of 7.4%.

Table 17 Gunnedah and NSW mortgage and rent, 2021

2021 Census data	Gunnedah	NSW
Median weekly rent	\$410	\$490
Renting households with rent repayments less than 30% of household income	58.3%	56.1%
Renting households where rent repayments are greater than or equal to 30% of household income	29.5%	35.5%
Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,476	\$2,167
Home-owning households where mortgage repayments are less than 30% of household income	76.7%	71.9%
Home-owning households with mortgage repayments greater than or equal to 30% of household income	12.7%	10.8%

Source: NSW Government New England District Data Profile 2021/Census Quick Stats 2021

### Rental and mortgage stress

Across the LGA, weekly median rents have increased by 37%, and monthly mortgage repayments have increased by almost 12% between 2011 and 2021, shown in Table 18.

In 2021, of the 1,343 households in private rentals in the Gunnedah LGA, 29.5% are in rental stress (lower than the regional NSW average of 36%).

Increases in rental stress are likely to be a factor of short supply and increased property values that may be due to a variety of factors such as the costs of construction in Gunnedah, the impact of high-income workers and the displacement of people caused by COVID-19.

Importantly, it appears that rental and mortgage stress are increasing over time. It is suggested that housing stress may appear to be more pronounced if the higher incomes could be removed from the data set.

Table 18 Rental & mortgage repayments LGA 2011-2021

Gunnedah LGA	2011	2016	2021	Change	
				No.	%
Median household income	\$937	\$1,253	\$1,625	688	42
Median weekly rent	\$190	\$240	\$300	110	37
Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,300	\$1,473	\$1,476	176	12

#### 4.1.11 Key findings

The population of Gunnedah was forecast to grow to 12,724 in 2031 and decline slightly settling at 12,618 by 2041 (see Section 4.2.1), however, the figures prepared by profile.id show Gunnedah had reached 12,690 in 2020. The challenge of population forecasting is noted, and it is important that Council can respond to fluctuations. Flexibility in planning policy and land available for delivery to the market and the identification of additional land for future rezoning (as identified in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Lands Strategy) are critical.

The net increase in population is not a sole function of dwelling demand with a change in household composition. An increase in lone person households, smaller family sizes and an older population generally will drive continued demand for housing.

The rate of population change will be dependent upon a range of factors that influence growth. These include the continued development of mining, renewable energy and supporting industries as well as continued strength in agriculture. Proximity to Tamworth coupled with improvements in transport and communications may result in additional migration into the Shire from 'tree changers'. Changes in the way we do business, acceptance of the mobile workplace and continued pressure in terms of housing affordability in the metropolitan areas may also influence migration into the region.

The impact of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic is yet to be realised. Changes to the way people work may provide opportunities for further growth in the regions.

This Strategy needs to respond to community expectations and requirements for the provision of residential housing stock and infrastructure, considering changing demographics such as:

- An increase in lone person households and declining household sizes;
- High dwelling demand in Gunnedah;
- An aging population in all areas across the LGA;
- An expected change in household types presenting a mismatch with existing supply;
- Continued growth of mining to 2041.

Assuming the benchmark of 30% of income is allocated to accommodation, based on the median house price and rental data housing is unaffordable for a significant portion of the population.

Without intervention the proportion of people experiencing housing stress for rentals will continue to increase.



## 4.1.12 Regional comparison

Data from the ABS 2021 Census provided for Gunnedah in the Table 19 below, with comparisons to the Tamworth LGA as the adjoining major regional city and the rest of NSW.

Table 19 Regional Demographic Comparison

	Gunnedah LGA	Tamworth LGA	NSW
Population (Usual Resident)	12,929 Median age: 40	63,652 Median age: 40	7,480,242 Median age: 38
Males	6,438 or 49.8%	49%	49.4%
Females	6,495 or 50.2%	51%	50.6%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples:	2,022 or 15.6%	8,035 or 12.7%	216,176 or 3.46%
Average children per family:	1.9	1.9	1.9
Children 0-14	22.4%	11.1%	18.2%
Seniors 65+	19%	19.8%	17.7%
Average household size	2.46%	2.4%	2.5%
Household composition	Family: 61.5% Single/lone: 25% Group: 2.8%	62.8% 26.5% 2.8%	66.4% 23.7% 3.7%
Private dwellings	5,811 dwellings	27,642 dwellings	2,889,061 dwellings
Separate house	87.1%	86.5%	63.8%
Semi detached	11.5%	11.8%	17.2%
Flat or apartment	.1%	.2%	17.8%
Other	0.1%	.7%	0.7%
Average bedrooms	3.2	3.2	3.0
Household income, gross weekly	< \$650: 24.5% > \$3000: 12.3%	< \$650: 18.2% > \$3000: 14.6%	< \$650: 15.4% > \$3000: 25.2%
Dwellings: Owned outright	34.4%	31.7%	30.3%
Owned with mortgage	29.8%	29.3%	31.0%
Rented	31.7%	29.4%	31.3%
Not stated	4.1%	7.4%	5.5%
Rental Stress >30% income	29.5%	32.8%	35.5%

Source: Comparison of key ABS 2021 Census household statistics for Gunnedah, Tamworth and NSW.

## 4.2 Housing Demand

The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that there is sufficient land made available for future housing. To determine whether there is sufficient land available for residential development, it is necessary to understand the likely demand. Housing demand has been considered using both the population forecast provided by DPE and Council dwelling approvals data.

### 4.2.1 DPE Population and Dwelling Projections

Table 20 provides an outline of DPE's projected dwelling demand in the LGA. The implied additional dwelling demand using the DPE forecast from 2016 – 2041 is 580 dwellings. It is noted that household size is projected to decrease from 2.38 in 2016 to 2.21 in 2041. This equates to delivery of approximately 29 dwellings per year, as shown below.

The total number of dwellings (occupied and unoccupied) as at the Census in 2016 was 5,683 dwellings.

Table 20 DPE population and household projections to 2041

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Total change	% change
Total population	12,491	12,607	12,698*	12,724	12,693	12,618	127	1.0%
Households	5,069	5,228	5,344	5,461	5,552	5,586	517	10.2%
Family households	3,515	3,614	3,667	3,707	3,733	3,723	208	5.9%
Lone Person	1,421	1,486	1,553	1,631	1,698	1,746	325	22.9%
Household size	2.43	2.38	2.34	2.29	2.24	2.21	-	-
Implied Dwellings	5,683	5,861	5,992	6,123	6,225	6,263	+580	10.2%

Source: DPE Population and household projections, 2016. Note that these figures do not account for major infrastructure projects which have the potential to significantly impact population.

In 2019 the NSW Department Planning & Environment (DPE) released population projections for regional NSW including Gunnedah LGA. It is acknowledged the forecasting population is challenging, particularly in smaller settlements where the loss or gain of one or two new families might equate to a change of 5% to the overall population and be the difference between a school remaining open and closing.

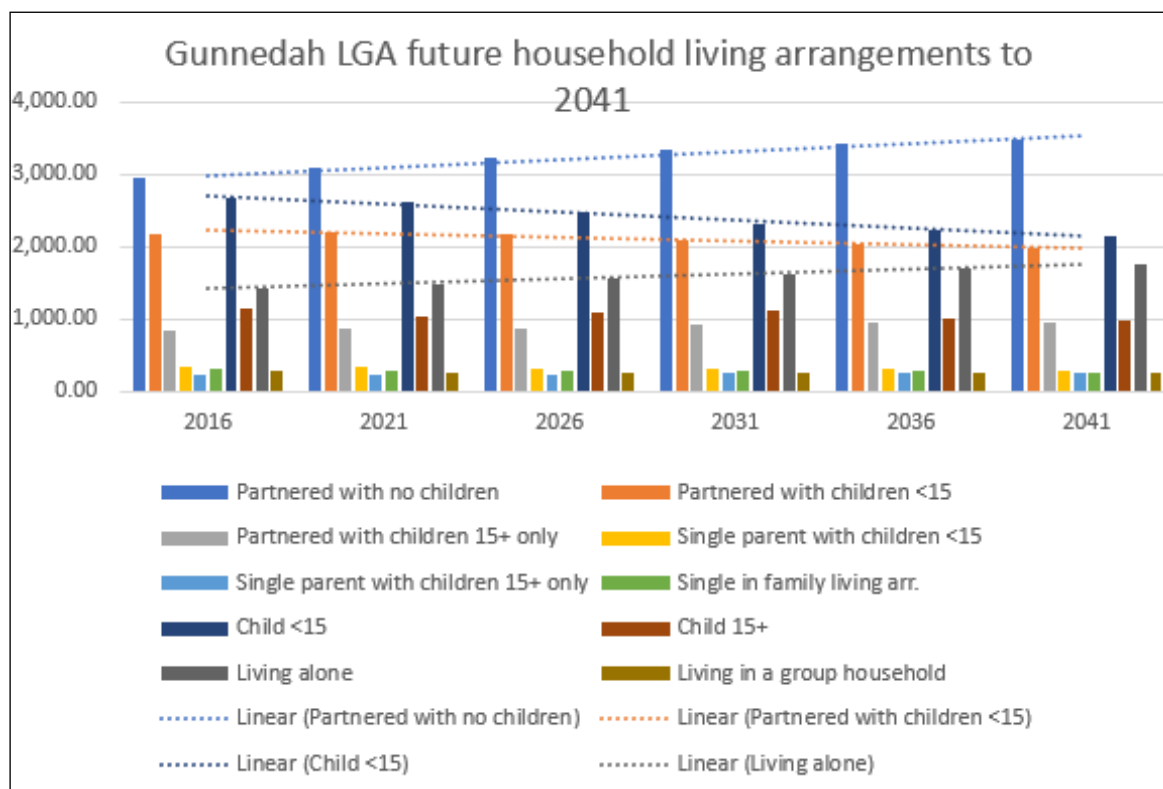
Despite the challenges, monitoring of subdivision and dwelling approvals will continue to be important across all the settlements to ensure that sufficient land remains available or can be released to accommodate growth.

The DPE projections suggested that the overall population increase will peak around 2031 then steadily decline to 2041. Annual growth is averaged at 0.4% and 10.2% over the period 2016 to 2041. (In considering these projections it is noted that in 2021 population figures for the Gunnedah LGA had surpassed those projected by DPE).

Based on analysis of the future household living arrangements, it is evident that the largest increase will be in couples living without children (533 more people), couples with children over 15 (115 more people) and lone person households (325 more people or 31% of all households). Declines are expected across couples with children under 15, single parent households and group households. People living in non-private dwellings are expected to increase over the timeframe to 2041 as shown in Figure 26.

The number of dwellings expected over this timeframe range from 5,861 in 2021 to 6,263 in 2041, a total increase of 580 over twenty years, as shown in Figure 26 Living arrangements to 2041 below.

Figure 26 Living arrangements to 2041



The number of new dwellings required based on DPE projections are set out in Table 21.

Table 21 Projected annual dwelling demand

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Gunnedah (A)	5,683	5,861	5,992	6,123	6,225	6,263
New dwellings required	-	178	131	131	102	38
Annual *rounded up	-	36	26	26	20	8

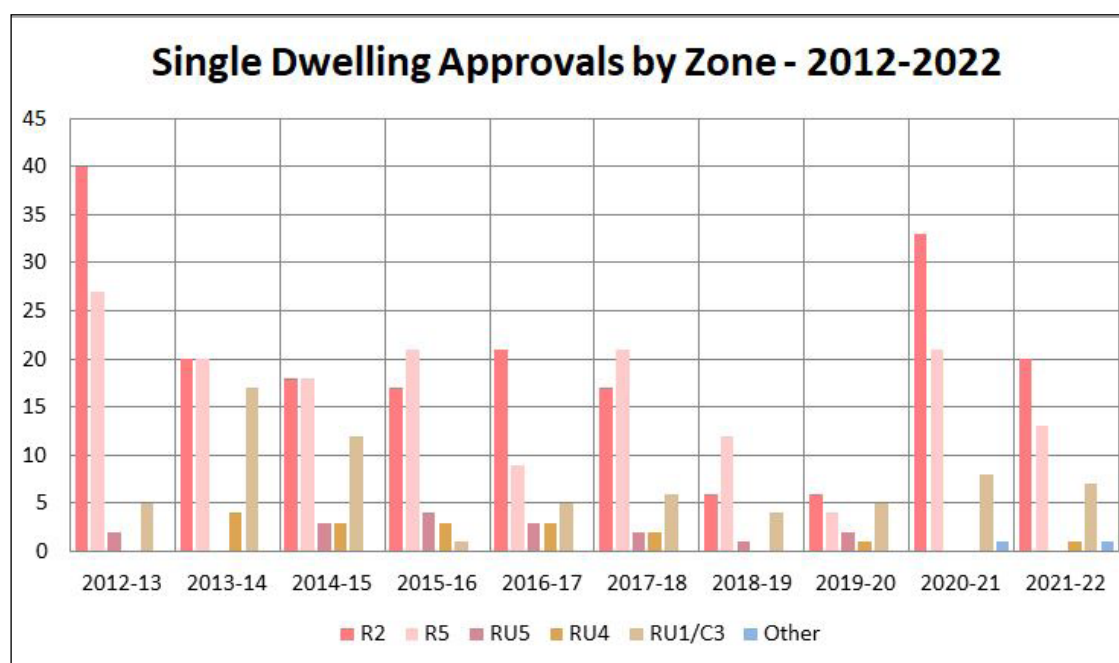
It is anticipated and assumed that the majority of new dwellings will be in Gunnedah.



## 4.2.2 Dwelling approvals data

Council approvals data for new housing for the period 2012 to early 2022 shows a clear trend for single dwellings in the R2 Low Density and R5 Large Lot Residential zones in Gunnedah, particularly in 2012-13 most probably in tandem with mining development in the region. This is consistent with the 2016 census data which shows 88% of housing stock is made up of single dwellings and 8.4% 'medium density'. There has been some development in the RU5 Village zone mainly at Curlewis. Rural dwellings in the RU1 Primary Production zone peaked in the 2013-14 period, slowing during the drought years of 2018-2019.

Figure 27 Dwelling approvals 2012-2022



Source: Gunnedah Shire Council, 2022

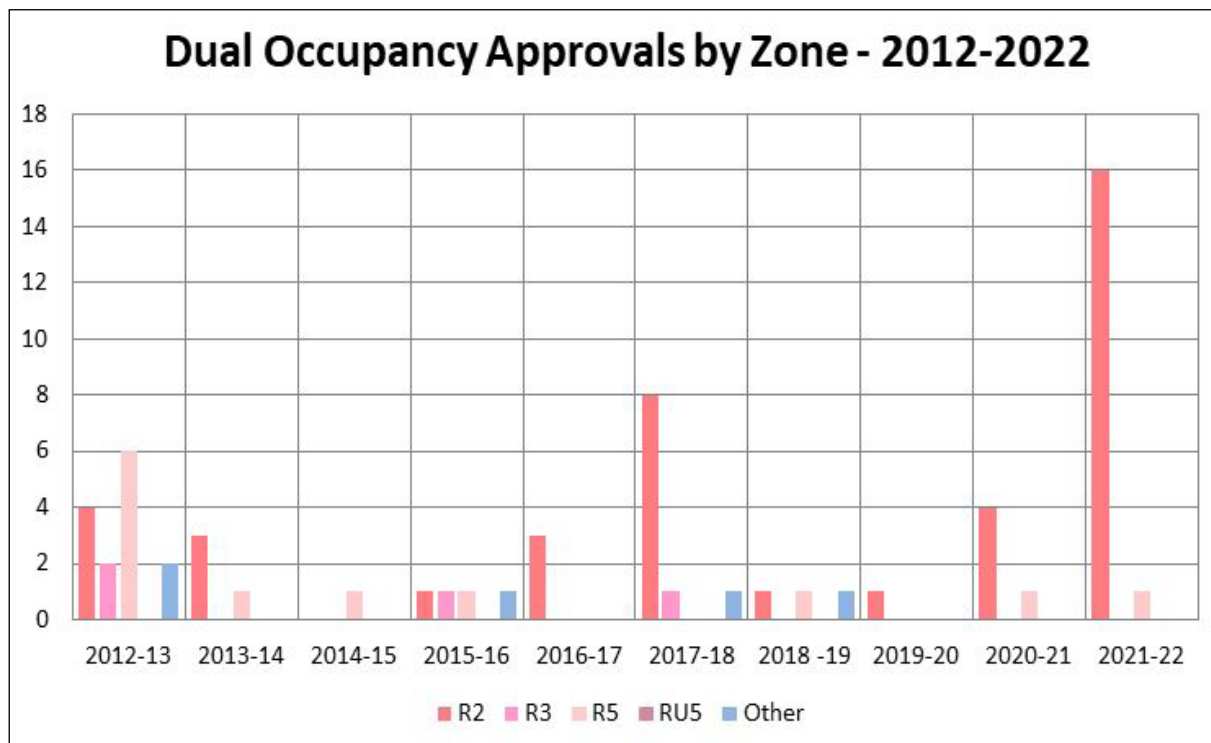
Table 22 Single Dwelling Approvals Data

Year/ zone	R2 Low Density	R5 Large Lot	RU5 Village	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	RU1 Primary Production/C3 Environmental Management	Other	Total
2012-13	40	27	2	0	5	0	74
2013-14	20	20	0	4	17	0	61
2014-15	18	18	3	3	12	0	54
2015-16	17	21	4	3	1	0	46
2016-17	21	9	3	3	5	0	41
2017-18	17	21	2	2	6	0	48
2018-19	6	12	1	0	4	0	23
2019-20	6	4	2	1	5	0	18
2020-21	33	21	0	0	8	1	63
2021-22	20	13	0	1	7	1	42
							<b>470</b>

Source: Gunnedah Shire Council, 2022

Dual occupancy development is a lower proportion of approvals with the majority located in the R2 and R5 zones during the timeframe 2012-13. As with single dwellings, there was a clear uplift in approvals during 2012-13 and downturn in the drought years. There are also approvals for dual occupancies in the R3 Medium Density zone and B5 Business Development zone in Gunnedah (Figure 28 and Table 23).

Figure 28 Dual Occupancy approvals 2012-2022



Source: Gunnedah Shire Council, 2022

Table 23 Dual Occupancy Approvals 2012-2022

	R2 Low Density	R3 Medium Density	R5 Large Lot	RU5 Village	Other zones	Total
2012-13	4	2	6	0	2	14
2013-14	3	0	1	0	0	4
2014-15	0	0	1	0	0	1
2015-16	1	1	1	0	1	4
2016-17	3	0	0	0	0	3
2017-18	8	1	0	0	1	10
2018-19	1	0	1	0	1	3
2019-20	1	0	0	0	0	1
2020-21	4	0	1	0	0	5
2021-22	16	0	1	0	0	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>62</b>

Source: Gunnedah Shire Council, 2022. \*There was one dual occupancy in each of the RU1, RU4 and B5 zones in 2012/13.

Table 24 provides assumptions as to dwelling demand based on both the historic approvals and DPE implied dwelling forecast to 2041.

Table 24 Dwelling demand to 2041

Dwelling demand based on various scenarios (cumulative)	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Total
DPE Implied Additional Dwellings	178	131	131	102	38	580
At 5-year average dwelling approvals rate per annum	35.6	26.2	26.2	20.4	7.6	

Source: DPE Population Forecasts 2019

### Smaller villages

There has been minimal activity in the villages outside Gunnedah. Smaller settlements are inherently less attractive for the majority of newcomers to the LGA for a range of reasons including access to employment, education and social and community services. Although more affordable in terms of the price of land, there is in most cases limited or no access to reticulated water and sewer infrastructure. These locations are complicated by the environmental requirements of septic systems which can be highly variable depending on site conditions. The lack of certainty is a key barrier to the on-going orderly development of the smaller settlements. The exception is Curlewis.

### Curlewis

There have been some new single dwellings and dual occupancy development in Curlewis over the timeframe 2012-2022, most likely a factor of the village being in proximity to Gunnedah, and has more services including reticulated water and sewer. Curlewis offers an alternative and more affordable village-style housing choice to Gunnedah with a similar standard of servicing.

### Specific target groups

The LGA has a high prominence of single and couple-only households and a significant lack of supply of housing other than large detached dwellings.

By 2041 there will be approximately 3,275 people or 22% of the population over 65 likely needing housing that is smaller, more adaptable and closer to services. This is also reflected in the projected increase of 325 lone person households from 2016 to 2041. These projected changes will exacerbate the

anecdotally current chronic lack of supply. In addition, there is an ongoing need to provide suitable housing for 'key workers' such as teachers, nurses and police as well as those attracted to the LGA by employment in mining either short or long term.

The shortage of rental accommodation and significant increase in rent is particularly impacting those within the community with less disposable income, elderly or otherwise vulnerable. It is understood that increased rents are pushing lower income groups to seek less expensive accommodation, which can mean low standard or alternative housing is in high demand, often leading to overcrowding and social disadvantage related to a lack of basic services. There is evidence that Temporary Accommodation is in low supply, with people finding accommodation outside Gunnedah town and villages or at worst are sleeping rough.

Despite this trend, Gunnedah is well positioned to deliver diverse housing opportunities, particularly for an ageing population and improve housing affordability for all sectors.

Discussions with affordable housing providers has confirmed the need for more affordable housing in the LGA, particularly in Gunnedah where social disadvantage is concentrated. Land would need to be provided at no or very low, cost (e.g. Council-owned land) to make the delivery of affordable housing a viable option. The current incentives in the SEPP (Housing) 2021 are ineffective in stimulating investment in the region. At this stage, no land has been identified for this purpose.

The provision of alternative dwelling typologies, as well as other forms of residential accommodation such as seniors living, or residential aged care should be considered to address a shortage in housing suitable for older people and address housing affordability.



### 4.2.3 Regional Housing Taskforce

A Regional Housing Taskforce was established by the NSW Government in July 2021 to investigate the challenges in the planning system that may be preventing the delivery of housing supply and formulate recommendations to improve housing supply in regional NSW. The terms of reference for the Taskforce include consulting with regional communities to investigate regional housing issues and the barriers to buying, renting and building in the regions.

Consultation was carried out in August 2021 through forums conducted across all NSW Regions. Advice from the consultation will be used to formulate recommendations to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on how to use the planning system to address housing needs and stimulate supply.

The focus will be on government 'levers' to stimulate housing supply and address housing needs:

- Removing impediments within the planning system to the delivery of affordable housing types and housing generally; and
- Identifying mechanisms within the planning system to facilitate and drive the delivery of housing matched to community needs.

The Taskforce submitted a report outlining its findings into the investigation of planning barriers to regional housing in September 2021. Source: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/regional-housing-taskforce](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/regional-housing-taskforce)

### 4.2.4 Key findings

Demand for housing remains strong in Gunnedah and will likely continue to 2041. Curlewis provides an alternative housing choice in the LGA. The key findings area:

- The population is projected to grow, generating demand for additional housing;
- At minimum there is a need for 580 additional dwellings to accommodate anticipated growth to 2041;
- An expected increase in the proportion of older people and lone person households will result in the need for increased housing diversity in the LGA;
- Housing rental supply is currently low, expensive or below standard. Low income individuals and families are being forced out of rental housing in Gunnedah into less than ideal arrangements. There is a growing demand for affordable housing, and housing located close to Gunnedah's centre; and
- The NSW Government has established a Regional Taskforce to investigate regional housing shortages and barriers to delivery of supply of affordable housing.

Providing a land use planning policy framework to ensure that the housing that is delivered is suitable both now and as the demographics change over time. This means:

- The inclusion of smaller lot housing, housing that is adaptable and options that ensure that people who want to remain in Gunnedah and close to family and friends have a choice to do so;
- Facilitating infill development including secondary dwellings; and
- Addressing housing affordability including working with government and not for profit sector to provide increased housing types in the LGA.

## 4.3 Housing Supply

Gunnedah has residentially zoned land available for immediate development, however, cost, location and ownership factors continue to influence supply. The lack of reticulated sewer in the villages is also a key impediment to land supply.

A common misconception is that if land is zoned, vacant and undeveloped, then it is available for immediate development. In practice, this may not be the case. In fact, there is often a 'disconnect' between the amount of zoned land and actual delivery of housing lots.

Land that is rezoned for residential development may not necessarily be delivered to the market. This could be due to a variety of reasons, including planning constraints (e.g. statutory requirements, difficulties with infrastructure provision, fragmentation of ownership, etc.), capacity constraints (e.g. bushfire, flooding, slope and landslip, etc.), up-front cost of development (e.g. finance and holding costs, upfront development contributions) and commercial pressures. Each has the potential to severely impede the supply response to demand pressures.

In terms of infill, the market does not act in the same manner in regional areas as is the case in the metropolitan centres where greenfield land resources are scarcer, highly constrained and costly to deliver. Infill development is driven by land value, access to transport and community infrastructure and the ability for significant uplift. Therefore, while there remains capacity in the planning controls to accommodate a significant amount of higher density infill development, making assumptions as to the take up of this is difficult. The example in Gunnedah in the take up (or lack of) in the R3 Medium Density Residential zone.

The adequacy of land release is therefore crucial for the supply of housing. From first principles, the supply of housing directly impacts the price of housing.

A constrained supply of land will drive up landowner expectations making site assembly a high risk and high resource activity for developers.

Ensuring that the supply of land is adequate to meet demand, particularly in circumstances where growth is slow involves:

- The strategic identification of opportunity areas based on high level constraints analysis;
- The identification of residential land development opportunities in circumstances where the landowner is a willing participant;
- Ensuring that the site is in sync with the existing urban development footprint, that is, not 'leapfrogging' land which drives up costs;
- Providing a planning framework that will ensure that land is developed in a coordinated and orderly manner, that is via a concept plan or structure plan;
- Determining the impact of growth on local infrastructure and providing a mechanism to deliver it; and
- Land development in smaller regional communities is a 'slow burn'. Developers are typically local businesspeople or families invested in the community and need to be prepared to carry the cost of development over an extended period.

The availability of ready to develop residential lots is limited, relying on infill development, being land that is already zoned residential but not developed to its full serviced potential. There are significant areas of zoned residential land in Gunnedah, with Curlewis having some capacity as well as the other settlements (refer to Village Snapshots).

### 4.3.1 Residential Release Strategy

The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy identified land availability and made recommendations for additional land supply as discussed in Section 2. It provides a comprehensive overview of residential land availability in Gunnedah. The Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy does not propose duplicating this work, rather, considered it in the context of 2021.

The Strategy provided an evaluation of residential zoned land against the future population and highlighted a number of issues. For the purpose of comparison and review, the following provides a comment against these findings based on the current situation.







## 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy

The Residential development analysis has highlighted that most DCP Masterplan areas whilst holding development approvals for subdivision have not been developed for housing with a total of 801 lots still undeveloped, averaging over 80% per Masterplan area still available for new dwellings.

### Comments:

- Council approvals data shows that between 2012 and 2022 there have been 470 houses approved mainly in Gunnedah township, with 241 of these post-2016.
- The projections data provided by DPE indicates that an additional 580 dwellings are required to 2041.
- In responding to the need for housing diversity in the future, a higher proportion of dwellings can be situated on existing zoned land potentially.
- There has been no additional land rezoned since 2016 which allows an assumption about residential yields and demand in Gunnedah. However, there has been some modification of subdivision approvals and a slight increase in available lots to 825.
- There is an opportunity to convert to different typologies of for example 10% secondary dwellings in 2021 to 25% in 2041 which will allow delivery of more dwellings on the same zoned footprint.
- There is still agreement based on different assumptions about existing supply that has resulted in estimates of twice as many lots being possible in the 'master planned' areas.
- The estimates put forward in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy could be conservative, for example the additional yields suggested for the R5 zone on Wandobah Road and Maitland Street amount to a potential further 895 lots being available.
- However, it is acknowledged that there remain issues with land ownership and constraints that do not permit clear assumptions to be made about total potential yield.

Based on Department of Planning and Environment figures it can be concluded that the existing Masterplan areas can cater well in excess of the projected demand for new housing with 801 lots remaining.

### Comments:

- Based on the DPE projections an additional 580 dwellings will be required by 2041.
- Notwithstanding the development activity in the past 5 years there is adequate land available to meet demand. However, under the current zoning and MLS provisions, the diversity and choice will remain limited. Therefore, these areas should be the focus of land use policy change.

In 2020, according to realestate.com.au, the median house price in Gunnedah is \$375,000. The median house price in Gunnedah is marginally lower than Narrabri (\$380,000), but higher than both Tamworth (\$310,000) and Boggabri (\$157,500).

### Comments:

- In 2020 the median house price had fallen to \$315,000. In Narrabri the median price has fallen to \$350,000 and Tamworth has risen to \$350,000. The median house price in Boggabri has also risen to \$187,000. Source: realestate.com.au

There is merit in considering release of additional land for residential purposes primarily to retain housing location options in the market and retain property prices at affordable levels.

### Comments:

- This principle is supported.

## 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy

As part of the research associated with developing this strategy, the DPE population projections have been revised.

This revision has been based on dwelling approvals over the last 5 – 10 years and is presented for comparative analysis purposes outlining an alternative projected demand of housing over the next 17 years up to 2031.

This indicates the existing supply of residential lots could be extinguished by 2031 and additional R5 zoned residential lands will be required for future residential land use.

### Comments:

- A similar exercise has been undertaken based on the historic dwelling approvals.
- The 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy anticipated 429 lots/dwellings to 2025. The actual figure was 470 between 2012 – 2022; with 241 from 2016-2022.
- The demand for R5 zoned land has remained strong. Additional land should be identified if Council want to continue to support this form of lifestyle development. If this is the case, consideration should also be given the lot size in terms of the efficiency of land resources with a view of reducing the MLS in the R5 from 1.2ha to 1ha subject to the adequacy of on-site sewer and drainage.
- The delivery of R5 land in East Gunnedah has stalled. Evidence suggests that in part the challenges associated with building on black soil and associated costs may be contributing. Similarly, earthworks and retaining walls required for lots in the R2 East Lincoln Street precinct may also be impacting land delivery.

There is a reasonably wide choice of housing options and development sites in Gunnedah. Housing affordability, both to buy and rent, has been raised as an issue. House prices have increased as a result of the increase in coal mining, however the progressive release of residential land has taken some of the heat out of the market. As the MAC Villages at Boggabri and Werris Creek become fully operational, there may be a decrease in demand for residential rental properties from the mining sector, which may also place some downward pressure on rent levels.

### Comments:

- Housing choice is limited, and the dominant dwelling typology remains the single detached dwelling with 3+ bedrooms.
- Demand from mining seems to have remained strong. Initial feedback from Whitehaven suggests difficulty in securing accommodation for staff. A similar problem has been experienced across a range of key labour markets in health, education and professional services. This seems to be a particular issue in relation to the suitability of the rental stock available.

Within the housing sector, there is a marked under supply of independent living units for the aged, with a waiting list of around 86 people for units at Gunnedah aged care services.

### Comments:

- This is likely to remain the case. The Oaktree Group have been constructing a retirement village and the delivery of additional dual occupancy, multi dwelling housing and secondary dwellings may also serve this market in terms of downsizing a transition to retirement.

### 4.3.2 Gunnedah vacant land estimates

The four masterplanned precincts have been reviewed in the context of the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy. Generally, the areas zoned R2 and R5 in Mornington Heights and East Gunnedah have experienced more growth than the other areas in recent times. It is noted from Council’s subdivision approvals data that there have been some modifications to previous consents which goes some way to explaining the overall capacity of the masterplanned precincts increasing from 801 lots in 2016 to 825 lots in 2021, (Table 25).

Assumptions have been made about lot yields and lot sizes based on information in the 2016 Masterplan. It is important to note also that the ‘footprint’ of the masterplanned precincts is not changed.

Table 25 Location of future residential yield for Gunnedah

Precinct/Masterplan lots estimated	Developed lots 2021 (dwellings)	Undeveloped lots	Years supply
East Gunnedah (404 total) ^	24	330*	8.6
South Gunnedah (354 total)	122	232	6.1
East Lincoln Street (222 total)	10	212	5.5
Kamilaroi East Gunnedah (72 total)	15	51	1.34
	<b>171</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>22 years</b>

^ not including Oaktree retirement village

\* includes assumptions made about yield of unsubdivided residue land

Figure 10 and Table 26 provide a summary of the yield based on the existing zones and assumptions about the potential of undeveloped land. The areas shown in orange in Figure 29 are the recommended future release areas proposed in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy which will yield over 900 lots, which when added to the potential in the zoned areas, amounts to over 1,700 lots. It is noted that the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy was relatively conservative through estimating potential yield of vacant land by a margin of 25% in some cases and not including some vacant infill areas. The 2021 estimates are based on the same spatial extent and density as the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy to allow comparison.



Table 26 Yield assumptions for residential land in Gunnedah

Precinct	Zone/MLS	Vacant land	Potential Lots 2016	Estimated lots 2021
<b>Serviced residential master planned estates (red outline on Figure21)</b>				
East Gunnedah	R2 650m <sup>2</sup>	25 ha	352	250 lots
	R5 2-3000 m <sup>2</sup>	43 ha		80 lots
Mornington Heights	R2 650m <sup>2</sup>	38.5 ha	200	232 lots
East Lincoln Street	R2 650m <sup>2</sup>	35 ha	212	212 lots
Kamilaroi Rural Residential	R5 1.2ha (2021 lots are likely less than 1ha in area)	239 ha	37	51 lots
Subtotal		401 ha	801	825
<b>Potential additional residential – areas A, B and C</b>				
Precinct	Comment	Vacant land	Potential Lots 2016	Estimated lots 2021
South Wandobah Road (A)	South of Rugby Club 650m <sup>2</sup> MLS	21.1ha	211	211 lots
West Wandobah R5 (B)	North and south of McCalls Road 650m <sup>2</sup> MLS	63ha	636	636 lots
Boundary Road/ Maitland Street (C)	R2 650m <sup>2</sup> MLS	9.35ha	48	90 (9.35ha)
Subtotal		93ha	895	937 lots
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>1,762 lots</b>

Figure 29 Precincts and opportunities for development in Gunnedah . 'A', 'B' and 'C' are noted in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy as future residential growth areas. Maitland Street has been increased to 9ha from 4.8ha.

### 4.3.3 Housing supply gaps

The current housing stock in Gunnedah is typically 3-4 bedroom single detached dwellings. This lack of diversity of housing typologies has already led to issues including:

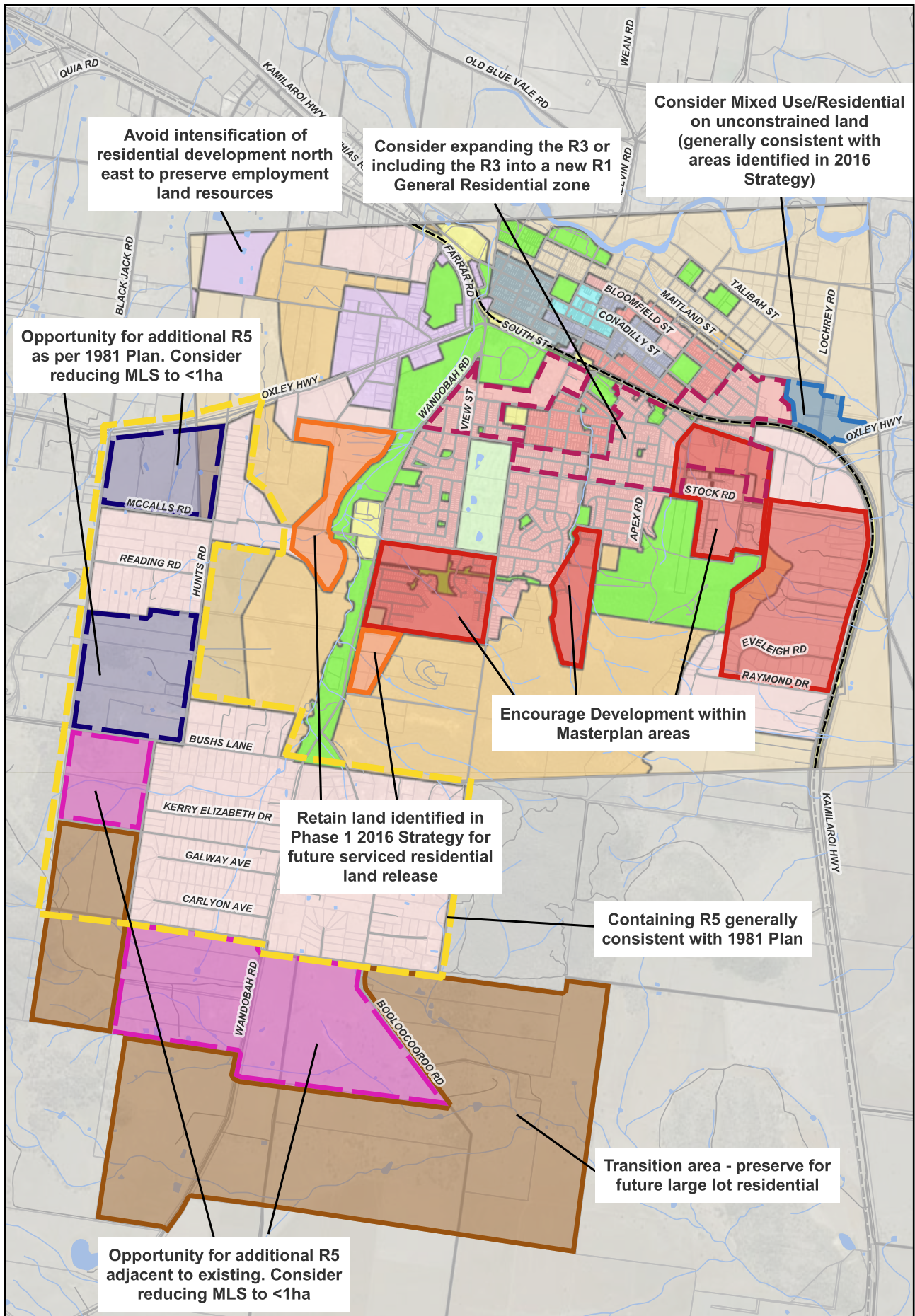
- Limited choice and housing affordability;
- Suitability of housing for older people to downsize;
- Limited opportunity to age in place; and
- Difficulties for first home buyers looking to enter the market at a lower entry point.

Providing a better understanding within both the industry and wider community in terms of the different residential accommodation options that could be considered under the current planning framework may provide a first step in realising greater diversity in housing.





Figure 29 Precincts and opportunities for development in Gunnedah





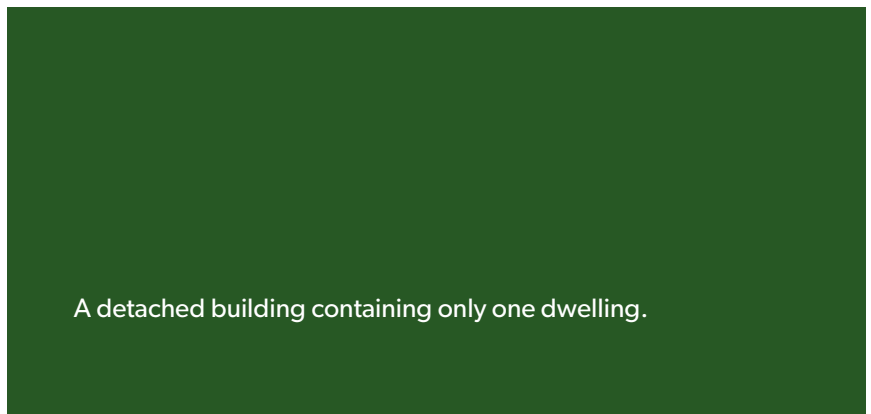
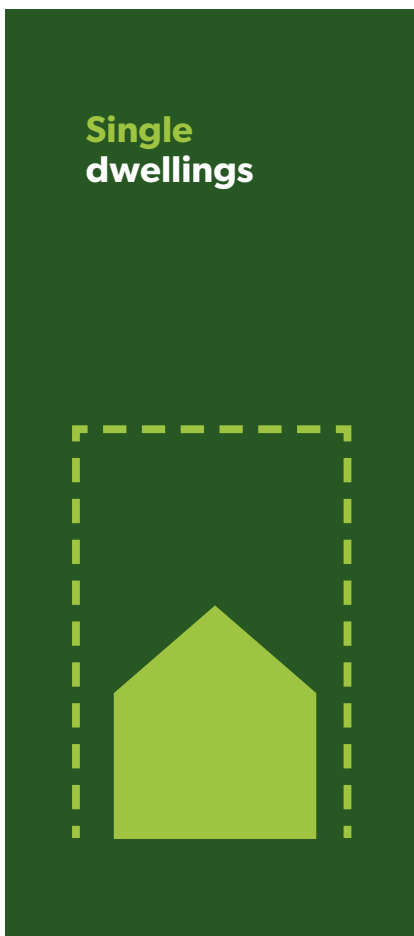
### 4.3.4 Building typologies

A range of housing types and sizes help ensure people can more readily meet their housing needs throughout their lifecycle, remaining in the area where they have existing networks. This mix contributes to the social vibrancy and character of towns and cities.

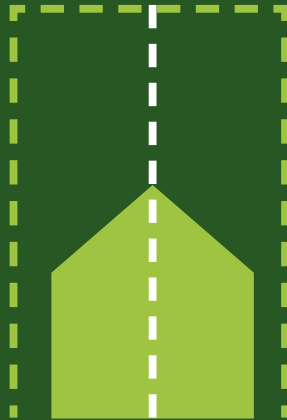
To continue to meet the needs of the existing and future community, Council will need to ensure a greater range of housing types in different built forms is encouraged and developed.

There is an opportunity in the residential zones to deliver dual occupancy, secondary dwellings, villas and townhouses and single dwellings. There was strong support during the early stakeholder consultation for dual occupancy and secondary dwellings as a form of residential accommodation that could be more prevalent in Gunnedah and not necessarily limited to areas closest to the town centre. Table 27 details examples of low, medium and high-density building typology options.

Table 27 Building typologies



## Two attached dwellings



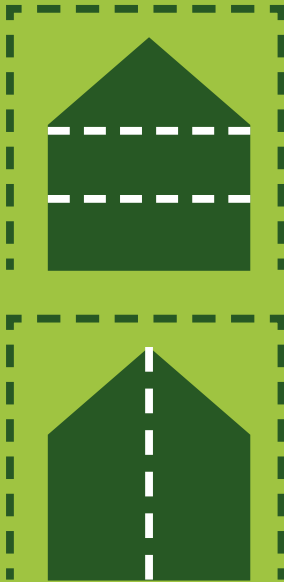
One building with two attached dwellings.

## Terraces



Three or more attached dwellings which have a frontage to the street.

## Dual occupancy



Two dwellings on one lot of land that are either attached to each other or detached, but does not include a secondary dwelling.

## Secondary dwellings

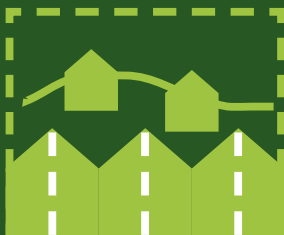
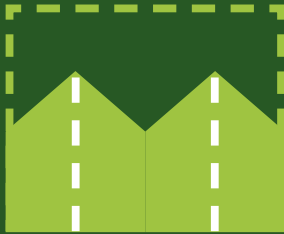


A self-contained dwelling that:

- (a) is established in conjunction with another dwelling (the principal dwelling); and
- (b) is on the same lot of land as the principal dwelling; and
- (c) is located within, or is attached to, or is separate from, the principal dwelling.



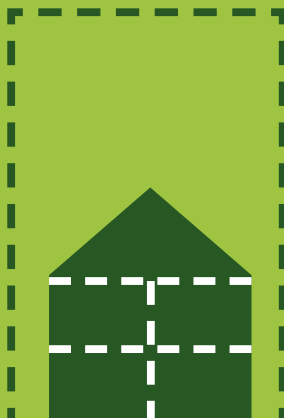
## Multi-dwelling houses (terraces or townhouses and villas)



Three or more dwellings on one lot of land where:

- each dwelling has access at ground level;
- no part of a dwelling is above any part of any other dwelling; and
- dwellings face and generally follow the alignment of one or more public roads.

## Manor houses



A building containing 3 or 4 dwellings, where:

- each dwelling is attached to another dwelling by a common wall or floor; and
- at least 1 dwelling is partially or wholly located above another dwelling; and
- the building contains no more than 2 storeys (excluding any basement).

## Boarding houses



A building that:

- (a) is wholly or partly let in lodgings; and
- (b) provides lodgers with a principal place of residence for 3 months or more; and
- (c) may have shared facilities, such as a communal living room, bathroom, kitchen or laundry; and
- (d) has rooms, some or all of which may have private kitchen and bathroom facilities, that accommodate one or more lodgers, but does not include backpackers' accommodation, a group home, hotel or motel accommodation, seniors housing or a serviced apartment.

## Group home



Means a dwelling:

- (a) that is occupied by persons as a single household with or without paid supervision or care and whether or not those persons are related or payment for board and lodging is required; and
- (b) that is used to provide permanent household accommodation for people with a disability or people who are socially disadvantaged but does not include development to which State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing ) 2021 applies.



## Seniors housing



A building or place that is:

- (a) a residential care facility; or
- (b) a hostel within the meaning of clause 12 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021; or
- (c) a group of self-contained dwellings; or
- (d) a combination of any of the buildings or places referred to in paragraphs (a)–(c),

and that is, or is intended to be, used permanently for:

- (e) seniors or people who have a disability; or
- (f) people who live in the same household with seniors or people who have a disability; or
- (g) staff employed to assist in the administration of the building or place or in the provision of services to persons living in the building or place but does not include a hospital.

Source: Standard Instrument LEP 2018 (NSW)





### 4.3.5 Stakeholder Engagement

Initial stakeholder engagement was undertaken in Gunnedah in April 2021 to inform the evidence base for the Strategy. This included targeted engagement with local housing providers, real estate agents, industry and Council.

#### The key insights from the consultation included:

- Identifying the need for more diversity in housing
- Shortage of housing for key workers
- Limited supply of quality rental accommodation
- Lack of short term and emergency accommodation
- Limited choice of housing for older people
- Cost of development

#### The key points from stakeholder engagement are:

- In Gunnedah, there was strong support for more diverse residential development, despite 90% of dwellings being single detached houses. However, there was also mention of developers preferring larger lots with single dwellings and that there were 'no lots left' in the R5 Large Lot Residential zones. Participants, including council staff emphasised the view there is strong demand for different housing typologies in Gunnedah, particularly one-bedroom studio apartment style housing. This demand is not likely to be reflected in the demographics or development application data, as there is little available for sale to meet this demand.
- Many participants expressed concern over the lack of housing that is suitable for people who are looking for short term, temporary accommodation and affordable housing. It was suggested there is high demand for housing that provided 1-2-bedroom dwellings for couples and individuals and 3 bed dwellings for single parents. Walkability and access to schools and shops were mentioned as important as well as cool, landscaped streets and parks for people to enjoy being outside.
- Rentals for dual income couples were scarce and there was suggestion that some residents were being displaced from Gunnedah. COVID-19 and regionalisation of the population may exacerbate this issue. Ideas such as 'build to rent' and more dual occupancies were suggested as ways of bringing more supply into the market. A Government scheme that guaranteed rents for private developers was also suggested as an option for Gunnedah.
- The villages were mentioned as the location for Temporary Accommodation (TA) for people who could not find housing in Gunnedah, however there were limited options. There were instances where people including families were sleeping rough in Gunnedah due to a lack of short term or emergency housing. There was a clear sense of frustration about the inadequacy and high cost of rental accommodation and housing for sale in Gunnedah.
- The lack of housing choice for older people was raised by many participants, particularly where some people are living in large homes that are no longer suitable and require significant maintenance. Suggestions were made for innovative approaches to adapt or modify large homes to allow downsizing and 'ageing in place' as a transition to a nursing home. Many participants either knew someone or had their own experience not being able to find a suitable home to move into. There was mention of retired people moving from Gunnedah in search of more appropriate housing.
- There were numerous instances mentioned where essential workers such as apprentices, nurses, agricultural and mining employees etc were unable to find suitable rental or permanent accommodation in Gunnedah, with this being cited as an economic risk. There was demand for smaller dwelling typologies to cater for individuals and couples in this category.
- All participants valued local character and wanted to see this maintained in Gunnedah.

- This includes the historic core, particularly around the CBD and areas zoned R3 Medium Density, the R2 zone as well as the R5 Large Lot Residential zones. There is strong support for more compact styles of housing. There was mostly positive reaction to different dual occupancy examples, suggesting that design, materials and landscaping are important.
- There was also suggestion that with good design, housing could be provided in the CBD to meet the needs of people who did not want to maintain backyards and preferred a more compact living arrangement within walking distance of the main street, generally north of the railway line.
- There is a desire to see contemporary housing that is appropriate for Gunnedah's rural lifestyle. A common reaction to modern examples of housing was that it was 'appropriate in the city but not in Gunnedah'. There was strong support for a variety of housing design, and not 'cookie-cutter' houses. There was discussion about the potential for the SEPP Exempt and Complying Codes driving housing style and form without observance of local requirements.
- There was also strong support for street trees and landscaping in creating attractive environments, including Curlewis. Many participants felt that good landscaping is very important to the overall look and feel of a house and as a way of mitigating climate change impacts.
- There was support for higher density housing such as multi dwelling housing in the R2 zone and reduction of the minimum lot size to encourage housing diversity.
- It was suggested that the R3 zone is in the 'wrong location' due to the prevalence of older housing that is not viable to redevelop. It was acknowledged that there were challenges in delivering contemporary housing that is attractive and appropriate for the location.
- The unwillingness of some landowners to bring land onto the market for development was discussed. It was suggested that there is a need to incentivise new housing typologies through development contributions.
- There is potential for development partnerships between developers and entities such as social housing providers, mining companies and Gunnedah Council was discussed to bring housing onto the market.
- Generally, participants support growth that would attract families to the area. Indications from local mining companies were that there was and would continue to be around 1,500 people in Gunnedah employed in mining-related work in the area.
- It was mentioned that staff were at risk of being lost to the region due to a lack of housing. Both mining representatives and Council staff agreed that FIFO 'mining villages' were not a long-term solution and attractive housing choice was imperative in retention of professional staff in Gunnedah.
- The costs of development headworks charges were cited as a reason for the slow pace of development, particularly compared to other LGAs. Housing potential was being lost due to the cost of headworks where owners of large lots were building one dwelling only.
- The formula for levying charges was mentioned as being discriminatory against higher density development such as multi dwelling housing. Car parking provision in the main street precinct was also cited as a reason behind limited residential development.

### 4.3.6 Key findings

Providing for additional diversity in housing typologies in Gunnedah should be a key outcome of the Strategy. Investigating opportunities to diversify the residential land that is available for development will also improve competition and may lead to the acceleration of the delivery of land.

Discussions with both local real estate agents and industry representatives indicate that there are significant issues with the existing and ongoing supply of suitable housing in Gunnedah across a range of typologies.

The cost of delivering land to the market (contributions, headworks changes and holding costs) is contributing to the lag in the construction of housing. A lack of local trades persons, particularly builders is also cited as a concern, noting that they cannot compete with larger companies who are delivering house and land packages.

#### The following issues have been identified:

- The historical trends suggest that when suitable supply of land is available, it is not necessarily converted to housing on the ground
- Land that is zoned and available for subdivision is not being developed
- Delivery of smaller, housing typologies (dual occupancy and multi dwelling housing) for downsizers, will also unlock opportunity for housing stock suitable for families
- There is a significant inward migration trend to Gunnedah township both from outside the LGA and within, and a limited supply of suitable accommodation is available
- The lack of diverse housing options may be constraining the growth of Gunnedah particularly for smaller property types
- The reluctance of some existing landowners to release land
- Constraints on the construction of dwellings on approved lots due to topography and black soils significantly increasing the cost of housing
- Lack of affordable housing across all residential accommodation types
- Lack of suitable housing for 'key workers': police, teachers, nurses
- There is a growing demand for more temporary and permanent social housing in Gunnedah. There is potential to work with social housing providers to identify new sites and collaborate with Council to provide more affordable housing





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# 5. The Priorities

**This section brings together the research and assessment undertaken during the study to provide a set of guiding objectives to inform planning decisions around the delivery of housing in the Gunnedah Shire over the next 20 years and beyond.**







## 5.1 Local Housing Strategy Objectives

The objectives of the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy (the Strategy) have been formed by the comprehensive analysis of the review of the strategic policy context, demographic analysis, community and stakeholder engagement and analysis of the character, opportunities and challenges for the Shire. These are to:

- Ensure the timely delivery of suitable residential zoned land to meet the current and future needs of the Gunnedah LGA to 2041;
- Provide a diversity of choice in residential land and dwelling types in a range of appropriate locations responsive to the demographic needs of the Gunnedah LGA;
- Provide flexibility in zoning and Development Control Plans for high quality urban design outcomes;
- Ensure growth occurs in a contiguous and logical manner concentrating on the central areas of settlements for medium density and on the fringe of settlements (within the investigation areas) for larger residential lots;
- Ensure future development should strengthen the efficient use of existing infrastructure, services and transport networks and not seek to create unrequired demand for significant new infrastructure;
- Require future development, particularly at the residential/agricultural and residential/industrial interfaces to demonstrate that conflict between land uses can be avoided;
- Provide for development that will complement and reinforce existing and future settlement structure, character and uses and allow for the creation of legible and integrated growth;
- Provide and support opportunities for urban intensification through infill and adaptive reuse close to the centre of Gunnedah;
- Encourage large lot residential development where opportunity areas are identified on the Gunnedah Structure Plan Map;
- Ensure residential development avoids areas of environmental significance, significant natural and/or economic resources, potential hazards, high landscape or cultural heritage value, or potential increased risk associated with impacts of climate change; and
- Establish clear and logical physical boundaries for the containment of urban development of Gunnedah, allowing transitional land uses and subdivision patterns which protect the highly productive agricultural landscape and transition to industrial and employment land and areas of significant biodiversity.

## 5.2 Land Use Planning Approach

This Strategy adopts an approach to land use planning (below) that is designed to support the delivery of a diverse range of housing in the right locations and to enhance people's ability to access jobs and services, compatible with key identified values that contribute to the character of an area.

It predominantly:

- Considers opportunities for land use planning controls that will facilitate diversity of housing without impacting local character and amenity;
- Concentrates development within the existing residential zoned land that can be readily serviced;
- Encourages some local infill through reviewing planning controls;
- Includes opportunities for large lot residential development adjacent to existing development areas; and
- Addresses housing affordability.







## 5.3 Key Recommendations

### 5.3.1 Infill development

Broad planning controls will continue to provide a range of development opportunities. There are, however, specific areas in the centre of Gunnedah that could be accommodated in a new R1 General Residential zone, extension to the Medium Density Residential zone or a consolidation of the two. This would allow a more targeted approach to development for high density housing and could be strengthened through a Development Control Plan (DCP).

The area proximate (1km) to the CBD of Gunnedah offers the most suitable location for renewal and intensification. There is already growing demand in this area for more compact and affordable housing.

Analysis of the demographics and housing suggests there is a need for a diversity of housing choices. The area indicated would utilise existing infrastructure, support existing commercial activities and create a walkable and active town centre.

Council could consider individual proposals on a site-by-site basis where the proposal is accompanied by a development concept plan and fully considers the impact of the proposal on both the existing urban character and the ongoing viability of the Gunnedah town centre.

#### Actions:

- Review residential zones to facilitate high densities where local character is maintained
- Consider additional LEP provision to allow flexibility under specific circumstances
- Review DCP controls that may be inhibiting infill development
- Review the types of dwellings permissible within residential zones in infill areas

### 5.3.2 Affordable Housing

Housing is usually considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of a household's gross income. The provision of affordable housing is also an initiative of organisations like the not for profit sector, who manage housing like a private rental property manager.

Affordable housing is not the same as social housing, which refers to housing that has been developed with assistance from State or Federal governments through planning incentives.

Both the Affordable Housing Revised Schemes and Affordable Rental Housing SEPPs have been rolled into a new Housing SEPP (Refer Section 2.1.2).

#### What this means for Gunnedah LGA

It is acknowledged that there is a lower rate of return on housing investment for regional areas compared to metropolitan areas; with asset growth not as strong compared to larger centres such as Sydney but rental return is strong. New investment in regional housing has regional and local economic and social benefits, and there is a clear call for the NSW Government to incentivise new investment in regional areas. NSW's regions are feeling the impact of COVID-19 with increased demand for housing from people from the eastern seaboard, which in turn is squeezing housing supply and increasing prices beyond previous levels.

While there are initiatives being investigated for rural areas via SEPP (Housing) 2021, the NSW Regional Housing Taskforce and the NSW Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund, Council can play a role to influence the delivery of affordable housing options by working with the NSW government, housing providers and the development industry to promote a desired housing vision; and influencing outcomes through its planning controls and policy framework. Council's role in delivering housing can be through investigating sites in Gunnedah such as Crown Land that may be better utilised for housing.

## Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme

The EP&A Act provides a mechanism by which local councils can require land or contributions for affordable housing as part of a condition of development consent. Under these provisions there needs to be an identified need for affordable housing in the area and the proposed development will or is likely to reduce the availability of affordable housing or is likely to create a need for affordable housing.

Such a contribution needs to be authorised by a Local Environmental Plan and be in accordance with a contributions plan or affordable housing contributions scheme which allows for the dedication of land for the purpose of affordable housing or a monetary contribution for the purpose of providing affordable housing.

Affordable housing contribution schemes have been introduced or are being considered in a number of metropolitan LGAs. The Greater Sydney Commission has introduced housing targets in the District Plans, and the Sydney Regional Plan, 'A Plan of Growing Sydney' includes affordable housing targets of between 5-10%.

This approach is aligned with the rezoning process with the contribution derived from a value capture model where part of the increase in the value of the land up-zoned is diverted to affordable housing via a contribution based on uplift in value or additional yield. The Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy is the first step in developing an affordable housing contribution scheme. Additional work would need to be undertaken to identify whether such a scheme is a viable option for Council. If Gunnedah Shire Council were to consider such an initiative, suitable land will need to be identified for rezoning to increase density

in certain areas that are deemed suitable for the uplift.

There is also a question as to capacity of the market in Gunnedah to respond to such an initiative while ever there are opportunities for standard greenfield development in the short to medium term. Further, opportunities currently exist for higher density development without the burden of an affordable housing levy on development and yet the building and development statistics reflect the dominance of single detached dwellings.

Based on the affordable housing income and cost benchmarks in section 4.1, there is a real need for more housing that is affordable. In addition to social and affordable housing, Council could look to initiatives to increase the diversity of housing by supporting low cost options including smaller homes or smaller blocks, actively encouraging dual occupancy and multi dwelling housing and new generation boarding houses. Provisions are already in place in the LEP that would facilitate these forms of housing, and part of the strategy could be for Council to market these opportunities.

There are developers looking for opportunities to move out of the metropolitan area and consider projects in regional communities. Better utilisation of surplus public land, either owned and controlled by Council or the Crown, may be able to be converted into housing projects. Council could also look to opportunities to be more active in the delivery of housing through joint venture arrangements. Finally, Council could provide advocacy to the NSW Government for a clearer direction in relation to housing diversity and affordable housing in the revised NENWRP.

### Actions:

- Work with housing providers to identify opportunities for redevelopment and/or renewal of existing council housing assets
- Educate the community and development industry as to the flexibility, incentives and opportunities to delivery smaller lot housing under the planning framework
- Investigate options to enhance the availability of key worker accommodation in order to attract and retain a skilled workforce
- Consider developing new housing in collaboration with industry and housing providers
- Investigate key owned sites and consider developing multi dwelling housing instead of single dwellings and residential flat buildings as per current situation
- Identify opportunity for the redevelopment of surplus public land
- Work with the development industry to facilitate the delivery of housing



### 5.3.3 Development Incentives and Infrastructure delivery

One of the messages through initial consultation was the high upfront cost of delivery of infrastructure including the cost of local contributions and water and sewer headworks charges under the Development Servicing Plan (DSP).

A range of policy measures and mechanisms can be used to encourage additional housing supply, housing diversity and sustainable housing designs. Council needs to promote and improve the level of awareness across the community, government and development industry of the options available beyond single detached dwellings.

#### Actions:

- Investigate options for the payment of contributions at later stages of the development process





### 5.3.4 Housing Diversity and Choice

Council has a role to encourage a range of housing choices for all residents as they move through different life changes and their housing needs change. Housing diversity is a key action of the New England North West Regional Plan.

In addition to the suggested review of residential zones, there are opportunities to include additional permissible uses in the R2 Low Density Residential zone without impacting the existing minimum lot size or zone objectives. The inclusion of multi dwelling housing and a corresponding provision in the LEP that addresses the minimum lot size for this use is a mechanism that would complement the existing dual occupancy and secondary dwelling provisions currently operating.

Refer to Appendix E for examples of local provisions.

Figure 30 Mechanisms for Housing Diversity



Source: NENW Regional Plan 2036

#### Actions:

- Consider amendments to the Development Control Plan to include planning controls to ensure that all new housing will be designed with adaptable or universal housing standards, thus enabling residents to age in place.
- Consider an amendment to the R2 Low Density Residential zone to improve the efficiency where the existing character can be maintained. Include provisions to control lot size in the LEP.
- Continue to educate and promote the option for housing delivery available through the planning framework.

### 5.3.5 Villages

The villages provide an alternative housing choice however with the exception of Curlewis, are generally constrained, unserviced and therefore unable to support substantial new growth. Actions for the villages contain planning and non-planning suggestions:

#### Actions:

- Curlewis:
  - Consider extending discrete land use zones over business, residential and industrial land uses to protect amenity
  - Ensure services have capacity for future growth
  - Consider potential for village-scale growth to unconstrained land adjacent to the village
  - Consider rezoning unconstrained land in stages to either R2 Low Density Residential and/or R5 Large Lot Residential and remove Dwelling Opportunity Map
- Consider reallocating the RU5 land use zone to cover unconstrained village development in Breeza
- Investigate servicing smaller villages with water supply
- Maintain amenity and character in villages including managing informal development

### 5.3.6 Residential land availability

In summary, as noted previously, existing zoned residential land accounts for a potential supply of in excess of 800 residential lots and another 895 if selected areas are rezoned to R2 from R5 as identified by the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy. However, a range of factors such as physical constraints, up-front costs and ownership patterns, are converging to inhibit new growth in some areas.

Without undermining the existing zoned land and recognising that 'back zoning' land is impractical, it is desirable that the Strategy include areas that represent an opportunity for future serviced residential land supply. This is also important to ensure that the potential R5 Large Lot Residential land investigation areas are not likely to impact on or undermine the long-term expansion of Gunnedah.

The analysis has shown that Gunnedah's land take up has not been realised as initially assumed in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy. The 2021 assessment of zoned and potential land supply indicates that over 825 lots are available within the existing zoned area. The recommendations for serviced land releases in the 2016 Gunnedah Urban Land Use Strategy in South Wandobah Road and north and south of McCalls Road are still relevant today as the most appropriate place for new development at urban densities.

With an estimate of 1,700 potential lots, it is also important to consider the need to provide for housing diversity within the urban footprint. Demand for smaller housing typologies is recognised in Gunnedah as a key issue to provide options for a range of people and incomes.

# 6. Delivery

**In Gunnedah, the priority is to continue releases of greenfield land for residential development whilst ensuring that local planning controls and development opportunities are sufficiently flexible to ensure a diverse range of dwelling typologies to provide for new demand.**

The opportunity to introduce changes to the application of certain land use zones and permissible uses in the Gunnedah Local Environmental Plan (GLEP) are also available.

## **Planning Proposals**

The key actions for land use zoning as identified in the Strategy will require changes to be made to the GLEP. The mechanism for amending the GLEP is through a Planning Proposal. A Planning Proposal is the document that explains the intended effect of a Local Environmental Plan and sets out the justification for making the plan. A Planning Proposal is prepared by either a proponent or Council to affect changes in the control in the Local Environmental Plan.

DPE have prepared guidelines under section 3.33 of the EP&A Act to assist in the preparation of Planning Proposals.







## 6.1

### 6.1.1 Local Environmental Plan

Local Environmental Plans guide planning decisions for local government areas. They do this through zoning and development controls, which provide a framework for the way land can be used. LEPs are the main planning tool to shape the future of communities and ensure local development is carried out appropriately.

There are a number of local provisions that can be applied through the GLEP to achieve the intended outcomes of the Strategy. These include specifying minimum lot sizes for particular zones and in certain areas, land use tables that provide a clear indication of the permissible and prohibited land uses, essential services and other local provisions.

The GLEP does not include provisions for urban release areas. The objective of the urban release area (URA) provisions in LEPs is to ensure that the development of land occurs in a logical and cost-effective manner and in accordance with a staging plan and DCP. The Strategy applies to land that is 'up-zoned' as part of an LEP review process. The continued operation of these provisions is essential for the orderly development of land identified under the Strategy.

#### Planning Proposals

The Strategy will require changes to the GLEP and DCP in order that it be implemented to the extent that land is rezoned to accommodate additional residential growth in the short to medium term. Land identified under the Strategy for future urban purposes will need to go through this process.

Planning proposals will likely take two forms:

- Council led proposals – a planning proposal to review the land use tables and extent of the residential zone, and include additional local provisions to allow subdivision of dual occupancy development in all zones where it is a permissible use.
- Proponent-led proposals - the Planning Proposal will be put forward by a landowner or proponent and may require additional technical investigations at a site-specific level to support the anticipated outcome. While the Planning Proposal will be initiated by the landowner, where the proposal is consistent with the Strategy and supported by Council, Council will commit to working with the landowners to facilitate the rezoning through the process.

Alternatively, there may be circumstances where Council takes the lead on the Planning Proposal and a landowner, or group of landowners, contribute to the funding for individual technical studies that may be required under a Gateway Determination once the proposal has the support of DPE.

Planning Proposals will consolidate the constraints analysis and further refine the indicative opportunity areas to identify land suitable and endorsed for development. Planning Proposals will need to provide a detailed infrastructure and servicing assessment based on estimated yields and relative to specific areas which will be used to inform a master plan and site-specific development control plan (DCP) provisions. Traffic and access will also be key considerations.

Land that is re-zoned to residential falls within the Urban Release Area provisions of the Standard Instrument LEP and a DCP is required to be prepared prior to the subdivision of land in an Urban Release Area. The following provisions (or similar) should be considered to ensure the orderly development of land.



## Development control plan

1. The objective of this clause is to ensure that development on land in an urban release area occurs in a logical and cost-effective manner, in accordance with a staging plan and only after a development control plan that includes specific controls has been prepared for the land
2. Development consent must not be granted for development on land in an urban release area unless a development control plan that provides for the matters specified in subclause (3) has been prepared for the land
3. The development control plan must provide for all of the following:
  - (a) a staging plan for the timely and efficient release of urban land, making provision for necessary infrastructure and sequencing,
  - (b) an overall transport movement hierarchy showing the major circulation routes and connections to achieve a simple and safe movement system for private vehicles, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists,
  - (c) an overall landscaping strategy for the protection and enhancement of riparian areas and remnant vegetation, including visually prominent locations, and detailed landscaping requirements for both the public and private domain,
  - (d) a network of active and passive recreation areas,
  - (e) stormwater and water quality management controls,
  - (f) amelioration of natural and environmental hazards, including bush fire, flooding and site contamination and, in relation to natural hazards, the safe occupation of, and the evacuation from, any land so affected,
  - (g) detailed urban design controls for significant development sites,
  - (h) measures to encourage higher density living around transport, open space and service nodes,
  - (i) measures to accommodate and control appropriate neighbourhood commercial and retail uses,
  - (j) suitably located public facilities and services, including provision for appropriate traffic management facilities and parking.

Further details as to the requirements for Planning Proposals will need to be discussed with DPE and relevant State agencies.

## Process for Rezoning

A Planning Proposal could be prepared on a site-by-site basis, or a number of landowners may get together to prepare a proposal for a consolidated site. The process itself is outlined in the Guide to Preparing Planning Proposals published by the NSW Government. The process involves:

1. **Preparation of a Planning Proposal** consistent with the Guide and the recommendations of the Strategy;
2. **Assessment** of the initial proposal by Council staff;
3. **Report to Council.** If Council support the proposal it is forwarded to DPE for their assessment;
4. **Gateway Determination.** If supported by DPE a Gateway Determination is issued. This generally includes conditions and may require the preparation of additional technical information, requirements for consultation with State Government agencies and Public Exhibition requirements; and
5. **Public Exhibition** of the Planning Proposal can commence only after any Gateway conditions have been met and will generally be a minimum of 20 working days for a standard Planning Proposal.

Following the exhibition period, submissions are reviewed, and in some circumstances, changes may be made to the proposal.

Once finalised, the Planning Proposal is reported to Council for finalisation. Following endorsement from Council, the proposal is then submitted to the Minister (or delegate) to be made. The rezoning becomes effective once the amendment to the GLEP has been published on the legislation website.



## 6.1.2 Development Control Plan

In addition to an amendment to the GLEP, Council can consider a range of other mechanisms to enhance, encourage and promote the objectives of the Strategy and the delivery of a range of housing, including a Development Control Plan (DCP).

## 6.1.3 Adaptable Housing Policy

One of the key findings in terms of existing housing is the lack of diversity in terms of typology. Coupled with an ageing population and change to household structure, 3-4 bedroom single detached dwellings are unlikely to be the most suitable option. In response to the changing demographic and principle of ageing in place, Council could consider the introduction of adaptable residential accommodation guidelines in the DCP or local policy.

Adaptable accommodation is a dwelling that can respond effectively to these needs without requiring costly and energy intensive alterations. Council could work with local developers and builders to address elements like bathroom size, corridor width and the general accessibility of the products currently being delivered. Development controls such as minimum targets for adaptable housing in multi-dwelling housing development could be introduced. This could encourage older people to relocate to smaller dwellings and age in place.

### Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing Policies are a mechanism for the delivery of smaller lot housing in particular areas or circumstances.

Council has a limited role in the direct provision of affordable housing. However, Council can provide a planning and policy framework that can influence the overall supply of housing, which can place downward pressure on housing prices and improve affordability.

Council should ensure that its planning controls support the supply of smaller forms of medium density dwellings (such as granny flats and small apartments) in appropriate locations; investigate the removal of barriers to the provision of housing; and incentivise affordable housing.

Council should monitor long term rental vacancies and housing affordability, and intermittently review its recommendations in relation to housing affordability within the LGA.

## 6.2 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Council will continue to monitor the release of land and dwelling approvals to track the actual delivery of housing against the projected demand.

The following implementation, monitoring and review schedule will be adopted:

- Annual review against the anticipated demand with particular focus on the number and location of new housing typologies including higher density housing and the implementation outcomes for increased housing supply identified above;
- Five yearly reviews of the evidence base, demographic profiles and housing stock against the broader intent of the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy; and
- A ten year review to ensure that the vision, evidence base and strategic planning context are aligned with the goals of the community, New England North West Regional Plan 2041 and implementation outcomes.



# 7. Actions

**The overarching Policy directions correspond to the relevant Parts of the New England North West Regional Plan 2041. This has been done to provide direct correlation between the New England North West Regional Plan 2041 and the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy.**

The **Strategy** is overarching and it has a corresponding **Action** or series of **Actions**.

**Implementation Outcomes** provide a simple measure of the success in delivery of the **Action**.

**Timeframe** is Short term 1-5 years, Medium 5 -10 years, Long 10 years plus. Timeframes may vary as priorities change in response to growth.

**Responsibility**, predominately Council but some **Actions** require collaboration.





**Direction 1: Deliver greater housing diversity to suit changing needs (NENWRP Direction 20)**

Strategy	Action	Implementation Outcomes	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.1 Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy is prepared having regard to the Draft guideline for the preparation of housing strategies and the Settlement Planning Principles	1.1.1 Complete and endorse the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy adopted</li> </ul>	Council/DPE	Short
	1.2 Provide for a range of housing typologies to suit the demands of the changing demographic of the current and future population	1.2.1 Review the GLEP Land use tables for the R2 Low Density Residential, R5 Low Density Residential and R3 Medium Density Residential zones to reflect the expectation of residents and different zone objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning controls provide for a range of residential accommodation</li> <li>Amendment to the GLEP made</li> </ul>	Council/DPE
1.3 Ensure that planning controls provide opportunity for housing for older people	1.3.1 Amend the DCP to include controls for adaptable housing in the R2 and R3 zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP revised and commenced</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
1.4 Provide opportunities for increase in densities closer to the town centre	1.4.1 Consider an amendment to the GLEP to provide for additional R3 Medium Density zone or introduction of an R1 General Residential zone close to the town centre of Gunnedah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increase in the amount of infill development, including multi-dwelling housing within 1km of the town centre</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
	1.4.2 Review local provisions to encourage multi-dwelling housing, dual occupancy and secondary dwellings closer to town centre (see 1.5 below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review local provisions to encourage multi-dwelling housing, dual occupancy and secondary dwellings closer to town centre (see 1.5 below)</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
1.5 Facilitate affordable housing	1.5.1 Review planning controls in the LEP to allow for a range of affordable housing options across residential zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ready supply of land to the market to meet demand.</li> </ul>	Council/DPE	Medium
	1.5.2 Investigate the incorporation of affordable housing targets in new release areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase a range of housing types available.</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.5.3 Develop and implement incentives for affordable housing standards and/or discounting DSP charges and/or deferring the commitment to pay later in the delivery process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in wait times for rental accommodation.</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.5.4 Review planning controls that encourage the delivery of one and two-bedroom dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased housing options for key workers</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
	1.5.5 Actively promote secondary dwellings as an alternative affordable housing option in relevant residential zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NENWRP provides clear policy directives for housing diversity and affordability</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.5.6 Actively pursue partnerships with housing providers and the development industry to provide affordable and increased housing choice in Gunnedah for key workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review planning controls that encourage the delivery of one and two-bedroom dwellings</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.5.7 Investigate public land and surplus Council owned land for conversion to housing in partnership with housing providers and developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review planning controls that encourage the delivery of one and two-bedroom dwellings</li> </ul>	Council	Short
1.6 Promote development in suitable locations in the Villages	1.6.1 Provide clear information about planning controls for residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure land use tables clearly enunciate permissibility and remove potential misinformation</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.6.2 Investigate the potential for more residential land releases adjacent to the Curlewis village boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased housing choice is provided where land is serviced and able to support increased densities</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	1.6.3 Ensure R15 Village boundaries appropriately located to unlock development potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Village boundaries accurately reflect development potential and avoid constraints</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
	1.6.4 Investigate servicing smaller villages with water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum lot sizes maintain local character and reflect waste water disposal requirements</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
	1.6.5 Review and update planning control to maintain amenity and character in villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use zone and lot size maps are reviewed</li> </ul>	Council	Medium

### Direction 2: Support healthy, safe, socially engaged and well-connected communities (NENWRP Direction 19)

Strategy	Action	Implementation Outcomes	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.1 Provide suitable Urban Release Areas that can be readily serviced, and infrastructure accommodated into a local contributions plan as part of the planning process for the Residential Development Structure Plan	2.1.1 Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy identifies areas that are suitable for rezoning for residential development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A development footprint that demonstrates sequential release of land</li> </ul>	Council/ Community/Landowners	Short
	2.1.2 Investigate the feasibility of extending the urban footprint into areas that are readily accessible, suitable for development and can be connected to existing infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local infrastructure delivered by the developer and apportioned to new development with no cost to the community.</li> <li>Review of relevant plans and strategies completed</li> </ul>	Council	Short
2.2 Ensure social and community infrastructure is available to meet the needs of future population	2.2.1 Review community and recreation plans and strategies to support the delivery of infrastructure to new development		Council	Short
2.3 Maximise the utilisation of hard infrastructure (water and sewer)	2.3.1 Ensure that Development Service Plans (DSPs) are up to date and develop a policy for the timing for payment of contributions in the development delivery process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to date DSPs</li> <li>More lots constructed and released for housing</li> <li>Increase in infill development</li> </ul>	Council	Short
	2.3.2 Provide flexibility in the planning controls to encourage infill development in suitable locations		Council	Medium

### Direction 3: Strengthen community resilience (NENWRP Direction 17)

Strategy	Action	Implementation Outcomes	Responsibility	Timeframe
3.1 Support adaptable housing	3.1.1 Amend the DCP to include adaptable and liveable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP amended to reflect adaptable and liveable housing provisions</li> </ul>	Council	Medium
3.2 Promote Sustainable Communities	3.2.1 Amend the DCP to include energy efficiency and sustainable design principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCP amended to include energy efficiency and sustainability principles</li> </ul>	Council	Medium



#### Direction 4: Provide great places to live (NENWRP Direction 18)

Strategy	Action	Implementation Outcomes	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.1 Deliver well planned places and communities	4.1.1 Include Neighbourhood Planning Principles in the consideration of the future development of Urban Release Areas under Planning Proposals 4.1.2 Consider connectivity in preparing Neighbourhood Structure Plans/ Master Plans and development concept plans for Urban Release Areas 4.1.3 Review Council's planning resources and update/create information sheets or online resources to assist 'mum and dad' developers to understand the controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Release Areas identified with corresponding guidelines to facilitate development in the short term</li> <li>Mum and dad developers have access to resources that increase understanding of development processes</li> </ul>	Council/ Developer/ Landowner Council Council	Ongoing Ongoing Short
4.2 Secure the supply of future residential land	4.2.1 Preserve the areas identified in the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy for urban release or future investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain adequate amount of land supply</li> <li>Ensure residential land is preserved for appropriate development outcomes through minimum lot size and land use tables</li> <li>Potential reduction of the R5 zone MLS to below 1ha</li> </ul>	Council	Ongoing
4.3 Monitor land take up and approvals	4.3.1 Continue to monitor land take up and approvals, and provide reports to the NSW Government as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and reporting obligations met</li> </ul>	Council	Ongoing

#### Direction 5: Deliver well planned rural residential development (NENWRP Direction 21)

Strategy	Action	Implementation Outcomes	Responsibility	Timeframe
5.1 Preserve the areas identified under the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy for rural residential development	5.1.1 Consider Planning Proposals to deliver additional rural residential development with lot sizes that maximise the efficiency of both the land resources and the approval process for housing 5.1.2 Ensure that lots are of a size sufficient to accommodate on-site wastewater disposal 5.1.3 Develop criteria for rezoning applications including a set of development principles that can be applied to future unsolicited Planning Proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural residential MLS reviewed</li> <li>Criteria adopted and applied</li> </ul>	Council Council Council	Short Short Short



# Appendices



## A Regional Economic Development Strategy

The Lower North West Regional Economic Development Strategy or 'REDS' sets out a long term, high level economic strategy and actions for the functional economic region of Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Councils. The REDS is based on the industry specialisations and opportunities that leverage the Regions key 'endowments' – relating to location, accessibility, and connectivity; highly productive agricultural land; significant mineral resources and strong lifestyle attributes – to guide investment and other actions to 2022. The four core strategies are:

1. Deliver key infrastructure as a foundation for growth;
2. Provide a positive, supportive environment to facilitate business growth and investment;
3. Support and leverage key sectors; and
4. Position and promote the Lower North West Region as a location of choice.

The fourth strategy concerning 'location of choice' refers to retaining and attracting new businesses and residents essential for increasing the size of the region's workforce and driving growth. This relies on factors such as amenity and appeal of the area, facilities and services, suitable and affordable housing, employment prospects and the vibrancy and inclusiveness of the community. The key initiatives relevant to the Gunnedah Local Housing Strategy are:

- Continue to improve the amenity and attractiveness of settlement;
- Improve and expand the activities, facilities and services available;
- Plan, facilitate and provide for a range of housing and property choice; and
- Market and promote the area as a 'location of choice' to attract new businesses, investment, residents and visitors.

The relevant key infrastructure priorities are:

- Improve health infrastructure in Gunnedah;
- Upgrade and expand sporting, recreation and cultural facilities;
- Ongoing improvements to the presentation and amenity of towns and villages;
- Improve the presentation and activation of the Gunnedah town centres;
- Review urban development strategies and EPIs to provide for a range of housing and property options; and
- Encourage the over 55's housing and supported aged care accommodation.

## B State Environmental Planning Policies

A number of State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) need to be considered in the context of delivering housing. Generally, these policies will form part of the statutory consideration of specific development applications and rezoning proposals.

The most relevant SEPPs are highlighted in Table 28.

Table 28 State Environmental Planning Policies

SEPP
<p>Exempt and Complying Development Codes SEPP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inland Code</li><li>• Greenfield Housing Code</li><li>• Low Rise Housing Diversity Code</li></ul> <p>Implication for the Strategy</p> <p>Referred to as the Codes SEPP, this policy allows for certain development, in particular circumstances to be undertaken without a development approval from Council. This includes single dwellings, dual occupancy and multi-dwelling housing.</p> <p>This means that Council has little influence in terms of the design, setback, material and landscaping elements of development.</p> <p>It highlights the need for clear and precise DCPs and structure plans for Urban Release Areas so that elements such as street width, footpaths and street trees, open space networks and linkages, community facilities and water and sewer infrastructure can all be considered and resolved prior to any residential development occurring in an area.</p> <p>The introduction of the Low Rise Housing Diversity Code has introduced dual occupancy and multi dwelling housing as complying development. Council will need to consider matching these provisions in its own LEP and DCPs.</p>

#### State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

##### Implication for the Strategy

The policy applies to land within New South Wales that is zoned primarily for urban purposes or land that adjoins land zoned primarily for urban purpose, including village and rural zones on the edges of towns and villages.

Much of the land surrounding Gunnedah and all of the villages could be developed under this policy.

#### State Environmental Planning Policy Primary Production and Rural Development 2019 (PPRD)

##### Objectives include:

- Facilitate use of land for primary production
- Reduce rural land sterilisation
- Identify and preserve state significant agricultural land

##### Implication for the Strategy

Replaces five former agricultural-themed SEPPs and gives priority to agricultural uses over rural living uses, addressing concerns that the preceding Rural Lands SEPP was contradictory in its attempt to balance the two incompatible land uses.

This gives effect to the NSW Right to Farm Policy, which applies to any Planning Proposal (PP), the mechanism that rezones land, in a rural zone or any PP seeking to change the minimum lot size in an environmental zone. A PP must demonstrate consistency with the priority of minimising rural land fragmentation and land-use conflict.

Development in or contiguous with existing urban areas is preferable to ensure productive land remains viable.

Large lot rural residential subdivisions should be carefully considered and all opportunities to future-proof existing residential land resources to support population growth should be considered.



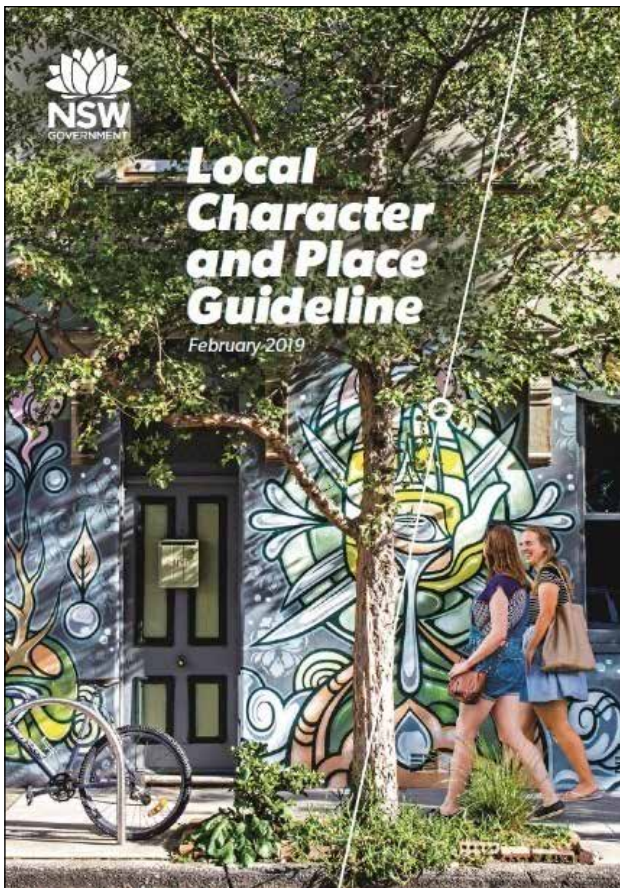
## C Other NSW policies

While the NENW Regional Plan 2041 and environmental planning policies provide the most relevant guidance for residential development in the region, there are a number of other policies that impact land use planning for settlements in some form. These are summarised in the Table 29.

Table 29 State plans and policies

Description and Objectives	Implication for the Strategy
State	
A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW	
Bringing together long-term planning and existing strategies like the Future Transport Strategy 2056, NSW State Infrastructure Strategy, and the regional plans the NSW Government's 20-Year Economic Vision (July 2018) sets out a clear pathway for ensuring that Regional NSW will continue to be a vibrant and growing part of our economy, and that people are supported in their decision to live in the regions.	The sub-region is expected to exhibit strong growth and will likely benefit from infrastructure projects in the coming two decades.
Future Transport 2056	
This transport and land use planning strategy sets out a long-term vision for the NSW transport network and articulates plans to support collaborations between agencies to improve access to key destinations, maximise existing infrastructure, ensure growth is reasonably managed and support housing supply, choice and affordability.	Connecting regions, towns, cities, centres and international gateways will boost regional mobility and economic development. Reducing travel times across NSW will encourage more people and businesses to choose regional NSW to call home, creating thriving communities.
NSW Right to Farm Policy	
Emphasises the need for appropriate zoning and permissible land uses that are compatible with agricultural activities. The policy supports local strategies that guide land use and minimise conflict. Relevant actions from the policy include reviewing current land use planning mechanisms and instruments, with the aim of delivering a planning policy framework that supports the management of current and future farming practices.	Increased policy emphasis on the preservation and viability of agricultural uses may require limiting of opportunities for large-lot residential rezoning and development outside existing settlements, and more reliance on land within the existing urban area to supply new housing or logical extensions of existing settlements.
Maintaining Land for Agricultural Industries Policy	
To guide the local planning process to provide certainty and security for agricultural enterprises over the long term. This recognises the best agricultural land is a limited resource; it should not be alienated either directly (by lands being used for non-agricultural purposes) or indirectly (by incompatible developments on adjacent land).  Guidance is provided to plan makers around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning instruments and their structure to continue agricultural uses.</li> <li>• Minimising land use conflicts.</li> <li>• Factors for consideration in the conversion of land, including impacts on surrounding uses, alternative sites for non-agricultural uses, the finality of a change in use away from agriculture.</li> <li>• Minimum area for dwellings to minimise residential uses and resulting conflicts.</li> </ul>	The policy aligns with the overall objectives and implications of the PPRD and the Right to Farm Policy. Future housing supply should be provided as infill development or on land contiguous with the urban area.

### C.3.1 Local Character and Place Guideline

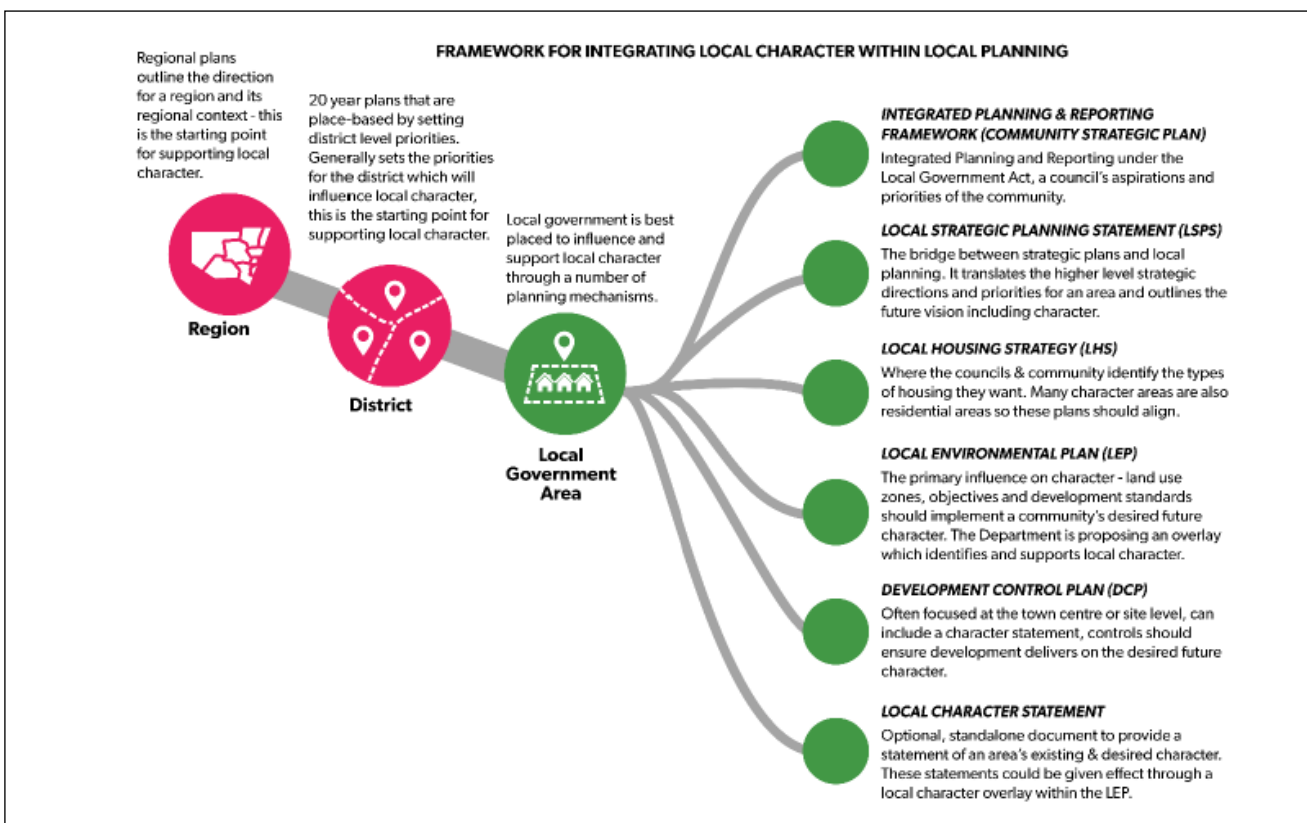


The NSW Government’s 2019 ‘Local Character and Place Guideline’ provides support to councils and communities to consider and nurture the unique identity of a place, while meeting the needs of a changing and growing population. The guideline helps define existing character and set a desired future that aligns with the strategic direction of an area.

Local character is what makes a neighbourhood distinctive and forms the identity of a place, the way it looks and feels. It is created by a combination of land, people, the built environment, history, culture and tradition including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal and looks to how they interact to make a distinctive character of an area. Local character is distinctive and differentiates one area from another. It also embodies a ‘sense of place’ a person has to that place, how people respond to it, how it impacts mood and the stories that come out of the people’s relationship with that place.

Places that develop in response to an identified local character and agreed future desired character are likely to be more sustainable, contribute to good quality of life and attract investment. The following excerpt from the Local Character and Place Guideline illustrates the various mechanisms available to Council to preserve and maintain local character and place building actions, including the Community Strategic Plan, LSPS, Local Housing Strategy, LEP and DCP.

Figure 31 Framework for Integrating Local Character within Local Planning



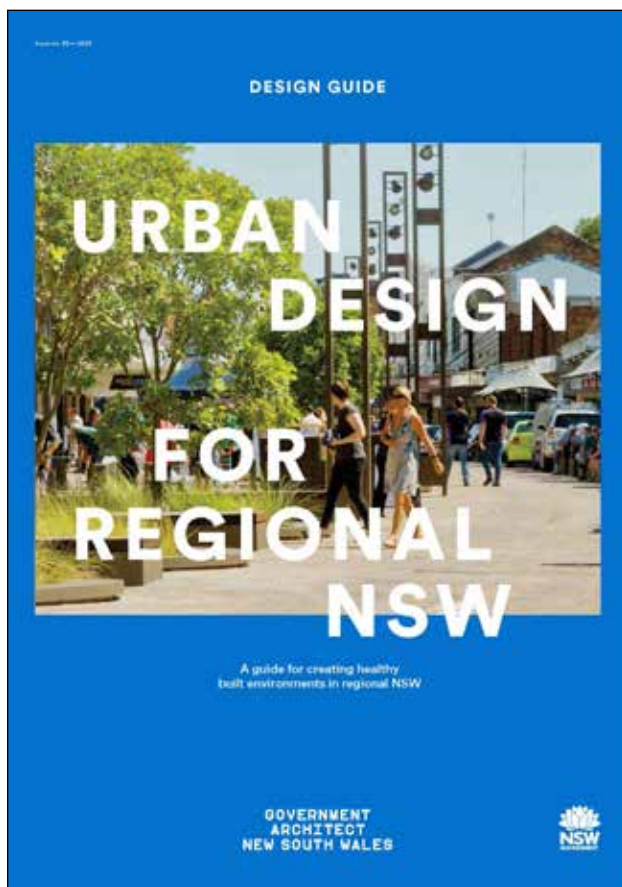
The Guideline provides further suggestion that the three approaches to integrating local character into local plans are:

- Local Strategic Planning Statement driven
- Overlay and local character statement driven
- Development control plan driven

Local character is a function of the existing development pattern and cultural heritage values. Managing heritage is about physically managing the material culture of the past and understanding how heritage shapes and influences communities today. Greenfield areas have the additional challenge of a 'clean slate' and therefore it is important to create new areas that are interesting and diverse by drawing on physical surrounds, history and culture as well as new types of homes, amenities, community facilities and cultural activities that attract people to the area.

The Guideline includes a Character assessment toolkit which applies community and stakeholder consultation outcomes across social, economic and environmental considerations in a bid to understand characterisation of an area. The characterisations then deal with issues of possible change, enhancements and maintenance of existing character. Tools to support the agreed local area characterisations are then applied in the most practical pathway, for example for Gunnedah a combination of LEP and DCP provisions is likely to provide the appropriate level of rigour to ensure new development meets the desired future character.

### C.3.2 Urban design guideline for Regional NSW



The NSW Government Architect published the Urban Design Guideline for Regional NSW in 2019. The guideline is valuable in providing direction for Councils to put in place better urban design principles for regional towns and villages in order to retain and build on local character and sense of place. It is also recognised that climate change is having an impact on regional communities and it is important to design for long term sustainability, safety and security.

The role of urban design means looking at a community holistically, that is, making sure economic, social and environmental factors are complementary. Integrating aspects of good built design, infrastructure provision and appropriate protections means that communities can be inclusive and connected.

The Guideline provides high level design objectives that aim to improve the way of life for regions. It does this through strategies such as the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy that make sure that planners:

- Engage with the history and culture of places
- Integrate with the natural environment and landscape
- Revitalise main streets and town centres
- Prioritise connectivity, walkability, and cycling opportunities
- Balance urban growth
- Increase options for diverse and healthy living
- Respond to climatic conditions and their impacts

The places where these strategies can be implemented are public spaces, town centres and main streets, infill development in existing neighbourhoods and greenfield development in new neighbourhoods.



## D Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions

Any proposal to rezone land needs to consider Ministerial Directions under section 9.1 of the EP&A Act. The Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy provides the evidence to identify land suitable for future development.

### **Ministerial Direction 6.1 Residential Zones has the following objectives:**

- Encourage a variety and choice of housing types to provide for existing and future housing needs; and
- To make efficient use of existing infrastructure and services and ensure that new housing has appropriate access to infrastructure and services; and
- To minimise the impact of residential development on the environment and resource lands; and
- The Directions apply where a planning proposal will affect land within an existing or proposed residential zone or any other zone in which significant residential development is permitted or proposed to be permitted.

### **A planning proposal must include provisions that encourage the provision of housing that will:**

- Broaden the choice of building types and locations available in the housing market; and
- Make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services; and
- Reduce the consumption of land for housing and associated urban development on the urban fringe; and
- Be of good design; and
- A planning proposal must in relation to residential land;
  - Contain a requirement that residential development is not permitted until land is adequately serviced (or arrangements made to the satisfaction of Council to service it); and
  - Not contain provisions which will reduce the permissible density of the land.

Generally, any inconsistency with a Ministerial Direction must be justified by a strategy. Other Directions of relevance to the Gunnedah Shire Local Housing Strategy are:

Direction 1.2 Rural Zones

Direction 1.5 Rural Lands

Direction 2.1 Environment Protection Zone

Direction 3.2 Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates

Direction 3.4 Integrating Land Use and Transport

Direction 4.3 Flood Prone Land

Direction 4.4 Planning for Bushfire Protection

## E Additional LEP Provision examples

### 4.1AB Minimum lot sizes for dual occupancies, manor houses, multi dwelling housing and residential flat buildings

1. The objective of this clause is to achieve planned residential density in certain zones.
2. This clause applies to the following land—
  - (a) land within Zone R1 General Residential,
  - (b) land within Zone R2 Low Density Residential,
  - (c) land within Zone R3 Medium Density Residential,
  - (d) land in Curlewis that is within Zone RU5 Village,
3. Despite any other provision of this plan, development consent may be granted to development on land to which this clause applies—
  - (a) for the purposes of a dual occupancy (attached), if the area of the lot is equal to or greater than 650 square metres, or
  - (b) for the purpose of a dual occupancy (detached), if the area of the lot is equal to or greater than 800 square metres, or
  - (c) for the purposes of multi dwelling housing, if the area of the lot is equal to or greater than 1,200 square metres, or
  - (d) for the purposes of a residential flat building, if the area of the lot is equal to or greater than 1,200 square metres, or
  - (e) for the purposes of a manor house, if the area of the lot is equal to or greater than 1,200 square metres.

### 4.1AC Exceptions to minimum lot sizes for certain residential development

1. This clause applies to the following land—
  - (a) land within Zone R1 General Residential,
  - (b) land within Zone R2 Low Density Residential,
  - (c) land within Zone R3 Medium Density Residential,
  - (d) land in Curlewis that is within Zone RU5 Village,
2. Despite any other provision of this Plan, development consent may be granted to the subdivision of land to which this clause applies if—
  - (a) multi dwelling housing or a dual occupancy is lawfully erected on the land, and
  - (b) the area of each resulting lot will not be less than—
    - (i) 330 square metres for a dual occupancy (attached) or multi dwelling housing, or
    - (ii) 400 square metres for a dual occupancy (detached), and
  - (c) only one dwelling will be located on each lot resulting from the subdivision.
3. Development consent may be granted to a single development application for development to which this clause applies that is both of the following—
  - (a) the subdivision of land into 2 or more lots,
  - (b) the erection of a dual occupancy (attached), dual occupancy (detached) or multi dwelling housing on each lot resulting from the subdivision, if the size of each lot is equal to or greater than—
    - (i) 330 square metres for a dual occupancy (attached) or multi dwelling housing, or
    - (ii) 400 square metres for a dual occupancy (detached).

## Urban Release Areas

### Provision that would need to accompany rezoning or up zoning of land

#### 6.1 Public utility infrastructure

1. Development consent must not be granted for development on land in an urban release area unless the Council is satisfied that any public utility infrastructure that is essential for the proposed development is available or that adequate arrangements have been made to make that infrastructure available when it is required.
2. This clause does not apply to development for the purpose of providing, extending, augmenting, maintaining or repairing any public utility infrastructure.

#### 6.2 Development control plan

1. The objective of this clause is to ensure that development on land in an urban release area occurs in a logical and cost-effective manner, in accordance with a staging plan and only after a development control plan that includes specific controls has been prepared for the land.
2. Development consent must not be granted for development on land in an urban release area unless a development control plan that provides for the matters specified in subclause (3) has been prepared for the land.
3. The development control plan must provide for all of the following —
  - (a) a staging plan for the timely and efficient release of urban land, making provision for necessary infrastructure and sequencing,
  - (b) an overall transport movement hierarchy showing the major circulation routes and connections to achieve a simple and safe movement system for private vehicles, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists,
  - (c) an overall landscaping strategy for the protection and enhancement of riparian areas and remnant vegetation, including visually prominent locations, and detailed landscaping requirements for both the public and private domain,
  - (d) a network of active and passive recreation areas,
  - (e) stormwater and water quality management controls,
  - (f) amelioration of natural and environmental hazards, including bush fire, flooding and site contamination and, in relation to natural hazards, the safe occupation of, and the evacuation from, any land so affected,
  - (g) detailed urban design controls for significant development sites,
  - (h) measures to encourage higher density living around transport, open space and service nodes,
  - (i) measures to accommodate and control appropriate neighbourhood commercial and retail uses,
  - (j) suitably located public facilities and services, including provision for appropriate traffic management facilities and parking.
4. Subclause (2) does not apply to any of the following developments
  - (a) a subdivision for the purpose of a realignment of boundaries that does not create additional lots,
  - (b) a subdivision of land if any of the lots proposed to be created is to be reserved or dedicated for public open space, public roads or any other public or environmental protection purpose,
  - (c) a subdivision of land in a zone in which the erection of structures is prohibited,
  - (d) proposed development on land that is of a minor nature only, if the consent authority is of the opinion that the carrying out of the proposed development would be consistent with the objectives of the zone in which the land is situated.





**Gunnedah**Shire

Open New Horizons