

# Warrumbungle Shire Council

## Land Use Strategy

March 2013





## Acknowledgments

A thank you is extended to the community of Warrumbungle LGA who contributed by attending the community consultations and open days thus far, and sending in submissions to the draft Warrumbungle Land Use Strategy

Warrumbungle Shire Council also acknowledges the financial support of the NSW Department of Planning in the preparation of the Warrumbungle Land Use Strategy.



NSW GOVERNMENT  
**Department of Planning**



## Executive Summary

This Strategy arises from the collaboration of the NSW Department of Planning, the Warrumbungle Shire Council and consultants GHD. It addresses a wide range of issues but focuses in particular on residential, rural residential, industrial and commercial land uses. These land uses are addressed in the context of the rural economy, natural environment and social circumstances of the Warrumbungle Shire and the individual communities in it.

The Strategy is a key document in the preparation of a new Local Environmental Plan for the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Strategy is based on the population and economic profiles of the LGA and the likely changes that are forecast to occur. The declining population base of the Shire is a major factor influencing this Strategy.

The Shire population fell by 670 residents (6.5%) between 2001 and 2006 and this trend is forecast to continue. A key goal of the Strategy is to provide measures that can be implemented by Council and the State to halt or at least slow this population decline.

The Strategy recognises the settlement hierarchy of the LGA and neighbouring communities and the need to focus on the three main towns of Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo as hubs to support the other villages and surrounding farming communities. The Strategy seeks to provide opportunities for employment lands (industrial and commercial) to ensure there are places for businesses to locate and take advantage of the inherent strengths of the Warrumbungle Shire. These include its good soils and strong agricultural industry, mineral resources and its rail and road infrastructure. The Strategy addresses both service and export industries as well as retail and office development.

The Strategy also seeks to ensure there are places to live (residential and rural residential) as well as opportunities to get access to health, education and community services and infrastructure that allow residents to meet basic human needs and lead happy and fulfilling lives.

For each major land use the Strategy evaluates the existing supply of zoned land in each category and determines if there is likely to be a shortfall between now and 2036. If there is a demand beyond existing supply then areas are identified that are potentially suitable for that purpose. If possible a variety of locations are evaluated to provide a choice of locations to the market. Prior to any land being rezoned for urban purposes site specific studies (such as contaminated lands assessment, or flood susceptibility) may need to be undertaken to enable development.

The outcome of the process is a series of actions that are relevant to the LGA. The Strategy also contains maps that identify land potentially available for employment purposes or urban or rural living over the life of the Strategy.

It is envisaged that the Strategy will provide the LGA with a sound basis for preparing a new Local Environmental Plan consistent with the state government's standard instrument.



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# 1. Introduction

The Warrumbungle Land Use Strategy has been developed to guide the preparation of a new LEP. This Strategy provides immediate statutory guidance to Council in reviewing its Local Environmental Plan, and will guide future land use and development in the Warrumbungle Shire. This Strategy is the result of collaboration between GHD Pty Ltd, NSW Department of Planning and the Warrumbungle Shire Council.

## 1.1 What is a Strategy?

A Strategy is a **plan for a desired future**.

This Strategy explains what Warrumbungle Council wishes to achieve in relation to key planning issues and how this might be achieved. It considers the complexity and interrelationships of issues involving land-use, transport, and infrastructure including community facilities, while incorporating social, cultural, economic and environmental values. The Strategy provides leadership to integrate and manage these issues in a more collaborative way between councils, state government and the community.

## 1.2 The Need for a Land Use Strategy

This Warrumbungle Land Use Strategy is intended to be a broad policy document that will facilitate and manage change, growth, and development within the Warrumbungle Shire over the next 25 years (to the year 2036). The role of this land use strategy is to explain the principles which will form the foundation of a new Local Environmental Plan.

In March 2006 the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006 was made. This Order sets out a template for new LEPs with which every local government authority must comply. Warrumbungle Council is now required by the NSW State Government to prepare a new LEP that caters for growth and change over at least the next ten years. The renewal of Council's Local Environmental Plan must be based on Council's consideration of the Standard Template. The Standard Template outlines a set of zones, definitions and planning requirements, which are to be used across the State.

The Strategy reinforces and makes explicit the policy position of Council and the NSW Government which in turn are a response to contemporary local and wider community expectations. It outlines an agreed vision for the future of the Shire. This ensures growth and development of the Shire occurs within a strategic policy framework. This enables orderly and sustainable land use and development, minimises conflicts between land uses, and protects existing and potential future land uses. This Strategy will also assist with Councils Management Plan or Community Strategic Plan. Council's aim is to effectively manage the pressures of development (and in some cases lack of development) on land, water, atmosphere, human resources, and biodiversity.

## 1.3 The NSW Planning Framework

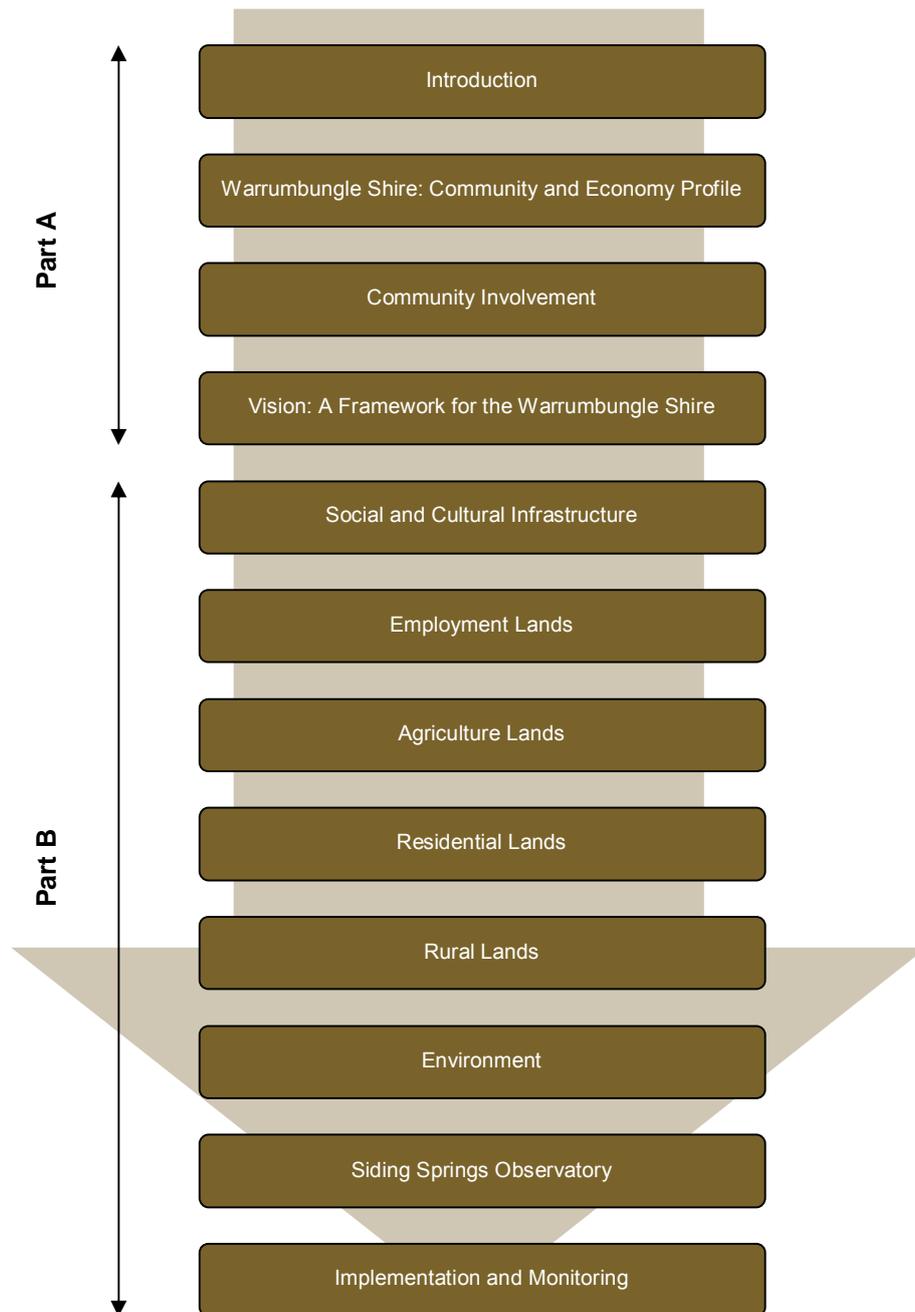
There is a range of planning elements that influence the consideration of activities occurring on land in the Warrumbungle LGA. In preparing the new LEP, Council is required to consider statutory and strategic planning instruments including:

- ▶ Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979;
- ▶ State Environmental Planning Policies;

- ▶ Ministerial Directions;
- ▶ Local Environmental Plans; and
- ▶ Local strategic planning and policy documents.

## 1.4 Structure of this Document

There are two parts and twelve chapters to this document.



Part A provides a summary of the context in which the Strategy has been prepared including community consultation so far, a summary of the characteristics, examines some of the issues, and outlines the vision.

Part B provides the strategic direction divided into themes which are broadly based on land use. These sections provide future direction and actions in terms of each theme.

The actions are the means to implement directions and responses, such as provisions in the new LEP or in a development control plan (DCP).

## 1.5 Background Documents

This Strategy is supported by a series of background documents including

- ▶ Warrumbungle Shire Council, Draft Local Profile Report (Andrews Neil Pty Ltd)
- ▶ Warrumbungle Shire Council, Draft Issues Paper (Andrews Neil Pty Ltd)

These documents provide some analysis of the existing conditions and discussion on a range of topics. However, it should be acknowledged these documents are draft only and have never been adopted by Council. Some of the information has not been verified or is now out of date.



## 2. The Warrumbungle Shire - Community and Economy

### 2.1 About the Shire

Warrumbungle Shire is located on the north-western slopes and plains of NSW. The Shire covers an area of 12,380 square kilometres and forms 1.5 percent of the state. Warrumbungle Shire is an amalgamated Council which was proclaimed on 25 August, 2004 and comprises the former Coolah and Coonabarabran Shires. The Warrumbungle is an indigenous term meaning 'crooked mountain'.

Bounding the Shire to the north is the Narrabri Shire with Gunnedah, Liverpool Plains and Upper Hunter Shires to east; Mid-Western and Wellington Shires to the south; and Dubbo City, Gilgandra and Coonamble Shires to the west. It is located approximately halfway between the regional cities of Dubbo (Coonabarabran is 161 km north east of Dubbo) and Tamworth (Coonabarabran is 182 km west of Tamworth).

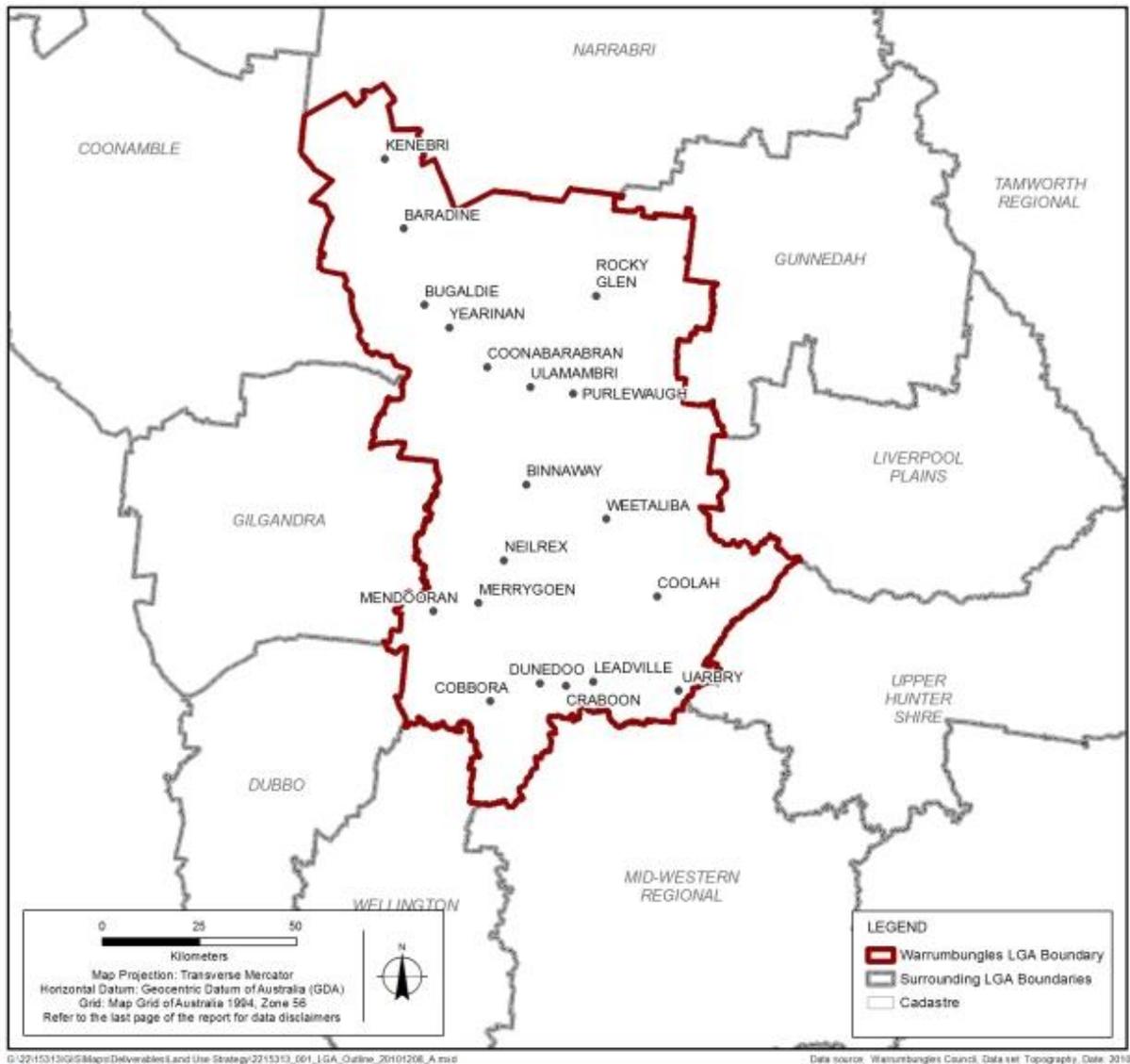
It had a population in 2006 of 9,810 persons (usual resident) which accounts for 0.15 percent of the state's population. The area incorporates the towns and villages of Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo, Binnaway, Baradine, Mendooran as well as several small villages such as Bugaldie, Cobbora, Kenebri, Leadville, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Purlawaugh, Uarby, Ulamambri, Weetaliba and Yearinan.

The Warrumbungle LGA is also a meeting place for the nations of our traditional owners and custodian of the land. The northern part of the shire is home to the Gamilaraay people while the southern part of the shire is home to the Wiradjuri people. Also the nations of the Weilwan and Kawambarai (Werriri) come into the Shire on the western border (WSC, 2008).

The first European to sight and explore the area was John Oxley in 1818 on his second expedition through New South Wales.



**Figure 1 Warrumbungle Shire in a Regional Context**



## 2.2 The Importance of the Warrumbungle Shire in a Regional Context

The Warrumbungle Shire is strategically positioned on the Newell Highway mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne. A number of highways and main roads traverse the Shire providing links with surrounding regional centres.

Coonabarabran is known as the ‘*Astronomy Capital of Australia*’, with the Siding Spring Observatory located approximately 20 km to the west of the town, it provides a major tourist drawcard to the region. In addition the Warrumbungle Shire is located within the foothills of the Warrumbungle and Coolah Tops mountain ranges, which are included on the National Heritage list as ‘*places with outstanding natural, Indigenous or historic heritage value to Australia*’ (DECCW, 2010).

The Warrumbungle Shire is positioned in a predominantly rural based economy. The main industries include sheep and cattle farming, wheat, and various other crops, as well as some manufacturing and

saw milling. Much of the primary produce from the Warrumbungle LGA is exported, contributing a significant amount to the state's exports.

Much of southern half of Warrumbungle Shire is underlain by potential coal resources in the Gunnedah Basin. East of the Shire in the Narrabri and Gunnedah Shires the basin hosts coal resources at mine projects such as Werris Creek, Boggabri and Maules Creek. The importance of coal resource potential in the area is reflected by the coverage of the southern half of the Shire by current coal exploration titles. The majority of the LGA is also covered by petroleum applications and exploration licences reflecting the prospects of the region for coal seam methane and conventional petroleum.

**Figure 2 Warrumbungle Shire in a State Context**



## 2.3 Snap Shot of the Warrumbungle Shire

Total Area	12,380 km <sup>2</sup>
Population in 2006	9,856
Dwellings in 2006	3,950
Labour Force Number (2006)	4,058
Major towns	Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo
Major Industries	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing; Education and Training; Retail

## 2.4 Population

The following table provides a summary of the Warrumbungle population from the 2006 census along with comparisons from the 2001 and 1996 Census.

**Table 1 Warrumbungle LGA Population Size and Growth Rates (Includes Overseas Visitors and Non Residents)**

Year	Population	Average % Change p.a
1991	11,214	-
1996	10,764	-0.8%
2001	10,576	-0.4%
2006	9,856	-1.4%

Source: ABS Census Data : Warrumbungle TSP 2006 – T01, Coolah TSP 2001 – T01 and Coonabarabran TSP 2001 – T01), (Place of enumeration).

Note:

- ▶ *Time Series Profile is based on place of enumeration, which is a count of people based on where they were located on Census Night. In many cases people are located away from where they usually live. Census counts by place of enumeration include out of town and overseas visitors.*
- ▶ *2006 Basic Community Profile is based on usual resident population which is data based on where people 'usually' live or their 'usual address' rather than where they were counted on Census night.*

In 2006, the Warrumbungle population accounts for 0.15 percent of the States population. Table 1 identified the population growth rates experienced by Warrumbungle Shire in the last three census periods. Overall the population has gradually declined; -4 percent between 1991 and 1996, -1.7 percent between 1996 and 2001 and a further -6.8 percent between 2001 and 2006. This represents a negative growth rate over the last ten years of -12.1 percent from 1991 to 2006.

**Table 2 Resident Population Warrumbungle Shire LGA (Usual Resident) 2001 and 2006 Census (usual residency)**

Year	Population	Average % Change p.a
2001	10,480	-
2006	9,810	-1.3%

Source: ABS Census Data : Warrumbungle BCP 2006 - B01, Coonabarabran 2001 URP – U01, Coolah 2001 URP – U01.

Population decline in rural areas is a common phenomenon in NSW. About 40% of towns are in decline with the majority of these being west of the Dividing Range (Peters, 2006). The extent and depth of the recent drought exacerbates the decline in some areas and in the Warrumbungle LGA this is particularly true due to its agricultural economy. The consequences of declining population include a reduction in community services and facilities (e.g. school closures), reduction in employment and business opportunities, decrease in volunteer organisations and sports clubs and declining shopping and professional services. For those that stay, there is likely to be increased travel, reduced social cohesion as well as other changes in lifestyle. This is discussed further in Section 5.

## 2.5 Population Distribution

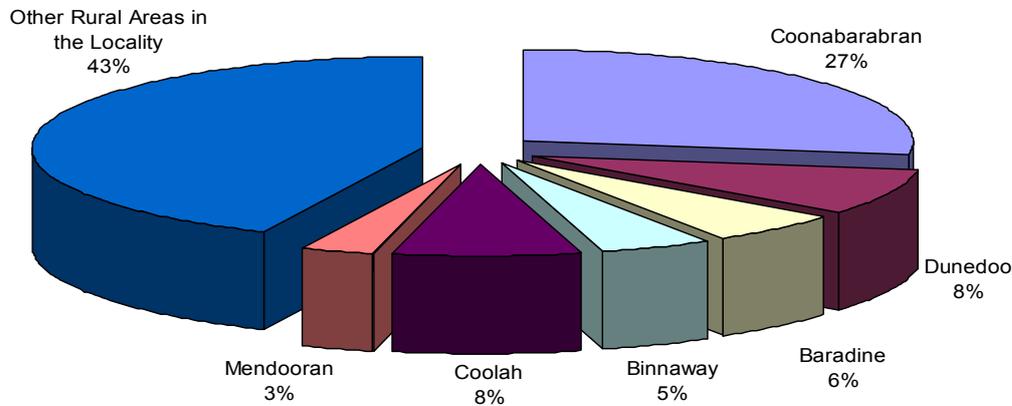
The largest proportion of the Warrumbungle LGA population (47 percent) do not live in urban areas. Coonabarabran is the largest urban area accounting for 27 percent of the population. Other population centres includes Dunedoo and Coolah. All these centres experienced a decline in population between 2001 and 2006, with the village of Baradine experiencing the largest decline in population of -19.9 percent.

**Table 3 Population Distribution (enumeration)**

Town/ Village	Census specific Area	Area size (Km <sup>2</sup> )	Population 2001 Census	Population 2006 Census	Growth Rate 2001 – 2006 (%)
Coonabarabran	Urban Centre/ Locality	9.1	2748	2673	-2.7%
Dunedoo	Urban Centre/ Locality	4.5	837	821	-1.9%
Coolah	Urban Centre/ Locality	2.5	785	766	-2.4%
Baradine	Urban Centre/ Locality	2.9	699	560	-19.9%
Binnaway	Urban Centre/ Locality	2.7	519	465	-10.4%
Mendooran	Urban Centre/ Locality	3.6	322	304	- 5.6%

Source: ABS Census Data: Coonabarabran Dunedoo, Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Mendooran PEP 2006 and 2001 – P01.

**Figure 3 Population Distribution in the Warrumbungle Shire, 2006**



Source ABS, 2006

## 2.6 Indigenous Population

The indigenous community makes up a large proportion of the Warrumbungle LGA population compared to the State. Unlike the general population of the Warrumbungle LGA which is declining, the indigenous population is increasing by approximately 1.4 per cent per annum (Table 4 )

**Table 4 Indigenous Population (Includes Visitors)**

	Warrumbungle			NSW
	1996	2001	2006	2006
Indigenous Population	566	609	745	138,188
Total Population	10,764	10,576	9,856	6,585,732
Percent of Total Population	5.1%	5.4%	7.2%	2%

Source: ABS Census Data Warrumbungle LGA , TSP 2006 – T06, Place of enumeration.

## 2.7 Population Projections

This section contains a summary of the population projection from 1996 to 2036. This is the most recent set of projections from the Transport and Population Data Centre according to assumptions agreed to by the Department of Planning (published in 2010). The projections are based on recent demographic trends and current settlement patterns and a series of assumptions regarding future patterns.

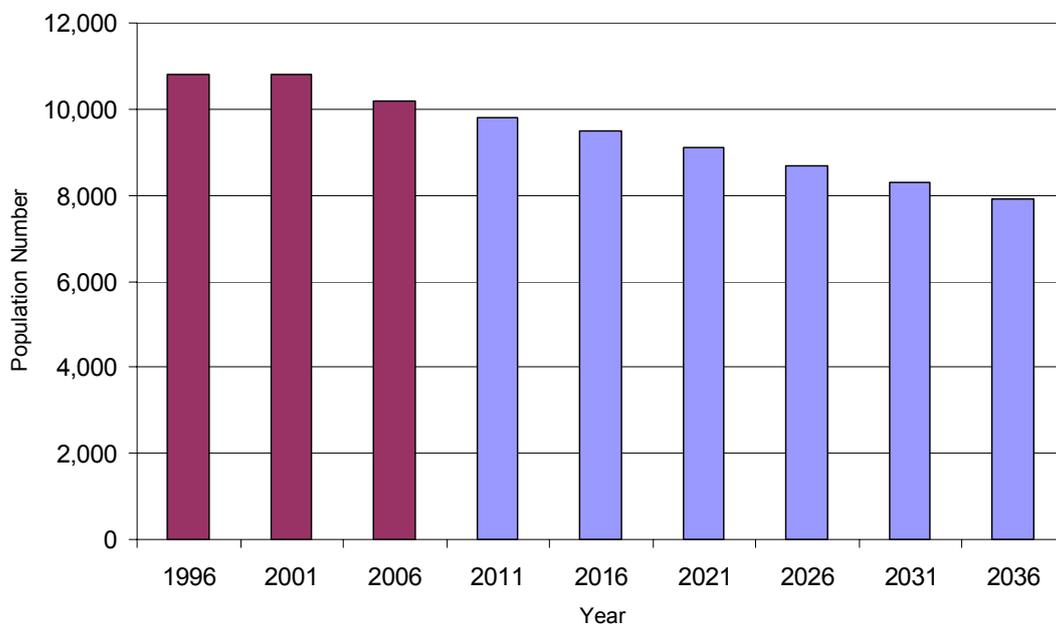
Table 5 and Figure 4 demonstrate the population trends for the next 26 years. Although the population of NSW is expected to have grown by an estimated 33 percent between 2006 and 2036, the Warrumbungle Shire population is expected to decrease by almost 27 percent during the same period.

**Table 5 Population Projections, 2010**

Statistical Local Area	Population No.
1996	10,800
2001	10,800
2006	10,200
2011	9,800
2016	9,500
2021	9,100
2026	8,700
2031	8,300
2036	7,900
% Change from 1996 to 2036	-26.8%

Source: Department of Planning SLA Population Projections 2006-2036, 2010. Data for 1996, 2001 and 2006 are final estimated resident population. Source is Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, Population Estimates by Age and Sex, Australia by Geographical Classification (ASGC 2006), ABS Cat. No. 3235.0, SuperTable datacube, released 18/8/08

**Figure 4 Population Projections in Warrumbungle Shire from 1996 to 2036.**



## 2.8 Age Structure

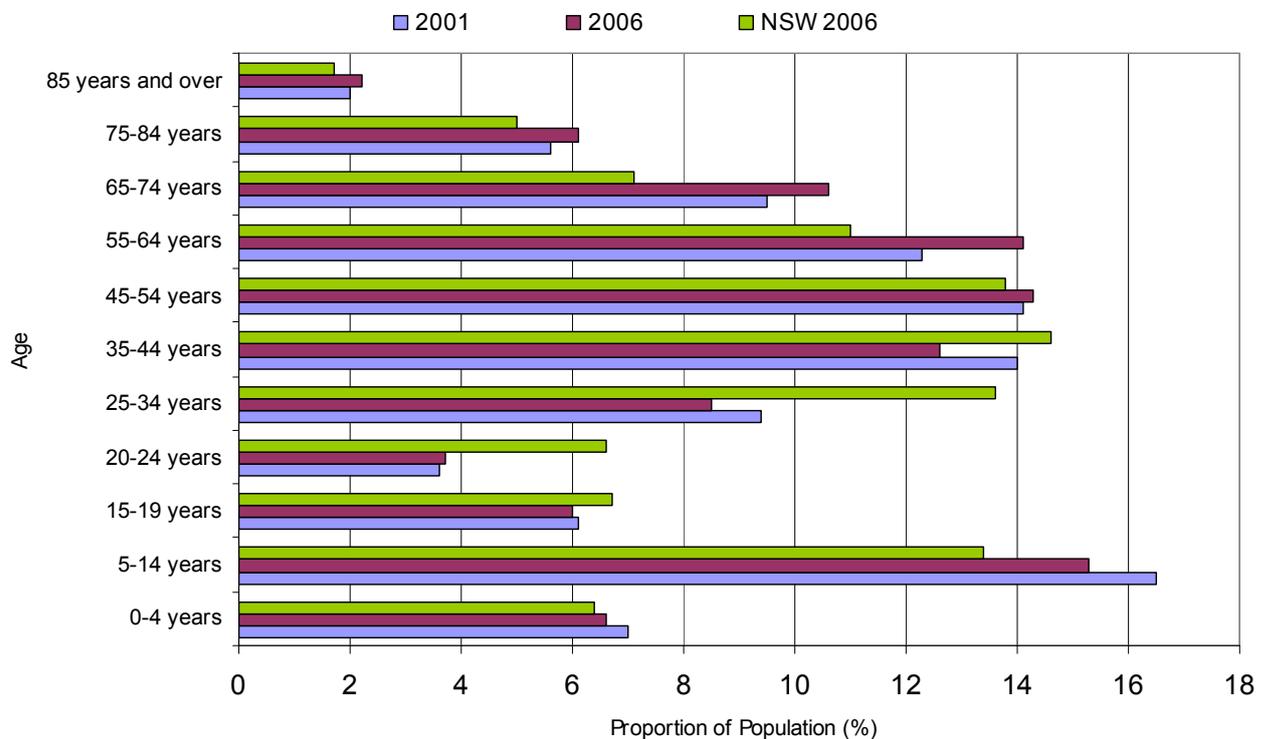
Figure 5 show the age distribution in the Warrumbungle Shire during the 2001 and 2006 census as well as the NSW age distribution in 2006.

The Shire has very high out-migration of young adults, resulting in a relatively small number of people in the 20 to 40 years age range. The Shire has a significantly smaller working age population, aged 20 to 34 year compared to the state average. 25 to 44 year old persons decreased significantly in the Shire between 2001 and 2006. The proportion of older people in the population is expected to increase rapidly as a result of aging of the existing population and retirement migration.

The Shire also has a higher proportion of younger persons (under 14 years old); however, this proportion has decreased since the 2001 census.

A significant difference between the Shire and the State age distribution is the number of older persons is significantly higher than the state. In 2006, of those persons over 55 years old approximately 26 percent were not engaged in the work force. This indicates that the population in the Shire is aging more rapidly than in NSW as a whole. It also indicates that many of the older people are remaining in the region in their retirement.

**Figure 5 Warrumbungle Shire and NSW Age Distribution 2001 and 2006**



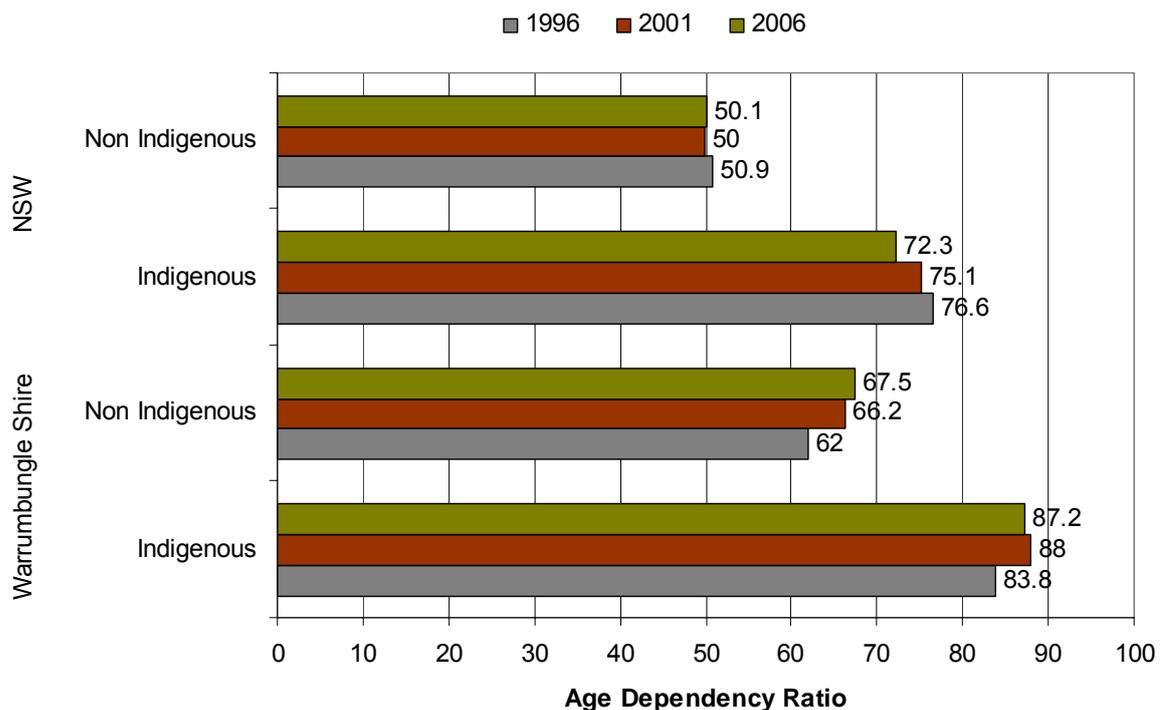
## 2.9 Age Dependency Ratio

The age dependency ratio is calculated as the percentage of the estimated resident population below 14 years of age and above 65 years of age to the percentage aged between 15 and 64 years. If the result is greater than 100, there are more people in the dependency age groups (below 14 and over 65) than people in the non-dependency age group (15-64 years).

Figure 6 demonstrates that a large proportion of the indigenous population (87.2 percent) in the Warrumbungle Shire is below 14 and over 65. 42 percent of the indigenous population in the Warrumbungle Shire is under 14 years old and represents 3.2 percent of the total population of the Warrumbungle Shire.

Between the 1996 and 2006 Census the non-indigenous age dependency increased to 17.4 percent more than the state. During the same period, the indigenous population age dependency increased slightly.

**Figure 6 Warrumbungle and NSW Age Dependency Ratio**



Source: ABS 2006 Time Series Profile, ABS 2006 Time Series Profile for NSW. (Place of Enumeration)

## 2.10 Household size (Occupancy Rate)

The occupancy rate in the Warrumbungle LGA during the 2006 Census was 2.49 persons. This is smaller than the state average of 2.6 persons in 2006.

## 2.11 Income

Although there is a wide range of income levels in the Warrumbungle Shire, there is a tendency towards the lower level of weekly individual income with 70.1 percent of individuals earning less than \$600 per week and 55 percent earning less than \$400 per week. This was significantly more than the number of persons in New South Wales earning less than \$600 per week (54 percent) and \$400 per week (41.5 percent).

In the Warrumbungle Shire, in 2006, 66 percent of households earn less than \$600 per week. The “poverty line” in Australia was under \$626.32 per week for a family of four in June 2006 (*University of Melbourne: June 2006*). The ‘poverty line’ estimates the amount of money people need in order to cover their basic costs and maintain a minimum living standard. A large proportion of the households in the Warrumbungle Shire live below the ‘poverty line’.

## 2.12 Ethnicity

According to the 2006 Census, Eighty eight percent of the Warrumbungle Shire population was born in Australia. This is significantly higher than the New South Wales total of 68 percent at the same census.

Of those people born overseas, 6 percent are from the United Kingdom, 0.6 percent from New Zealand and 0.4 percent are from Germany. Smaller groups of overseas born residents include those from Canada, USA and Netherlands.

## 2.13 Education

The level of education is significantly lower than the rest of New South Wales according to the 2006 Census. Of the persons aged over 15 with a qualification, 13.4 percent have a degree or higher (22.2 percent in NSW). However, there are slightly higher numbers of persons with skilled or basic vocational training.

The level of schooling (Year 12 and under) of persons in Warrumbungle Shire is also significantly lower than the rest of New South Wales. The proportion of persons who completed year 12 was 26.2 percent compared to 42.4 percent in New South Wales.

## 2.14 Household Type

The most common household type in the Warrumbungle Shire in 2006 was a ‘couple family with no children’, representing 30 percent of all households, followed by ‘lone persons households’ (27 percent) and then ‘couple family with children’ (25 percent). This trend is significantly different to the State where the highest proportion of households is couple family with children (35.9 percent), followed by couple family with no children (23.6 percent). Lone person households in NSW only make up 21.9 percent of households.

The Warrumbungle Shire has a similar proportion of family households (66 percent) and non-family households (27 percent) with New South Wales (67.9 and 31.1 percent respectively).

Since 1996, there has been a decrease in the number of family households, in particular couple family with children (decline of 10% in 10 years) and an increase in the number of non family households in particular lone households (increased by 4.3 percent over 10 years).

## 2.15 Dwellings

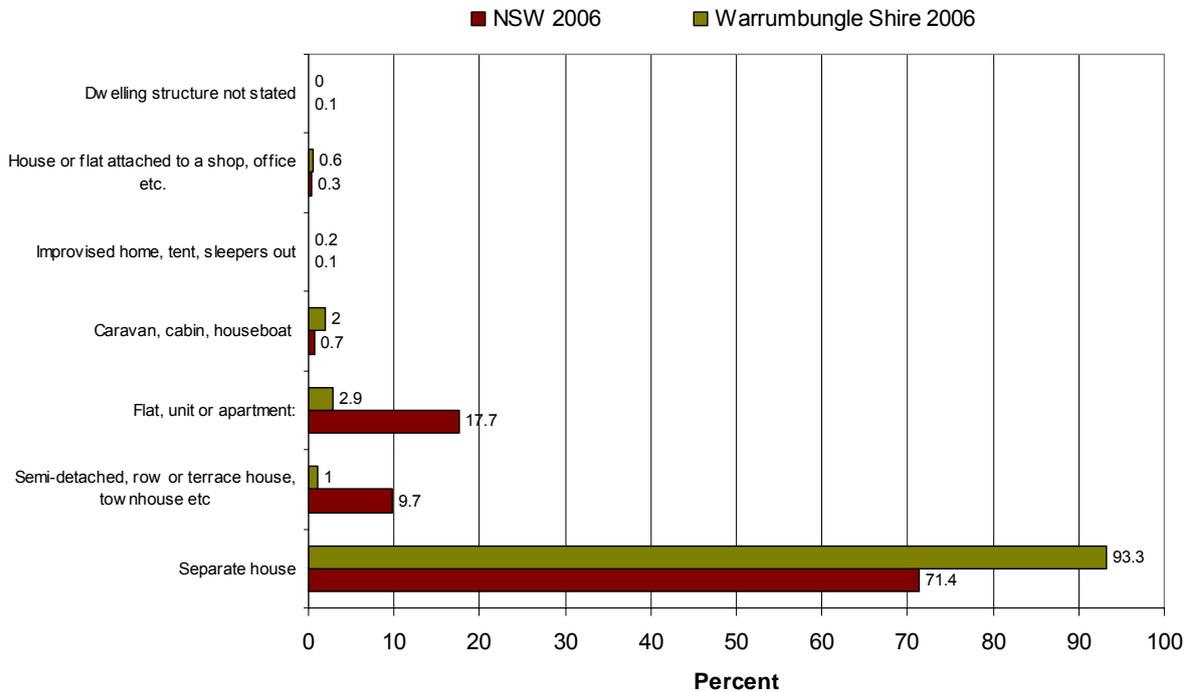
There were a total of 3,950 dwellings in the Warrumbungle Shire in 2006 of these separate houses made up 93.3 percent of dwellings, which is significantly higher than the state at 69.7 percent. The number of separate houses has increased by 3 percent in 10 years. The total number of occupied dwellings in the Warrumbungle Shire has remained steady over the last 10 years.

Flats, units and apartments made up the second largest dwelling type in the Warrumbungle Shire (2.9 percent). The Warrumbungle Shire has a significantly higher proportion of caravans compared with the state. Table 6 illustrates the total number of different forms of housing within the Shire. Figure 7 shows this information diagrammatically.

**Table 6 Warrumbungle Shire, NSW Dwelling Type**

	1996		2001		2006		NSW 2006
	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	No.	(%)	(%)
Separate house	3,601	90.3	3,719	92.2	3,685	93.3	71.4
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc. with:							
One storey	40	1	29	0.7	39	1	5
Two or more storeys	3	0.1	3	0.1	0	0	4.7
<i>Total</i>	43	1.1	32	0.8	39	1	9.7
Flat, unit or apartment:							
In a one or two storey block	74	1.9	133	3.3	109	2.8	6.4
In a three storey block	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.6
In a four or more storey block	8	0.2	0	0	3	0.1	5.5
Attached to a house	6	0.2	6	0.1	3	0.1	0.2
<i>Total</i>	88	2.2	139	3.4	115	2.9	17.7
Other dwelling:							
Caravan, cabin, houseboat	83	2.1	70	1.7	79	2	0.7
Improvised home, tent, sleepers out	11	0.3	3	0.1	8	0.2	0.1
House or flat attached to a shop, office etc.	51	1.3	52	1.3	24	0.6	0.3
<i>Total</i>	145	3.6	125	3.1	111	2.8	1.1
Dwelling structure not stated	109	2.7	19	0.5	0	0	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,986</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,034</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 7 Dwelling Type, NSW and Warrumbungle Shire, 2006 Census (Percent of Total)**



### 2.16 Tenure

In 2006, 47.5 percent of all dwellings were fully owned, higher than the State average of 33.2 percent. However, this has decreased by 5.2 percent since the 1996 census (refer to Table 7).

A further 21.1 percent of all dwellings in the Warrumbungle Shire were being purchased in 2006, which was lower than the state average. This proportion increased significantly from the 2001 and 2006 census by 6.8 percent.

**Table 7 Warrumbungle Shire and NSW, Dwelling Tenure, 1996 to 2006 Census**

	1996	1996 (%)	2001	2001 (%)	2006	2006 (%)	NSW 2006 (%)
Fully owned	2,096	52.7%	2,117	52.3%	1,877	47.5%	33.2
Being purchased	615	15.4%	645	15.9%	833	21.1%	30.2
Rented	1,027	25.8%	958	23.7%	951	24.1%	28.4
Other tenure type	62	1.6%	89	2.2%	56	1.4%	0.8
Tenure type not stated	181	4.5%	235	5.8%	234	5.9%	7.4
Total	3,981		4,044		3,951		

## 2.17 SEIFA

Socio-Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA) consists of four indexes developed by the ABS. Each of the four indexes summarises different aspects of the socio-economic conditions of people living in an area. Each is based upon a different set of social and economic information from the 2006 Census. The indexes provide more general measures of socio-economic status than is given by measuring, for example, income or unemployment alone (ABS, 2008).

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (2001) was used for this report and includes variables that reflect or measure relative disadvantage. The variables include low-income, low educational attainment, high unemployment and people with low skilled occupations - all factors likely to influence how a community copes with changing circumstances (ABS, 2006). High scores on the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage occur when the area has few families of low income and few people with little training and in unskilled occupations. Low scores on the index occur when the area has many low-income families and people with little training and in unskilled occupations. It is important to understand that a high score here reflects lack of disadvantage rather than high advantage, a subtly different concept. For example, an area that has a Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage Index value of 1200 is less disadvantaged than an area with an index value of 900.

Table 8 shows that relative to other areas, the Warrumbungle Shire has a significantly lower Index score for the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage. This means a high level of disadvantage in the Shire relative to other areas. Compared to the Sydney metropolitan average of 1020, the Shires Index score of 907 indicates high levels of unemployment, people working in unskilled occupations and citizens with low levels of educational attainment.

**Table 8 SEIFA - Index of Socio – Economic Disadvantage, Based on 2006 Census**

Area	Index Score	Rank in the State
<b>Warrumbungle Shire</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>19</b>
Dubbo	964	90
Gunnedah	912	22
Bogan Shire	912	27
Coonamble Shire	886	5
Gilgandra Shire	905	16
Narromine Shire	922	40
Warren Shire	924	43
Brewarrina	831	1
Bourke	932	53
Cobar	939	63
Mosman	1198	152
Sydney (City)	1111	138

Source: ABS Release March 2008, Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA ) 2006

## 2.18 Industry

The estimated number of employed persons in the Warrumbungle Shire was 2,070 persons in 2006, representing a decrease of 122 persons from the census recorded in 2001.

The primary (resource-based) sector is the most significant economic contributor in the LGA, accounting for 31.2 % of the employment. The primary (resource-based) sector is well above the NSW and national employment by industry benchmarks.

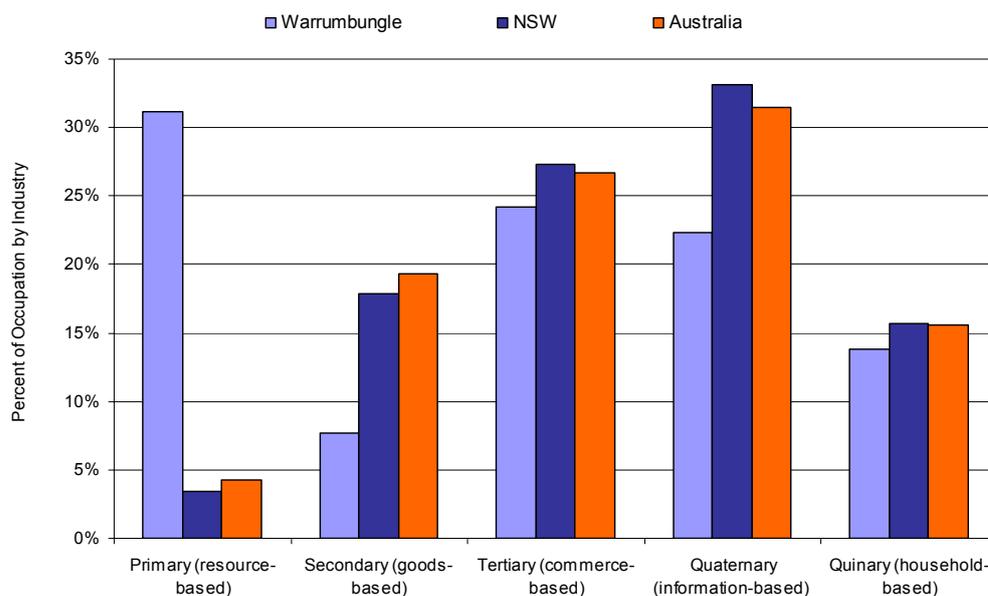
The analysis shown in Table 9 demonstrates the Warrumbungle Shire economy is largely driven by resources based industries in particular agriculture in the areas of wheat, sheep and cattle. However, the agricultural sector in the Warrumbungle Shire has been in decline. Between 1996 and 2006, employment in the agricultural sector declined by 2.8 percent (0.28 percent per annum). This trend is almost twice as fast as the industry's decline in NSW. Between 2001 and 2006 the NSW agricultural sector declined by 0.68 percent or 0.14 percent per annum.

The Secondary (goods-based) industry is significantly less represented than the State or National figures in particular the manufacturing and construction industries. However, these industries have increased slightly in the number over the last ten years.

Between 1996 and 2006 the tertiary (commerce based) and quaternary (business and information services) sector (which typically includes high-value, high productivity industries) sectors have seen some significant increases. However, while the sectors have increased, its percentage share of economic contribution is well below the NSW and Australian benchmarks. The quaternary (business and information services) sector was largely driven by the public administration, health care and education sectors

Retail trade in the Warrumbungle Shire has shown the greatest increase over the last ten years. This sector was almost equal to the NSW and Australian benchmarks in its percentage share of economic contribution.

**Figure 8 Contribution to the Economy – Employment by Industry, 2006**

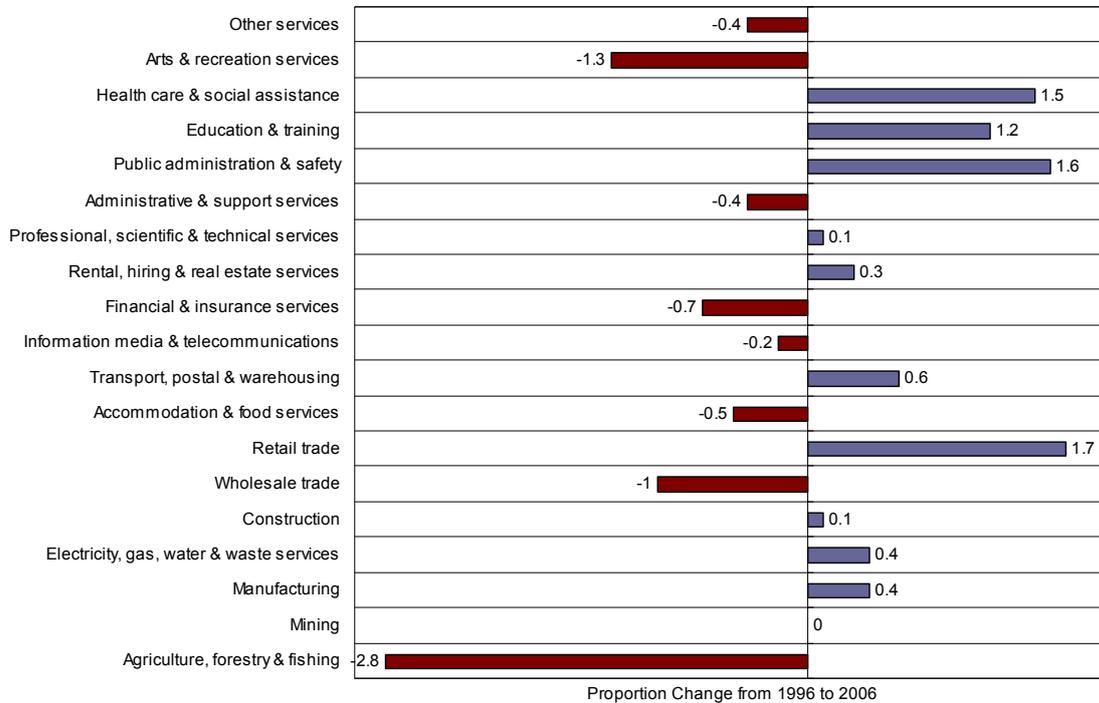


**Table 9 Employment by Industry, Warrumbungle Shire 2006 (Place of Usual Residence)**

	Warrumbungle	NSW	Australia
<b>Primary (resource-based)</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	31.2%	2.7%	3.1%
Mining	0	0.7%	1.2%
<b>Secondary (goods-based)</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>
Manufacturing	3.8%	9.6%	10.5%
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	1%	1%	1%
Construction	2.9%	7.3%	7.8%
<b>Tertiary (commerce-based)</b>	<b>24.2%</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
Wholesale trade	2.2%	4.7%	4.4%
Retail trade	10.8%	11.1%	11.3%
Accommodation & food services	7.1%	6.5%	6.3%
Transport, postal & warehousing	4.1%	5%	4.7%
<b>Quaternary (information-based)</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>33.1%</b>	<b>31.5%</b>
Information media & telecommunications	0.4%	2.4%	1.9%
Financial & insurance services	0.7%	5%	3.8%
Rental, hiring & real estate services	0.6%	1.7%	1.7%
Professional, scientific & technical services	2.4%	7.3%	6.6%
Administrative & support services	1%	3.1%	3.1%
Public administration & safety	5.8%	6%	6.7%
Education & training	11.4%	7.6%	7.7%
<b>Quinary (household-based)</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>
Health care & social assistance	10.2%	10.5%	10.5%
Arts & recreation services	0.7%	1.4%	1.4%
Other services	2.9%	3.8%	3.7%
<b>Inadequately Described/Not Stated</b>	<b>1%</b>		<b>2.6%</b>
<b>Total (excluding sub-total)</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>100%</b>

Source: ABS Census 2006 Warrumbungle Basic Community Profile

**Figure 9 Employment by Industry Sector, Change from 1996 to 2006 (%)**



## 2.19 Labour Force

The Warrumbungle Shire labour force has been steadily declining since 2001, which may be due to the drought reducing the amount of persons in the agricultural sector. However, at the same time the proportion of persons in the labour force has not significantly declined and is similar to the State average. This suggests those that were in the labour force are now leaving the Shire for work.

In addition, the unemployment rate has slightly increased and when compared with NSW and National levels reveals the Shire has a relatively high level of unemployment.

**Table 10 Labour Force in Warrumbungle Shire, 2001 and 2006**

	Warrumbungle				NSW		Australia
	2001		2006		2001	2006	2006
	No.	%	No.	%	%	%	%
<b>Employed/worked:</b>							
Full-time(a)	2,504	31.1	2,341	30.5	36.1	35.8	48.4
Part-time	1,054	13.1	1,116	14.5	17.2	16.1	10.8
Other/Not Stated	288	3.6	262	3.4	1.7	3.6	4.0
<i>Sub-Total Employed Persons</i>	<i>3,846</i>	<i>47.8</i>	<i>3,719</i>	<i>48.4</i>	<i>55.0</i>	<i>55.4</i>	<i>63.1</i>
<b>Unemployed, looking for:</b>							
Full-time work	252	3.1	248	3.2	3.0	2.2	2.5
Part-time work	84	1	91	1.2	1.2	1.3	0.9
<i>Sub Total Unemployed Persons</i>	<i>336</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>4.4</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>3.5</i>	<i>3.5</i>
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>8.4</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>5.5</b>
Total labour force	4,182	51.9	4,058	52.8	59.3	58.9	66.6
Not in the labour force	3,445	42.8	3,202	41.7	36.0	34.3	26.5
Labour force status not stated	427	5.3	422	5.5	4.7	6.8	6.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,054</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,682</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ABS Census 2001 & 2006, Basic Community Profile

## 2.20 Dwelling Approvals

Table 11 illustrates the number of dwelling approvals in the Warrumbungle Shire between 2005 and 2009. Statistics of building work approvals (from the Australian Bureau of Statistics) are compiled from approvals issued by local government authorities; contracts let or day labour work authorised by Commonwealth, State, semi-government and local government authorities; and major building activity in areas not subject to normal administrative approval (e.g. building on remote mine sites).

The statistics included in this profile relate to all residential building approvals valued at \$10,000 or more and all approved non-residential building jobs valued at \$50,000 or more and are usually a reliable indicator of the completed value of 'houses'. Construction activity not defined as building (e.g. construction of roads, bridges, railways etc.) is excluded from building statistics.

The majority of residential dwellings were approved in 2005. Since this time approvals in the Shire have been declining.

**Table 11 Dwelling Approvals Number 2005 to 2009**

BUILDING APPROVALS - year ended 30 June		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Private sector houses	no.	17	12	6	11	9
Total dwelling units	no.	17	16	6	14	14

Source: ABS, National Regional Profile 2000-2004

## 2.21 Property Market

The median property prices have grown steadily in the Warrumbungle Shire since 2006. The largest price growth was experienced in 2006, when median prices rose by 20.7%.

**Table 12 Median and Mean Property Sales, Warrumbungle Shire 2006 to 2010**

Date	Median (\$000)	Annual Change (%)
March 2006	111	20.7
June 2007	130	18.2
June 2008	141	8.5
June 2009	90*	N/A
June 2010	149	18.3

Source: NSW Department of Housing, Rent and Sales Reports  
\* Less than 30 bonds lodged

As Table 13 shows median weekly rent for a 3-bedroom house in the Warrumbungle Shire was \$155 during the September Quarter 2010, well below the NSW median of \$270. While slight growth in rents over the past five years has occurred in the Shire, compared to the NSW average rise, the Shire has had significantly lower house and unit rental growth.

**Table 13 Median Rents, Warrumbungle Shire, 2008 to 2010**

	<b>3 Bedroom Dwelling</b>	<b>Qrtly Change (%)</b>	<b>2 Bedroom Dwelling</b>	<b>Qrtly Change (%)</b>
March 2008	143*	-	115*	-
June 2008	150*	4.9	125*	8.7
September 2008	145*	-3.3	120*	-4
December 2008	160*	10.3	133*	10.8
March 2009	155*	-3.1	123*	-7.5
June 2009	160*	3.2	118*	-4.1
September 2009	160*	No Change	115*	-2.5
December 2009	170*	6.3	150*	30.4
March 2010	173*	1.8	125*	-16.7
June 2010	165*	-4.6	130*	4
September 2010	155*	-6.1	125*	-3.8

## 2.22 Agriculture Sector Profile

The agricultural sector is by far the biggest employer and remains the key economic driver across the Warrumbungle Shire, accounting for 31.2% of employment in 2006 (refer to Table 9). The agricultural sector has experienced significant declines, including a 2.8% decline between 1996 to 2006.

Agriculture still employs 68 % more people than retail trade, 70% more people than health care and social services, and 68% more people than education and training, all of which are agricultures closest employment competitors. This emphasises the importance of having a viable agricultural sector in the Warrumbungle Shire, as it provides substantial economic support to important subsidiary industries.

As demonstrated in Table 14, agricultural land use in the Warrumbungle Shire is predominantly used for livestock grazing, utilising a total of 720,585 ha and accounting for 82.1 percent of total agricultural land use.

Cropping on the other hand utilises 125,236 ha, accounting for 14.4 percent of total agricultural land use. In combination, livestock grazing and cropping utilises 845,821 ha, accounting for 68.3 percent of the total land use.

The remaining 32% (392,179 ha) of total agricultural land use in the Warrumbungle Shire is utilised for:

- ▶ Remnant vegetation and woodland unsuitable for grazing or cropping;
- ▶ Commercial forestry plantations;
- ▶ Wetlands or swamps unsuitable for grazing or cropping;
- ▶ National Parks, Environmental protection of sensitive ecosystems; and
- ▶ Farm infrastructure i.e. houses, sheds, roads etc. (ABS Ag Census, 2006).

**Table 14 Agricultural Land Use in the Warrumbungle Shire, 2006**

LGA	Livestock (ha)	% of Total Land Use	Cropping (ha)	% of Total Land Use	Total Ag. Land Use (ha)	% of Total
2006 Ag Census	720,585	82.7	125,236	14.4	845,821	97.1

Source: ABS Agricultural Census, 2006 (reissue, 2008)

There is a diverse range of agricultural ventures across the Warrumbungle Shire. The majority of which are traditional and remain the Shires primary source of income. The cattle 'meat' industry in 2006 at approximately \$39 million is the main contributor to the economy followed by Wheat for grain at approximately \$15 million (refer to Table 15 and Table 16)

**Table 15 Livestock Industries in the Warrumbungle Shire, 2006**

Livestock	Value (\$)	No. of head
Sheep & Wool Industry	23,573,986	651,820
Cattle Meat Industry	39,587,589	203,257
Pig Industry	3,638,503	6,125
Dairy Industry	0	12
Poultry slaughtered	16,704	-
Eggs	177,592	9,602

**Table 16 Cropping Industries in the Warrumbungle Shire, 2006**

Crops	Value (\$)	Ha
Wheat for grain	15,726,439	34,970
Oilseeds	647,414	1,514
Crops and Pastures for Hay	7,417,141	10,837
Barley for grain	2,901,750	10,185
Legumes for grain	376,619	979
Oats for grain	3,483,302	15,863
Triticale for grain	133,549	521
Grain Sorghum for grain	3,049,789	6,573
Cotton	295,761	240

## 2.23 Summary of Key Trends

The Shire has historically experienced steady population decline. The majority of the decline has been attributed to out-migration rather than natural decrease. The characteristics of the population have a significant effect on the current and future usage of existing facilities, as well as the type and size of facilities required.

Key population and housing characteristics of Warrumbungle Shire include:

- ▶ A low population density.
- ▶ A high proportion of the community who are not in the labour force.
- ▶ An aged population.
- ▶ A low number of working population.
- ▶ A high age dependent indigenous population
- ▶ A high proportion of single person households.
- ▶ A low level of educational achievement (in terms of degree or diploma attainment).
- ▶ A low income population with a high proportion below the poverty line.
- ▶ A low dwelling density.
- ▶ A high proportion of separate houses.
- ▶ A low occupancy rate.
- ▶ A community which relies on the agricultural industry for its income.

## 2.24 Physical Infrastructure

### 2.24.1 Transport

#### *Road*

Warrumbungle Shire has several major highways running through the area including the Newell Highway (National) Oxley Highway, Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway (State Highways).

The Newell Highway is part of the National Highway network, it runs parallel to the eastern coast about 400 kilometres inland and is an important inland route between Melbourne and Brisbane. It carries a significant level of interstate freight by semitrailer and B-double trucks. Traffic volumes recorded by the RTA in 2002 indicated two way flows in the order of 7000 vehicles per day within the township of Coonabarabran, with flows around 3500 to 4000 vehicles per day outside the main towns.

The Oxley Highway an east-west artery connecting the coast at Port Macquarie with the New England plateau, the western plains and western NSW. Within the Warrumbungle Shire it connects Coonabarabran to Gunnedah and Tamworth to the east. Traffic volumes recorded by the RTA in 2002 indicated two way flows to the east of Coonabarabran, around 1000 vehicles per day.

The Golden Highway is a state highway connecting the New England Highway in the upper Hunter Valley near Singleton to Dubbo in central western NSW. The route traverses the southern areas of the Warrumbungle Shire via Dunedoo. Traffic volumes recorded by the RTA in 2002 indicated two way flows in the order of 2000 vehicles per day.

The Castlereagh Highway crosses the Shire between Dunedoo and Mendooran, forming part of the route from the Golden Highway in the south, through to Gilgandra, Coonamble and on to Walgett in the north west of NSW. The road is constructed to a two lane two way rural highway standard. Traffic volumes recorded by the RTA in 2002 indicated two way flows in the order of 500 to 800 vehicles per day.

Other main routes include the Black Stump Way and the Warrumbungles Way. The Black Stump Way runs from the Golden Highway near Dunedoo, north via Coolah to intersect with the Oxley Highway at Mullaley. The route continues north of Mullaley via Boggabri to rejoin the Newell Highway at Narrabri. Part of the section from Mullaley to Boggabri is unsealed, with Gunnedah and Narrabri Councils currently seeking funding to complete the seal. The Black Stump Way is developing as an alternative route to the Newell Highway, with traffic volumes along this route increasing. The Warrumbungles Way links the Golden Highway, just west of Cassilis, to Coonabarabran via Coolah and Binnaway. This is the shortest route between the Hunter Valley and the Warrumbungle National Park.

The RTA has been planning upgrades to the Newell Highway progressively, recognising the need to provide a high quality bypass of the township of Coonabarabran. Federal Government funding of \$200,000 for the bypass was announced in May 2007. However, at this point a preferred route for the bypass has not been finalised and the continuation of the project is in doubt given current government budget priorities (Rand, 2006)

### ***Rail***

There are currently no passenger rail services to the Warrumbungle Shire. The nearest passenger railway stations to the Shire are Narrabri and Dubbo. There is a regular bus service to Dubbo provided by Country Link, which connects with the rail services to and from Sydney at Lithgow.

The only freight line still operating in the Shire is the Dubbo to Werris Creek line, via Dunedoo, Mendooran, Binnaway and on to Werris Creek. This line mainly carries grain shipments. The Binnaway to Gwabegar line, via Coonabarabran and Baradine has recently has operations suspended, with grain transported from silos along this line now being moved by truck. The likelihood of this line re-opening is low. Likewise the Binnaway to Mudgee line has been closed for many years is also unlikely to re-open. (Rand, 2006).

### ***Public Transport***

Coonabarabran has a 24 hour taxi service which services the locality of Coonabarabran.

There are currently local bus services providing basic services for school students and the local community throughout the Warrumbungle Shire. In addition Country link, Greyhound Coaches and Sidd Fogs provide services outside the shire. However, there is no public transport link between Coolah and Coonabarabran or between Coolah and Dubbo and Coonabarabran and Dubbo and Greyhound Coaches has recently withdrawn its daily Melbourne - Brisbane coach service via Coonabarabran. The service has been re-structured, to provide a Coonabarabran - Toowoomba - Brisbane service 4 days per week (Rand, 2006).

## **Airport**

Coonabarabran has an airport, which has closed its passenger services and is now used for mail/ parcel freight, charter flights, private planes and flying lessons. Coolah has a bitumen airstrip at Neilrex and a helipad at the hospital, while Baradine has a grass air strip. These strips are used for non-commercial flights and by the air ambulance. The nearest airports to the Shire with regular passenger services, are located at Narrabri, Gunnedah and Dubbo (Rand, 2006).

### **2.24.2 Water**

The supply of water is fairly limited to the community within the Shire. However reticulated water is provided within Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Coolah, Binnaway, Baradine, Mendooran, Bugaldie, Kenebri, and Merrygoen. Leadville has a private reticulated water supply.

Coonabarabran is supplied from Timor Dam and a well from the Castlereagh River. It is also supplemented by bores. The Dam has a relatively small catchment area and in times of drought, is not sufficient to meet the needs of the Coonabarabran community. The water allocation from the Castlereagh River is fixed and cannot be increased. Alternative water supply will need to be considered for future land use developments that may impact on the supply of water.

Water in Dunedoo, Coolah, Mendooran, Bugaldie, Merrygoen and Baradine is provided from sub-artesian bores. Within Dunedoo the introduction of bore-water based irrigation appears to be impacting its water supply. Water to Mendooran is supplied from the Castlereagh River via a well and two spears and both the quality and quantity of water extracted is poor. Mendooran and Dunedoo, there are currently investigations into future water supply options.

Baradine has an allocation limit on the volume of bore water that can be extracted. Currently the town is drawing less than the allocation, providing some potential for growth. Coolah Supply appears plentiful and not a constraint to growth. Council has installed in August 2007, a replacement pump and equipment to monitor the level of water in the bore. Binnaway has two wells, also pumping from the Castlereagh River, with the amount of water being pumped being well below the town's allocation. While the water allocation is sufficient to support increased population, there are capacity constraints with the water treatment plant.

### **2.24.3 Waste Water**

Within the Warrumbungle Shire, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Coolah, Mendooran and Baradine town centres are sewered. All other settlements rely on onsite effluent disposal, with Council implementing an On-Site Sewage Management Plan to ensure the disposal system is matched to the sites potential to treat and dispose of the waste, and therefore reduce the potential for contamination of bores and groundwater.

The treatment plants within Coonabarabran and Dunedoo are currently reaching capacity and Council is currently making assessments on their expansion or replacement. There appears to be no issues with either the Coolah or Baradine sewerage systems (Rand, 2006).

#### **2.24.4 Stormwater**

Coonabarabran township is serviced by a stormwater drainage system. The Contributions Plan for Coonabarabran Shire prepared in 1998 indicated that the drainage system applies to all land zoned for urban development and includes all existing and future urban areas. The vast majority of the Shire has on-site means for the disposal of stormwater from buildings (Rand, 2006).

#### **2.24.5 Electricity**

Country Energy supplies the Warrumbungle Shire community with their electricity needs. At the time of the development of the Economic Development Strategy in 2006 (Rand), Country Energy stated that they are proposing to upgrade the power supply to Coonabarabran and Dunedoo over the next 2 years.

#### **2.24.6 Natural Gas**

In June 2006, the Central Ranges Gas Pipeline was commissioned. The pipeline transports natural gas from Dubbo to Tamworth via Dunedoo, Coolah and Breeza. At this stage, Tamworth is the only centre on the new pipeline receiving reticulated gas, with the residential and industrial reticulation networks currently being established. The pipeline plans allow for lateral gas mains to be developed in the future if demand is sufficient (Rand, 2006).

#### **2.24.7 Telecommunications**

The towns in Warrumbungle Shire have the basic range of telecommunication services incorporating internet access, and mobile and landline telephone networks. Coonabarabran and Mendooran both have ADSL and ISDN Internet access; Binnaway, Dunedoo and Baradine have ISDN access and Coolah has ADSL dial-up internet services. Most rural areas in the Shire do not have broadband access.

Mobile coverage is available in all towns (with the exception of Mendooran). The service is reasonably good in the towns, however the range outside of the towns is limited.

### 3. Community Involvement

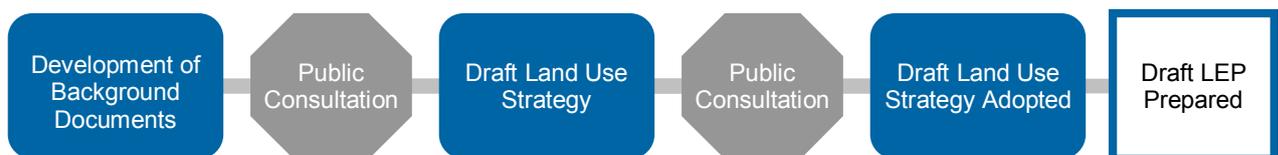
#### 3.1 How is the Public Involved in the Development of the Strategy?

The draft Strategy will be placed on public exhibition once it has been considered by Council. Council will review all submissions made to it during the public consultation period before adopting the strategy.

To date, extensive community consultation has taken place to help shape this draft Strategy and develop the background documents. This helps Council to prepare the Strategy that the community wants.

Once the strategy is adopted, Council will prepare a draft Local Environmental Plan. The draft Local Environmental Plan will take the actions and policy ideas from the Strategy and build them into planning regulations that will apply to the Shire. This includes the zoning of land in the new format of the Standard Local Environmental Plan. The draft Local Environmental Plan will also be subject to public consultation before it comes into effect.

The community feedback which occurred during the development of the draft background documents are summarised below in section 3.2.



#### 3.2 Community Directions

Public consultation commenced as part of the development of the background studies and the aim was to provide opportunities for both the public and state agencies to have input into the preparation of the Strategy (and subsequent draft Local Environmental Plan).

The public consultation thus far included seven workshops throughout the Shire. The workshops used techniques such as group consensus and photo board technique in order to discuss some of the broad issues and opportunities in the Warrumbungle Shire. State Government agencies were also consulted during the development of the background documents a full list of these agencies can be found in these documents. A summary of the results are as follows:

##### Participation

The purpose of this consultation was to allow the people of Warrumbungle LGA to express their views on issues such as: services and facilities in the Shire, environmental attributes existing consultation processes, the local economy, unemployment, infrastructure and development.

Overall, participants in the Warrumbungle consultations were supportive of the area growing, as long as its heritage was preserved as it was a strong part of the Shire identity. They felt passionately about their communities and wanted to see their special character preserved, while allowing for improved services for the area and better access to these services. There was strong support for preserving existing

agricultural uses and they saw tourism as a strong resource for economic development especially Siding Spring Observatory and the Warrumbungle National Park.

### **Development and Planning**

There was a wide recognition that urban development should be contained within the existing towns and villages only, due to the services that are available. However, many participants would like to see larger lot sizes in the towns and villages at approximately 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

There was a strong opinion to support further rural residential land close to the towns. They found that rural residential land suited the LGA due to the topography of the land and its natural surrounding and there was a preference of between 2 to 10 ha lot sizes. However, they didn't want rural residential development at the expense of prime agricultural land.

There was a strong opinion throughout the workshops that the heritage values of the buildings needed to be protected in order to protect the Shire's identity.

It was also agreed any development in the Shire needs to have adequate services. Participants agreed that all subdivision need to be sustainable with proficient planning and management. Rural landowners raised the point that there is a financial necessity for farmers to be able to "sell off" unproductive farmland.

Some types of inappropriate development was also debated, many participants did not want prisons, waste management depot or nuclear power plants.

***'Need small five acre within a 5 km radius with strict standards of home development such as quality building code.'***

***"Agriculture is still the main source of income in this area. Don't subdivide it."***

### **Local Economy**

Tourism was identified as a way of boosting the local economy. An emphasis on eco-tourism and "nature based" activities (e.g. bushwalking, bike tracks etc.) was suggested as one way to do this. Expand on niche industries such as solar farms and more light industry.

There was also a strong opinion that the State Forest land should not turn into National Parks as it will reduce the amount of forestry operations in the Shire. In addition, many participants stated they didn't want any mining in the area due to the destruction of the landscape and loss of prime agricultural land.

They felt a railway link to some of the towns and encourage more storage and water saving strategies to allow for further development were both important to boost the economy.

Other suggestion to boost the economy include encouraging a military base, intensive agriculture such as poultry, the timber industry, more tourist accommodation, industries to attract retirees or even a suggestion of a 24-hour fuel trucks stop with 24-hour meals.

***"Beautiful locations that must be promoted as a great place to visit. Encourage small business to establish tours on demand, tours of infrastructure, B&B. Work with tourist information."***

### **Natural Environment**

There was a strong opinion that there was too much clearing of the native vegetation. The rural landscape was a defining feature and highly valued aspect of the area, with many participants wanting to retain agricultural land wherever possible.

Warrumbungle National Park, Siding Springs Observatory, Coolahburrugundi River, Aboriginal scar trees as well as the existing ecosystems and waterways including groundwater were identified as important environmental attributes that needed to be conserved. The community wanted to actively foster renewable energy principles such as solar, waste and water recycling and reduction.

### **Facilities and Services**

Current community facilities in the Shire were seen to disadvantage less mobile members of the community such as the aged. It was also noted that greater accessibility of these facilities for residents is needed.

Public Transport and opening the railway line was a strong issue throughout all the workshops. The railway was seen as an important economic resource

Hospital upgraded with a maternity ward and a fully serviced operating theatre and more local emergency services was seen as an important

Other services and facilities that were needed include air services, appropriate signage for schoolchildren, aged care facilities, youth services, TAFE college, more childcare, a policeman, a doctor and mobile phone coverage.

***“Inland rail routes need to be essential. Agriculture was a productive industry before Government suspended the railway line. Provide employment to communities.”***

### **Consultation with the community and further actions**

Many participants were frustrated with Council’s consultation efforts. Council was seen as “*just going through the motions*”. They recommended that Council offer a range of consultation options appropriate to the needs and abilities of the diversity of community members.

Future actions were needed to be decided by those rural communities affected through community organisations. In addition community organisation needs to gain more active member and participants. Most felt that Council wasn’t listening to the community needs and wants.

They believed the State Government does not listen to the majority of rural communities and most decisions have been made by ‘*city centric bureaucrats and politicians*’. It was noted that most felt that the State Government does not provide any services or financial assistance to the rural communities and need to be lobbied more.

***“We need to gain a shire co-operative approach to lobbying Government to ensure our vision is realised”***

## 4. Vision: A Framework for the Warrumbungle Shire

The main purpose of a vision is to provide a succinct statement on which a Strategy can be based. It should be discussed and debated and reviewed periodically as a community evolves over time. The following vision is based on the community consultation which has occurred to date and provides the foundation for this Strategy.

The Warrumbungle Shire will:

- Protect our agricultural land as an important component of our rural identity and recognise that our productive agricultural land is a finite resource that is valued and supported.
- Protect our unique heritage which is a significant part of our character and identity.
- Encourage rural tourism (including that related to Siding Spring Observatory) and our beautiful rural landscape.
- Provide for growth within the town and villages but retain their identity to ensure they harmonise with the rural landscape and are sustainable in terms of infrastructure.
- Develop a strong, diverse and sustainable local economy that supports a range of employment opportunities including mining (in appropriate locations).
- Maintain and improve local services including education, health, cultural and recreation services with an emphasis on services for youth and older residents.
- Provide or lobby the State or Federal Governments for quality infrastructure such as rail, roads, public transport and footpaths.

## 5. Settlement Hierarchy

Establishing a settlement hierarchy assists in developing the roles and characteristics of the Warrumbungle Shire’s settlement areas. This includes the way that centres relate to each other and how they relate to settlements in the wider region and beyond. A settlement hierarchy also helps existing and prospective residents to understand the likely levels of community services, facilities and infrastructure and each settlements role in a regional context.

Defining a settlement hierarchy will also encourage development that recognises and complements the different roles and functions of the settlement. This will also ensure that towns maintain important elements of urban form and township character. The role and function of urban centres in this Strategy are similar to the work undertaken by the NSW Government for the metropolitan strategy for Sydney (Department of Planning, 2006).

A hierarchy of settlements should be made based on the facilities and role they play in the Warrumbungle Shire rather than purely population or dwelling numbers. Wherever possible the existing settlement hierarchy should be strengthened. Therefore, the following four level hierarchy, which is already evident in part, is recommended for the Warrumbungle Shire. A visual representation of the settlement hierarchy is shown in Figure 10.

Regional Centre	
Location	Tamworth and Dubbo (not in the Shire but services the Shire)
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A minimum of 8,000 jobs are located in these centres.</li> <li>▶ The main shopping and business centre for the Sub- Region, with a full scale shopping mall, council offices, regional education and health facilities, taller office and residential buildings and central community facilities.</li> <li>▶ Typical dwelling range 9,000—28,000.</li> <li>▶ Typical population range is 20,000 to 60,000.</li> <li>▶ Regional Centres provide employment close to public transport, which helps minimise the negative environmental impact of private vehicle use.</li> <li>▶ Accessible to significant parklands, a civic square, cinemas and sporting facilities.</li> <li>▶ Governance body: State and local government.</li> </ul>
Town	
Location	Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ These towns provide a range of local services and variety of employment opportunities in tourism and retail but rely on the Regional Centre for other opportunities.</li> <li>▶ Have some community facilities, specialist medical care, schools and restaurants.</li> <li>▶ Typical dwelling range 250 – 3,000.</li> <li>▶ Typical population range is 750 to 6,000.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Strategic bus and local bus networks.</li> <li>▶ Main street, sports facilities, reasonable access to parkland.</li> <li>▶ Governance body: local government.</li> </ul>
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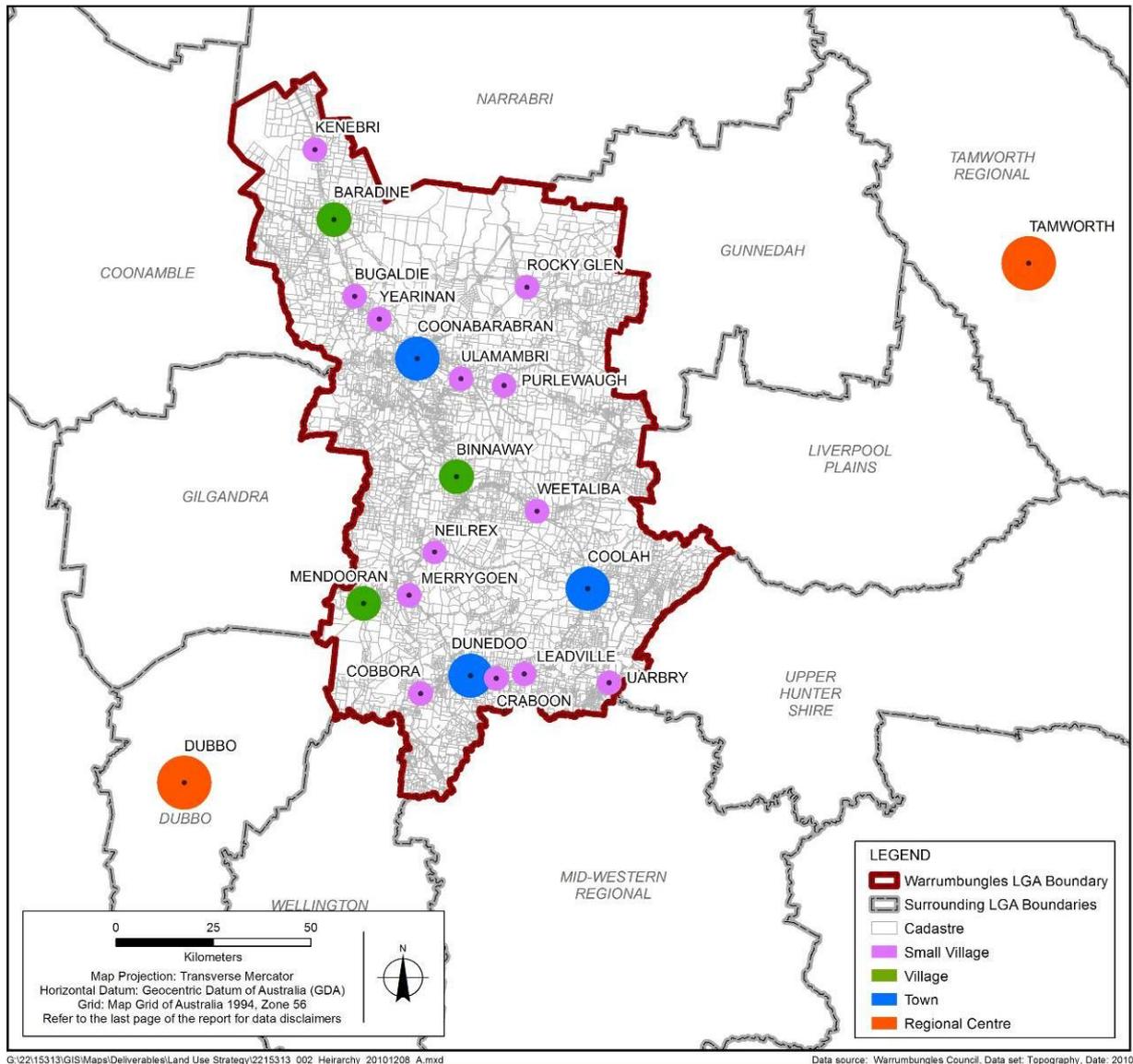
### Village

Location	Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran.
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Villages provide only for convenience needs and typically have only a general store / post office and/or a hotel.</li> <li>▶ Childcare centres, schools and other compatible activities in the immediate vicinity.</li> <li>▶ Typical dwelling range 50 – 200.</li> <li>▶ Typical population range is 200 to 600.</li> <li>▶ Local bus services.</li> <li>▶ Villages need to develop an enjoyable public environment with a mix of uses and good physical links with the surrounding neighbourhood.</li> <li>▶ Access to a local park, may have a market which shares space in school grounds (out of school hours) or another public space.</li> <li>▶ Governance body: local government.</li> </ul>

### Small Village

Location	Bugaldie, Cobbora, Craboon, Leadville, Kenebri, Purlawaugh, Ulamambri, Rocky Glen, Uarbry, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Weetaliba, Yearinan.
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Small village are a focal point for the surrounding community and usually have a community hall or bushfire shed.</li> <li>▶ There are generally no shopping facilities.</li> <li>▶ Typical dwelling range 10 - 50.</li> <li>▶ Typical population range is 10 to 150.</li> <li>▶ Local bus network.</li> <li>▶ Access to pocket parks or small urban outdoor space.</li> <li>▶ Governance body: local government.</li> </ul>

**Figure 10 Warrumbungle Shire Settlement Hierarchy**



### 5.1.1 Actions- Settlement Hierarchy

- ▶ The Department of Planning and Warrumbungle Shire need to adopt and support a settlement hierarchy identifying the functions of towns, villages and rural centres.
- ▶ Warrumbungle Shire needs to align future growth opportunities with urban centres of adequate infrastructure capacity.

## 6. Social and Cultural Infrastructure

### 6.1 Social Infrastructure

Social infrastructure refers to all services; facilities and structures that are intended to support the well-being and amenity of the community. This includes not only educational and health facilities, but social housing and other community facilities. Education and health facilities have often been located in areas of perceived need, with some areas having multiple facilities, and others greatly lacking.

Coonabarabran has a district hospital, with Coolah, Dunedoo and Baradine having combined hospital - multipurpose health services which provide emergency services, a limited range of hospital services and beds for the aged. There are no operating theatres or obstetric services in the Shire and a limited range of visiting specialists. People requiring higher order health services usually travel to Dubbo, with some patients occasionally going to Tamworth or Mudgee Base Hospitals. Psychiatric services are limited with patients requiring hospitalisation referred outside the Shire.

The Department of Education has one primary school, five central schools and one high school (Coonabarabran High School) in the Shire. In February 2008 total primary enrolments were 348 students, high school 416 students and Central Schools 850 enrolments. No private schools operate in the Shire but there is a bus service from Dunedoo to two private high schools in Dubbo

Social infrastructure is very important for rural communities and often comes under threat as population levels decline. Typically the state government provides these services and recent trends indicate that closure of small rural schools will continue. Children will be required to commute to larger urban centres for education, even to primary level.

Other social infrastructure must be responsive to changing demographics and community needs. An aging population, for example, will require innovative service responses to meet changing needs. To ensure that facilities, which meet the needs of specific groups are provided, Council needs to ensure that all members of the community have access to community centres that have good amenity, are well designed and maintained.

To plan effectively for community facilities, the demand in relation to both the number and range of such facilities must be clearly identified. In addition the capacity of existing social infrastructure to meet the needs of the Warrumbungle residents is, in some cases, limited by a lack of forward planning. This is a consequence of:

- ▶ the inadequacy of existing buildings to meet changing community needs
- ▶ reluctance to modify, redesign or make productive reuse of facilities
- ▶ a lack of opportunity for facilities and services to be provided in areas where there is growth
- ▶ a lack of coordination in the provision of services and the identified needs of the communities.

Demand can be determined through the use of population figures, usage patterns of existing facilities, and to a lesser degree benchmark standards for the provision of community facilities. Community consultation also plays a critical role in identifying community expectations and current demand for facilities.

### 6.1.1 Actions: Social Infrastructure

- ▶ Monitor population and socio-demographic trends and use demographic projections to guide government, community and industry in the provision of community facilities and services.
- ▶ Prepare a Community Strategic Plan to guide the delivery of community services and facilities. The plan should include a community needs assessment and stakeholder consultation. The plan should also set out priorities for the delivery of services and facilities.
- ▶ Identify opportunities to utilise surplus government land or infrastructure for community purposes.
- ▶ Foster effective partnerships between public, private and community sectors in responding to community needs. Develop collaborative arrangements to provide community facilities and services to areas currently deficient.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities to expand existing and/or create additional Council managed community services and facilities (via Section 94 funds, if required).
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for mobile health care services to overcome the distance between settlements in the LGA.

## 6.2 Demographic Change

Section 2 discusses in detail the Warrumbungle Shire existing and projected community profile. This section demonstrates that the Warrumbungle Shire contains communities with differences in ages, income, education and lifestyle.

The projections of the population and composition of the community will change over time in response to a range of factors, principally: economic circumstances and employment opportunities; trends in agricultural, tourism and primary industries; housing availability and affordability; the needs of aging populations and access to services. An aim of this Strategy is to develop actions which take into account the likely impact of predicted trends, in this way Council can contribute to the creation of liveable environments and healthy communities.

### Population Decline

A key consideration in this Strategy is to respond to the decline of population in the Warrumbungle Shire. The consequences of declining population include a reduction in community services and facilities (e.g. school closures), reduction in employment and business opportunities, decrease in volunteer organisations and sports clubs and declining shopping and professional services. For those that stay, there is likely to be increased travel, reduced social cohesion as well as other changes in lifestyle.

Budge (2002) suggests that in the future many country towns will be characterised by:

- ▶ Lesser numbers of businesses and services relating to the farm sector;
- ▶ More part time tourist and hobby businesses;
- ▶ A large number of “last generation” traditional town businesses;
- ▶ New life style seekers (long distance commuters, “tree changers”, external income);
- ▶ Retired farming people; and
- ▶ Jobless and welfare dependent people (often seeking cheap housing).

In relation to the basis for making locational decisions (why we live where we live) Budge (2002) found that employment was the primary basis of decisions relating to location regardless of whether the respondent was a rural or metropolitan dweller. The second most important factor was family. However, he warns that policy responses cannot rely on simplistic measures and each town and region travels in cycles of economic performance and change. It is important to know at what stage a community is at in order to implement useful policy and programs.

The Strategy will need to assist communities to identify policies and programs for economic development and employment, capitalising on their rural character, local attributes and strengths.

### **Aging Population**

It is anticipated that the most significant population change to occur will be the substantial increase in the proportion of people aged 65 and over.

Older people need manageable, safe and accessible housing, and many prefer to live in familiar surroundings and close to family. Lack of suitable housing options in rural areas and many conventionally developed residential areas can present older people with difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, frequently necessitating their moving to new or unfamiliar places, with the associated loss of independence.

A new Warrumbungle LEP will need to provide sufficient flexibility to cater for this demand, particularly regarding modifications to family homes, for example the building of additional accommodation on the farm. Ancillary dwellings such whether permanent or temporary, located near the family home could meet the accommodation needs of many older people. This is particularly important in rural areas where there are very little or no aged care facilities.

The increasing demand for retirement villages, aged care facilities and other support services will necessitate the need to encourage the provision of such facilities. The demand for such facilities should be integrated into existing areas and considered in new development planning. Subdivisions that provide for a range of housing types to suit differing needs within the population will also be encouraged.

### **Declining Working Population**

The decline in the available local workforce has impacts on the Warrumbungle Shire's ability to generate wealth, employment, diversity and sustainable communities. The NSW State Chamber of Commerce in 2000 cited the difficulties in attracting and retaining skilled labour in rural areas relates to (Peters, 2006):

- ▶ Lack of recreational and cultural facilities;
- ▶ Lack of quality educational facilities;
- ▶ The inability to pay metropolitan wage rates;
- ▶ Limited promotion opportunities; and
- ▶ Reduced access to medical facilities and doctors.

The Strategy will need to encourage the development of effective needs/evidence based planning approach through social plans. The Council will need to work with key stakeholders across sectors to develop strategies to attract and retain a diverse population, particularly the 19-35 age group and professional and skilled workers, to ensure social and economic sustainability within the Shire. In addition, the social plans will need to develop initiatives aimed at raising the profile of the region and raising awareness of opportunities for employment, business development and quality of life, targeting young families.

The out migration of the young skilled and educated population affects the social and economic viability of the Warrumbungle Shire. To encourage young, skilled, working age people to stay, the LGA must provide well-located employment in addition to an attractive lifestyle and environment. Hence, this Strategy recognises that young people have particular needs, many of which can be addressed in planning policies.

### ***Planning for the Indigenous Community***

As stated in Section 2 a high proportion of the population is made up of the indigenous population. Unlike the general population, the indigenous population of the Shire is increasing. We also know that the indigenous population has a high age – dependency ratio which means there are a high proportion of indigenous people aged below 14 years and above 65 years.

Indigenous populations in Australia have high demands for health services of all types and often need improved welfare services and housing. The large number of young people emphasises the need for childcare, education, sporting and entertainment facilities, which need to be accessible to individual communities. Employment is a big issue in indigenous communities and the need for skills, training and real jobs that can be undertaken within the Shire is important.

The challenge is to identify ways to effectively plan for the future of the indigenous population. The best persons to identify aspirations, local challenges and issues are the indigenous community themselves. Indigenous planning needs to be culturally appropriate, not just inclusive. Agencies must also consider that indigenous boundaries may differ from mainstream administrative boundaries.

Local government is in the best position to foster localised partnerships with the indigenous community. By working in partnership with the indigenous community, Council can achieve better outcomes for them, help build skills of the community members and deliver concrete plans to bring practical improvements in local communities.

Council should oversee the development of a local community plan for their area. These community plans should be developed with the local Aboriginal community with assistance of a Council staff member. The indigenous community plans should be linked with the Council's social/community plan. The plan should focus on what steps need to be taken in order to make the community stronger with a focus on areas such as sport, recreation, healthy living and participation in employment, training and civic activities (e.g. sports clubs).

Successful examples of place-based community plans and partnerships include the Yarning Circles (Brisbane City Council), Local Indigenous Networks and Regional Indigenous Council (Victoria, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2007) and the Brisbane North Negotiation Table (Department of Housing, 2006). A common element of all these initiatives is that the partnerships have been based on understanding and respect for cultural differences.

## 6.2.1 Actions: Demographic Change

### Declining population

- ▶ Work with key stakeholders across business sectors to develop employment opportunities to attract and retain a diverse population, particularly the 19-35 age group and professional and skilled workers. This will need to build on the strengths of the Warrumbungle Shire such as agriculture, mining, transport and land availability.
- ▶ Liaise more closely with relevant stakeholders regarding opportunities to attract skilled migrants from overseas.
- ▶ Develop initiatives aimed at raising the profile of the Warrumbungle Shire and raising awareness of opportunities for employment, business development and quality of life, targeting young families.
- ▶ Identify opportunities for residential, rural residential, industrial and commercial development and community facilities where there is projected future demand and where growth can be successfully integrated into existing settlements.

### Aging population

- ▶ Examine the impact of an aging population on the Warrumbungle Shire's finances (revenue and expenditure) and service provision (infrastructure, community support, health promotion and aged care services).
- ▶ Provide opportunities for the development of retirement villages, nursing homes and similar accommodation, which will free up family housing. Sites for aged housing should be integrated within the community and have ready access to transport and other community and human services.
- ▶ To provide for aged housing through joint developments between Councils housing providers and community groups.
- ▶ Facilitate the effective engagement of older people in local government decision-making processes by fostering relationships with seniors' organisations (in particular organisations that represent Indigenous Australians and culturally and linguistically diverse groups).
- ▶ In areas of settlement expansion consideration must be given to community needs for services including recreational facilities.

### Declining Working Population

- ▶ Foster employment opportunities for young adults and lobby state and federal governments to support rural traineeship programs, cadetships and apprenticeships.
- ▶ Encourage opportunities to develop youth training and education programmes in Council.
- ▶ Implement a Youth engagement Strategy to determine the youth needs for the Shire.
- ▶ Planning for the Indigenous Community
- ▶ Inform the planning process through a localised, place based indigenous community plan, which should include aspirations and priorities of the community, strategies for achieving the vision and how they would be implemented and monitored. The plan would be developed and endorsed by the local indigenous community in partnership with the Council.

- ▶ Engage the indigenous community in land use planning processes through a current and culturally appropriate engagement framework. This will help develop the community plan with groups and individuals who may be able to provide advice on how to solve issues and meet challenges.

### 6.3 Open Space and Recreational Facilities

Open spaces and recreational facilities contribute to the quality of life enjoyed by the Warrumbungle community. Well-planned, designed and implemented open space and recreation planning policies aid in the delivery of a range of broader personal, social, economic and environmental objectives for the community.

Open spaces are often thought of as local neighbourhood parks, reserves or conservation areas, however open space can be any land or water setting maintained for a variety of environmental and social purposes that is utilised by the community. Therefore, open spaces also include sport, recreation and leisure facilities, urban public space, urban and rural landscapes, linear linkages and riparian reserves.

While predominantly publicly owned and maintained, open spaces can also include private land such as golf courses, private reserves and trails, as well as agricultural land (which often contributes to broader regional landscape values). The Warrumbungle National Park, Pilliga Nature Reserve and Coolah Tops National Park provide residents with an additional wide range of opportunities for outdoor pursuits, catering for all levels of fitness, experienced and interest. Appendix A shows some of the public and private open space within the Shire. However, not all open space and recreational facilities such as private reserves and trails have been listed.

Further, not all open space needs to be zoned as 'open space' under the Local Environmental Plan. Indeed zoning under the LEP can create difficulties for the broader multi-purpose function of some open spaces.

In February 2008, Warrumbungle Shire Council adopted the *Community Social/Cultural Plan*. This Plan identified gaps in open space and recreational needs from the community. The Plan Stated "*The current playgrounds in the Warrumbungle LGA cater predominantly for Pre School and school aged children with very little equipment specifically available for children under the age of three years. Consultation with service providers and residents revealed the need for having some playgrounds mainly catering for children under 3 and adequate shade for these playgrounds. The ongoing maintenance and replacement of the play equipment in the local parks and playground was another concern expressed during the consultation. The challenge for Council is the ability to seek adequate resources to meet the identified needs.*"

Council must ensure that its open space provision is responsive to the changing needs of the community. Car parks, change rooms, play equipment, sports facilities such as skate areas, walking paths, cycle tracks, and seating are all consistent with functional open space areas. As identified in the *Community Social/Cultural Plan* Council must ensure facilities are accessible for people with disabilities, are provided with acceptable levels of amenity for users, and that no damage to the environment results.

Sporting facilities complement the open space network, but are focused on purpose built structures and environments for active recreation pursuits. These can also be publicly or privately owned. The construction and maintenance of sporting facilities can be a significant expense and within the region are designed to serve a broader regional catchment to avoid under-utilisation. A regional approach to providing major sporting facilities ensures that unnecessary duplication of facilities is avoided, thereby

minimising long-term costs to the community. Protecting regionally significant sporting facilities from land use conflicts is also a key consideration.

The Warrumbungle Section 94A (fixed development consent levy) 2009 enables Council to levy new residential, tourist, commercial and industrial development for funds to assist with the provision of open space and recreation facilities, community facilities, waste depot within the Shire and the administration of funds collected under the plan. This Plan will ensure further resources are utilised for open space and recreational purpose.

Council's stretched resources will need to be well managed in the future to ensure those gaps identified in the *Community Social/Cultural Plan (WSC, 2008)* are completed for the well being of the community.

### 6.3.1 Actions: Open Space and Recreation

- ▶ Maintain at least the current rate of provision of open space and recreational services to all settlements.
- ▶ Create a framework to give direction for the purchase and improvement of strategic open space in order to resolve the identified gaps for open space and cultural facilities in the *Community Social/Cultural Plan (WSC, 2008)*.
- ▶ Support the development of major facilities and open space for public use and capitalise on the economic opportunities they present, such as tourism, recreation and increased land values.
- ▶ Design open space to be adaptable and accommodate changing recreational uses over time.
- ▶ Enhance recreational focal points by upgrading facilities and amenities.
- ▶ Adopt the standard zones for recreational and open space areas required under the Standard Template. This includes the RE1 Public Recreation which is generally intended for a wide range of public recreation areas or RE2 Private Recreation which is on land that is privately owned or managed. The Department of Planning recommends the following for the application of the recreational zones:

*The application of the RE1 and RE2 zones is to be based on the existing or proposed use of the land. Councils may also wish to use the community/operational categorisation to inform their choice between RE1 and RE2.*

*RE1 Public Recreation: This zone is intended for a wide range of existing or proposed public recreation areas and activities, including local and regional open space. Councils may generally permit typical public recreation uses in this zone. A range of land uses compatible with the recreation use of the land should be permitted. The RE1 zone should not be applied to any facility that does not allow public access, e.g. Bowling Clubs on public land. Registered clubs is therefore not considered a suitable land use definition for inclusion the RE1 zone. (SIC) It is intended that this zone be used for land if it is proposed for public acquisition. Any such land should be outlined and annotated on the Land Reservation Acquisition Map and the relevant acquisition authority identified in the table in clause 5.1.*

*RE2 Private Recreation: This zone is intended to cover a wide range of recreation areas and facilities on land that is privately owned or managed. It is not intended that this zone be used for public facilities that are privately managed, such as public baths – the RE1 Public Recreation zone should be used for this purpose*

## 6.4 Indigenous Heritage

The Warrumbungle Shire has a rich and long history, which forms the basis of the Shire's indigenous cultural heritage values. The area covered by the former Coonabarabran Shire sits at the convergence of the territories of three Aboriginal language groups, the Gamilaraay to the northeast, the Wiradjuri to the south and the Wayilwan to the west. Archaeological evidence suggests that indigenous people have occupied the land to the east of Coonabarabran for up to 25,000 years and in the Warrumbungle Ranges for up to 17,000 years (High Ground Consulting, 2006).

Specific indigenous sites around Coonabarabran that have been identified and studied include Kawambarai Cave, Crazy Man Cave, the cave containing the 'girl with the dilly bag', Tara Cave and many other rock shelters, open campsites and scarred trees. Some caves in the Warrumbungle Ranges contain hand stencils and engravings and bora grounds are located in a number of places. Grinding grooves are evident on the rocks of the Castlereagh River at Willow Vale, close to the centre of Coonabarabran (High Ground Consulting, 2006).

NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System and the National Estate lists approximately 720 sites in the Warrumbungle Shire. In addition *the Community Based Heritage Study of the former Coonabarabran Shire* (High Ground Consulting, 2006) listed several places of significant value to the local indigenous population this includes Burrabeedee Mission Site, Gunnedah Hill, Nandi Hill Bora Ground, Willow Vale and Wokla (former Burrabeedee buildings). These sites have been recommended to be included in the new LEP.

Knowledge of cultural places and their values is often confidential and difficult to obtain. Engagement and partnerships with the indigenous community can provide opportunities for information sharing and effective management of cultural values and cultural heritage. Information about places of cultural significance must be managed in a way that satisfies the custodians of the area while ensuring those managing the land have access to sufficient data to ensure proper management.

This Strategy aims to acknowledge and respect the important indigenous cultural heritage of the Warrumbungle Shire and ensure that sites of cultural importance to the Aboriginal community are recognised and appropriately managed.

### 6.4.1 Actions: Indigenous Heritage

- ▶ Apply statutory protection measures in the new LEP to Aboriginal sacred sites, objects, values and landscapes, including the retention of natural processes that are part of the significance of a place
- ▶ Identify any further the Indigenous heritage significance within Warrumbungle Shire, in consultation with local Aboriginal groups.
- ▶ Identified areas in the *Community Based Heritage Study of the former Coonabarabran Shire* (High Ground Consulting, 2006) should be protected and taken into account in strategic land use planning processes.
- ▶ Ensure that sites that are sacred to indigenous tribes are protected and managed in accordance with traditional Aboriginal custom.
- ▶ Continue collecting oral histories with a view to identifying significant places and preserving traditional indigenous knowledge as well as contemporary experiences.
- ▶ Adopt planning provisions that ensure any development likely to threaten indigenous relics is preceded by an archaeological investigation to assess the likely impact upon them.

## 6.5 Non Indigenous Heritage

The Warrumbungle Shire has a long history with squatters moving into the area in the 1830's and settlements largely appearing in response to agricultural developments. Non-Indigenous heritage also consists of landscapes, places, buildings and groups of buildings, and precincts. The built heritage of the Warrumbungle displays a great diversity of types and styles, reflecting the unique processes that have shaped its towns, villages and rural centres. The development of many settlements can be traced through the locations and styles of their buildings.

Currently the Coonabarabran LEP 1990 lists five heritage items and the Coolah LEP 2000 lists 20 items which includes two National Estate items. Many items include cemeteries and court houses within the locality. Warrumbungle National Park was also listed on the National Heritage List in December 2006.

The most recent listing on the State Heritage list in 2010 was the Wooleybah Sawmill and Settlement – Old Wooleybah Road Kenebri. This was listed as it is a rare surviving intact example of a bush sawmill and settlement dating from the 1930's in the Pilliga Scrub. This sawmill was a major source of employment for the local Aboriginal community from the 1930's until the closure of the mill in the late 1990's.

The Thematic History of the former Coonabarabran Shire (High Ground Consulting 2006) describes in detail the history of the area. In addition the *Community Based Heritage Study of the former Coonabarabran Shire* (High Ground Consulting, 2006) includes preliminary list of 142 heritage items and the *Coolah Shire (former) Heritage Study Report* (B J Hickson, 2004) includes approximately 220 heritage items. These studies also list recommended items for the new LEP.

Further work was undertaken by High Ground Consulting, being the Warrumbungle Shire Heritage Strategy 2009-2012. The strategy and accompanying Heritage Action Plan for 2008/2009 have been prepared to meet the requirements of the Heritage Branch, (NSW Department of Planning) Three Year funding agreement to support local government heritage management in NSW. The Heritage Action Plan covers the following key performance areas and outcomes. The study identified several locations which are suitable for conservation areas (shown in Figure 102 to Figure 112). These include the following:

- ▶ Baradine – Wellington Street between Narren and Darling Streets.
- ▶ Binnaway – Renshaw Street between Bullinda Street and Yarran Street.
- ▶ Coolah – Binnia Street between Campbell Street and Booyamurra Street.
- ▶ Coonabarabran
  - John Street between Cassilis Street and the Castlereagh River.
  - Dalgarno Street between Charles Street and Robertson Street.
- ▶ Dunedoo – Bolaro Street (southern side) between Wallaroo Street and Merrygoen Street.
- ▶ Mendooran – Bandulla Street between Napier Street and Yalcogran Street.

The Warrumbungle Shire heritage is recognised by the community as an asset that requires ongoing and careful management. Therefore, the recommendations of the Heritage Studies should be implemented through the new LEP by the creation of a heritage schedule that lists heritage items and conservation areas.

In addition, the new LEP needs to consider the development of appropriate processes and decision-making criteria concerning heritage-listed buildings and the attributes that would need to be considered in the event of changed use or redevelopment. In addition to the mechanisms regulating development

through the new LEP there are many measures that should be considered as part of a broader strategy to better manage the Warrumbungle Shire's heritage.

Council would work towards its strategic goal of retaining the Warrumbungle Shire character and better managing its heritage by implementing a range of measures that would complement the LEP. Council should consider:

- ▶ introducing best practice guidelines for owners of heritage-listed properties; and
- ▶ engaging expert advice (pre development application lodgement) for owners of heritage-listed properties to reduce the potential for unsympathetic development proposals.

A coordinated approach will achieve synergies for heritage protection and result in reduced levels of conflict and a reduced regulatory burden for owners of heritage-listed properties.

It is important for the conservation and retention of the non - indigenous heritage of the Warrumbungle Shire that places of heritage significance have a useful purpose. The capacity of heritage buildings and places to take up development opportunities is often regarded as a constraint and one that often leads to the decline of the building. There are significant amounts of under-utilised heritage features.

Adaptive reuse is a contentious issue, which lies at the heart of heritage conservation and appreciation, especially in regional towns where resources are limited. To address this issue, planning controls need to be flexible enough to promote innovative reuse of heritage buildings, each assessed on its merits and in accordance with local and state legislation.

#### 6.5.1 Actions: Non Indigenous Heritage

- ▶ Implement the recommendations from the *Community Based Heritage Study of the former Coonabarabran Shire* (High Ground Consulting, 2006) and the *Coolah Shire (former) Heritage Study Report* (B J Hickson, 2004) through the new LEP by the creation of a heritage schedule that lists heritage items.
- ▶ Implement the recommendations from the Warrumbungle Shire Heritage Strategy 2009-2012 and include the six conversation areas as shown in Figure 102 to Figure 112 in the new LEP.
- ▶ Prepare a DCP to support the LEP and provide additional detailed guidelines and protection for development in relation to heritage items and conservation areas.
- ▶ Ensure that the planning controls are sufficiently flexible to consider adaptive reuse of heritage places where this would contribute to their survival and ongoing management.
- ▶ Promote the financial and societal benefits of heritage conservation to landowners, the tourism industry and business through the media.
- ▶ Review the existing development control plans for towns and villages with identified heritage character, and amend where necessary.
- ▶ Develop streetscape protection measures for all towns with heritage significance.
- ▶ Develop and implement an education program informing the community on the benefits of heritage conservation.

### **What's the difference between the Heritage items and Conservation areas?**

**Heritage items** are individual buildings, structures and places of individual value. They are afforded statutory protection by their inclusion in the Warrumbungle Shire Local Environmental Plan. The heritage items have been identified in the heritage study are listed in a schedule to the LEP. Heritage items consist of those things we have inherited and want to keep. These places and objects give us a sense of the past and of our cultural identity. They are the things we want to protect and pass on to future generations so that they too will understand what came before them.

**Conservation areas** are areas in which the historic origins and relationships between various elements create a cohesive sense of place that is worth keeping. Heritage conservation areas provide an important opportunity to conserve and interpret the heritage significance of an area or significant townscape, group of buildings and sites. It is important that the heritage significance of the whole area is considered when proposing development.

While the individual buildings that comprise a conservation area may not have sufficient significance to be listed as heritage items, collectively they are considered to possess a value worth retaining. Conservation areas generally recognise that many buildings have significant heritage value and are expected to be retained, while other buildings are not expected to be retained as they may be of little heritage value. Within conservation areas there is a focus on the protection of the external envelope of buildings, gardens, and structures.

### **What does this mean to property owners?**

Listing as a heritage item or within a conservation area recognises the heritage significance of your property. It is a mark of the community value for your property as evidence of the history of the area.

*It is important to realise that what makes these properties important (their heritage significance) transcends the ownership of that property at any given time.*

Owners or potential buyers of heritage properties need to assess the suitability of the property for their current and future needs. Although Council is supportive of the re-use of heritage properties requirements beyond those provided by the existing structures may not be able to be accommodated.

### **Does this mean I can make no changes?**

Heritage listing of a place or item does not prohibit any future change, but provides the framework in which changes can occur. Heritage controls function to retain and restore the significant elements of items and places, while allowing sympathetic development to occur. For example, original features can be retained, while also updating service areas and sometimes adding new living space to the rear in a sympathetic manner.

### **What are the benefits?**

Some additional benefits for heritage properties include:

- ▶ Added protection for your property from inappropriate development close to you that may devalue your property, and help to maintain the special quality of environment that attracted you to the property and the surrounding neighbourhood.
- ▶ The distinctive identity of conservation areas and heritage items, valued by their residents, will be kept for all to enjoy.

- ▶ With Council consent, heritage items may be used for any purpose including those not ordinarily permitted within its zone, provided that it will not reduce its heritage significance, residential density or surrounding amenity.
- ▶ All heritage-listed properties are eligible for reduced land tax. Owners of heritage items and buildings in conservation areas can request a “heritage restricted” valuation, which can adjust the land tax to reflect the existing property value rather than the land’s maximum redevelopment potential.
- ▶ Owners of heritage items that produce income may be able to claim tax deductions for maintenance and repair work or depreciation against the assessed income- discuss this with your tax advisor.
- ▶ There are funding sources that owners of heritage items should be able to access for assistance include the Heritage Office Small Grants program, Commonwealth Grants - The Cultural Heritage Projects Program (CHPP) , The Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW heritage Grants and the Ministry for the Arts



**State Heritage Listing – Old police station and court house in Coolah**

## A Concise History of Warrumbungle Shire

The area covered by the former Coonabarabran Shire sits at the convergence of the territories of three Aboriginal language groups, the Gamilaraay to the northeast, the Wiradjuri to the south and the Wayilwan to the west. Archaeological evidence suggests that indigenous people have occupied the land to the east of Coonabarabran for up to 25,000 years and in the Warrumbungle Ranges for up to 17,000 years.

The first European engagement with the present Warrumbungle Shire occurred in 1818 with Oxley and Evans' exploratory journey from the Macquarie River to Port Macquarie. The first migrations of Europeans into the region occurred from the 1820s, within a fairly short time of John Oxley's first journey. The discovery of easy passes over the Liverpool ranges opened paths for squatters to move mobs of cattle and sheep into the rich Liverpool Plains. Andrew Brown of Coerwull, Bowenfels (at the western end of the Lithgow valley) is credited to be the first European to squat on the Castlereagh River. Brown spent the years around 1830 scouting runs for himself and his employer, James Walker of Wallerawang. James Walker's main sheep station employed over 60 men in 1839. Outstations of *Biamble* such as *Goorianawa* and *Baradine* were operated for years by two men.

The indigenous people of the Warrumbungle Region were displaced by European settlement. Aboriginal people of the region resisted incursions into their land, loss of resources and sexual exploitation. The loss of societal cohesion and impact of disease among Aboriginal people has been recorded in a number of places.

The Shire developed over the next century or so as an agricultural district as from period 1860 to 1880 saw a movement of wheat growing away from the coastal areas of New South Wales to the inland. Most early selectors tended to grow small acreages of wheat that provided flour for their own consumption. Any surplus could also be sold. Wheat was taken to Robert Neilson's or McIntyre's mills at Coonabarabran. The second half of the 19th Century was also characterised by the encroachment of the Pilliga Forest into lands which had previously been used for grazing. By 1870 the acacia and cypress trees of the Pilliga had begun to invade land which had been used for grazing since the 1830s. During the 19th century a network of travelling stock routes was established to facilitate the movement of stock around the colony.

In the inter-war period, the first wave of subdivision occurred, with estates created for returned soldiers. In addition, newly settled migrants from Europe moved into many regional areas and made their mark. Former Forest Foreman Buster Davies recalled European migrants who worked in the Pilliga forests after the war. The post-war period saw decades of consolidation of development within the Shire; accompanied by population growth from European immigration and a baby boom. The 20th century saw substantial changes in land management practices and pastoralism. The wool boom of the 1950s saw substantial investment in many rural properties with homesteads and woolsheds being modernised, modified or replaced.

Coonabarabran which is the Shire's largest town developed around a crossing of the Castlereagh River as a trading and administrative centre. Initial development included stores and inns which serviced the pastoralists of the district. The built environment of Coonabarabran reflects the steady but unspectacular development of the town since the 1890s. Housing styles represent a substantial amount of building in the Federation era and ongoing development through the 20th century.

Coolah was important to the very earliest European settlement west of the Mountains, and indeed was used as the so called limit of location by Governor Darling i.e. 'west of the black stump'. The "Black Stump Run" is described in the Government Gazette of 19th June 1850, as an area estimated at 16,000 acres with grazing capacities of 640 cattle. It was bounded by the Coolah Range on the south, on the north by the (Binnaway) road leading to the big river (the Castlereagh). Governor Darling's proclamation of Limits of Settlement meant that no-one was to go beyond the Black Stump Run'. This uniquely Australian colloquialism has put Coolah on the cultural map.

## 7. Employment Lands

### 7.1 Facilitating Economic Growth

If the Warrumbungle Shire is to maximise its economic potential, it is essential this Strategy considers future sources of growth and develop strategic actions to facilitate and capture them. It is only through sustained economic growth that Warrumbungle Shire will be able to enhance the levels of community services, cultural facilities and environmental protection that underpin the lifestyle the community values.

The economy of the Warrumbungle Shire has been heavily affected by a number of forces associated with globalisation. These include the decline and restructuring of traditional farming practices, the shift from manufacturing to service sector activities, the effect of agglomeration economies in driving growth in larger regional centres, the effect of information and communication technologies, and the emergence of lifestyle preferences such as the “sea change” and “tree change” phenomenon (SGS, 2008).

In addition, the decline in the traditional sector of agriculture has had significant implications to the Shire. Together with a concentration of older and younger non-working age brackets (refer to section 2), this is constraining the capacity of the labour force to some extent. As a consequence, the Shire’s economy is undergoing a transition period of significant structural change.

The Warrumbungle Shire Council developed an *Economic Development Strategy* in 2006 which details a framework for encouraging, coordinating and facilitating economic development within the Shire across a range of industry sectors and localities. This Warrumbungle Shire Land Use Strategy utilises the recommendations from the *Economic Development Strategy* (Rand & Associates, 2006) as well as other land use actions which will facilitate economic growth.

The *Economic Development Strategy* identified priorities for economic development which included the following. Each priority had specific actions in order to undertake each priority.

<b>Priority 1 -</b>	<b>To work with existing businesses, particularly those that are at risk of closing down and those that have the potential to expand and/or diversify.</b>
<b>Priority 2 -</b>	<b>To ensure that there is sufficient land available to accommodate growth.</b>
<b>Priority 3 -</b>	<b>To provide the 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure needed to support growth.</b>
<b>Priority 4 -</b>	<b>To improve the presentation of the towns and the 'liveability' of the Shire.</b>
<b>Priority 5 -</b>	<b>To encourage 'smarter' ways of doing business.</b>
<b>Priority 6 -</b>	<b>To target specific economic sectors and potential business opportunities.</b>

Source: Rand & Associates, 2006

Implementing the above priorities through the actions stated in the *Economic Development Strategy* provides a significant opportunity to enhance the locational advantage of being on the Newell Highway (a major interstate transport corridor) with strong east-west connections to the Hunter Valley and to Gunnedah and Tamworth; and next to the Warrumbungle and Coolah Tops National Parks and Pilliga Forest as well as next to the Siding Spring observatory.

In addition there are industrial opportunities associated that will drive economic development for the broader region, by encouraging increased population, number of visitors with flow on effects to gross regional product. Benefits from realisation of the above priorities will include making Coonabarabran Town Centre a more vibrant and active space, attracting significant investment to the broader region.

Accordingly, the Shire's capacity to create jobs and support the preferred pattern of development requires specific strategies and initiatives. These will need to focus attention on:

- ▶ encouraging skills to support industry and growth;
- ▶ developing a more outward looking, entrepreneurial culture including increased integration into the global economy;
- ▶ continuing to provide land for industry and economic activity that creates employment close to where people live;
- ▶ preserving the Shire's natural economic advantages; and
- ▶ diversifying the Shire's economic base.

Land use contributes directly to the Warrumbungle Shire economy. Agriculture alone already account for millions per year in direct value to the economy, with additional value coming from related industries. Other priority industries also include tourism, forestry, health and niche businesses such as abattoirs. For a large majority of the Shire there is no significant competition for land use, although there is pressure for land for rural residential development, which is pushing out traditional agricultural land uses.

There are two opportunities for intervention this Strategy can examine: firstly, to improve the competitive position of existing and new businesses within the Warrumbungle Shire, and secondly, to seek to eliminate or minimise the structural barriers to competitiveness. Planning should seek to intervene where there has been a failure to create the preconditions necessary for future competitiveness. This Strategy seeks to reduce the barriers to investment in ways that are consistent with the vision for the Shire. It can do this in a number of ways including:

- ▶ Council can build on existing strengths, through a new LEP, which can provide opportunities for appropriate economic growth and recognise the need for local employment in order to sustain settlement populations and ensure their economic wellbeing. Warrumbungle Shire Council capacity to promote development opportunities and diversification of activities can be inhibited by a lack of available and appropriately located land. A scarcity of land available for business development could deter investment in local areas, stifling economic growth and employment.
- ▶ Ensure that land is available for development and is adequately served by infrastructure, and should be responsive to economic trends. It should provide for different land uses to cater for different needs, encourage competition and provide the flexibility required by industries to develop in appropriate locations.
- ▶ Giving priority to investment that improves necessary transport, energy and communications infrastructure. Cost-effective transport and access to high speed internet will be significant drivers of competitiveness.
- ▶ Minimising barriers to the establishment of small businesses by ensuring flexible location and impact-based assessments, promoting, for example, working from home.

- ▶ Supporting inward migration, education and skills development and a culture of lifelong learning to ensure sufficient employees with the skills necessary to support and drive economic development. Portability of skills across sectors is important in this context.

Many of these concerns are outside the traditional role of land use planning however this strategy presents an opportunity for increased coordination and alignment of policy goals.

### 7.1.1 Actions - Economic Growth

- ▶ Coordinate an Economic Committee with Council representatives as well as State and regional organisations such as the Department of State & Regional Development (DSRD), the Orana Region Development Board (ORDB) and the Orana Area Consultative Committee (OACC) in order to implement the actions stated in the Warrumbungle Shire *Economic Development Strategy*.
- ▶ Encourage existing industries to investigate opportunities to expand their industry base through value-adding to existing products expanding the range of products and establishing synergistic opportunities with other existing or new industries.
- ▶ Identify opportunities and support studies to develop new industries and products in the Shire, in particular, those which are synergistic with existing industries, have high value-adding components or where the region has distinct comparative advantages.
- ▶ Ensure planning policy facilitates the establishment of new businesses based on the competitive advantages of the Warrumbungle Shire, including providing access to major road routes and rail lines, suitable land and separation distances from adjoining land uses.
- ▶ Lobby the State Government to facilitate the development of a range of education and training infrastructure and programs that are accessible to the community, respond to specific industry needs and support a highly skilled work-force.
- ▶ Develop industry clusters and partnerships, targeting industries relevant to the LGA's competitive advantages and market opportunities.
- ▶ Provide for the location and land needs of key industry sectors by changing Development Control Plans to include performance-based policies based upon land capability assessment.
- ▶ In rural zones encourage the processing of local agricultural products, low key tourist accommodation and facilities and other primary production related forms of value adding land uses.
- ▶ Encourage the development of intensive agricultural industries where they can be serviced with necessary infrastructure and in appropriate locations to avoid land use conflicts.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities to develop and promote indigenous creative outputs.
- ▶ Permit sustainable energy production forms in the new LEP such as wind, solar or geothermal.
- ▶ Investigate opportunities for carbon offset projects within the Warrumbungle Shire.

## 7.2 Commercial Development

Commercial areas are generally places where there are a concentration of retail, civic or cultural land uses taking place within a defined area. Commercial development is an important component of the structure of each town and plays a key role in providing goods and services, employment and a cultural focus for the community. This Strategy promotes the development of multifunctional, accessible commercial areas. The benefits of commercial areas are significant in that it:

- ▶ Enhances the viability and vibrancy of rural centres and the surrounding urban environment;
- ▶ Enables a more efficient and equitable use of resources and infrastructure;
- ▶ Assists in focussing the delivery of key community services;
- ▶ Provides a centre around which housing opportunities can be strategically planned;
- ▶ Creates opportunities to live and work more closely;
- ▶ Facilitates agglomeration economies for business and industry.

In addition to the above a commercial centre also provides sustainable jobs for a regional economy. According to the ABS Census in 2006 retailing was one of the largest contributors to the labour market at 10.8 percent. Retailing is also a growing employment sector as over a ten year period (from 1996 to 2006) the labour force increased by 1.7 percent, which was the greatest increase from any industry in the Warrumbungle Shire during this period.

The *Economic Development Strategy* (Rand, 2006), examined the viability of commercial land in the Warrumbungle Shire and stated:

*'Given the small size of the shopping centres and lack of higher order and bulky retail outlets, there is a high level of 'out-shopping' to the larger regional centres, primarily to Dubbo, Mudgee, Gunnedah and Tamworth, with some leakage to the larger centres in the Hunter. The availability of a Woolworths Supermarket in Coonabarabran and rising petrol prices may help address this in the Coonabarabran area, however it is unlikely that residents of Dunedoo or Coolah will change their shopping patterns to come to Coonabarabran when the larger centres are more accessible and offer a more extensive range of goods and services'.*

This Strategy provides a framework to reduce the 'out shopping' in the Shire by encouraging development especially multipurpose and large lot developments.

The commercial areas in the Shire are defined in accordance with the hierarchy (shown in section 5) to ensure complementarities and efficiencies rather than creating unnecessary competition between centres. In addition identifying a hierarchy of centres will promote retail and commercial development that matches the size and character of the town. Understanding the role of the centre assists in determining the need for expansion of any business zones in line with projected demand.

In addition, this Strategy recommends that developments that provide concentrated employment opportunities or generate significant community patronage should be located within the commercial centres. Out-of-centre development is inconsistent with this principle. It can diminish town vitality and detract from economic growth by diluting public and private investment in centre related activities, facilities and infrastructure. Out-of-centre development is highly damaging to main street commercial centres such as those of the Warrumbungle Shire.

### **7.2.1 Existing Commercial Land Supply**

There are three main commercial areas within the Warrumbungle Shire Council area being, Dunedoo Coolah and Coonabarabran, with the former having the largest area of commercial land. There is also limited commercial and retail provision within the villages of Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran, Merrygoen. Each of these centres is discussed briefly below.

### Coonabarabran

The commercial land of Coonabarabran is centred around the Newell Highway and has a high amount of through traffic, carrying in the order of 1,500 to 2,000 vehicles per day through Coonabarabran (Rand, 2006). The area is bounded to the north by Essex Street and the Castlereagh River and to the east by Charles Street and to the west by Robertson Street. The land to the north is restricted by the Castlereagh River and to the west and east by residential development.

Coonabarabran has several large retailers including a Woolworths Supermarket and Foodworks. There are also a variety of food outlets including Subway, Eagle Boys, Chinese Restaurants as well as several cafes. There is a choice of eateries at the Bowling Club, Golf Club and three Hotels within the centre. The town also offers basic services including a bakery, newsagent, chemist, hairdresser etc. and a limited range of higher order comparison good outlets such as Retravision. Coonabarabran also includes some administrative businesses including the Council chambers.

The vacancy rate in retail premises in Coonabarabran is very low, with premises in the main shopping strip being very quick to let. The Economic Development Strategy (Rand, 2006) found that 'since the Woolworths announcement, there has been a few national traders have made preliminary inquiries about the centre, with these traders including Country Target. The centre would benefit from having a Country Target or Best & Less style outlet as a second anchor to the supermarkets'. The Woolworths announcement refers to the supermarket that is now fully operational in Dalgarno Street.

**Figure 11 Coonabarabran Commercial Centre**



### Dunedoo

The main commercial area of Dunedoo is to the south of the Golden Highway. The area is bounded to the south by Digilah Street, to the east by Wargundy Street and to the north by the railway. Dunedoo has a very attractive park on the north side of the highway with silos and heritage railway buildings.

Dunedoo has a small supermarket (5 Star) and basic retail services including a newsagent and chemist. There are also a number of rural supply / hardware outlets plus an antique / old wares shop and arts & craft outlet. There are two hotels as well as a bowling club and several cafes and a pie shop. A motel is also located in the main street among the retail buildings.

Dunedoo's position on the Golden Highway ensures it functions as a highway service centre. However, the close proximity to Dubbo and Mudgee results in a relatively high level of 'out-shopping' to these other locations. There are several vacant shops within the centre. There is a vacant hotel within the main centre and a vacant motel on the edge of town.

**Figure 12 Dunedoo Commercial Centre**



### **Coolah**

The main commercial area of Coolah surrounds Binnia Street / Black Stump Way. The area is bounded to the north by the Golf Course and residential development to the east and south by industrial and residential land uses and to the west by residential dwellings. The commercial area services the surrounding villages of Cassilis, Premer, Tambar Springs and Leadville. The commercial area to the north affords some district view due to its topography and the centre has several well maintained heritage buildings. These aspects, including the landscaping create an attractive centre.

Coolah contains two supermarkets including an IGA supermarket and an independent supermarket, rural supply, hardware outlets a range of basic services and eateries. The centre has a new hall which provides a modern library, gymnasium, exhibition gallery and Visitor Information Centre. The centre also has the Coolah Veterinary Clinic which services a large area extending into Gunnedah and Upper Hunter Shires.

**Figure 13 Coolah Commercial Centre**



## 7.2.2 Recent Commercial Demand Trends

There were 93 transactions of commercial properties recorded for Warrumbungle Shire between 2000 and 2011. As shown below in Table 17, the majority of the commercial sales during this time (50 altogether) occurred in Coonabarabran with the largest median price occurring in 2007. There were fourteen commercial sales in 2000, thirteen in 2007 and ten in 2010.

**Table 17 Commercial Sales, Warrumbungle Shire Council 2000 – 2011**

Suburb	Year	Land Use	Number of Sales	Median Sale
Coolah	2000	General commercial	3	\$68,000
Coonabarabran	2000	General commercial	8	\$48,750
Dunedoo	2000	General commercial	3	\$40,000
Coolah	2001	General commercial	1	\$23,000
Coonabarabran	2001	General commercial	3	\$46,000
Dunedoo	2001	General commercial	1	\$108,000
Coonabarabran	2002	General commercial	5	\$ 80,000
Dunedoo	2002	General commercial	1	\$120,000
Coolah	2003	General commercial	1	\$57,100
Coonabarabran	2003	General commercial	6	\$61,000
Dunedoo	2003	General commercial	1	\$12,750
Coolah	2004	General commercial	1	\$10,000
Coonabarabran	2004	General commercial	3	\$110,000
Dunedoo	2004	General commercial	3	\$200,000
Coolah	2005	General commercial	1	\$78,000
Coonabarabran	2005	General commercial	5	\$100,000
Coonabarabran	2005	Commercial strata unit	1	\$220,000
Coolah	2006	General commercial	5	\$80,000
Coonabarabran	2006	General commercial	3	\$450,000
Dunedoo	2006	General commercial	1	\$275,000
Coolah	2007	General commercial	7	\$130,000
Coonabarabran	2007	General commercial	5	\$321,000
Dunedoo	2007	General commercial	1	\$170,000
Coonabarabran	2008	General commercial	3	\$ 92,000
Dunedoo	2008	General commercial	3	\$253,000
Coolah	2009	General commercial	3	\$80,000

Suburb	Year	Land Use	Number of Sales	Median Sale
Coonabarabran	2009	General commercial	3	\$ 50,000
Dunedoo	2009	General commercial	2	\$ 110,000
Coolah	2010	General commercial	4	\$ 50,625
Coonabarabran	2010	General commercial	5	\$167,000
Dunedoo	2010	General commercial	1	\$58,000

Source: RP Data, 2011

The demand for further retail and commercial property in the Warrumbungle Shire will be a product of its population growth, the spending patterns of its residents and the development of the industries that employ workers. While it is unlikely the retail sector of the Warrumbungle Shire Council will represent significant competition to either Dubbo or Tamworth in the future, there exists the need to strengthen the retail sectors in Coonabarabran to prevent scattered development which could lead to increased retail leakage. An exception to this would be the development of a type of Enterprise Corridor which should be located on the Highway and within close proximity to the Shire's major population growth centre of Coonabarabran.

### 7.2.3 Major Commercial/Retail Projects

Coonabarabran recently had a substantial retail development at 35 Dalgarno Street, with a full line Woolworth's supermarket being constructed. Stage one opened on 23 June 2007 comprising a 2,180m<sup>2</sup> Woolworths with liquor outlet. Stage two has also now opened, comprising a further 670m<sup>2</sup> of specialty area under a 12-month rent guarantee. The property will have an on-completion value of \$6.85 million and provide an initial yield of 7.75%.

### 7.2.4 Commercial Land Supply and Demand Analysis

In 2006 the *Economic Development Strategy* (Rand, 2006), examined commercial land in the Warrumbungle Shire and stated in terms of the commercial land supply that 'Coonabarabran has a shortage of commercial land' and the Council needs to 'ensure that there is sufficient land available to accommodate future growth of the shopping centres - As part of the planning process for the new Local Environmental Plan, consideration needs to be given to the future direction for the growth of the commercial centres in Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah.'

It should be noted that the Woolworths development was constructed the following year (2007) however this section examines supply and demand in further detail.

To calculate the supply of and demand for land, it is necessary to look at a number of factors, such as:

- ▶ Population growth or decline
- ▶ Approval and development rates
- ▶ Shop vacancy rates
- ▶ Land supply and utilisation

#### *Demand Methodology*

The purpose of the following is to outline the methodology to estimate the demand for additional commercial floor space for the Warrumbungle Shire, and examine if it is appropriate to expand the

commercial land available in each town centre being Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah. For the purposes of this Strategy commercial includes retail and office development.

Preparation of the Strategy will require consideration of the factors that underlie the demand for commercial floorspace and land. These factors encompass:

- ▶ The existing supply of commercial floorspace and its roles and adequacy in relation to contemporary and likely future consumer needs.
- ▶ Existing commercial vacancy rates (measured or estimated) throughout the main street and likely changes to these levels.
- ▶ Population and households resident in the Warrumbungle Shire and the long-term changes in demographic structures of the residential population.
- ▶ Long-term changes in demographic structures of the residential population.
- ▶ Household income structure of the resident population and likely structural changes to these levels.
- ▶ Ongoing changes to retail store sizes and retail distribution logistics.
- ▶ Siting and land requirements for retail/ commercial goods and services.

On the coast where population levels are predominantly increasing, estimates of demand for future commercial areas are typically based on population growth predictions translated into demand for goods and services. They can also be based on predicted increases in employment levels in retail and service industries. A more focussed analysis would also examine existing businesses to establish any expansion plans or the desirability of certain forms of development or particular locations for future development.

A further demand indicator is the number of development applications for commercial development dealt with by Council over the proceeding five years. This can give an indication of the area and type of commercial development that has historically been in demand.

The Queensland Department of State Development suggest that in order to sustain economic growth areas there is a ratio of 1 employee per 19 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. Therefore, the Warrumbungle Shire should have at least 19 m<sup>2</sup> of occupied commercial floor space per employed person (according to the last census) to sustain trading levels. With a labour force at the 2006 census of 4058 people, the Shire will need 77,102 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space distributed throughout the centres of Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo. A reasonable distribution of this might be two thirds to Coonabarabran (50,890 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space) with the other one third distributed between Coolah (13,105 m<sup>2</sup>) and Dunedoo (13,105 m<sup>2</sup>).

There is no current accepted standard for the provision of retail and commercial floorspace within small country centres. The *Shire of Murray Local Commercial Strategy in Western Australia* (Gilchrist, 1997) recommends a retail floorspace allocation of 0.93m<sup>2</sup> net lettable area per capita (i.e. per person in the Shire or locality). With an estimated Shire population of 9,800 in 2011, this method would suggest that the Warrumbungle Shire should have approximately 9115 m<sup>2</sup> of net lettable commercial floor space. Since there has never been a commercial and retail floor space analysis undertaken for Coonabarabran or anywhere else in the Shire it is not possible to be certain of the existing supply.

The Warrumbungle Shire is characterised by a declining population growth and declining employment levels and it is not possible to use the models that rely solely on growth. The relatively low population density also makes it difficult to rely on fixed ratios.

Another problem is that typically there are minimal development applications over the last five years to represent commercial development. In the case of Warrumbungle Shire that may be partly to do with the extended drought that has occurred now over a long period.

However, even with population decline it is possible to attract development as long as the conditions required for that development (resources, location, transport, workforce) are present or can easily be imported. The apparent weakness of the Warrumbungle Shire can ultimately be turned into its strengths. Factors such as the eagerness of the community to embrace development, the cost of commercial lands, the size of the land or building that is available.

In the situation where the Queensland Department of State Development's model for determining commercial floor space requirements does not yield an estimate of demand beyond existing provision, (because the per capita ratios are too low for the country areas where existing provision is more like 30 m<sup>2</sup> of floor space per employee) it is recommended that an area the equivalent of approximately 30% of the existing zoned commercial area be identified in the Strategy for potential future commercial use.

### **Coonabarabran Demand and Supply**

Growing demand for commercial space in Coonabarabran over recent years is reflected by the lack of vacant shop fronts in the town centre. There were no long lasting commercial vacancies present in the existing shops in 2010. Using the Queensland Department of State Development approach the demand for commercial floor space in Coonabarabran is assumed to be 50,890 m<sup>2</sup>.

The demand for services, and for retail and commercial floor space is a function of household formations and growth as well as population change. Anecdotally, the Council advises that there is some pressure for additional commercial and retail space in the town centre. The fact that the major development of a full line Woolworths Supermarket has occurred in Coonabarabran rather than outside of the centre is viewed as a boost to the viability of the centre. The bulk of the Warrumbungle Shire population growth is likely to be concentrated in the Coonabarabran township and in the villages and rural localities outside the township. This would suggest there is still a capacity to expand the commercial floor space supply to meet demand.

The Coonabarabran commercial centre is currently zoned 2(v) Village. It is estimated that the extent of shops and commercial premises that would generally be regarded as the commercial centre is 16.6 ha in area (refer to Figure 30). It is focussed on the Newell Highway and extends from Essex Street in the north to George Street in the south. In parts it extends in an east /west direction to include Robertson Street and Charles Street. This is quite a large amount of land and is a function of the 2(v) village zone where land in proximity to the town centre has been regarded as suitable for commercial use and residential areas have evolved as one off commercial uses commenced. However, there are still a lot of dwellings scattered within this area that could be used for commercial or retail purposes either in their current form or as part of a redevelopment project.

An assessment of the potential supply for additional retail floor space in Coonabarabran must give due consideration to the relationship between zoned commercial land and net floor space that the zoned land might yield. Victor Harbor Urban Growth Management Strategy 2008 – 2030 (City of Victor Harbour, April 2009) utilised the following assumption for land supply:

*“The 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of additional retail floor space equates to 1.6 ha (of zoned land) assuming a grossing up factor of 20%, car parking at 5.5 spaces/100m<sup>2</sup> and a 15% margin on the resultant calculation for ancillary site areas.”*

Therefore using the above, for the purposes of this analysis, 31.3% has been adopted as the proportion of the total area of commercial land that is potentially leasable. For the existing 16.6 ha in Coonabarabran town centre there is potentially 52000 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space that exists or could be made available through change of use or redevelopment.

### ***Balancing Supply and Demand in Coonabarabran***

A key requirement of the Strategy is to ensure suitable supply of commercial land to achieve established economic objectives. Using the above estimates the proposed commercial area for Coonabarabran should be able to yield 52000 m<sup>2</sup> while the estimate of demand is 50,890 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. So the proposed commercial area could yield about 1000 m<sup>2</sup> more floor space than is estimated to be required. However, within the area nominated as the recommended commercial zone for Coonabarabran there are 25 dwellings occupying approximately 2.54 ha of land. This area of underutilised land should be sufficient to cater for demand in Coonabarabran over the life of the Strategy as it is approximately 15% of the projected demand.

### ***Dunedoo***

Dunedoo commercial centre is currently zoned 2(v) Village under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000. It is estimated that the extent of shops and commercial premises that would be regarded as the commercial centre is 6.4 ha in area (refer to Figure 32). All of this is located in the town of Dunedoo and the majority is located south of the Golden Highway. The area on the northern side of the Golden Highway includes a rural supplies facility, service station and caravan park.

Using the Victor Harbour methodology for converting zoned land into supply of floor space this area should be able to yield 19,840 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. Using the Queensland Department of State Development approach to estimating demand Dunedoo should have approximately 13,105 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. So the proposed commercial area could yield approximately 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> more floor space that is estimated as required.

Some of the proposed commercial area contains residential dwellings. Given the anecdotal lack of pressure for additional retail development and the existence of approximately 20 percent vacancy in existing shops in Dunedoo it is not recommended that additional commercial land be made available at this stage.

### ***Coolah***

Coolah commercial centre is currently zoned 2(v) Village under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000. It is estimated that the extent of shops and commercial premises that would be regarded as the commercial centre is 4.7 ha in area (refer to Figure 34).

The commercial centre has retained its historic charm with many older buildings still remaining. Some have been listed with the National Trust. Given Coolah's isolated position in the Shire its retail and service sector is predominantly oriented to the needs of the permanent residential population in the surrounding areas. However, with the downturn in forestry in the area Coolah has experienced a severe population decline in recent years.

Using the Victor Harbour methodology for converting zoned land into supply of floor space this area should be able to yield 14,711 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. Using the Queensland Department of State Development approach to estimating demand Dunedoo should have approximately 13,105 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space. So the proposed commercial area could yield approximately 1,600 m<sup>2</sup> more floor space that is estimated as required.

Given the lack of pressure for additional retail development, the large amount of existing commercially zoned area for a rural town and the existence of approximately 5% vacancy of total leasable floor space it is not recommended that additional commercial land be made available at this stage. Considerable intensification (whilst still maintaining the low-scale feel of the town) is possible on land currently functioning as the commercial centre.

### ***Selection Criteria for Suitable Locations for Commercial Development***

Commercial development is an important component of the structure of each town and plays a key role in providing goods and services, employment and a cultural focus for the community. Planning for commercial land supply requires a balanced, holistic and strategic view of a range of issues. Should additional areas be required for commercial development in Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo in the future then selection of suitable locations for commercial development must consider the following (GHD, 2009):

- ▶ Developments that provide concentrated employment opportunities or generate significant community patronage should be located within the commercial centres. Out-of-centre development is inconsistent with this intent. It can diminish town vitality and detract from economic growth by diluting public and private investment in centre related activities, facilities and infrastructure;
- ▶ An assessment of the existing zoned commercial land that is currently not being used for commercial purposes;
- ▶ the locations of major attractors in the town centre needs to be encouraged as new investment will assist in upgrading facilities, and to encourage high quality design and amenity improvement;
- ▶ the locations of major off-street car parks;
- ▶ potential development sites close to the retail core area;
- ▶ the need to achieve a compact CBD;
- ▶ the need to provide commercial focus and contiguity to the prime retail street;
- ▶ encouraging economic vitality through increased linkages; and
- ▶ the location of additional floor space must ensure the commercial areas are not disjointed and lack cohesion.
- ▶ retail and commercial development respects the built form and scale of the Coonabarabran town centre, its pattern of development and historic landmarks.
- ▶ encouraging economic vitality through increased linkages; and
- ▶ the location of additional floor space must ensure the commercial areas are not disjointed or lack cohesion.

### **7.2.5 Actions – Commercial Supply and Demand**

- ▶ Apply the appropriate business zones in the Warrumbungle LEP to each town's commercial centre including Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah.
- ▶ Implement a land use monitor area to accurately identify commercial land supply and demand issues on a regular basis

- ▶ Ensure that all new commercial development is situated within existing settlement boundaries for Dunedoo and Coolah and within identified business zones in order to prevent retail leakage from the town centres and out of centre development.

### 7.3 Promotion of the Commercial Centres

For the Warrumbungle Shire to maximise its economic potential, it is essential this Strategy consider the promotion of the commercial centres especially as future sources of growth and development.

Competitiveness generates economic advantage and through this employment, higher growth, better standards of living and more sustainable services.

Each town within the Warrumbungle Shire namely Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah, have unique and specific assets that can be leveraged for economic development. These assets of the local economy that can provide opportunities for significant growth. They include:

- ▶ *Availability of commercial zoned land:* provides an opportunity for the attraction of companies to invest in the centre e.g. mining company headquarters
- ▶ *Surrounding residential land use:* a greater mix of residential and commercial land uses can bring benefits to commercial centres in terms of vibrancy, street activity, passive surveillance and an increased customer base.
- ▶ *Proximity to major highways:* especially in Dunedoo, highways allow for easy and quick access to and from Shire for the movement of products and people. However, this can also be a disadvantage. This is discussed in more detail below.
- ▶ *Heritage influence:* centres such as Coolah present as an attractive well designed town that has a heritage feel which fosters tourism business and boosts creativity.
- ▶ *Low cost housing:* The relaxed lifestyle and low cost of living is an advantage of the Warrumbungle Shire that can be used as a key selling point to attract businesses and employees to the region.
- ▶ *Availability of labour force:* An established labour force with a large proportion of workers will be attractive to businesses.

There are several opportunities within each centre to promote investment. The goal is to foster business and industry networks in proximity to residential living and recreational facilities by encouraging companies, professionals and their industry organisations to invest in creative building design and innovative commercial arrangements. Opportunities for the centres include the following.

#### *Protecting the retail core:*

Protecting the retail core in each centre is essential for ensuring the community continues to have convenient access to a full range of services and facilities and also protects the investments made by business and the Council. This Strategy provides a framework to protect the role of the commercial centre, to encourage redevelopment where appropriate, to attract new development, to upgrade facilities, and to encourage high quality design and amenity improvement. Out-of-centre development is inconsistent with the need to protect the traditional retail core. It can diminish town vitality and detract from economic growth by diluting public and private investment in centre related activities, facilities and infrastructure. Large format premises involved in bulky goods retailing, and single purpose non-food retail activities occupying large sites, should ideally be located within town centres. However, some development may be more appropriately located on the periphery of town centres. These developments may include industrial and business park type developments. The location of development on the

periphery of the centre should be assessed on community need and potential impact on the primacy and functionality of surrounding centres; maintenance of pedestrian convenience and transportation system efficiency; and standard of amenity with surrounding residential neighbourhoods.

*Encourage Newell Highway bypass of Coonabarabran:*

Coonabarabran commercial centre experiences some higher levels of interaction of local traffic movements with the Newell Highway through traffic. The interstate trucks presents reduce the visual amenity of the centre and have serious safety concerns for its residents.

In 1997 consultation began for the location of a bypass at Coonabarabran. Four short-listed route options were exhibited in August 1999 and a route selection report has since been released. It is proposed that the 6.3 km bypass will leave the existing highway 4km south of Coonabarabran, passing east of the golf course before crossing the Castlereagh River and rejoin the existing Newell Highway 1km west of the Oxley Highway junction. Only \$1 million has been allocated to the project under Auslink, indicating construction is still a number of years away. Council needs to lobby the State and Federal Governments to ensure this project is given priority.

**Figure 14 Coonabarabran Commercial Centre: Interstate truck movements produce community severance and safety concerns**



*Appropriateness of a Mixed-use Commercial Core:*

Historically, Councils have facilitated and promoted the advantages of mixed-use development (development which includes places of employment, residential and tourism uses). The promotion of mixed-use development has raised questions about the appropriateness of residential development in non-residential areas especially in rural centres.

Mixed-use developments can present certain land use compatibility conflicts. Residential uses on the same site or adjacent to commercial uses can expose residential uses to higher levels of noise than what would be expected in traditional residential development because of noise associated with traffic, loading docks, mechanical equipment (such as generator, heating, ventilation and air conditioning units), deliveries, trash hauling activities, and customer and employee use of facilities associated with commercial uses.

Where mixed-use development has been proven appropriate for metropolitan areas (e.g. shop top housing), in rural towns where the majority of residential development is single dwellings, these land use conflicts are intensified, hence reducing residential amenity. The Strategy will need to consider the appropriateness of single dwelling residential development within the commercial core of some of the town centres.

#### *Urban Design:*

Design needs to be consistent with the character and landscape values of each area and maintain their amenity and identity. This is particularly important on key tourism routes and locations. Urban design is the collaborative process of enhancing the setting for life in rural towns. A vibrant and responsive public realm has community, economic and environmental benefits. For the residents of towns and settlements, having urban spaces that are legible, distinctive, stimulating and beautiful add meaning and richness to life, promotes civic pride within the community, and helps people to efficiently access resources. Many towns have a distinctive character and identity which has historic roots and forms part of their charm and attraction for visitors. This identity should be retained.

### **7.3.1 Actions – Promotion of Commercial Centres**

- ▶ Ensure that planning controls facilitate the establishment of new businesses based on the competitive advantages of the LGA, including providing access to major roads, land, and compatibility with adjoining land use.
- ▶ Promote the safety and vibrancy of the Coonabarabran town centre.
- ▶ Contain commercial growth within the current commercial boundaries and protect the existing retail core.
- ▶ Develop infrastructure that improves trading and commercial opportunities e.g. appropriate car parking.
- ▶ Prepare revised DCP's to guide building design, landscaping and commercial layout in business zones.
- ▶ Promote the benefits of high quality urban design in project planning and development through programs, demonstration projects and public awareness.
- ▶ Reinforce the importance of active frontages between public places and the private domain to revitalise centres and create quality pedestrian experiences.
- ▶ Reinforce the importance of active frontages between public places and the private domain to revitalise centres and create quality pedestrian experiences

### **7.4 Highway Service Centres**

The RTA currently has a directive to bypass the Newell highway out of the Coonabarabran Commercial Centre. The proposal is to direct the highway along the eastern boundary of the town. It will be important

to provide the passing trucks and the travelling public with a service centre that may need to be open 24 hours a day. However, having a service centre in close proximity to residential zones will reduce the amenity of the neighbourhood especially if the centre operates for 24 hours.

Council is eager to remove trucks (as discussed above) from the main street of Coonabarabran which will increase the amenity of the town. Locating a service centre just outside the town within the rural zone would be the most logical solution. In addition, Council has had recent enquiries for a service centre on the fringe of Coonabarabran. Therefore, the new LEP will need to consider the permissibility of a service centre in an appropriate rural area. The DCP and LEP objectives should identify specific requirements for a service centre such as having safe access to the Newell and/or Oxley Highway, being in reasonable proximity to the town, not near residential areas and with minimal environmental constraints on the site.

#### **7.4.1 Actions – Highway Service Centre**

- ▶ Ensure that planning controls permit with Council consent a highway service centre in an appropriate rural location within a 5 kilometre radius from Coonabarabran and with safe access to the Newell and/or Oxley Highway.

### **7.5 Advertising Signage in Commercial Areas**

Signage is an essential means of advertising a public facility or commercial retail land use within the commercial areas of the Warrumbungle Shire. However, the siting, construction and illumination of signs can have a significant impact on the quality and amenity of settlements.

The advantages of signs for individual business and the wider benefit to surrounding businesses must be balanced with the need to retain the attractiveness and character of buildings and the historic nature of the streetscape. In the Warrumbungle Shire, this is particularly the case in the historic town of Coonabarabran.

This strategy is designed to promote both economic development and to create and improve amenity and aesthetic value. The aim is to allow reasonable signage that is compatible with the surroundings and the individual buildings concerned.

Signage can detract from the character of rural areas. Council should include guidelines in the DCP that only allow signs in rural areas if they are related to business activity occurring on that land or at that site, and are of appropriate size, design and construction. Council will also allow exemptions from the regulations for short-term activities such as sales, elections and community events.

#### **7.5.1 Actions – Advertising**

- ▶ This Strategy recognises that inappropriate advertising signage can detract from the amenity, heritage values and appearance of the commercial area of the Warrumbungle Shire. All new advertising signs should be designed and placed appropriately to their surroundings including the buildings on and near which they are located. Therefore a new comprehensive DCP should include signage guidelines for the commercial areas of the Shire.

### **7.6 Enterprise Corridor**

The Warrumbungle Shire has had increased demand for business development along the Newell Highway which need high exposure to passing traffic. These areas need to be near existing retail

centres, employment areas or concentrations of population where there is a focus for additional enterprise activities or 'highway' related businesses.

Within Coonabarabran there are two possible areas which may be suitable to this type of development. The first area is along the Newell Highway to the south of the existing commercial centre. This area is bounded to the north by Bandulla Street, to east by residential development, to the west by the Newell Highway and to the south by bushland (refer to Figure 30). Separating this area to the main commercial centre is a vacant lot and Coonabarabran High School. This area currently has a significant number of commercial uses such as a child care centre and motels. The latter relies on passing traffic.

The second area is within the northern boundary of Coonabarabran along the Newell Highway. This area is located to the east of the existing industrial land and to the north of existing residential development along Dows Lane (refer to Figure 30). This area already has highway enterprise type of development with a motel and caravan park on the site as well as a cleared site from a previous service station. Two lots to the north are covered in vegetation and will need to be subject to further investigation to the significance of that vegetation.

The purpose of encouraging the areas is to provide land on busy roads for a range of business uses not requiring a commercial context. Such uses can include land uses such as some large floor-plate commercial use. Key industries may include the following:

- ▶ Tourism
- ▶ Transport and Storage
- ▶ Information technology
- ▶ Education

It is important that when identifying which uses are appropriate for a specific Enterprise Corridor, that consideration should be given to restrict the commercial/retail development that is permitted. That is: permit non-food and non-clothing retail only (i.e. bulky goods) and permit commercial premises that have only a minor office space component. Any greater than a minor proportion (say 30%) of office space and the business should be accommodated in the commercial centre. This will ensure that existing commercial centres are protected and that these enterprise corridors will not directly compete with existing commercial centres.

#### **7.6.1 Actions – Enterprise Corridor**

- ▶ Investigate an appropriate zone for the two areas along the Newell Highway shown in Figure 30 for proposed enterprise corridor development such as tourist, logistics and transport related businesses but only if general retail can be prevented.

#### **7.7 Nature of Future Industrial Land**

To ensure the continued growth of the economic sector as discussed above and to position the Warrumbungle Shire to take advantage of potential market opportunities, both new and redeveloped land will be required in suitable quantities and locations.

For the purposes of assessing the supply for industrial land it is useful to identify two different categories of industrial activities, each having different land and locational requirements.

The first category includes those operations and firms serving local communities and businesses, for example, providing automotive services, storage services, construction materials and engineering services. This is the so-called 'service' industry sector. Often these businesses require street front exposure to passing trade and may include some component of retail goods and services from a shop front or warehouse (for example providing automotive services with spare parts).

The second category is broad but includes those operations with markets extending beyond the immediate locality or region. Businesses in this category may be more capital intensive, or combine commercial, research and manufacturing operations, or be involved in significant value adding through elaborate transformations. Large-scale storage and traditional heavier industry would be in this category. Because businesses in this category rely on inter-regional sales they are grouped together as the 'export' industry sector.

Some industrial land users will fall between these two categories and to this extent they represent two ends of a continuum. However, for the purposes of assessing demand for industrial land these categories are useful because the locational characteristics sought by businesses in one category can be distinguished from those in the other.

### ***Service Industry***

The required locational attributes for service industry could be described as follows:

- ▶ adjacent to or very near to commercial centres (not more than 1,000m);
- ▶ 1,000 to 4,000 square metre sites;
- ▶ full range of utility services;
- ▶ on-site or convenient off street parking;
- ▶ proximity to public transport; and
- ▶ road capacity for small truck movements and loading.

### ***Export Industry***

The Queensland government has published a working paper on 'Business and Industry Land Requirements and Identifying Strategically Important Sites'. These relate to business and industry of 'regional' or 'sub-regional' significance, an alternative collective for the 'export' industry category described above.

Of particular importance, from a physical location point of view is:

- ▶ the absence of significant slopes over most of the area (not more than 20% of the site over 7% slope);
- ▶ freedom from recognised endangered fauna and flora, Aboriginal heritage sites, or other significant environmental constraints;
- ▶ flood free land and flood free access;
- ▶ accessibility to highway or arterial road and if possible to a rail network;
- ▶ centrality to markets, residential and labour markets; and
- ▶ within 30 to 45 minutes of an airport.

(After GHD, 2007)

For the purposes of assessing demand for industrial land these categories are useful because the locational characteristics sought by businesses in one category can be distinguished from those in the other.

### 7.7.1 Actions – Nature of Future Industrial Development

- ▶ Ensure suitable areas are available for export industries that have existing or planned access to strategic transport infrastructure as well as other key utilities or infrastructure.
- ▶ Make adequate provision for accessible local service industry and support activities that are serviced by suitable water, stormwater, sewerage and waste disposal systems.

## 7.8 Industrial Development

Having a range of serviced and appropriately located and designated land for industrial activities will significantly improve the LGA’s ability to attract economic investment. A shortfall in the availability of industrial land could lead to the region missing strategic opportunities.

Industrial land is an important economic contributor to the Warrumbungle Shire and provides general service-based industry to support local population needs along with major value adding businesses to drive large-scale employment. The provision of market ready, attractive industrial land in the Shire would position the area more competitively for new investment in key competitive areas such as transport and freight and value adding to primary production.

### Industry Sectors

Five basic industrial sectors have been identified in the industrial property market. These sectors are identified below with an indication of the key features of these sectors.

**Table 18 Identified industrial sectors and key components for the Warrumbungle Shire**

Activity Type	Land Requirement	Location/Access
<b>1. Heavy Industry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ heavy engineering, concrete batching plants etc</li> <li>▶ with any proposed Newell Highway upgrade there will be a need for road construction related industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Medium to large sites - (5 – 50 ha)</li> <li>▶ Flat land</li> <li>▶ Need at a regional level</li> <li>▶ Large separation buffers</li> <li>▶ Provision of utilities and Information</li> <li>▶ Communications and Technology</li> <li>▶ Industry zoning</li> <li>▶ Competitively priced land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ B-double access</li> <li>▶ Proximity to freight route</li> <li>▶ Proximity to container or rail terminal</li> <li>▶ Access to supply chain/labour /customers</li> </ul>

Activity Type	Land Requirement	Location/Access
<b>Warehousing/ Transport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trend in manufacturing/ importing to outsourcing storage - distribution combined.</li> <li>Manufacturing / Component Assembly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium sites (2 ha +)</li> <li>Flat land</li> <li>Need at a regional level</li> <li>Industry zoning</li> <li>Competitively priced land</li> <li>Ready site access/egress</li> <li>Advanced Communications and Technology</li> <li>On Major transport routes emerging as transport and distribution hub.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B-double access</li> <li>Access to key freight routes</li> <li>Direct access to major road and rail.</li> <li>Proximity to customers</li> </ul>
<b>Local Trade Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car service and repair; joinery, construction and building supplies; domestic storage. Wide range of businesses that service other businesses (components, maintenance and support).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range of sizes- particular need for small sites- 500-1,000 m<sup>2</sup> ranging up to 1 ha for light industrial/ small local businesses.</li> <li>Competitively priced land</li> <li>Minor buffers</li> <li>Industrial zoning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central to customers</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Industry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural processing/ packaging</li> <li>Farm vehicle repairs/maintenance etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium to large sites</li> <li>Large separation buffers</li> <li>Competitively priced land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proximately to primary production</li> </ul>

### **What are the Emerging Industrial Trends in the Warrumbungle Shire?**

A review of recent reports such the Economic Development Strategy (Rand, 2006), points to a number of emerging trends in industry. Many of these are already becoming evident within Warrumbungle Shire industrial areas:

#### *Focus on higher value added products*

- Manufacturing has increasingly focussed on high value added goods.

#### *Industry Clustering*

- The facilitation of industry clusters will become an increasingly important economic strategy for rural regions as large and small companies co-operate in order to compete in a more competitive global marketplace.

#### *Changes in patterns of demand for industrial land*

- Industry now has a smaller land footprint, with more efficient technologies, product specialisation, and smaller production runs, outsourcing of production to a range of “just-in-time” producers, smaller plants being less expensive and more flexible.

- ▶ Industries with low inventory products seek out the lower cost land whereas industries with high inventories and high value added products seek higher cost land closer to end customers.

#### *Improved environmental performance*

- ▶ A trend towards environmentally sustainable design of industrial parks, with many industrial processes becoming lighter, cleaner and less polluting.

#### *Growth in logistics*

- ▶ There has been a growth in the wholesale trade and logistics sectors, with high productivity vehicles and a focus on fast and efficient “just-in-time” delivery to the customer.
- ▶ Industries now focus on core competencies and partner with other firms which provide intermediate goods. The logistics task has become more complex and important and is increasingly being carried out by third party specialists.

#### *Change in Hours of Operation*

- ▶ An increasing shift to 24 hour/ 7 days a week operations.

### **7.8.1 Existing Industrial Land Supply**

Within the Warrumbungle Shire there are currently five towns or villages which have industrial zoned land or land that is zoned village, but predominantly used as industrial land; these include Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran and Baradine. A summary of each is provided below.

#### ***Coonabarabran***

There is one industrial precinct in Coonabarabran which is currently zoned Zone No 4 General Industrial under the *Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990*. This is the largest industrial precinct within the Warrumbungle Shire at 65.63 ha. It is located on the northern boundary of the town, north of the Newell Highway. The precinct is bounded to the north, south and west by dense bushland.

The *Economic Development Strategy* (Rand, 2006), stated “*The Coonabarabran Industrial Estate was developed by Council as an incentive to attract small industrial businesses to town. Land was offered at very competitive prices and the blocks were quickly taken up. Because of the low price land was purchased by both investors and people looking for storage space for trucks, caravans etc.*”

The precinct contains a high proportion of relatively poorly maintained industrial sites with little attention to the appearance of the existing businesses. The precinct comprises a mix of industrial businesses involved in light and general industry including rural suppliers, wreckers, mechanical repairs, bus services and nursery and landscaping supplies as well as the Coonabarabran sewage treatment plant which is located on the northern boundary of the precinct. A map of the area is shown in Figure 36.

This area appears to be suited to a continuation of the development of industry focused on serving the local economy. However, there is a significant amount of vacant land in the precinct (approximately 50%), and many lots are being underutilised.

**Figure 15 Coonabarabran Industrial Estate – Sign Demonstrating Current Vacancies**



### Coolah

Within Coolah there are two industrial areas with a combined area of 22.3 ha (refer to Figure 40). Coolah industrial areas are currently zoned Zone 4 (a) (Industry) under the *Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000*. Each precinct is discussed in more detail below.

1. Northern Precinct: A triangular parcel of land located between Martin and Booyamurra Streets adjacent to the eastern edge of the town centre. There are 11 lots along this area (at a total of 2.49 ha) that are used for a variety of industrial uses including the rural fire service and warehousing. The Economic Development Strategy (Rand, 2006), commented about this precinct, *'It is located adjacent to the town centre and lies between the town centre and the Cunningham Caravan Park and Coolaburrungundy River. The river foreshore is potentially a recreation resource and tourist attraction for the town. Elevated residential properties also look out over the town centre to the river flats to the east, with the industrial area lying within this view-shed. Part of the industrial area can also be seen from the shopping centre and the main traffic routes through town. If the quality of development is not controlled, this area has the potential to become an 'eye-sore' for the town. As the development to date has been limited, there is opportunity to introduce design and landscape controls to protect the amenity and inherent character of the town and create an attractive place to work and visit.'*
2. Southern Precinct: The total size of the precinct is 19.81 ha. The precinct surrounds Leadville Road both to the east and west. To the west of Leadville Road with the exception of the large western lot it is occupied by residential dwellings. The only existing industrial use in this area is a rectangular parcel of land located adjacent to Railway Ave which is used for the storage and sale of hay. Located on Queensborough Street is a large vacant lot at 9.10 ha in size. To the east of Leadville Road the zoned industrial area is located on the railway corridor. This area is completely clear of any vegetation and has a large silo located on the site.

Like many towns within regional NSW, which were traditionally zoned village, industrial land uses are scattered throughout the towns, Coolah is no different. For such a small town the industrial areas are scattered throughout the village area. This can potentially cause amenity and land use conflict issues with neighbouring commercial and residential uses.

**Figure 16 Coolah Industrial – Southern Precinct**



**Dunedoo**

The industrial area in Dunedoo is currently zoned 2(v) Village under the *Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000* (refer to Figure 38). The industrial precinct is located to the west of the town, and is bounded to the north and west by the Golden Highway, to the east by Cobborah Street and Caigan Street and there are residential dwellings further to the east. The size of this precinct area is 4.58ha.

**Figure 17 Dunedoo Industrial Precinct**



**Mendooran**

A large site to the south of the village area is currently zoned Zone 4 (a) (Industry) under the *Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000* (refer to Figure 42). The site is 34.42 ha is located almost 2 kilometres south of the town and is currently vacant and covered in vegetation. It does not appear to be serviced with utilities.

### Baradine

The industrial area in Baradine is to the south of the village and is currently Zone No 4 General Industrial under the *Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990*. The site is 32.8 ha and is surrounded by the railway and contains the Council Depot, a grain storage silo and an old sawmill.

#### 7.8.2 Recent Industrial Sales

Table 19 demonstrates the industrial land sales with median prices in the Warrumbungle Shire from 2000 to 2011. 2006 has the largest number of sales for industrial land. From 2000 to 2011 the median sale was \$49,296 for industrial land. Note that only three industrial sales were recorded since 2007, probably indicative of the impacts of drought on the rural economy. The data source in this case does not identify lot sizes so the square metre values of industrial land cannot be determined.

**Table 19 Industrial Sales, Warrumbungle Shire 2000 - 2011**

Year	Number of Sales	Median Sale
2000	1	\$50,000
2001	1	\$55,000
2002	2	\$119,000
2003	3	\$49,000
2004	0	0
2005	2	\$60,000
2006	4	\$90,750
2007	0	0
2008	2	\$195,000
2009	1	\$90,000
2010	0	0
2011	0	0

Source: RP data

#### 7.8.3 Industrial Supply and Demand

The types of growth that will occur within the Warrumbungle Shire will depend in large part on the strategies Council decides for establishing and promoting available land and actively pursuing investment.

The key issues in relation to the supply of and demand for industrial land in Warrumbungle are:

- ▶ The development and uptake of industrial land is often slow and occurs over a long period. Uptake is often influenced by state and local government economic priorities and strategies.
- ▶ the characteristics of industrial land that is likely to be in high demand comprise of large lots; good access to the highway/ railway; level land; and access to infrastructure.

- ▶ The most interest in industrial land in the Warrumbungle Shire is for businesses involved in: heavy industrial; manufacturing; commercial; storage; and distribution.

To encourage and foster new forms of industrial development, it may be appropriate for Council to become directly involved in land development and servicing, and to actively encourage or even subsidise industrial interests.

There are substantial uncertainties in respect of assessing the long term requirements for employment land in any area. Economies are continually changing with new sectors and new working practices emerging. As a result the property requirements and demands within the economy are likely to change. However, the degree of change is unclear. This assessment of demand is therefore a guide. There will be a need to retain flexibility to respond to changing needs as market dynamics become evident.

### ***Demand Methodology***

In basic terms, industry satisfies the demands created by providing goods and services to the local population, value adding to locally generated products and value adding to products generated elsewhere in other regions. In a region undergoing population growth and increasing employment opportunities the following approach would normally be undertaken. Important demand drivers for industrial land include:

- ▶ Economic and population growth: The demand for goods and services (not necessarily within the Shire) stimulates investment in production capacity, which in turn results in increasing demand for land to locate production facilities and accommodate employees;
- ▶ Labour productivity: There is a positive relationship between labour productivity and the demand for industrial land;
- ▶ Levels of employment: As economic prosperity rises so too does employment and assuming labour productivity remains strong, the level of production increases accordingly. Therefore, by predicting employment levels it is possible to estimate the demand for industrial land; and
- ▶ Changes in industry structure: Certain industries tend to locate within industrial estates and have different value adding outcomes. The significance of these industries to a region will in part determine the demand for industrial land. (After GHD, 2008).

Each of the above factors is considered in the Queensland Department of State Development's model for determining land requirements for types of industrial purposes. The model is a comprehensive method of estimating industrial land requirements. The model involves the following estimation process.

- ▶ Assess the past demand for industrial land or industrial building production over a period of say five years and project this demand forward over a given time frame.
- ▶ Estimate the demand per capita for industrial land based on a fixed ratio such as:
  - 50 m<sup>2</sup> per head of population short term; and
  - 100 m<sup>2</sup> per head of population long term.

The minimum amount of land required to sustain an economy is 30 m<sup>2</sup> per head of population.

However, such models will not produce an estimate of the amount of industrial land that is required in a declining population situation such as in the Warrumbungle. It has also been observed that the task of forecasting what the private sector may require for various forms of industrial activity over 20 years is so intrinsically complex as to almost always result in unreliable estimates (GHD, 2008A). The Queensland model has been designed to estimate demand in relatively densely populated coastal areas where there

is a predominant focus on service industries and small businesses that typically require small areas of land. In non coastal areas the relatively low population combined with often larger pieces of industrial land means that the ratios of land to population on the coast are too low and can't be applied.

However, even with population decline it is possible to attract development as long as the conditions required for that development (resources, location, transport, workforce) are present or can easily be imported. The apparent weaknesses of the Warrumbungle Shire can ultimately be turned into its strengths. Factors such as the eagerness of the community to embrace development, the cost of employment lands, the size of the land that is available and the lack of Section 94 costs can all be an incentive to development moving into the Shire or staying within the Shire if a larger space is required.

In the situation where the Queensland Department of State Development's model for determining industrial land requirements does not yield an estimate of demand (because the per capita ratios are too low in the western council areas) it is recommended that an area the equivalent of a minimum of 30% of the existing zoned industrial area be identified for potential future service and manufacturing type industrial use. If there is currently no land-zoned industrial then an estimate of the area used for industrial purposes will be made and a minimum of 30% will be identified for potential future industrial use.

But there is also a need to accommodate larger resource based or agribusinesses that often require isolation from urban areas (due to noise, dust, operating hours, etc) or simply large spaces to store or process agricultural products. There may be a need to identify relatively large areas that are well suited to this purpose. These areas should not be limited by a fixed ratio or a % of the existing zoned areas. This is because the end user is not known. It should also not be assumed that all or any of these large areas identified will need to be zoned industrial as many of the agribusiness uses are likely to be permitted as rural industries under the Standard LEP in a range of rural zones.

### **Coonabarabran**

The one industrial precinct in Coonabarabran is 65.63 ha. Approximately 50% of this precinct is vacant and many lots that are not vacant are underutilized. Within this precinct there has not been very much recorded demand.

Given that the Coonabarabran industrial precinct offers different lot sizes that are fully serviced and which can be used by a range of industries; in excess of 30 percent of the zoned land is vacant; and historical demand has been low, then there is no additional industrial land required for Coonabarabran beyond the existing zoned area.

### **Coolah**

Within Coolah there are two industrial areas with a total of 22.3 ha. The northern precinct would have approximately 40% vacancy (about 1 ha). Within the southern precinct the area along Leadville Road, with the exception of the large western lot is being occupied by houses and the owners have expressed little interest in development for industrial purposes. Although this land is still suitable for industrial purposes it is unlikely to yield lots in the short term. In addition, the area on the railway corridor is flood prone and unlikely to be used for industrial purposes given its location. This area adjacent to the railway is therefore discounted (approximately 6 ha in size). However, near Queensborough Street, there is an area (approximately 9.10 ha in size) that is fully vacant. The discounted supply from the existing zoned land is estimated at approximately 11.7 ha

Based on the Queensland Department of State Development model the amount of industrial land that approximates future demand would be between 50 and 100 m<sup>2</sup> per person in the Shire. This gives a

range of between 3.94 and 7.88 ha of land required to meet the current demand based on the 2006 population. The current amount of readily available developable industrial land is only 11.7 ha. Given the population is projected to decrease in size by 2031 the demand range based on this model will not increase.

Using the alternate model of requiring approximately 30 % vacant industrial land as stock in hand, the demand would be approximately 6.69 ha. This is low, because is starting from a low base of 22.3 ha of industrial land.

Even though there is a small portion of vacant industrial land available there may be pent up demand which will drive an initial surge once new industrial land comes onto the market. In the interest of promoting economic development in the Shire it is better to overestimate demand in the Strategy rather than underestimating demand and stifle opportunity.

In addition, Council has historically catered for differently types of service industrial within its urban area of Coolah and has not addressed the issue of providing for export industries. Export industry is expected to require considerably more land with lot sizes generally larger than 2ha. These might be for warehousing, storage and distribution. The possible creation of an export industry locality that is relatively close to town has good access to road and rail links is an option that Council would like to pursue in order to boost the local economy.

### **Dunedoo**

The industrial area in Dunedoo is 4.58 ha and is mostly utilised for a local service industry. The existing industrial area is approximately 50% vacant but this is only about 2ha of land

Based on the Queensland Department of State Development model the amount of industrial land that approximates future demand would be between 50 and 100 m<sup>2</sup> per person in the Shire. This gives a range of between 4.1 ha and 8.2 ha of land required to meet the current demand based on the 2006 population. Given the current amount of industrial land is only 4.58 it is reasonable to suggest that there is an undersupply.

Using the alternate model of requiring approximately 30 % vacant industrial land as stock in hand, the demand would be approximately 1.37 ha. This is low, because is starting from a low base of 4.58 ha of industrial land.

Council has not historically catered for different types of service industries within its urban areas and has not addressed the issue of providing for export industries outside of the urban area.

The Cobbora Coal Mine is proposed to open an Open Cut Coal mine south of the village of Cobbora approximately 22 km west of Dunedoo. This mine is at the planning phase and likely open once approved. The Environmental Assessment (ERM, December 2009) states that more than 625 people are likely to be directly employed during the construction and 1,700 persons employed during the operational phase and a further 200 persons associated with the delivery of coal to power stations. As a result of this mine there will be significant support services needed such as maintenance and contractors.

The existing industrial area is approximately 50% vacant but this is only about 2ha of land. Service industry alone would generate demand for an additional 1.6 ha to add to the 2 ha that is currently available. There may be a demand from the opening of the mine which will drive an initial surge once new industrial land comes onto the market. In the interests of promoting economic development in the Shire it is better to overestimate demand in this Strategy rather than underestimate demand and stifle opportunity.

### **Mendooran**

The industrial zoned land in Mendooran is 34.42 ha in size and located almost 2 kilometres south of the town. It is currently totally vacant and covered in vegetation. There is not history of demand in recent times for industrial land in this location. Small service industries could locate in the village area of Mendooran. Unless there is a major export industry interested in this location then it is unlikely this area will be developed. It is not actually suitable for industrial use due to its isolated position in the Shire and lack of services to the site. It is suggested this area is zoned to agricultural uses similar to the surrounding land uses.

### **Baradine**

The industrial area in Baradine is 32.8 ha and is surrounds the railway corridor. A significant portion of this land is used for storage facilities such as the Council Depot and the grain silo. There is no evidence for demand for further industrial land in this location. In addition some land to the west of the railway is currently being utilised for residential purposes.

Approximately 40% of this precinct is vacant and subdivided for industrial purposes. Within this area there has not been very much recorded demand. Therefore there is no additional industrial land required for Barradine beyond the existing zoned area.

### **Constraints on Existing Industrial Land Supply**

A number of factors impact on supply. These include the following:

- ▶ *Environmental Constraints and Infrastructure Issues:* Flora and fauna issues within or in proximity to industrial areas. The provision of major utilities, services and adequate transport infrastructure on the surrounding network.
- ▶ *Land Ownership:* Availability of sites in private ownership will largely depend on economic decisions by landowners, not all of whom choose to either sell or develop their land in the short-term.
- ▶ *Withholding Issues:* There are several types of withholding. In some instances existing industry is holding land for future expansion or buffering.
- ▶ *Best Use of Land:* A small amount of land uses occurring in industrial zones are not industrial, particularly in older and established industrial zones. However the tighter zoning controls applying to newer industrial estates do not allow non-industrial uses.
- ▶ *Residential Development:* Increases in residential density in some locations has placed pressure on existing nearby industries to change their activities or reduce their external impacts. In some instances this has led to industry relocation. There is a need to consider surrounding land uses when planning greenfield estates and to provide adequate separation distances between incompatible land uses.
- ▶ *Unsuitable:* industrial zoned land which has low market appeal due to issues such as topography, poor access or land use interface conflicts.
- ▶ *Zoning:* not enough zoned industrial land on the market to meet the demand.

### **Supply**

The supply of land needs to distinguish between general services based land needs and strategic export land needs.

- ▶ Local service based industry needs to be accessible to the population centres and supplier markets in the local area. Often these businesses require street front exposure to passing trade and may retail goods and services from a shopfront or warehouse. The provision of land in local areas should be in accordance with demand and appropriate supply for growth so as to not jeopardise the role of other industrial precincts.
- ▶ Strategic export sectors, on the other hand, have different location needs, often requiring direct access to their primary products, larger land areas for larger operations, and access to major transport infrastructure for access to markets outside the region. In many cases they do not rely on direct exposure to a local market since this is not a core market for their business. The location of new export land in the Shire will need to ensure that while remaining reasonably proximate to the local labour force, the areas take advantage of major transport infrastructure on large tracts of flat land capable of accommodating a wide range of larger businesses.

### Site Selection Criteria

There are many factors to consider when identifying and assessing potential sites for new industrial land development. State Government Departments have in place planning policy to guide the selection of new urban land. The Department of Planning needs to be satisfied new industrial land is located in area which are consistent with the criteria set out in the Settlement Planning Guidelines (DoP, 2007).

Table 20 summarises the site selection criteria to be used when assessing land for industrial use.

**Table 20 Industrial Land Supply – Site Selection Criteria**

Guiding Principle	Criteria	Site Analysis
1. Economic	Healthy economic activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Land affordability</li> <li>▶ Profile of the site</li> <li>▶ Ability to attract tenants</li> <li>▶ Flexibility of site to accommodate tenants</li> <li>▶ Data technology capabilities</li> <li>▶ Ability to create an industry cluster</li> <li>▶ Development feasibility</li> </ul>
	Shire positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Capacity to service intra Shire growth and development</li> <li>▶ Warrumbungle Shire competitiveness (capacity to service competitive advantage)</li> </ul>
	Efficient and effective transport access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Access and profile to highway / major roads network</li> <li>▶ Access for consumers, workers and service vehicles (energy efficiency)</li> <li>▶ Access to export markets from airport and rail</li> <li>▶ Proximity to existing industrial areas</li> <li>▶ Access to tradewaste sites and transfer stations</li> <li>▶ Traffic implications and constraints</li> <li>▶ Access for B Double vehicles</li> <li>▶ Access costs to connect with the Highway network</li> </ul>

	Cost-effective infrastructure and land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Existing investment in services and infrastructure</li> <li>▶ Upfront investment required in infrastructure and impact on viability</li> <li>▶ Impact on existing land uses and other industrial areas</li> </ul>
	Employment impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Direct and indirect employment generation</li> <li>▶ Proximity to labour force and vehicle kilometres (journey to work)</li> </ul>
2. Governance	Accountability and compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Existing zoning and suitability of proposed land use</li> <li>▶ Planning direction of and support from Council and Dept. Planning</li> <li>▶ Potential for future expansion</li> </ul>
	Landowner views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Willingness of owners to develop as industrial</li> <li>▶ Attitudes of and impacts on adjoining land holders</li> </ul>
	Community acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Acceptable levels of impact on community amenity</li> <li>▶ Acceptable visual impacts and appropriate buffers</li> </ul>
3. Human Habitat	Quality built environment and places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Proximity of residential areas and potential encroachment</li> <li>▶ Proximity of areas of high environmental value</li> <li>▶ Convenience of workplace trips</li> <li>▶ Suitable size for intended role (i.e. export scale vs. local)</li> <li>▶ Elevation of land and fill requirements</li> </ul>
	Infrastructure services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Proximity to and availability of essential services:</li> <li>▶ Water</li> <li>▶ Sewer</li> <li>▶ Electricity</li> <li>▶ Broadband/technology</li> </ul>
4. Ecology	Healthy waterways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Flood levels</li> <li>▶ Catchment management</li> <li>▶ Waste water treatment</li> </ul>
	Geotechnical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Contamination issues</li> <li>▶ Geotechnical issues</li> <li>▶ Soils testing</li> <li>▶ Vegetation</li> </ul>
	Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Flora and fauna/wildlife corridors/threatened species</li> <li>▶ Other vegetation/conservation issues</li> </ul>

Source: AEC, 2007

### **Coonabarabran**

As shown above, there is already significant vacant land within the Coonabarabran Industrial Precinct and therefore no demand for additional areas.

### Coolah

Coolah has traditionally relied on forestry as its main source of income, however since the closure of the Coolah Sawmill following the cessation of forestry in the Warung State Forest and the proclamation of Coolah Tops as National Park, the economy of Coolah has narrowed. Coolah now must consider alternative methods of attracting income to the town if further problems are to be avoided.

This Strategy encourages the restructure of employment base due to the changing timber industry. The idea is to provide a range of land including the potential for a large industrial use for example such as an export industry.

Export industry is expected to require more land with lot sizes generally larger than 2 ha. These might be used for warehousing, storage and distribution of agricultural based products or transport related activities. The employment base Coolah has to offer and its proximity to Dubbo may make Coolah a more attractive location for large scale export industry.

Coolah should also be interested in attracting a broad acre industrial land user to boost the local economy. In this regard there may be a demand for an agriculture related business to locate in proximity to town on a site with good transport options and sufficient space for storage and processing. Given that Council has not specifically targeted this type of industry in the past, there is no history of demand that can be used to estimate how much land is required to cater for export industry.

Using a broad scale site analysis there is a site that, subject to further investigation may be suitable for rezoning to accommodate future industrial growth. The proposed area is shown on Figure 40.

### Queensborough Street, Coolah

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Gross Potential Area (ha): 12.9

#### *Assessment against industrial locational requirements:*

- ▶ Extension from the southern precinct (along Collaville Ave and Park Street) and on the towns borders away from the town centre which minimises amenity issues.
- ▶ It has direct access off Black Stump Way.
- ▶ It is flat land that is substantially cleared with a small stand of trees along the north western border.
- ▶ It has a small gully running north south near the eastern boundary and this will need to be considered with any future development.
- ▶ It has high groundwater vulnerability and has no salinity issues
- ▶ It is not affected by the 1% flood event.
- ▶ It is zoned residential at its eastern and southern boundary and there is a need to use a buffer between housing and any industrial uses.

**Figure 18 Potential Industrial Growth Area – Queensborough Street, Coolah**



### **Dunedoo**

The existing industrial area is approximately 50% vacant but this is only about 2 ha of land. Service industry alone would generate demand for an additional 1.6 ha to add to the 2 ha that is currently available. There may be a demand from the opening of the mine which will drive an initial surge once new industrial land comes onto the market. In the interests of promoting economic development in the Shire it is better to overestimate demand in this Strategy rather than underestimate demand and stifle opportunity.

The Cobbora Coal Mine is likely to produce a significant amount of demand for both service and export type of industry development especially considering it is only 22 km south of Dunedoo. There may be a need to provide for some service industries on smaller lots (less than 4000 sqm) with some wholesale and ancillary retail uses in a high quality built form that could also cater for knowledge industries, warehousing and clean industry within Dunedoo. Export industry is expected to require more land with lot sizes generally larger than 2 ha. These might be used for warehousing, storage and distribution of agricultural based products or mine related products or transport related activities. Therefore it is likely that Dunedoo will need a significant amount of industrial land to keep up with demand from the Cobbora mine.

Using a broad scale site analysis there is at least one area that, subject to further investigation may be suitable for rezoning to accommodate future industrial growth. This area is identified below and shown at Figure 38. The site is evaluated against the industrial land suitability criteria outlined above.

### **Caigan Street, Dunedoo**

Gross Potential Area (ha): 52.5

*Assessment against industrial locational requirements:*

- ▶ Located on the western edge of town with frontage to the Golden Highway.
- ▶ Currently used for grazing.
- ▶ Immediately south of the existing industrial land and is adjacent to existing village and has access to reticulated sewerage and water services.

- ▶ It is flat land that is substantially cleared and does not contain any high conservation value vegetation.
- ▶ It has moderate groundwater vulnerability, has minor sheet erosion, has no salinity issues.
- ▶ It is not affected by the 1% flood event.
- ▶ It is zoned residential at its eastern boundary and there is a need to use a buffer between housing and any industrial uses.
- ▶ Worthy of further investigation in the medium term for service industries that are likely to be compatible with the nearby residential uses and for uses for the mine.
- ▶ May be suitable for export industries needing larger areas of land.
- ▶ Given the size of the site, staging will need to be considered. The studies that will need to be undertaken prior to the rezoning of the subject site include service availability and site contamination.

**Figure 19 Potential Industrial Growth Area – Caigan Street, Dunedoo**



#### **7.8.4 Actions – Industrial Land**

- ▶ Commence detailed site investigation of Queensborough Street, Coolah to assess the viability of this site in satisfying the Coolah service industry and the export industry land requirements for the Warrumbungle Shire over the short to medium term (refer to Figure 40).
- ▶ Commence detailed site investigation of Caigan Street, Dunedoo to assess the viability of this site in satisfying the service industry land and export industry land requirements for the Warrumbungle Shire over the short to medium term (refer to Figure 38).
- ▶ Zone land currently zoned Industrial or in a designated industrial locality to a general industrial zone under the Standard LEP Template.
- ▶ Provide market ready and commercially attractive land in the short-term to position the Warrumbungle Shire to take advantage of strategic export opportunities.

- ▶ Prohibit the establishment of industry in rural residential areas and areas zoned specifically for residential purposes.
- ▶ Prohibit inappropriate land uses from locating on land zoned for industrial purposes.
- ▶ Provide a range of allotment sizes for industrial uses.
- ▶ Identify requirements for staging the future release of land and consider appropriate trigger points for new development.
- ▶ Implement a land use monitor to identify industrial land supply and demand issues on a regular basis in the Warrumbungle Shire.

## 7.9 Industrial Site Planning

Some industrial precincts across the LGA, have a low visual amenity. A particular example is in Coonabarabran, where a major site is being used for wreckers' storage and some buildings are aging and present poorly to the street. It is a precinct on the edge of town and is part of the visual impression that is made on travellers as they enter from the north.

There is also mix of experiences on the current gateways in other towns. Appropriate land uses and urban form should guide development at these important locations and provide a higher level of amenity in terms of better presented streets, appropriate signage structures and good quality buildings and landscaping. First impressions are always important.

The design and location of industrial development also impacts on the perceived character of the Warrumbungle Shire as a scenic and 'clean, green' LGA. Where visual aesthetic objectives cannot be met through planning or design they should be screened from view where possible.

### 7.9.1 Actions – Industrial Site Planning

- ▶ Any new industrial development should include Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles including effluent reuse and stormwater harvesting. Council should include these principles in its DCP.
- ▶ Prepare a development control plan to support the LEP and provide additional detailed guidelines for development such as energy efficiency, waste management and water conservation standards for industrial development.
- ▶ Prepare and adopt landscaping requirements (including implementation and maintenance requirements) for all new industrial sites and estates.
- ▶ Protect and enhance industrial amenity and reduce the visual dominance of industrial estates/sites on gateways to towns through the provision of adequate buffers, landscaping and appropriate guidance on building form and design.
- ▶ Ensure land use policy clearly describes the appropriate scale of industrial development in a locality.

## 7.10 Servicing of Existing Industrial lands

Further analysis of land owner interest of Greenfield industrial sites is needed. The cost of servicing will be a major determinant future development of vacant industrial land. A coordinated infrastructure servicing plan should be developed for all new areas to identify road, water, sewer and power needs and apportion costs across potential beneficiaries.

### 7.10.1 Actions – Servicing of Existing Industrial Lands

- ▶ Investigate and facilitate the servicing of proposed industrial lands to unlock existing supply

## 7.11 Land Use Conflicts

Industry and essential infrastructure are critical to the local, regional and state economy. They provide goods and services that are crucial to the social and economic wellbeing of the community. It is necessary, therefore, to protect industry and essential infrastructure from encroachment by incompatible development and more sensitive land uses that could adversely restrict their operations. Such restrictions might arise as a consequence of real or potential negative impacts of industry and essential infrastructure through emissions such as noise, smoke, dust, odour, vibration and light or by generating potential risks. The amenity and health of the community should be protected from unreasonable adverse impacts.

Inappropriate land use decisions that place sensitive land uses (such as schools, dwellings and tourism uses) in the vicinity of 'bad neighbour' industries creates land use conflict that can significantly reduce the quality of life of affected persons and/or reduce the long-term viability of important industries. Where such industries can be identified in permanent locations, Council should impose a designated buffer area to ensure that the potential impacts are assessed when considering land uses in their immediate vicinity. Buffer area distances will be in accordance with accepted best practice.

### 7.11.1 Actions – Industrial Land Use Conflicts

- ▶ Prepare specific controls to address industrial land use conflicts and implement them through a DCP.
- ▶ Prevent residential encroachment onto land that would limit the efficient and safe operation of existing industrial activities.
- ▶ Allow for expansion of industry when defining separation distances from other uses.
- ▶ Involve neighbours and the wider community in the assessment process of significant industrial development proposals.
- ▶ Provide land use buffers to prevent land use conflict between industrial development and competing uses. Refer to *Living and Working in Rural Areas* (DPI, 2007) for recommended buffer zones in rural areas.

## 7.12 Industrial Development Outside of Urban Areas

In some cases it may be appropriate to locate industry in rural areas where it relates to value adding of agricultural produce, and there is no suitable site within an industrial zoned area. This Strategy recognises the important role of such employment-generating industries, which have located in such areas for various reasons including historical associations, proximity to raw materials or major customers, or to minimise costs and increase viability. Examples include abattoirs and other processors of raw materials, agricultural contractors and industries servicing agriculture.

Subject to their meeting appropriate amenity and environmental standards, the location of such industrial uses is not considered to pose a significant planning concern, and on the contrary can provide significant benefits for those areas.

### 7.12.1 Actions - Industrial Development Outside of Urban Areas

- ▶ Recognise the need for buffer areas in proximity to non-industrial land uses.
- ▶ Any proposed use or development of land in rural areas for industrial purposes should satisfy the following criteria:-
  - Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that there is no suitable site in an industrial zone.
  - Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the impact of the development will not have a significant detrimental impact to any resident or environmental feature including the quality of water in any river or stream or the agricultural use of surrounding land.
  - Ensure that all effluent from the use or development can be disposed of within the site, or by connection to facilities operated by Council or disposed of to the satisfaction of Council.
  - Ensure that the site is serviced with adequate road infrastructure.
  - Ensure that the amount of land lost to agricultural use is minimised.

### 7.13 Small and Home Based Business

Like other rural and regional areas, the Warrumbungle Shire has a large number of people self-employed in small businesses.

The Australian, State and Territory Governments published “Home - Based Business: Local Opportunities” in 2004. It championed home based businesses as an important part of the small business sector, pointing to their economic, social, environmental and regional benefits (Commonwealth of Australia, 2004).

The small business sector is a large contributor to the local economy, with two-thirds of the small business sector being home based. This sector of the economy generates considerable employment and wealth and provides diverse and often specialist skills to the population and industry. Many small businesses develop over time into more conventional businesses. This growing sector of the economy often operates from non-traditional premises and does not comfortably fit into traditional development patterns. This Strategy provides support and flexibility for development of this sector to maximise its benefit to the economy.

Many business activities can be carried out at home without causing disturbance or loss of amenity for neighbours. This is particularly true in small towns and rural areas where density of development is lower. Home-based employment can significantly reduce the costs of a business and increase its viability.

The new LEP should adopt a flexible approach to proposals to work from home and, subject to assessment of amenity and traffic generation, Council should favourably consider such proposals.

#### 7.13.1 Actions - Small and Home-based Business.

- ▶ Continue to support the establishment of home businesses provided they are consistent with the hierarchy and do not adversely affect residential amenity.
- ▶ Provisions for home occupations and small business should be flexible and supportive across the Warrumbungle Shire subject to assessment of the impact on the residential amenity of the area, the transport network and the environment. Home occupations and home business should be development permitted without consent in all zones where dwellings are a permissible use.

## 7.14 Reuse of Buildings

In both urban and rural areas there are many buildings potentially suitable for conversion to employment-generating uses, particularly for small business or tourism uses. The age and location of a building may be attractive; conversely the costs of new buildings may be prohibitive. This Strategy considers it preferable to productively use existing buildings and ensure their upkeep rather than prohibit active reuse. Reuse of buildings contributes to the stock of business premises and can create opportunities for employment-generating development. The reuse of buildings helps preserve heritage buildings or original buildings in the streetscape.

The LEP should be flexible in considering proposals to reuse buildings for employment-generating purposes, applying the normal assessments of impact on amenity and environment, and traffic generation, as well as of the suitability of the building for conversion and the application of relevant construction standards.

### 7.14.1 Actions - Reuse of Buildings

- ▶ Council will encourage reuse of buildings for such purposes subject to assessment of impacts.
- ▶ A new LEP must have the flexibility to consider the reuse of redundant buildings for employment-generating uses subject to an assessment of effects on the urban amenity of the area, traffic generation, impact on any heritage values and the capacity of the conversion to meet building regulations.

## 7.15 Tourism

Tourism and catering for the travelling public is an important and growing industry within the Warrumbungle Shire and has strong future growth prospects. Tourism is a significant industry estimated to be worth more than \$30 million per annum to Warrumbungle Shire.

Tourism New South Wales developed a report for the Central NSW region (Destination Development Workshop Program, September 2007). The Central NSW region, comprised 21 Local Government Areas (LGAs) including the Warrumbungle Shire and represents an area of 113,000 km. The report stated that Central NSW received over 1.8 million domestic overnight visitors per year (year ending June 2007), representing 4.9 million visitor nights – down by 1.3% on Jun 06. The majority of visitors (90.5%) travelled to the region by car. Their major purpose is ‘Visiting friends and relatives’ (40.2%), followed by ‘Holiday and leisure’ (36.2%).

In 2006, Explorer Country Tourism Organisation commissioned the developed the *Tourism Business Development Strategy* (PacALLIANCE (Australia) Pty Ltd. & Environmetrics Pty Ltd., 2006). The report examined tourism within each of the Central NSW LGAs and at the time the Warrumbungle Shire Council had not yet been amalgamated, therefore the tourism analysis were for Coonabarabran and Coolah LGA's separately. Some tourism profile figures from this report are stated below.

#### *Former Coolah Shire:*

- ▶ 7% of visitors to Central West NSW spend time in Coolah;
- ▶ 40% of visitors to Coolah come from regional NSW (including Newcastle and the Hunter), 31% from Sydney and 29% from Interstate.

- ▶ The report concluded for Coolah ‘the tourism product mix appears to offer a lot of events/festivals and nature/outdoors products. On the other hand, it appears light-on with the essential accommodation and food/beverage products.’

*Former Coonabarabran Shire:*

- ▶ 17% of visitors to Central West NSW spend time in Coonabarabran, of whom 94% stay at least one night;
- ▶ 55% are on holidays and 27% are just passing through;
- ▶ 58% come from Interstate, 22% from Regional NSW and 20% from Sydney;
- ▶ The attraction of the Warrumbungles and of the Siding Spring Observatory totally dominate visitors to Coonabarabran;
- ▶ The report concluded for Coonabarabran ‘Given the very high destination nature of visitation to Coonabarabran and the volume of traffic on the Newell, the opportunity for additional attractions, events and short stay activities appears significant’ .

It is envisaged that the tourism industry is likely to expand. This will include small scale or low key tourism development, such as rural retreats, holiday cabins and bed and breakfast-style accommodation, as well as large scale developments, such as integrated resorts and motels. The former small scale developments are largely permitted within the existing zones ancillary to existing permissible uses.

In 2006 the Warrumbungle Shire Council commissioned Rand & Associates to prepare a Tourism Development and Marketing Plan for the Shire. The Plan stated:

*‘To date, the Newell Highway has been the primary generator of visitation to the Shire, with Coonabarabran being a well-known highway service centre. Structural changes in the marketplace (e.g. discount airfares, rising petrol prices, shorter holidays) coupled with the prolonged drought and the emergence of other routes in competition to the Newell, has resulted in a decline in tourist traffic to Central NSW and along the Newell corridor.*

*Tourism in the remainder of the Shire is in its infancy. Interest in tourism in Coolah, Dunedoo and the three smaller towns has been stimulated primarily by the need to diversify and strengthen the local economic base to counteract the decline in traditional industries.’*

The Plan identified the issues and intended outcomes for the Shire and developed 6 priorities for action

- Priority 1 - To build and strengthen touring / highway traffic**
- Priority 2 - Market development - diversify and build the market base of the Shire**
- Priority 3 - To improve, strengthen and diversify the attraction base of the Shire**
- Priority 4 - To increase visitation to the towns and villages**
- Priority 5 - To improve the tourism facilities and infrastructure available within the Shire**
- Priority 6 - To provide the resources & structure needed to effectively support the tourism industry within the Shire**

Source: Rand, 2006

By implementing the above priorities through the actions stated in the Tourism Development and Marketing (Rand, 2006) exists a significant opportunity for strengthening and growing tourism within the Shire.

Land use planning and its outcomes have numerous impacts upon the tourism industry including how well authentic landscapes and character is protected and enhanced; and whether the LEP provides flexibility to ensure that tourism industry can be innovative and respond to demand and the market. In addition land uses associated with tourism also need to be managed to ensure that they do not detract from the value of the region as a living environment.

Future tourism development should not adversely impact the environmental, economic or social structure of the area it is located in and should not introduce land use conflicts with nearby agricultural or rural-lifestyle areas. Rural tourism is examined further in section 10.4. The characteristics of a site mooted for tourism should ideally be as follows:

- ▶ the site should have formed and sealed road and electricity and telecommunications facilities,
- ▶ the site should have access to a secure water supply
- ▶ the site should not be on flood prone land, saline soils, and medium or high risk bush fire lands
- ▶ the proposed development should not be located within 500 metres of the boundary of any land used for intensive agriculture or a mine or quarry.
- ▶ the site should be capable of supporting, establishing and maintaining an adequate onsite effluent disposal system.

#### 7.15.1 Actions – Tourism

- ▶ Protect and enhance authentic and distinctive local characteristics and landscapes throughout the region.
- ▶ Recognise economic drivers for tourism development and provide specific land use planning responses for tourism within existing processes. In particular, support the tourism industry related to the Siding Spring Observatory by taking action to preserve the dark night sky in the Shire.
- ▶ Assist continued innovation in the tourism industry by ensuring restrictive land use planning policies and principles do not unnecessarily prevent tourism use and development.
- ▶ Protect the natural landscapes of the Warrumbungle Shire along designated scenic routes and town approaches.
- ▶ Ensure tourism development is of a scale, design and form that will not overwhelm, over-commercialise or detract from the intrinsic values of the land on which it is sited.
- ▶ Identify the appropriate scale, character and design criteria that will enhance the amenity and landscape character of the locality.
- ▶ Reinforce the unique character of towns with tourism development that complements their desired cultural, built and landscape character.
- ▶ Ensure that tourism development in areas of primary production supports the continuation of primary industry in the area (where possible) and does not undermine it or create conflict with it.

Figure 20 Tourism is an important industry in the Warrumbungle Shire



## 8. Siding Spring Observatory

Located in the Warrumbungle Mountains about 18 km west of Coonabarabran, Siding Spring Observatory is Australia's premier facility for optical and infra-red astronomy. Siding Spring Observatory has several telescopes on the site including the 2.3m Advanced Technology Telescope, the 3.9m Anglo-Australian Telescope, a 2m Faulkes Telescope, the 1.24m UK Schmidt Telescope, two Boller & Chivens Cassegrains 1m and 0.6m along with the 0.5m Automatic Patrol Telescope and 0.6m Uppsala Schmidt Telescope.

The Siding Spring complex is owned and managed by the Research School of Astronomy and Astro Physics at the Australian National University, with the telescopes owned and operated by a number of institutions including the ANU, University of New South Wales, British Science Research Council and the AAT Board.

There are around 40 staff and researchers based at the Observatory, undertaking research programs for Australian National University (ANU) and the Anglo-Australian Observatory (AAO). The Observatory has an 18 room accommodation lodge and a number of cottages that are used by visiting researchers as well as small meeting and conference rooms. The Observatory is open to the public and is the second most popular tourist attraction in Warrumbungle Shire, drawing around 30,000 visitors per year. The Economic Development Strategy prepared for the Shire in 2006 identified astronomy as a small, but significant economic activity contributing around \$3+ million per annum to the Shire economy (Rand, 2006).

The key issue with an observatory is that extremely faint objects can only be observed if the night sky brightness from nearby towns and rural development is controlled. Relatively small amounts of light at night within 18 km of the observatory can have an impact and larger amounts of light up to 100 km away can also have a negative effect on the performance of the observatory.

In 1990 the Orana Regional Environmental Plan No 1 – Siding Spring (REP) was gazetted. It applies to the Shire of Coonabarabran (now amalgamated into the Warrumbungle LGA). The REP is now deemed to be a State Environmental Planning Policy. Its aim is to encourage the use of land in a manner that will preserve the optimum observation conditions at the observatory. In order to achieve this, the REP prohibits development without consent within 18 kilometres of the observatory unless the development is not supplied with electricity. Emission rates (in lumens) are given for development at distances up to 100 kilometres from the observatory. Any development that exceeds the emission rate prescribed shall be referred to the Director of the Observatory for comment and requires the concurrence of the Director of Planning NSW before Council can grant consent. There are exemptions to the need for concurrence for dwellings and farm buildings if certain light emission criteria can be achieved. The REP was under review at the time of preparing this Strategy.

In November 2004 the Warrumbungle Shire Council adopted the Warrumbungle Development Control Plan No.1 - Shire Lighting Code to Protect Siding Spring Observatory. The DCP operates in rings at different distances from the Observatory and with different degrees of control. These are called Area A, B, and C. The plan covers all outdoor lights and also indoor lights which can be seen from outside. It does not apply, except on a voluntary basis, to any lights existing when this plan was introduced, however replacements and upgrades must conform to this plan. The plan provides a greater level of detail on what lighting is or is not acceptable in different locations in the LGA and what information is required in order to make a proper assessment of a development application.

Protection of the dark night skies can be achieved through limiting the opportunity for light polluting development in proximity to the Observatory and through planning controls on light emissions that apply to development that is permitted in proximity to the Observatory. This is particularly relevant given the extent of the existing rural residential zone to the west of Coonabarabran along the Timor Road. The potential for addition rural dwellings within 18km of the Observatory should be limited to existing subdivisions with a minimum lot size overlay used to discourage further subdivision and dwelling entitlements. The planning controls in the current DCP No. 1 need to be supported in any future LEP.

### 8.1.1 Actions - Siding Spring Observatory

- ▶ The dark night sky is an important community asset that supports the astronomy industry in Warrumbungle LGA. Rural residential areas within 18km of the Observatory should be limited to existing zoned and subdivided locations. Areas that are zoned, but remain unsubdivided should be considered for a general rural zone. Provision for genuine future rural residential demand should be made outside of the 18km radius of the Observatory as shown on Figure 54.
- ▶ Provision for planning controls that limit light emissions for all development in the Warrumbungle LGA needs to be included in a future LEP and DCP based on the existing controls and consistent with State government planning legislation.



**Light emissions within 18km of Siding Spring Observatory need to be limited**

## 9. Residential Land

Residential development within the Warrumbungle Shire will generally comprise low density residential development which is primarily detached dwellings. Residential land is focussed mostly around the towns of Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo. The distribution of residential development around these towns reflects the nature of the local rural economic activity and its transport links.

Across the Shire a key driver of demand for residential development is demographic change. People have different housing needs depending upon such things as age, health, income and cultural background. People also have different housing preferences. As an ageing population farmers facing retirement sell their properties and move into towns such as Dunedoo, Coolah and Coonabarabran where they are closer to aged care services and infrastructure such as the hospital and medical practitioners.

This strategy has to resolve two issues in the Warrumbungle Shire in terms of residential development: firstly, how much land, if any, should be made available for residential development; and secondly, what should that development look like and who should it be for. A key objective for residential development in the Shire is to focus growth within serviced settlements (Dunedoo, Coolah and Coonabarabran) to maximise the utilisation and efficiency of existing infrastructure and community services. On this basis the Strategy promotes infill development in preference to settlement expansion. Settlement expansion places great pressure on agricultural lands and natural areas. There are many other benefits associated with concentrating development within settled areas. These include stimulating development and re-development of land and buildings within established settled areas, a process known as “urban renewal”. It also creates certainty and associated cost savings for businesses and local governments about where infrastructure, such as roads and sewers for future development, will be needed and how much it will cost.

This plan supports the practice of ensuring that residential neighbourhoods retain their sense of place based on their location, residential character, topography, natural environment, built form and proximity to the town centre. Like many rural towns Coolah, Dunedoo and Coonabarabran are characterised by wide avenues with mature street trees, often centrally located. This is a very distinct part of the rural character of residential neighbourhoods in the Warrumbungle Shire and one which should be retained.

**Figure 21 Typical Residential Development within Coonabarabran**



## 9.1 Residential Land Supply and Demand

To determine whether there is an adequate supply of residential land to meet expected demand requires an assessment of future demand. Land and dwelling demand can be estimated using a variety of methods. Each method has merit and can be useful. The outcomes from each method are influenced by the assumptions made and these need to be stated. Applying a range of methods gives a good overview of the range of demand that may occur over a nominated time frame.

### 9.1.1 Residential Land Demand

#### 1. Population Projections Method

The NSW Department of Planning has produced medium series population projections at the Statistical Local Area (SLA) level, published in *NSW State and Regional Population Projections, 2001-2051* (2005 Release). Dwelling demand is based on these population projections, occupancy rates, dwelling types and lot densities.

Section 2.7 demonstrate the population trends for the next 26 years. Although the population of NSW is expected to grown by an estimated 33 percent between 2006 and 2036, the Warrumbungle Shire population is expected to decrease by almost 27 percent during the same period.

Therefore, assuming that there is no additional population in-migration, there is no predicted demand for new residential land based on these population projections.

#### 2. Dwelling Approvals Method

Another approach to defining the demand for land and dwellings is to assess the past approved dwellings over a period of say five years and project this demand forward over a given time frame to give an estimate of future demand. This methodology is outlined in the State Government's publication, *Urban Settlement Strategies – Guidelines for the North Coast* (DUAP, 2000).

**Table 21 Warrumbungle Shire Building Approvals– year ended June 30**

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Private sector houses	no.	13	17	12	6	11
Total dwelling units	no.	14	17	16	6	14
Value of private sector houses	\$m	1.5	2.1	1.8	1.1	2.3
Value of new residential building	\$m	1.8	2.1	2.3	1.1	2.8
Value of total residential building	\$m	2.7	2.8	3.1	1.9	3.1
Value of total non-residential building	\$m	0.9	0.3	9.1	0.1	4.3
Value of total building	\$m	3.6	3.2	12.3	1.9	7.5
Average value of private sector	\$'000	117.2	124.6	148.6	191.3	211

Source: ABS *National Regional Profile: Warrumbungle Shire (A) (Statistical Local Area)*

As shown in Table 21, it is known that the average number of dwellings approved by Council over the 5 years (2004 to 2008) is 11.8 dwelling houses per year (59 dwellings over the last entire five years). The majority of this development occurred in 2005.

Projecting this as a constant demand until the year 2036 (25 years) then Warrumbungle Council will need to give approval to 295 dwelling houses. Given that demand at present is for single dwellings only it could be assumed that the 295 single dwelling houses are needed.

For the purposes of determining the potential dwelling and population to be achieved in Warrumbungle Shire, recent subdivisions were identified and surveyed to determine typical dwelling yields per hectare.

Within Warrumbungle Shire the demand for only two dwelling types was evident. This includes single dwellings and dual occupancy. The typical single dwellings lot sizes ranged from 1250m<sup>2</sup> to 1500m<sup>2</sup>, which achieved average densities of between 5 to 6 dwellings per hectare. In other locations higher density developments, achieved lot sizes ranged from 900m<sup>2</sup> to 1200m<sup>2</sup> which achieved average densities of between 7 to 8 dwellings per hectare.

If densities are at the low end for dwellings, say 6 dwellings per ha then 49 ha of residential land will be required. If densities are high range, say 8 dwellings per ha then 36 ha of residential land will be required.

### 3. Lot Approvals Method

Another approach to defining the demand for land (and therefore dwellings) is to assess the past demand for land (or lot production) over a period of say five years and project this demand forward over a given time frame to give an estimate of future demand. This methodology is outlined in the State Government's publication, Urban Settlement Strategies – Guidelines for the North Coast (DUAP, 2000).

**Table 22 Warrumbungle subdivision approval 1995 to 2005**

Year	Subdivision Approval
1995	12
1996	19
1997	11
1998	15
1999	3
2000	8
2001	7
2002	4
2003	14
2004	8
2005	8
2006	6

Source: Warrumbungle Council 2011

Through previous development applications (from 1995 to 2006) it is known that the production of residential land in the Warrumbungle Shire is 115 lots over 12 years or 9.6 lots per year. It might be

assumed, given recent market demand and census statistics, the majority of these lots are to be used to construct dwelling houses.

Projecting this as a constant demand until the year 2036 (25 years) then Council will need to release 240 lots in order to satisfy the current level of demand from the market.

Taking these lot production estimates and assuming a low range of 6 lots per ha then 40 ha of residential land will be required. If lot density is at the upper end of the range, say 8 lots per ha then 30 ha of residential land will be required.

### ***A Preferred Approach to Estimating Demand***

Table 23 summarises the range of demand statistics outlined previously. These options indicate that Warrumbungle Shire should have between 31 and 49 ha of zoned residential land to satisfy the potential demand between now and 2036.

In determining its preferred approach Council needs to be mindful that underestimating the demand has greater impacts on the community than overestimating demand. Accordingly it is recommended that the upper level of 49 ha of land be the assumed demand over the life of the Strategy.

**Table 23 Warrumbungle Shire - Summary of Land and Dwelling Demand Options**

Demand Method	Dwelling Houses Required (No.)	Residential Land Required at Low Density (ha)	Residential Land Required at Upper Range Density (ha)
Population Projection	0	0	0
Dwelling Approvals	295	49	36
Lot Approvals	-	40	30

### **9.1.2 Land Supply**

Identification of land suitable for future residential development is vital for effective planning. Not only does residential development need to be located appropriately in relation to jobs, schools and shopping but other infrastructure such as transportation links, electricity, water and sewerage needs to be planned for these developments. Timely and effective planning can lead to efficiencies of infrastructure provision as well as an appropriate distribution of the population leading in turn to more sustainable urban areas.

The supply of land and housing to meet future demand will come from a combination of sources:

- ▶ Vacant lots within existing zoned residential subdivisions;
- ▶ Residential zoned land that is yet to be subdivided;
- ▶ Redevelopment of existing residential or other properties; and
- ▶ Rezoning of new land for residential purposes (“Greenfield sites”).

The supply of land to meet the future demand for residential development in Warrumbungle Shire will come from a combination of sources and are shown below. All areas and lot counts are approximate and are based on an assessment of the cadastre and air photography:

**Table 24 Residential Land Supply in Warrumbungle Shire**

	Coonabarabran	Coolah	Dunedoo	Total
Vacant subdivided lots within existing zoned residential land	15 lots	72 lots	101 lots	188 lots
Residential zoned land that is yet to be subdivided	1317.26 ha	22.34 ha*	15.8 ha	1355.4 ha
Infill development of urban areas (e.g. dual occupancy etc)	minor	minor	minor	minor
Rezoning of new land for residential purposes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* See below for discounting in Coolah.

### 9.1.3 Residential Land Suitability

Identifying land that is suitable for future residential use would normally be undertaken through a land suitability analysis. Typically this process would focus on the features of the landscape that pose limitations to development including economic, social and environmental features. Natural features would include flooding, steep land, native vegetation/habitat, bushfire hazard, salinity, land contamination, etc. A land constraints map can be prepared overlaying the available information and the areas not affected by natural constraints can be further sieved by features such as proximity to urban areas (typically adjacent or as close as possible to an existing residential area), or access to services or facilities e.g. flood protection, sealed roads, telephone and electricity. Economic factors that might also be evaluated include land affordability, location desirability, future construction costs, and on site infrastructure such as drainage or culverts. The potential for conflict with adjacent land uses is also a consideration.

However, in order for this process to work effectively the information needs to be up to date and accurate to the scale at which it is to be used and accurate in relation to the cadastre (or property boundaries) of the Shire. It also needs to be available across the area of interest.

In the case of the Warrumbungle Shire much of the data available is not accurate at the individual property level and cannot be relied upon to objectively identify suitable land at that scale. An alternative method is to use the existing residential settlement pattern as a guiding principle and assess land in proximity to existing residential areas to gauge its potential suitability for residential expansion using the best available information.

Some constraints for which there is information in parts of the Warrumbungle Shire are discussed in Table 25.

**Table 25 Typical Constraints to Residential Development**

Constraint	Reason for Unsuitability
Land within 400m of a sewage treatment plant	This land is often affected by odour problems and a 400m buffer is recommended by the State

	government.
<p>Land in the vicinity of a local aerodrome or airstrip where it may:</p> <p>Impede the operations and potential growth of the airport.</p> <p>Exceed the obstacle height limitation.</p> <p>Be affected by noise that exceeds an ANEF of 25dB(A).</p>	It would not be in the public interest to jeopardise the current operation and future growth potential of local aerodromes.
Land that is located within the 1% AEP flood planning level or is land known by Council to be floodprone.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in the floodplain unless no reasonable alternative exists.
Land that is located adjacent to an existing forestry operation or land owned by Forests NSW	It would not be in the public interest to jeopardise the current or future operation of the local forest industry.
Land that is located adjacent to or within 500m of an existing mining or extractive industry operation (or 1000m if blasting is involved)	It would not be in the public interest to jeopardise the current or future operation of local mining or extractive industries.
Land that is located within an area of high biodiversity conservation value or an area identified by the state government as an environmentally sensitive area, unless there are extenuating circumstances to justify its development.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas that should be protected for their natural values.
Land that is located in, or within 500m of an existing water supply bore field or an area of high groundwater vulnerability.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas where urban activities could contaminate water supplies or contaminate groundwater.
Land affected by salinity	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas where salinity can cause damage to buildings and infrastructure.
Land that has a slope greater than 15 degrees.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas where steep slopes can lead to problems with land slip and infrastructure maintenance.
Land that is of high scenic value	It would not be in the public interest to place residential dwellings in locations where the dwellings will have a high visual impact on a scenic locality.
Land that is affected by high bushfire hazard and cannot meet the requirements of 'Planning for Bushfire Protection'.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas where bushfires can cause damage to buildings and infrastructure and threaten people's lives.
Land that is accessed from a major road unless the access to that road can be limited to a single location.	It would not be appropriate to place residential dwellings in areas where multiple private access points are created onto a major road causing traffic conflicts.

#### 9.1.4 Balancing Supply and Demand of Urban Residential Land

In preparing a Strategy to look at urban areas over a long period of time normally we would need to look at a range of time periods (short, medium and long) in order to assess how supply will diminish over time based on demand assumptions.

A typical time frame might be:

- ▶ 0-10 years (short term);
- ▶ 10-20 years (medium term); and
- ▶ 20 years plus (long term).

A residential balance sheet allows Council to estimate how the supply of residential land will be used up over time and this allows Council the opportunity to take action at the appropriate time to assure long term supply of land to the market.

If we discount the land within the villages to reflect the lack of infrastructure and minimal market interest in these locations then the discounted estimate of supply for the Warrumbungle Shire is 1392 ha (1355.4 ha of un-subdivided land plus 37 ha of subdivided land). The assumed constant estimate of demand is 1.9 ha per year (49 ha over 25 years).

Within Coolah there are relatively large amounts of vacant un-subdivided land located to the east of Binnia Street (south of Booyamurra Street) that are zoned for residential use. However, not only is this area flood affected it is also affected by the buffer to the sewage treatment plant (STP) and its effluent ponds. There has been minimal market interest in this location for urban development. The designation of land for urban purposes needs to be optimally located to appeal to the market and make development of the land a viable proposition. It is recommended that 5.35 ha of this area be discounted from the supply side of the supply and demand balance being made up of 2.84 ha of un-subdivided land and 2.51 ha of subdivided land. Another parcel of land on the western edge of the town is also discounted from the supply (east of Regan Street to the north Macbeth Street). This land is heavily vegetated and is currently used for rural residential purposes. There is a low probability that it will be subdivided in the foreseeable future. Altogether the discounted supply from Coolah is 7.86 ha.

Although there is no urgent need to supply additional residential land to the market in the Warrumbungle Shire (given the supply in Coonabarabran) there is a perceived demand for an alternative supply in Coolah. There has recently been a wind turbine farm proposed for 500 wind turbines to the north of Coolah. This has the potential to bring additional workers to Coolah (estimated 50 workers to live in Coolah) for the construction and maintenance of the wind turbines which may increase demand in this area.

Given there is a minimal history of private developers undertaking residential land release there is merit in identifying Council land that may be utilised for residential purposes. A local, undeveloped park in Goddard Street is an area identified (subject to further investigation) may be suitable for rezoning to accommodate future residential growth. This area is shown in Figure 50. This area is a logical extension to the town, is elevated and has considerable views across the valley. Council has already had interest to develop this land. The site is evaluated below against the residential land suitability criteria outlined in this Strategy.

### Potential Residential Area 1: Goddard Street, Coolah

Gross Potential Area (ha): 7.45 ha

*Assessment against residential locational requirements:*

- ▶ This area is located on the northern edge of Coolah, adjacent to the golf course which surrounds the site to the north and east. It is east of an area currently zoned rural residential. It has frontage to Goddard Street.
- ▶ It is immediately adjacent to zoned residential land (across the road) and has access to reticulated water and sewerage.
- ▶ It is not affected by buffers to STP, landfill site, aerodrome or the like.
- ▶ It is also not located adjacent to a forestry area or within 500m of a mine or extractive industry.
- ▶ It is located outside the 1% floodplain.
- ▶ It is not steeply sloping land.
- ▶ It is substantially cleared and does not contain any ESA's. There is an area to the north west of the site which contains high conservation values which may need a buffer to the proposed residential land to ensure it is not bush fire affected.
- ▶ It is not affected by dryland salinity.
- ▶ It has high groundwater vulnerability (but it will be seweraged).
- ▶ Has the potential to supply residential land in the medium to long term. The studies that will need to be undertaken prior to the rezoning of the subject site include groundwater vulnerability, the risk of land contamination from past uses and possible bushfire risk considering the close proximity of the high conservation values to the north west of the site.

Given the above once we discount the supply in Coolah and include the additional supply of land proposed above then the discounted estimated of supply for the Warrumbungle Shire remains at 1392 ha (1392 ha minus 7.86 ha plus 7.45 ha).

**Table 26 Residential Balance Sheet for Warrumbungle Shire**

Time Frame	Residential land stock at start of period (ha)	Estimate of Demand over period (ha)	Residential land stock at end of period (ha)	Estimate of years of supply remaining at end of period
2011-2016	1392	9.5	1382.5	727
2016-2021	1382.5	9.5	1373	722
2021-2026	1373	9.5	1363.5	717
2026-2031	1363.5	9.5	1354	712
2031- 2036	1354	9.5	1344.5	707

The residential balance sheet indicates that Council has sufficient land in the town of Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah to last well beyond the life of the Strategy. Even if the lack of data on past

residential development has caused a gross underestimate of demand or the supply calculations have been over estimated, it is still unlikely that there will be a shortage of residential land in the Warrumbungle Shire in the foreseeable future. Other than for the town of Coolah it is recommended that no further residential opportunities be identified in the Strategy other than what is in current LEPs.

#### 9.1.5 Actions – Residential Supply and Demand

- ▶ Apply a general residential zone to the residential areas of Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo to reflect existing uses.
- ▶ Land on the northern edge of Coolah shown in Figure 40 should be zoned for residential development.
- ▶ Consider a minimum lot size of 700m<sup>2</sup> for sewerred lots within residential areas.
- ▶ Encourage infill development in existing serviced urban areas.
- ▶ Implement a land use monitor to accurately identify residential land supply and demand issues on an annual basis.

## 9.2 Villages within the Warrumbungle Shire

The settlement hierarchy shown in Chapter 5 identifies the villages within the Warrumbungle Shire which include Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran. These areas have traditionally been zoned 2 (v) (Village) under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 and Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990. Each village generally has a main street with limited retail facilities or a focal point such as a church or pub. The location of industrial land uses within some villages is relatively ad hoc.

These villages are generally outside the serviced settlements of the Shire, but often perform important economic and social roles in the community. They largely have characteristics of strong communities with distinct identities.

Although growth within the villages has been historically low, recent economic activity and rises in house prices across the state have created some pressure for rural villages to develop. This small demand for residential development may be associated with tourism-related business activity for the Warrumbungle National Park or the Siding Spring Observatory and with fluctuations in local farming enterprises. In addition, development in rural villages is also driven by affordable housing. Currently, village areas have extremely low cost housing available and this type of housing is attractive to low income households within the Warrumbungle Shire.

New development in villages is often of a scale suited to the village and is incremental in nature. Lack of services largely prevents significant housing growth at conventional densities as on-site disposal of effluent cannot be achieved. Villages in the Warrumbungle Shire vary in their capacity to cope with new development.

Council's strategy is that unserviced settlements should not be promoted as nodes for significant housing and population growth. Within identified unserviced settlements Council will allow for future development such as small-scale subdivision and infill options subject to subdivision layout, maintaining levels of amenity and adequate disposal of effluent and stormwater. It is important to allow natural growth and continued investment in unserviced settlements to ensure the physical, social and economic conditions of the villages do not deteriorate.

The small villages under the settlement hierarchy as shown Chapter 5 include Merrygoen, Bugaldie, Cobbora, Craboon, Leadville, Kenebri, Purlewaugh, Ulamambri, Rocky Glen, Uarbry, Neilrex, Weetaliba and Yearinan. These are essentially small groupings of dwellings in rural settings. While Council will not encourage further development in these areas, consolidation of lots and dwellings is considered appropriate. The small villages should be defined within the LEP and allowed to consolidate through the addition of further houses subject to merit assessment. In addition for these villages a minimum lot size should be set at 4000m<sup>2</sup> as Council does not want to encourage further development in these areas.

The development of many villages can be traced through the locations and styles of their buildings. Warrumbungle Shire has important rural built heritage, early farmhouses, court houses, farm villages and historic plantings which all contribute to the cultural heritage of the Shire. The heritage also contributes to the character of the villages. The character of the villages is an important aspect which contributes to the vitality of these centres. Therefore Council should encourage development that complements the character of the area, is respectful of its setting, is in proportion and that relates well to surrounding development in terms of form and colours.

Council also needs to consider the existence of agriculture as a use within the village areas. Areas within the existing village boundaries are often used for small agricultural pursuits or are part of a larger holding. In small rural villages the existence of primary production contributes to the important agricultural character of these rural centres. Council will therefore need to consider if these types of uses are to be encouraged within the Standard Template LEP.

It is recommended that the village boundaries be retained though an appropriate village zone in the standard template. The boundaries for the villages of Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran, Merrygoen, Bugaldie, Cobbora, Craboon, Leadville, Kenebri, Purlewaugh, Ulamambri, Rocky Glen, Uarbry, Neilrex, Weetaliba and Yearinan are shown from Figure 70 to Figure 100. Binnaway, Mendooran and Ulamambri (refer to Figure 70, Figure 72, Figure 84 and Figure 96) there is extensive areas which are flood affected. Council will need to include flood planning guidelines for future development in its comprehensive DCP.

### 9.2.1 Actions – Villages

- ▶ Support and maintain the hierarchy of settlements by zoning the villages of Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran, Merrygoen, Bugaldie, Cobbora, Craboon, Leadville, Kenebri, Purlewaugh, Ulamambri, Rocky Glen, Uarbry, Neilrex, Weetaliba and Yearinan as Village as shown Figure 70 to Figure 100
- ▶ For the Villages of Merrygoen, Bugaldie, Cobbora, Craboon, Leadville, Kenebri, Purlewaugh, Ulamambri, Rocky Glen, Uarbry, Neilrex, Weetaliba and Yearinan a minimum lot size should be set at 4000 m<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Within the villages of Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran and Ulamambri (refer to Figure 70, Figure 72, Figure 84 and Figure 96) Council will need to consider flood planning guidelines for any future development.
- ▶ This Strategy recognises the important role of un-serviced settlements and villages in the Warrumbungle Shire. Un-serviced villages will not be promoted as nodes of growth but provision will be made for incremental growth of housing to suit the needs of individual communities subject to addressing environmental issues.

- ▶ Council will ensure through LEP objectives and DCP controls that the village character of the Warrumbungle Shire villages is maintained. Mixed-use development will be encouraged in central areas subject to heritage and amenity impacts.
- ▶ Endorse the use of land for primary production within the village areas as appropriate.

### 9.3 Residential Housing Development

Residential housing development is a significant contributor to development within the Warrumbungle Shire as described in section 2.20. There were a total of 3,950 dwellings in the Warrumbungle Shire in 2006 of these separate houses made up 93.3 percent of dwellings, which is significantly higher than the state at 69.7 percent.

Traditionally the Coolah and Coonabarabran LEP's and associated DCP's for residential development have considered the following planning principles.

- ▶ A high standard of design in residential development.
- ▶ Efficient use of the stock of under-utilised, serviced land in the villages.
- ▶ Residential areas which are safe, pleasant and user-friendly environments for residents and visitors.

However, since the mid-1990s a number of new housing issues have emerged or intensified due to changing environmental, demographic and economic issues since these controls were in place. These now require further action. These include sustainability, aging populations and housing affordability.

#### **Sustainability**

There is increasing awareness within the community of environmental issues and greater consideration of how dwellings contribute to sustainability through energy efficiency, transport costs, greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on water quality and stormwater management.

Settlements are inextricably dependent upon climate and water resources, as well as land and water dependent eco-systems. The design, siting and management of all development must actively seek to prevent adverse impacts on these critical assets; it must also minimise the exposure of people and property to danger from natural hazards, such as flooding, bushfire and potential land slides.

Energy supply is also limited in many parts of the region. Building design and innovative local energy supplies (e.g. solar, co-generation – see information box) can assist in making best use of available and planned energy supplies. Residential layout can significantly impact on energy consumption patterns. Energy efficient layouts make use of the sun for passive heating, consider the effects of prevailing winds, and recognise the mitigating effects of vegetation.

#### **How Can We Improve Water and Energy Efficiency?**

There are many approaches to the design of buildings and subdivisions which maximise the re-use of storm and waste water in residential locations. For example, in some developments stormwater is filtered and plumbed back into houses for use in toilets, or stormwater is treated to drinking quality. Some industries also reuse waste and stormwater for cooling or washing down machinery.

Reducing energy demand can be achieved through innovative housing design and methods such as co-generation (that allows electricity and heat to be produced in a single process).

### **Aging Population**

Warrumbungle Shire population is aging. The proportion of people aged 65+ years has been increasing since 1991 in both those aged over 65 and those aged over 85 (refer to Section 2). There are now more small households and fewer large households. Warrumbungle Shire housing stock has developed during the “baby boom” era - at a time when there was a much greater need to house larger families. However, the average number of people per household is now much smaller.

It is expected that with an aging population, a reduction in occupancy rates and changes in household structure, future housing in the Shire will need to include a range of housing types and tenures to be adaptable to various lifestyles and situations and affordable for differing income levels, unemployment rates, housing prices, rents and mortgage levels.

Low density housing, whilst a popular form of housing, cannot always cater for all sections of the community. Providing choice in the housing market allows people to live out their life in their community. This might include changing from broad acre farms to smaller rural residential properties or changing from single-family dwellings to seniors housing, villas or aged care facilities. These facilities need to be provided on appropriately located and zoned areas in or adjacent to urban settlements.

### **Affordable Housing**

The price (purchase and rental) of dwellings is increasing and has seen an increasing proportion of residents experiencing ‘housing stress’. The most obvious sign of housing affordability is the marked increase in property prices seen over the past decade.

Affordable housing is defined by the Department of Housing as not having to spend more than one third of household income on housing. Affordability has become an issue in the Warrumbungle Shire as the value of land and housing has risen in line with a national property boom. Increasing housing prices create affordability challenges for people in the private rental market and those who would like to buy a home in the area.

The planning system has sometimes been criticised as the cause of declining housing affordability through restrictions on residential land supply, developer charges and development control (A. Moran, 2006). However, there are many, complex influences on house prices. The Productivity Commission held an enquiry into first home ownership in 2004 (Productivity Commission, 2004). It found that the cause of rapid escalation in prices was primarily a surge in demand underpinned by income, employment growth and more affordable finance. It pointed out that housing supply could not immediately respond to increases in demand because of the time taken for land to become development ready. In any event, it also considered that land release policies had a relatively insignificant influence on housing affordability:

*“given the small size of net additions to housing in any year relative to the size of the stock, improvements to land release or planning approval procedures, while desirable, could not have greatly alleviated the price pressures of the past few years. Nonetheless, removing unnecessary impediments on the supply side is clearly important to affordability in the long run, particularly in the context of the focus on planning to contain ‘urban sprawl’” (Pg 82).*

Provision of an adequate residential land supply is clearly important to ensure that land supply constraints do not impact on housing affordability.

However, within the Warrumbungle Shire the high cost of public, social and service infrastructure “upfront” in the development of ‘Greenfield sites’ is a major cost to new housing. The holding costs of

these expenses are borne by the developer and then ultimately passed onto the consumer as part of the price of a block of land. Although such a system passes the costs onto the actual users of the land, these are often first home owners, families and workers that are least able to pay these costs. Council needs to take on the role of land developer in order to absorb the initial up front costs and then pass these on at the lowest rate possible. This can also include Council financed loans for land purchasers which further decreases the up front costs of buying land and building a home.

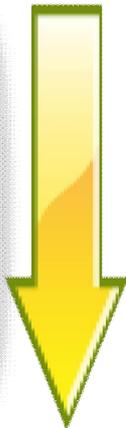
Sustainable Housing Developments

Aging Population

Declining Housing Affordability

### What Can the Council Planning Controls Do?

Strategic



Statutory

- ▶ Consolidate urban development
- ▶ Energy efficiency
- ▶ WSUD
- ▶ Support public transport & alternative transport modes
- ▶ Mixed use development
- ▶ Ensure efficient land use

- ▶ Encourage smaller dwellings, close to services
- ▶ Encourage aging in place
- ▶ Identify preferred sites for aged care developments
- ▶ Ensure adequate open space provision (private & public use)

- ▶ Ensure adequate land supply
- ▶ Avoid over regulation
- ▶ Encourage a variety of urban lot & dwelling sizes
- ▶ Adopt proactive measures to encourage affordable housing use

- ▶ Subdivision layout
- ▶ Solar access
- ▶ Density controls
- ▶ Lot sizes
- ▶ Rainwater tanks

- ▶ Density controls
- ▶ Status of residential facilities
- ▶ Open space requirements
- ▶ Implement adaptable housing standards if appropriate

- ▶ Status of single dwellings and multiple dwellings
- ▶ Incentive & protection measures for affordable housing

## Amenity

One of the main objectives of the planning system is to protect the “amenity” of the community. The amenity of a locality or building means “any quality, condition or factor that makes or contributes to making the locality or building harmonious, pleasant or enjoyable.” (*Macquarie Dictionary, 1996*).

The planning system seeks to protect those qualities which we enjoy about the place in which we live. This is sometimes easier said than done. For example, development of a house on a vacant block next door may often result in some loss of amenity. Any building will block a proportion of outlook. Any building will cast a shadow. Any building with windows will have the potential to allow overlooking of neighbours. It is the extent to which these effects occur which is the concern of planning (Glenorchy City Council, 2009).

The planning system seeks to safeguard a “reasonable” level of amenity. To decide what is reasonable, a planning authority must consider general community expectations, when balancing competing demands and interests in land.

The planning system may protect amenity in two main ways:

- ▶ By separating potentially conflicting land uses through the use of land use zoning controls.
- ▶ By requiring proposals for use and development of land to meet certain use and development standards.
- ▶ By ensuring the developments do not conflict with the objectives of the zones.

Development standards within the DCP’s may apply to such matters as building setbacks (distances from boundary), height, density, car parking requirements and open space. These standards may protect to an extent the amenity of an area. Current development standards often adopt a “performance-based” approach whereby compliance with a numerical standard is not necessary, provided the objective for the standard is satisfied. For example, a 2m minimum setback from boundary may not be required if a proposal would not cause unreasonable visual bulk, overshadowing or privacy impacts on neighbouring properties.

### 9.3.1 Actions- Residential Development

- ▶ New development needs to incorporate the principles of designing for climate change, energy efficiency, water sensitive urban design and biodiversity retention.
- ▶ Encouraging more efficient development (i.e. more connections per hectare), while recognising the need for residential development to be market responsive and commercially viable.
- ▶ Facilitate a range of housing choice through a mix of dwelling types responsive to changes in the structure of the Warrumbungle Shire population.
- ▶ Promote affordable housing in its broader sense through as many options as possible, particularly the maintenance of a sufficient supply of suitably-zoned land to meet anticipated demand for a 25 year period.
- ▶ Prepare a simple affordable housing strategy for the Shire to highlight areas where Council can achieve better outcomes on this issue.
- ▶ Protect the amenity of the towns and villages within Warrumbungle Shire community through the appropriate application of land use zones tables and objectives and well drafted and comprehensive use of the DCP’s.

## 9.4 Residential Development Infrastructure Constraints

Section 2.24 describes the Warrumbungle Shire physical infrastructure. Providing services within the Warrumbungle Shire is often difficult and expensive due to lower population densities and a dispersed settlement pattern. As a general rule, servicing costs will be higher the more remote a subdivision is and the more distant it is from existing services. Increased population results in greater demands on services and facilities provided by Council, such as water, roads, waste management and telecommunication facilities.

In general, infrastructure facilities are fixed in place, are costly and time consuming to plan and build, are durable and have low operating costs, and often exist as networks. They require routine maintenance and periodic upgrading to prolong their lives. Such assets often have environmental or social benefits that cannot be fully recovered by user charges. Because of the public goods which it provides, infrastructure is often publicly owned or regulated.

Section 2.24 examines the physical infrastructure within the Warrumbungle Shire in detail. Reticulated sewerage is only available in the towns of Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo and the village of Baradine and is unlikely to be economic for other villages and settlements. The sewage treatment plants within Coonabarabran and Dunedoo are currently reaching capacity and Council is currently making assessments on their expansion or replacement. Therefore in order to facilitate any development in the future Council will need to investigate an appropriate size STP for future expansion.

In terms of water supply within Coonabarabran, Coolah, Binnaway and Baradine there is some capacity or potential for expansion of water supply. However, In the case of Dunedoo, there are currently investigations into future water supply options.

Water supply in Dunedoo is obtained from sub-artesian bores. The introduction of bore-water based irrigation in the Dunedoo area appears to be impacting on the town's water supply. Studies into the alternative water supply options for Dunedoo are expected to be commissioned. There are also growing issues with salinity in Dunedoo. Council's 'State of the Environment Report 2005, identifies salinity as a problem and indicates that desalinisation of at least part of the town water supply will be required within 5 to 10 years.

Given the significant constraint to development as a result of the supply of water to Dunedoo Council will need to investigate ways to increase the capacity of the water supply in the short term to facilitate development.

Water to Mendooran is supplied from the Castlereagh River via a well and two spears. In addition, Council recently commissioned an Water Treatment Plant which draws water from the Castlereagh River.

In the case of Coonabarabran, the Castlereagh River and Timor Dam provide water supply to the area, however, it is limited by a fixed licence. In order to attract industries and agricultural uses, additional sources need to be explored, including additional dam storage, new bore supplies and water.

Asset management aims to maintain assets to deliver services in the most cost effective manner for present and future consumers. Sound asset management will prolong the life of assets and minimise their whole-of-life costs. The proper management of local government assets has implications for the financial sustainability of many local governments. The cost and efficacy of existing and future infrastructure should also be a key consideration in determining the location of any future Greenfield development areas.

The available capacity of Warrumbungle Shire infrastructure is uneven relative to the development which it services. In general terms, the Shire existing built up areas are well served by infrastructure. However, there are a number of localised capacity constraints which have the potential, if not rectified, to place limits on infill development. It will be important to ensure that new development in these areas is co-ordinated with infrastructure investment to ensure that the development is appropriately serviced in a planned manner. There is also a need to ensure that new development is provided with adequate social infrastructure as there is some inequity in the distribution of services such as local parks and shopping opportunities.

#### 9.4.1 Actions - Residential Development Infrastructure Constraints

- ▶ Put in place an ongoing strategic planning process to co-ordinate residential development processes and infrastructure.
- ▶ Investigate options for an appropriate sized STP in order to facilitate future development in Coonabarabran and Dunedoo.
- ▶ Investigate options for Dunedoo for the supply of water in order to facilitate future development and improve current water quality issues.
- ▶ Investigate additional options for the supply of water to Coonabarabran.
- ▶ Identify and protect critical infrastructure from encroachment and fettering.



## 10. Rural Lands

### 10.1 Rural Residential Land

Rural residential development is considered to be the use of rural land primarily for residential purposes, and may or may not be associated with some form of agriculture. This differs from rural dwellings or rural houses (discussed in Section 10.2) which are those that are on properties that are primarily used for agriculture, and the residential function of the property is ancillary to the farming function. Rural-residential development within the Warrumbungle Shire creates a form of low-density settlement providing for:

- ▶ the lifestyle desires of Warrumbungle residents who would like to live within a more rural setting rather than in the towns or villages;
- ▶ full-time or holiday and weekend residents seeking a rural or natural environment where no agricultural pursuits are carried out;
- ▶ hobby farming, specialty and boutique products, arts and crafts, other small-scale home occupation or cottage industries that require more space or land than a suburban lot;
- ▶ tourist and recreation uses e.g. horse riding or astronomy;
- ▶ housing of farmers in their retirement (on appropriately located and zoned rural residential areas adjacent to urban settlements).

Where there is inadequate planning for an area this speculation can impact on agricultural land values and increase rural conflict to the detriment of continuing agriculture.

Rural-residential development can have disadvantages, if poorly sited or developed in isolation from existing settlement or zoned in excessive amounts. These include:

- ▶ conflict with nearby landowners who do not use the land for intensive agriculture where intensive land use is proposed;
- ▶ competition for quality agricultural land;
- ▶ conflict with general agricultural uses and production;
- ▶ conflict with existing or proposed extractive industries and mines;
- ▶ lack of services, facilities and infrastructure;
- ▶ increased costs of services and infrastructure;
- ▶ possible constraints on town or village expansion;
- ▶ community fragmentation;
- ▶ demand for economic activities if settlement is removed from employment centres;
- ▶ adverse environmental and landscape impacts (e.g. overstocking, additional buildings, wild dogs and weeds);
- ▶ increased fire risk.

However in saying the above, positive benefits can result from well-sited and planned rural-residential development including:

- ▶ attracting investment and new residents and employment opportunities;
- ▶ providing greater diversity in housing and lifestyle choice;
- ▶ enhancing the environment through actions such as rehabilitation, management and reservation of drainage channels and other environmental features;
- ▶ protection of existing remnant vegetation;
- ▶ support for nearby small rural communities improving their viability and sustainability.

Under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 and Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 rural residential development is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings). Rural residential land in the Warrumbungle Shire is focussed mostly around Coonabarabran town centre as well as in the villages of Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran, and the town of Coolah.

**Figure 22 Typical Rural residential Development within the Warrumbungle Shire**



### 10.1.1 Rural Residential Land Demand Methodology

Rural residential land and rural residential dwelling demand can be estimated using a variety of methods. Each method has merit and can be useful. The outcomes from each method are influenced by the assumptions made and these need to be stated. Applying a range of methods gives a good overview of the range of demand that may occur over a nominated time frame.

### 10.1.2 Rural Residential Dwelling Approvals Method

One approach to defining the demand for rural residential land and rural residential dwellings is to assess the past approved rural residential dwellings over a period of say five years and project this demand forward over a given time frame to give an estimate of future demand. This methodology is based on a residential methodology outlined in the State Government's publication, Urban Settlement Strategies – Guidelines for the North Coast (DUAP, 2000).

**Table 27 Rural Residential Dwelling Approvals 2001 - 2006**

Year	No of Dwellings
2001	2
2002	2
2003	6
2004	14
2005	4
2006	14

Source: Andrews Neil 2008

It is known that the average number of dwellings approved by Council over the six years (2001 to 2006) is 7 dwelling houses per year. Projecting this as a constant demand until the year 2036 (25 years) then Warrumbungle Council will need to give approval to 175 rural residential dwelling houses to meet the projected demand. No allowance has been made for rural dual occupancy, as demand is not likely to be significant.

The Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 0.4 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone and the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone.

This provides a guide to the likely density of rural residential dwellings in the future. Based on these densities the area of land required would be from 70 ha to 175 ha.

### 10.1.3 Rural Residential Lot Approvals Method

Another approach to defining the demand for rural residential land (and therefore rural residential dwellings) is to assess the past demand for rural residential land (or lot production) over a period of say five years and project this demand forward over a given time frame to give an estimate of future demand. This methodology is based on a residential methodology outlined in the State Government's publication, Urban Settlement Strategies – Guidelines for the North Coast (DUAP, 2000).

**Table 28 Rural residential subdivision lot approvals 2001 - 2006**

Year	Number of Lots
2001	10
2002	0
2003	8
2004	0
2005	8
2006	8
2007	53
2008	13
2009	19
Total	119

Source: Andrews Neil 2008

Through previous development applications (from 2001 to 2009) it is known that the average production of rural residential land (in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone only) in the Warrumbungle Shire is 13.3 (say 13) lots per year. During this period there was a large subdivision approved in 2007 for 30 lots. Although this skews the figures slightly, there is an argument that it is balanced by the years when zero subdivisions approvals were issued.

Projecting this as a constant demand until the year 2036 (25 years) then Council will need to release 325 rural residential lots in order to satisfy the current level of demand from the market.

The Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 0.4 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone and the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone. This provides a guide to the likely density of rural residential dwellings in the future.

Based on these densities the area of land required would be between 130 ha and 325 ha over the next 25 years.

#### 10.1.4 A Preferred Approach to Estimating Demand

A preferred approach for demand has been recommended for each Council. The aim of the preferred approach is to identify the demand that represents sustainable (and realistic) growth to 2036. In determining its preferred approach Council needs to be mindful that underestimating the demand (in a Strategy) has greater impacts on the community than overestimating demand.

Table 29 summarises the range of demand statistics outlined previously, modified to gauge the effect on demand for a lot size of between 0.4 h and 1 ha. These options indicate that the Warrumbungle Shire should have between 70 and 325 ha of rural residential land to satisfy the potential demand for rural residential development between now and 2036.

In determining its preferred approach Council needs to be mindful that underestimating the demand has greater impacts on the community than overestimating demand. Accordingly it is recommended that the upper level of 325 ha of land be the assumed demand over the life of the Strategy.

At this point the impact of the Cobbora coal mine is unknown. In some areas such as Dunedoo the incoming population has been taken into account however, until further details are known Council will need to monitor any incoming population in order to satisfy the workers demand for housing.

**Table 29 Warrumbungle Shire - Summary of Rural Residential Demand Options**

Demand Method	Dwellings or Lots Required Per Year (No.)	Dwelling or Lots Required till 2036 (No.)	Rural Residential Land Required at one dwelling per 0.4 ha Density (ha)	
			Low	High
Dwelling Approvals	7	175	70	175
Lot Approvals	13	325	130	325

### 10.1.5 Rural Residential Land Supply Methodology

Identification of land suitable for future rural residential development is important if a Council wants to cater for this type of development in an effective way. Not only does rural residential development need to be located appropriately in relation to jobs, schools and shopping but other infrastructure such as transportation links, electricity, and communication needs to be planned for these developments. Timely and effective planning can lead to efficiencies of infrastructure provision as well as an appropriate distribution of the population.

The supply of land and housing to meet future demand will come from a combination of sources:

- ▶ Vacant lots within existing zoned rural residential subdivisions;
- ▶ Rural residential zoned land that is yet to be subdivided; and
- ▶ Rezoning of new land for rural residential purposes (“Greenfield sites”).

The supply of land to meet the future demand for rural residential development in the Warrumbungle Shire will come from a combination of sources. All areas and lot counts are approximate and are based on an assessment of the cadastre and air photography and are shown below.

**Table 30 Rural Residential Land Supply in Warrumbungle Shire**

	Subdivided lots occupied (ha)	Vacant subdivided lots within existing zoned rural residential land (ha)	Rural residential zoned land that is yet to be subdivided (ha)	Total supply of vacant land (ha)	Total Area of Zoned Land (ha)
Baradine	8	38	1,205	1,243	1,251
Binnaway	32	0	1,104	1,104	1,136
Coolah	24	0	0	0	24
Mendooran	195	121	0	121	316
Ulamambri	1.3	10	403	413	414
Coonabarabran	2,030	252	11,526	11,779	13,809
<i>Total Warrumbungle Shire</i>	<b>2,290</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>14,238</b>	<b>14,660</b>	<b>16,950</b>

#### 10.1.6 Balancing Supply and Demand of Rural Residential Land

In preparing a Strategy to look at rural residential areas over a long period of time there is normally a need to look at a range of time periods (short, medium and long) in order to assess how supply will diminish over time based on demand assumptions.

A typical time frame might be:

- ▶ 0-10 years (short term);
- ▶ 10-20 years (medium term); and
- ▶ 20 years plus (long term).

A rural residential balance sheet allows Council to estimate how the supply of rural residential land will be used up over time and this allows Council the opportunity to take action at the appropriate time to assure long term supply of land to the market.

The Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 and the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990, 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone constitutes the existing supply of land to the rural residential market. This has a total area of 16,950 ha. Approximately 2,290 ha of this land should be discounted as it is already developed for rural residential purposes (often at lots quite a lot larger than the 0.4 or 1 ha minimum) and is unlikely to be subject to further subdivision.

As demonstrated above the estimated upper level of 13 ha (325 ha over 25 years) be the assumed demand over the life of the Strategy.

**Table 31 Rural Residential Balance Sheet for Warrumbungle Shire**

Time Frame	Rural Residential land stock at start of period (ha)	Estimate of Demand over period (ha)	Rural Residential land stock at end of period (ha)	Estimate of years of supply remaining at end of period
2011-2016	14,660	65	14,595	1,122
2016-2021	14,595	65	14,530	1,117
2021-2026	14,530	65	14,465	1,112
2026-2031	14,465	65	14,400	1,107
2031 - 2036	14,400	65	14,335	1,102

The rural residential balance sheet indicates that Council has more than sufficient rural residential land in the Warrumbungle Shire to last well beyond the life of the Strategy. Even if the lack of data on past rural residential development has caused a gross underestimate of demand, it is still unlikely that there will be a shortage of rural residential land in Warrumbungle Shire in the foreseeable future.

As the balance sheet above demonstrates, Warrumbungle Shire has excessive amounts of rural residential land with approximately 1,102 years of supply at the end of the planning period (at 2036). Much of the land within the Shire especially around Coonabarabran has generally been held in a rural residential zone for a number of years with no movement towards subdivision. In addition, the manner in which many of the sites have been developed does not lend itself to redevelopment with rural subdivisions typically being in excess of the minimum lot size. One characteristic of the supply is that it is not evenly spread across the three main town centres. Coonabarabran has a huge supply while Coolah and Dunedoo have virtually none.

The difficulty that most Councils have is directing demand for rural residential development to appropriate locations in physical and infrastructure terms, while matching these locations with an owner that has an interest in undertaking the development.

Inappropriate rural residential development displaces agricultural activities and can hinder ongoing operation through amenity complaints. Excessive amounts of zoned rural residential land also impose a burden on Council in terms of infrastructure and service provision such as roads and waste management. Improved direction is required to determine the appropriateness of new dwellings in certain areas to ensure that rural residential development is not displacing agriculture or preventing flexibility and adaptability for farm businesses. This Strategy needs to consider that any introduction of new dwellings within the rural residential zone does not inhibit the long term productive land use of farming land. In Warrumbungle Shire there is the added need to preserve the dark night sky to assist in the functioning of the Siding Spring Observatory.

This strategy recognises the strength of demand for rural residential land use and the legitimacy of this land use as a part of the residential opportunities of the region. However, this land use should occur where the benefits potential residents can be maximised, and where the risks to farming and the Siding Spring Observatory is minimised.

It is recommended that Council should rationalise rural residential land use in the Warrumbungle Shire with the objective of maintaining a reasonable supply in the locations that is most likely to be required while minimising future negative impacts. Each area is examined in detail below.

### 10.1.7 Rural Residential Land Suitability

Identifying land that is suitable for future rural residential use would normally be undertaken through a land suitability analysis. Typically this process would focus on the features of the landscape that pose limitations to development including economic, social and environmental features. Natural features would include flooding, steep land, native vegetation/habitat, bushfire hazard, salinity, land contamination, etc. A land constraints map can be prepared overlaying the available information and the areas not affected by natural constraints can be further sieved by features such as proximity to urban areas (typically less than 10 km from a service centre), or access to services or facilities e.g. sealed roads, telephone and electricity. Economic factors that might also be evaluated include land affordability, location desirability, future construction costs, and on site infrastructure such as bridges or culverts.

However, in order for this process to work effectively the information needs to be up to date and accurate to the scale at which it is to be used and accurate in relation to the cadastre (or property boundaries) of the Shire. It also needs to be available across the area of interest.

In the case of the Warrumbungle Shire a lot of the information is simply not available or is not accurate at the individual property level and cannot be relied upon to objectively identify suitable land at that scale. An alternative method is to use the existing rural residential settlement pattern as a guiding principle and assess land in proximity to existing rural residential areas to gauge its potential suitability for rural residential expansion using the best available information.

Some constraints for which there is information in parts of the Warrumbungle Shire are discussed in Table 32.

**Table 32 Typical Constraints to Rural Residential Development**

Constraint	Reason for Unsuitability
Land within 400m of a sewage treatment plant	This land is often affected by odour problems and a 400m buffer is recommended by the State government
Land that is located within the 1%AEP flood planning level or is land known by Council to be floodprone.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in the floodplain unless no reasonable alternative exists.
Land that is located within the land capability classes 1, 2 or 3.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings on good quality agricultural land unless no reasonable alternative exists.
Land that is located adjacent to an existing forestry operation or land owned by Forests NSW	It would not be in the public interest to jeopardise the current or future operation of the local forest industry.
Land that is located adjacent to or within 500m of an existing mining or extractive industry operation (or 1000m if blasting is involved)	It would not be in the public interest to jeopardise the current or future operation of local mining or extractive industries.
Land that is located within an area of high	It would not be appropriate to place rural

Constraint	Reason for Unsuitability
biodiversity conservation value or an area identified by the state government as an environmentally sensitive area, unless there are extenuating circumstances to justify its development.	residential dwellings in areas that should be protected for their natural values.
Land that is located in or within 500m of an existing water supply bore field or an area of high groundwater vulnerability.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in areas where onsite effluent disposal could contaminate water supplies or contaminate groundwater.
Land affected by salinity.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in areas where salinity can cause damage to buildings and infrastructure.
Land that has a slope greater than 15 degrees.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in areas where steep slopes can lead to problems with land slip and infrastructure maintenance.
Land that is of high scenic value.	It would not be in the public interest to place rural residential dwellings in locations where the dwellings will have a high visual impact on a scenic locality.
Land that is affected by high bushfire hazard and cannot meet the requirements of 'Planning for Bushfire Protection'.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in areas where bushfires can cause damage to buildings and infrastructure and threaten people's lives.
Land that is accessed from a major road unless the access to that road can be limited to a single location.	It would not be appropriate to place rural residential dwellings in areas where multiple private access points are created onto a major road causing traffic conflicts.
Land that has direct frontage to a waterway unless multiple private water rights can be avoided.	It would not be in the public interest to place rural residential dwellings in areas where each new dwelling can obtain private water rights to a waterway due to its frontage.
Rural residential areas within 18km of the Siding Spring Observatory should be limited in order to protect dark night sky.	It would not be appropriate to place future rural residential development within an 18 km radius of the Observatory.

#### 10.1.8 Baradine Rural Residential Land Use

Baradine is located approximately 45 kms north of Coonabarabran and to the west of the Pillaga Forest. Baradine is a small village with approximately 560 persons in the 2006 Census. The railway and Baradine Creek divides the village into two separate precincts to the west and east.

Existing rural residential land use is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 and is located on both sides of the village. The size of the rural residential land surrounding the village is 1,251 ha.

Within the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 the prescribed minimum lot size for rural residential development is 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone. However, very little of this land has been subdivided down to this lot size as shown in Table 33. More than 60 lots are over 4 ha which demonstrates the lack of subdivision that has occurred within the rural residential zone near Baradine.

**Table 33 Baradine Rural Residential Lot Size Summary**

Lot sizes	Total Number of Lots
less than 2 ha	13
2 - 4 ha	13
4- 10 ha	49
>10	30

Some of the rural residential zoned land to the east of the village is currently used for an air strip and some for a quarry. Due to noise and dust impacts these types of land uses traditionally require buffer areas of about 1 km (*Living and Working in Rural Areas*, DPI, 2007) which will further restrict any rural residential land use. Therefore it is recommended this area shown in Figure 62 is zoned to other rural uses.

The land to the north of Baradine Creek (east of the village area) has access via a bridge, is fairly flat and has some views to the south. This area is therefore considered suitable for rural residential development.

To the south of the village there are some areas within the flood plain that are currently used for agricultural production or heavily vegetated. This area has also been recommended to be zoned for other rural uses. To the east of the village area there is a small area which is currently being used as a showground and therefore unlikely to be developed for rural residential developed.

West of the village, along Coonamble Road is a small area with some subdivided lots with dwellings attached. This area is preferred for further rural residential subdivision as it is out of the 1% floodplain, adjoins the existing village and has adequate road access. This area is therefore considered suitable for rural residential development (refer to Figure 62). Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines.

### 10.1.9 Binnaway Rural Residential Land Use

Binnaway village is located approximately 35 kms south of Coonabarabran with approximately 465 persons in the 2006 Census. The railway and Castlereagh River divides the rural residential zoned areas.

The rural residential land in Binnaway is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 and completely surrounds the village area in all directions and covers an area of 1,136 ha.

Within the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 the prescribed minimum lot size for rural residential development is 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone. As shown in Table 34 over 55

percent of the lot sizes within the Binnaway rural residential areas are more than 4 ha. This illustrates that existing areas are not in high demand, are constrained or that the 1 ha minimum lot size is not a size preferred by the market.

**Table 34 Binnaway Rural Residential Lot Size Summary**

Lot sizes	Total Number of Lots
Less than 1 ha	17
1 to 2 ha	8
2 - 4 ha	10
4- 10 ha	17
>10	26

Immediately to the west of the village are the Golf Club and course as well as a rifle range across the road. Any type of residential development in proximity to a rifle range would not only be hazardous but also may cause amenity issues in terms of noise. In areas where current rifle ranges exist such as in Port Macquarie, Hill Top (Southern Highlands) and Lismore noise and safety assessment have been completed to determine the buffer distances from residential development. The buffer distances are based on the type of weapons used and the type of range in use. It is likely the minimum buffer would be a 2 km radius from the shooting range.

In addition to the above a small proportion of this land to the west is flood affected and some areas have been identified as having high conservation value. This area would be more suitable for primary production which is its current use. It is therefore recommended the land current zoned rural residential to the west of Binnaway village is zoned to other rural uses.

Land to the south of the village has been identified as flood affected. Where this may be resolved with higher floor levels it would be more appropriate given there is no existing rural residential development on this land to identify better suited area for residential development. To the north of town adjacent to Box Ridge Road, the land is heavily vegetated and provides a significant backdrop to the town. Rural residential development should also be diverted from this area as well to protect the amenity and biodiversity values of the village.

An existing zoned rural residential area on the eastern side of the village along Ropers Road has very little constraints to the land; it is flat, close to the village, flood free and some area view to the rural landscape. It has full sealed road access from Renshaw Street and Warrumbungles Way. This has a total size of 147.4 ha.

Given the amount of land recommended to be zoned to other rural uses (a total of 989.3 ha), it is also recommended to extend the existing rural residential land along Ropers Road given this area meets all the criteria for rural residential land use (refer to Figure 64). Ropers Road would provide access to the proposed lots, there is very little primary production taking place on the land and as stated above there is very little known constraints to the land. Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines. The total size of the proposed growth area is 125.5 ha.

**Figure 23 Proposed rural residential growth area in Binnaway**



#### **10.1.11 Coolah Rural Residential Land Use**

Coolah is located 86 kms south of Coonabarabran to the West of Coolah Top National Park with approximately 766 persons in the 2006 Census.

A small area to the north of Coolah is the only area that has been zoned and subdivided for rural residential development. This area is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 and is 24 ha. Aerial photos demonstrate this subdivision has 100 percent occupancy. Given Coolah is one of the major towns within the Warrumbungle Shire with a large rural population base it is appropriate that there is some vacant rural residential land available to meet reasonable demand in the locality.

On examination of the land directly surrounding Coolah the areas to the west are significantly constrained as it is steep and heavily vegetated. To the east of the town the land is low lying and is adjacent to the Talbragar River and significantly flood affected.

The land directly adjacent to the golf course and to the north of the existing rural residential area provides a logical extension to the current zoned area. In addition it is slightly elevated above the town and provides views over the valley but at the same time is flat enough for future land development. Some vegetation exists to the west of the proposed area but is unlikely to affect any potential development. This area has direct access off Black stump Way and is not affected by flood. The land is in single ownership and the owner has advised Council of his wiliness to subdivide the area. Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines. The size of the area is 152 ha. It is therefore recommend that this area be identified in this Strategy as a future rural residential growth area (refer to Figure 58).

**Figure 24 Coolah – proposed rural residential growth area**



#### **10.1.12 Mendooran Rural Residential Land Use**

Mendooran is a small village approximately 71 kms south west of Coonabarabran and 33 kms north west of Dunedoo. The village lies on the banks of the Castlereagh River and is severely flood affected. It had a population of 304 persons in the 2006 Census.

Mendooran has an existing zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 which is located south of the Castlereagh Highway and west of Forest Road. This area covers approximately 316 ha and has already been subdivided and partly developed. It is not flood affected. It is recommended that the Mendooran rural residential precinct be retained for future development. Rural residential lots within Mendooran are serviced by town water and have onsite sewage which will be specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines.

Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 prescribes a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 0.4 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone. As shown in Table 35 the majority of the lots are between 2 and 10 ha with only 10 (or 13 percent) of the lots less than 2 ha.

**Table 35 Mendooran Rural Residential Lot Size Summary**

Lot sizes	Total Number of Lots
Less than 1 ha	10
1 to 2 ha	36
2 - 4 ha	24
4- 10 ha	5
>10	10

The Mendooran rural residential precinct has been in existence for a number of years and as shown on Table 30, 121 ha of this land (38 %) is still vacant. The land is flat to undulating and Mendooran is affected by hard groundwater which may present an impediment to some uses.

This area has a mix of permanent and temporary housing (as shown on Figure 25). Mendooran is serviced by reticulated water supply. In addition, the village does have access to childcare, primary school and high school services (via bus). The lack of social services and employment may be the reason for the amount of vacant lots.

However, this precinct is close to Dubbo and to the Cobbora coal mine which is proposed to open south of the village of Cobbora. Demand for this land may increase as workers and their families have a need for accommodation. Given that over 87% of the lots are over 2 ha in size this area is capable of re-subdivision.

Council does however need to be careful about the type of housing developed on rural residential land. Temporary housing such as that present in the area now does not provide a sustainable community and has low amenity issues. The comprehensive DCP will need to address this issue within the precinct prior to the mine opening.

**Figure 25 Mendooran rural residential land is scattered with temporary housing**



### 10.1.13 Ulamambri Rural Residential Land Use

Ulamambri is a small village approximately 15 km south east of Coonabarabran. The village is located on the banks of the Castlereagh River and is severely flood affected.

Existing rural residential land use is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 and completely surrounds the village. The size of the rural residential land surrounding the village is 413 ha. This area is less than 5 kilometres away from the rural residential land surrounding Coonabarabran.

Within the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 the prescribed minimum lot size for rural residential development is 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone. The distribution of lot sizes within the rural residential land is shown in Table 36. There is a significant amount of lots less than 2 ha. These lots appear to be an old village layout and many of the lots are village size at around 0.2 ha. They are located adjacent to the railway line and within 350m of the Castlereagh River. However, only a small proportion of these lots have been occupied with about 9.5 ha still vacant. Part of this area is recommended to be retained in a rural residential zone as it is an existing subdivision with some houses on it. However, it is in flood prone land and Council will need to include flood planning guidelines for future development in its comprehensive DCP (Figure 66). Council should encourage the consolidation of the smaller lots into areas that exceed 1 ha to better allow for onsite wastewater disposal. Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines.

Given the proximity of the village to Coonabarabran, the majority of the land is flood affected and some of it contains a high conservation vegetation area, it is recommended the majority of the rural residential land be zoned to other rural uses. Table 36 demonstrates demand for rural residential land surrounding Ulamambri is not high and rural residential land is better located near a larger town such as Coonabarabran where infrastructure is available.

**Table 36 Ulamambri Rural Residential Lot Size Summary**

Lot sizes	Total Number of Lots
less than 2 ha	64
2 - 4 ha	10
4- 10 ha	5
>10	12

### 10.1.14 Coonabarabran Rural Residential Land Use

Coonabarabran has the largest population in the Shire (2673 persons in the 2006 Census) and the largest amount of economic opportunities, and social and physical infrastructure. Existing rural residential land use is zoned 1 (c) (Rural Small Holdings) under the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 and completely surrounds the town. Within the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 the prescribed minimum lot size for rural residential development is 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone.

There are excessive amounts of rural residential land surrounding the town with a total of 13,808 ha which is 81% of all the rural residential land in the Shire. This area extends to over 5 kms to the east, over 4 kms to the north and south and over 7 kms to the west. This area is the biggest contributor to the oversupply of rural residential land with the Shire. Too much land allocated for rural residential housing and too many development fronts means:

- ▶ Fragmented land development with high costs for infrastructure,
- ▶ Rural residential neighbourhoods commenced, but with poor capacity for servicing due to a struggle to gain critical mass,
- ▶ Increased opportunity for land use conflict at the rural/rural residential interface,
- ▶ Long term and unfair community cost burdens, relating to infrastructure maintenance,
- ▶ Inefficient operation of the property market due to uncertainties on supply and holding times,
- ▶ Increased pressure on emergency services such as local rural fire brigades, ambulance and police, and
- ▶ Increased chance of impact on the dark night sky required for the Siding Spring Observatory.

A strategy is needed which can bring land on stream as needed, proportional to demand and to ensure adequate supply and choice, while not creating other problems.

However, as shown in Table 37 there is still a reasonable demand for rural residential lots within Coonabarabran with a significant amount of lots having been subdivided. In saying this Table 30 shows that within the subdivided land there are still 252 ha of subdivided vacant land yet to be occupied. Given the demand is 13 ha per year for the whole of the Shire this is still 19 years' worth of supply. This Strategy will therefore need to rationalise which rural residential land surrounding Coonabarabran is most likely to be suitable for future development.

**Table 37 Coonabarabran rural residential lot size summary**

Lot sizes	Total Number of Lots
less than 2 ha	99
2 - 4 ha	28
4- 10 ha	62
>10	239

Located to the west of Coonabarabran is the Siding Spring Observatory. As discussed in Chapter 8, the dark night sky is an important community asset that supports the astronomy industry in Warrumbungle LGA and is a major factor in supporting the tourism industry. Rural residential areas within 18 km of the Observatory should be limited to existing developed locations. The provision for genuine future rural residential demand should be made outside of the 18 km radius of the Observatory as shown on Figure 54. It is therefore recommended that future rural residential development within this 18 km radius be limited to existing subdivided land or land that has consent to be subdivided as shown on Figure 52.

Further land to the north and east of Coonabarabran will still need to be rationalised. The majority of the land to the north, south and west is constrained by high conservation vegetation. Some fairly steep

slopes extend to the north and south of this area. Given this land is fairly constrained and the existing supply of subdivided land is extensive, it is proposed that un- subdivided existing rural residential land be zoned to other rural uses.

The land that is proposed to remain as rural residential includes those areas that have been subdivided (or have consent to be subdivided) plus an existing zoned but unsubdivided area along the Bingi Grumble Road (about 179 ha), an area to the east of town beyond the proposed Coonabarabran bypass (about 310 ha) and an area north east of Coonabarabran (about 82 ha).

Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines.

**Figure 26 Coonabarabran – some existing rural residential zoned land is constrained by vegetation and steep slopes**



**Figure 27 Existing subdivided rural residential land in Coonabarabran**



### 10.1.15 Dunedoo Rural Residential Land Use

Dunedoo has the second largest population in the Shire with 821 persons in the 2006 Census. Dunedoo is also well positioned in the Warrumbungle Shire as it is only 60 km North of Mudgee and 100 km North West of Dubbo, it is located at the cross section of the Golden and Castlereagh Highway and has an operating rail freight line adjacent to the town centre.

However, Dunedoo does not have any existing zoned rural residential land. Given that the Cobbora Coal Mine is proposed 22 km away from the town and there is anecdotal evidence of demand for rural residential land use in Dunedoo, then some rural residential land is warranted. There is also a significant disparity when compared to other towns.

Locations in proximity to the town centre are less likely to put excessive strain on Council services. Land to the north of Dunedoo town Centre is flood prone and therefore unsuitable for rural residential development. Land to the east of Dunedoo town centre has a golf course and saleyards and is therefore not really available as shown in Figure 38.

However, land to the south of Dunedoo is fairly unconstrained; it is cleared of vegetation, not affected by dry land salinity, low to moderate groundwater vulnerability and little or no erosion. The land is slightly sloped, however, it does have excellent views towards Dunedoo and the south. This area has direct access to Wargundy Road.

In addition there is an area to the west of Dunedoo which has no vegetation and direct access from the Golden Highway which may be suitable for rural residential development. The area is cleared of any vegetation, has low to moderate groundwater vulnerability and little or no erosion.

Rural residential lots will require a minimum 10,000 gallon (45,000 litres) tank for domestic water storage as well as onsite sewage which will be specific to the site and in accordance with the Council guidelines. A potential area of 336.5 ha is identified and is shown in Figure 56.

### 10.1.16 The Revised Warrumbungle Shire Rural Residential Land Supply

Table 38 summarises the existing and proposed rural residential supply in the Warrumbungle Shire. The total supply in each area has been rationalised including the provision of rural residential development around the major population centres such as Dunedoo and Coolah and a reduction of supply around Coonabarabran and smaller villages. The overall excessive supply of rural residential land previously presented is recommended to be reduced to a manageable amount of 2,068 ha.

**Table 38 Rural Residential Existing and Proposed Land Use Summary**

Location	Total Area (ha)				
	Existing Zoned Rural Residential land to be zoned to other uses	Existing Zoned Rural Residential to be retained that is currently occupied	Existing Zoned Rural Residential to be retained that is currently vacant	Proposed Rural Residential Growth Area	Total Supply of Rural Residential Land
Baradine	827	8	425	0	425
Binnaway	989	32	115	126	241
Mendooran	0	195	121	0	121

Location	Total Area (ha)				
Coolah	0	24	0	152	152
Ulamambri	403	1.3	10	0	10
Coonabarabran	11,681	1,344	782	0	782
Dunedoo	0	0	0	337	337
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>1,604</b>	<b>1,453</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>2,068</b>

On a Shire wide basis assuming a demand of 13 ha per year this correlates to 159 years supply of rural residential land. This is more than enough to deal with demand for rural residential land beyond the life of this Strategy. Table 39 demonstrates that a rural residential land supply of 2,068 ha in 2011 will still result in 134 years of supply at the end of the Strategy planning period (2036). Even though this is still a significant amount of rural residential land supply, it is an 86% reduction from the original supply of 14,660 ha under existing planning controls.

**Table 39 Final Rural Residential Balance Sheet for Warrumbungle Shire**

Time Frame	Rural Residential land stock at start of period (ha)	Estimate of Demand over period (ha)	Rural Residential land stock at end of period (ha)	Estimate of years of supply remaining at end of period
2011-2016	2,068	65	2,003	154
2016-2021	2,003	65	1,938	149
2021-2026	1,938	65	1,873	144
2026-2031	1,873	65	1,808	139
2031 - 2036	1,808	65	1,743	134

#### 10.1.17 Minimum Lot Size for Rural Residential Development

The Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 0.4 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone and the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 prescribed a minimum lot size for rural residential development of 1 ha in the 1(c) (Rural Small Holdings) zone.

In order to simplify the next Local Environmental Plan it is recommended to utilise primarily one lot size for all rural residential areas throughout the Shire.

The prevailing demand (based on market evidence, rural residential lot patterns and previous DA's) is for rural residential lots over 2 ha. Minimum lot sizes of 0.4 or 1 ha are quite small for a "broad acre" rural LGA such as Warrumbungle Shire. Having a lot size considerably less than the market is creates an illusion about the longevity of existing supply. In addition, smaller lot sizes require additional services to be provided to maintain public health and environmental standards. As shown in Table 40 surrounding

Councils have a similar lot size which reflects the demand for rural residential development in western NSW.

A Lot Size Map will be used control subdivision and redevelopment within the rural residential areas.

**Table 40 Surrounding LGA proposed rural residential minimum lot size**

Council Area	Proposed Rural Residential Minimum Lot Size
Gilgandra Shire	2 ha
Bogan Shire	2 ha
Coonamble	4 ha
Narromine	3.5 ha

#### 10.1.18 Land Proposed to be Removed from the Rural Residential Land Supply

The recommendation to cut back the Shire wide rural residential land supply from 14,660 ha to 2,178 ha may result in some landowners who have yet to get an approval for a dwelling losing both their ability to subdivide into small lots (which is intentional) and their current dwelling entitlement (which is not intentional). This may apply to landowners who don't have a holding of 500 ha or more. A solution to this is to introduce a special provision in Council's upcoming LEP that provides for a sunset period of say 5 years after the zoning changes for an applicant to lodge an application for a single dwelling on a holding that was previously zoned for rural residential purposes, is less than 500 ha and does not have a dwelling on it or an approval for a dwelling.

#### 10.1.19 Actions – Rural residential land

- ▶ Provide for genuine demand for rural residential development in locations that do not cause conflict for agricultural lands, extractive industries, mines, areas of high potential for mineral and extractive resources and do not undermine future urban expansion options.
- ▶ Use existing rural residential settlement patterns as a guide and assess land in proximity to these areas to gauge its potential suitability for rural residential expansion using the best available information.
- ▶ Monitor the Cobbora coal mine incoming population assess the demand for additional rural residential housing.
- ▶ Include a special provision in Council's upcoming LEP that provides for a sunset period of 5 years after the zoning changes for an applicant to lodge an application for a single dwelling on a holding that was previously zoned for rural residential purposes, is less than 500 ha and does not have a dwelling on it or an approval for a dwelling.
- ▶ Council will endeavour to provide reticulated water to rural residential development where it is feasible and cost effective.
- ▶ Rural residential land around the village of Baradine shown in Figure 62 should be rezoned to a general rural zone.
- ▶ Remove the rural residential zoned land shown on Figure 64 around Binnaway. Apply a general rural zone in this area.

- ▶ Commence detailed site investigation of proposed rural residential land along Ropers Road, Binnaway to assess the viability of this site in satisfying the rural residential land requirements for Binnaway over the medium to long term (refer to Figure 64).
- ▶ Commence detailed site investigation of proposed rural residential land in Dunedoo, to assess the viability of this site in satisfying the rural residential land requirements for Dunedoo over the short to medium term (refer to Figure 56).
- ▶ Commence detailed site investigation of proposed rural residential land along Black Stump Way, Coolah to assess the viability of this site in satisfying the rural residential land requirements for Coolah over the short term (refer to Figure 58). It is suggested that this site is master planned and released in stages.
- ▶ Update DCP controls relating to the quality of temporary housing developed within the Mendooran rural residential land (refer to Figure 60) to ensure the area provides a sustainable community.
- ▶ It is recommended that rural residential land around the village of Ulamambri shown in Figure 66 to be rezoned to other rural uses.
- ▶ The remaining rural residential land in the vicinity of Ulamambri will need to include flood planning controls for future development in the comprehensive DCP as well as the new LEP (refer to Figure 66).
- ▶ It is recommended that rural residential land around Coonabarabran shown in Figure 52 be rezoned to other rural uses.
- ▶ It is recommended that Council consider adopting a minimum lot size of 2 ha for new rural residential development throughout the Shire.

## 10.2 Rural Dwellings

The Warrumbungle Shire has a significant history of land fragmentation. Although it still has almost 23% of its rural holdings in excess of 600 ha it has 46% of its rural holdings less than 100 ha (Andrews Neil, 2008). Most existing holdings would be occupied with at least one rural dwelling. Historically, these houses were largely occupied by the land owners and their workers in agriculture or forestry. More recently other sectors of the population began moving to rural areas for hobby farming or 'lifestyle' reasons. The location of houses and other development can be a threat to agricultural production. Development of houses on smaller rural holdings generally alienates the land from commercial production. Many smaller rural holdings support only limited agriculture and while some niche industries contribute to household income it is unusual for hobby farms to be commercially viable.

The state government supports the retention of agricultural land, particularly prime crop and pasture land, for commercial food and fibre production. It is recognised, however, that some alienation of prime crop and pasture land is inevitable as a consequence of population growth and economic development. The state government's policy on the protection of agricultural land states that conversion of such land should only take place where fully justified in an appropriate planning context, including an assessment of alternative sites.

The current system of determining whether a dwelling is allowed to be approved on a property is based upon a minimum lot size and the concept of an existing holding in both the Coonabarabran and Coolah LEP's. Existing holdings have usually been described in LEP's as a lot or portion of land that was held either in isolation or in conjunction with other adjoining lots or portions as at a specified date.

Currently the Council has used the concept to permit a dwelling in a rural zone on a lot or parcel of land that otherwise would have been too small to make the minimum lot size for Council to permit a dwelling. So, typically it was linked to the concept of a dwelling entitlement. It is often difficult to be sure what lots were held together at a past date, although searches can be undertaken with the State government in most cases. These can be time consuming and expensive and historically many Council's made mistakes in assessing whether a lot or parcel was an existing holding.

Consistent with state policy, Ministerial Directions under Section 117 and the Standard Instrument LEP template, the new Comprehensive LEP will not permit concessional lot provisions and existing holding rights. Therefore, the minimum lot size will be the primary control used for rural subdivision on RU1 Primary Production land.

Dual occupancy development is defined in the Standard LEP as:

*“two dwellings (whether attached or not) on one lot of land, but does not include a secondary dwelling”.*

Secondary dwelling is really a form of dual occupancy dwelling but has been separately defined in the Standard LEP to allow it to be confined to a smaller size than the principal dwelling on the property. A suggested size is no more than 60 square metres.

Coonabarabran and Coolah LEP's adopt the model provision which permit dual occupancy in rural areas. Dual occupancy can lead to over capitalisation of a property and subsequent pressure for subdivision. In coastal areas this has been controlled by allowing only attached dual occupancy. However, this has led in some cases to a proliferation of illegal dual occupancy development as landowners seek to avoid the prohibition.

Dual occupancy can provide rental income for a farm and can be used to house family members (such as retired farmers seeking to remain on the family land). It can be a way of providing low cost housing. The potential for pressure for subdivision can be reduced if the dwellings are accessed from the same driveway and are held on the same lot.

It is important that the development of additional dwellings does not detract from scenic amenity and does not place additional demands for infrastructure upon Council. It is also imperative that dual occupancy is developed in such a way that the design is rural in style, materials and fabric. All buildings on a rural property should be compatible and complementary. The siting and size of these buildings must also take into account environmental constraints, including biodiversity, bushfire hazard and the ability to safely dispose of effluent.

A rural workers dwelling is defined in the Standard LEP template as a:

*“a dwelling, ancillary to a dwelling house on the same landholding, used as the principal place of residence by persons employed for the purpose of agriculture or a rural industry on that land”.*

The large distances between urban areas and some parts of the Warrumbungle are a legitimate basis for rural workers dwellings. The broad acre farming that occurs in the region and the need for workers to be available for long hours during certain seasons is another reason to support this development type. However the Council may want to define certain areas where rural workers dwellings are permitted to avoid them becoming de facto rural residential development areas. Any application would still need to show that the agricultural production of the property required additional accommodation that could not be met by dwellings already on site or the nearest urban area.

To the south west of Coolah (north of Leadville) is the Salisbury Estate, Johnson Estate and Schiemer Estate this area is currently zoned 1(a) General Rural under the Coolah LEP 2000. This area was

approved with dwelling entitlements in 2000 and is currently contained in Schedule 4 - Additional Permitted Uses with dwelling entitlement on each lot as long as the dwelling complies with Planning for Bush Fire Protection. Given the areas currently has consent for a dwelling it is therefore recommended that the LEP include a minimum lot size for each lot that allows for a dwelling but does not allow for further subdivision of the land.

### 10.2.1 Actions – Rural Dwellings

- ▶ Ensure that rural dwellings are developed only where water quality, scenic rural landscapes, agricultural activities and the natural environment are not adversely effected,
- ▶ Ensure that rural workers dwellings are permitted only in areas of genuine agricultural production and that evidence of the need for workers accommodation on site is provided.
- ▶ Promote the clustering of rural workers dwellings and the joint use of road access points and services. The dwellings should be located on the same lot and further subdivision (to separate the houses) should be prohibited.
- ▶ Not include a reference to existing holdings for the purposes of rural dwelling entitlements in future LEP or if they are included, then phase the concept out after five years.

### 10.3 Rural Small Holdings (Primary Production Small Lots)

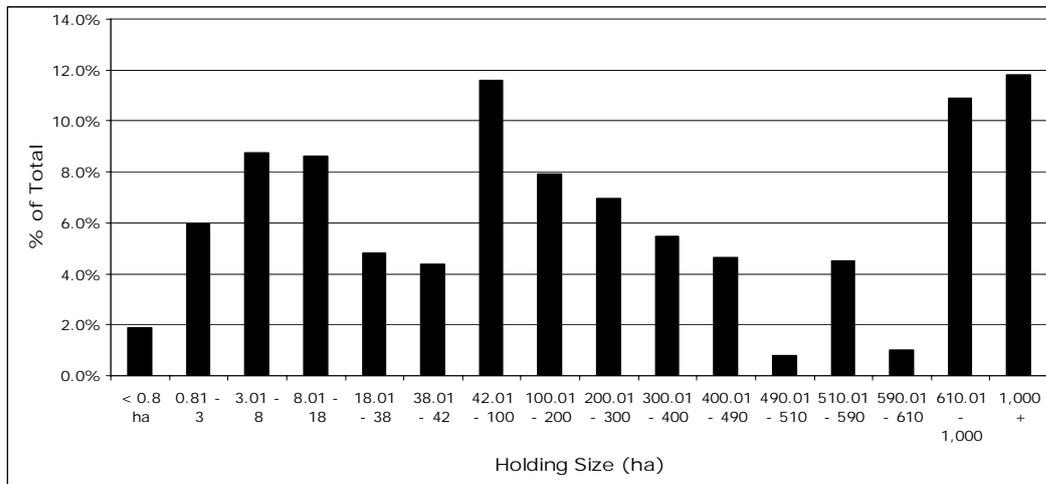
The LEP practise notes (PN 06–002) states in regard to the rural small holdings zone (now known as Primary Production Small Lots) that:

*‘This zone is generally intended for land which is to be used for small scale rural and primary industry production. Land within this zone might also provide for emerging primary industries and agricultural uses. It is not intended that this zone be used for land that is primarily residential in function—the R5 Large Lot Residential zone should be used for that purpose.’*

It is intended to be an agricultural area that provides for specific commercial agricultural activities that may be viable on smaller lot sizes than traditional extensive grazing or cropping activities. It is not intended to be a form of rural residential development, or rural lifestyle development or hobby farm. It does not correlate with the areas currently identified and zoned as rural small holdings as all these areas are rural residential development. In nearby LGA’s this land use would be applied to areas that produced commercial quantities of grapes or irrigated oranges or intensively farmed poultry. In Warrumbungle Shire this form of agriculture is not currently evident in any one location beyond individual holdings.

Niche agriculture (such as horticulture, intensive agriculture etc) historically utilises smaller holdings within the Shire. There are over 40 prospective new livestock products in Australia. The annual estimated value of livestock and products traded from these industries exceeds \$200 million with approximately 50% traded on export markets. About 80% of value comes from kangaroo, game birds and goat meat. New livestock industries in Australia include: emus, ostrich, rabbit meat, hare meat, buffalo meat, bison, deer, camel meat, snails, mohair, cashmere, angora, alpaca fibre, silkworm, duck meat and eggs, turkeys, geese, quail, squab, pheasants, guinea fowl, partridge, kangaroo, wallaby, crocodile, yabbies, native birds, frogs, possum, turtle, flying fox, witchetty grubs, dairy goat, dairy sheep, and dairy buffalo (DPI, 2010). These types of niche agriculture would utilise small holdings and could be carried out without a specific small holdings zone on any land where agriculture is a permissible use.

**Figure 28 Warrumbungle Shire Rural Holding Size in 2008**



Source: Andrews.Neil, 2008

As Figure 28 demonstrates, there is already a variety of existing holding sizes throughout the Warrumbungle Shire and there is a strong argument that there is probably a sufficient quantity of small lots to support any emerging niche agriculture.

In addition, the new LEP will ensure other mechanisms are in place which will ensure the supply of this industry is maintained. Such mechanisms include farm boundary adjustment clauses, subdivision without dwelling entitlement clauses and rural worker dwelling provisions. These provisions should facilitate flexibility and opportunity yet prevent fragmentation in the rural zone meeting the SEPP (Rural Lands) principles and rural zone objectives, while still recognising community concerns and creating an environment which will foster niche agriculture.

### 10.3.1 Actions – Rural Small Holdings (Primary Production Small Lots)

- ▶ Not identify any rural areas for inclusion in the rural small holdings zone on the basis that the existing holding size pattern allows for niche agriculture.

## 10.4 Rural Tourism

Following on from Section 7.15, the Warrumbungle Shire region is a popular tourist destination for a wide range of visitors from intrastate, interstate and international locations. It is an important part of the local economy. Sustainable tourism developments build on these assets.

Although tourism is well catered for in the Warrumbungle Shire urban area it is also a growing industry in the rural areas. Tourists and Warrumbungle residents are using and visiting accommodation, recreation and other day visit attractions, astronomy viewing, arts and crafts studios and outlets, and restaurants and tearooms often associated with the National Parks, Siding Spring and a range of other attractions.

Tourism in rural areas can broaden the economic base and employment opportunities in the area where traditional rural economies may be in decline. It is argued that tourism development should be managed, located, designed and sited in a manner which protects and enhances wherever possible the outstanding scenic and environmental attributes of the area. On the other hand where agriculture is the dominant and priority use others believe tourism must only be permitted in the rural area where it will not be in conflict

with established or potential agricultural activity and should not overtake or replace agriculture. It can be argued that agriculture is dependent on suitable soil and water conditions while tourism has much greater flexibility and opportunity to locate in other areas and not impact on significant agricultural operations. Therefore protecting agriculture would not place an unacceptable constraint on tourism and it is unlikely that farmers would use land with good soil and water conditions for such uses other than agriculture.

Planning to avoid any adverse impacts on agriculture could concentrate rural tourism, particularly where it includes overnight accommodation, in and around rural towns and villages. Areas could also be suitable where they are some distance from agriculture or separated by a physical feature such as a hill that minimises the risk of an adverse impact. Ecotourism has become a very popular activity and as such could create some conflict with agricultural uses if not managed properly.

#### 10.4.1 Actions – Rural Tourism

- ▶ Identify areas where tourism should be encouraged such as in Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo.
- ▶ Review the balance between the levels of tourism permitted with or without the need to change the zoning in rural areas to maximise flexibility in controls.
- ▶ Review DCP planning guidelines and criteria for assessment of tourism.

### 10.5 Agriculture

Primary production covers the majority of the landscape of the Warrumbungle Shire. This is characterised by sheep and cattle grazing, lucerne, canola, grain crops and forestry. Use of the land on a broad acre scale for agriculture has been the traditional use since settlement, and is the dominant contributor to the economy of the Warrumbungle Shire. Ongoing maintenance and development of this productive capacity is essential to the future economic health of the area and is a key objective of the Strategy. This is supported by the State Environmental Planning Policy (Rural Lands). Councils are required by legislation to ensure that their LEP's are consistent with the objectives of this policy.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (Rural Lands) 2008 was developed in an effort to provide principles for the orderly development of rural land, preserving areas of high agricultural value for continued agricultural use and making provision for rural lifestyle, settlement and housing in those areas where it is socially and economically feasible. The SEPP sets out principles for planning in rural areas as well as principles for rural subdivision, and the principles that must be adhered to in exercising functions related to the preparation of an LEP.

There are several issues affecting continued agricultural capacity within the Warrumbungle Shire. These summarised below.

- ▶ *Expansion of towns and villages:* The expansion of towns and villages and the location of houses and other development is a primary threat to continued agricultural production. Development of houses on small holdings or rural holdings can alienate land from commercial agricultural production. Many small holdings support limited agriculture and it is unusual for hobby farms to be commercially viable.
- ▶ *Subdivision of agricultural land into non-viable holding:* There is some expectation that landowners can subdivide portions of land under agricultural holdings to build a house. Subdivision of rural holdings with a dwelling in this way generally contributes to the conversion of land away from agricultural uses, and as such contravenes the SEPP (Rural Lands). Agricultural productivity is to be

a key consideration in the assessment of any proposed rural subdivision. The LEP will include minimum lot size in rural areas and this will effectively prevent excessive rural subdivision in the majority of cases.

- ▶ *Rural residential zoning:* The purpose of rural residential zoning is to provide opportunity for people to live in rural areas without compromising the agricultural productivity of the area. There is already excessive amounts of rural residential land in the Warrumbungle Shire, particularly around Coonabarabran. Inappropriately located rural residential development can have a significantly detrimental impact on agricultural productivity. Section 10.1 above discusses the rationalisation of this land use in detail.
- ▶ *Climate Change:* Adapting to climate change will be a challenge for primary production in the Warrumbungle Shire. The CSIRO will continue modelling and monitoring changes in temperature, rainfall and flood behaviour to inform future planning for agriculture.
- ▶ *Residential Development Conflicts:* Conversion of productive agricultural land to residential and other sensitive uses – through poorly planned residential expansion or subdivision into ‘rural residential’ areas – is strongly discouraged as this has the potential to create conflicts at interfaces and compromise farm operations. Loss of productive agricultural land and potential for conflicts with incompatible uses can be reduced by:
  - ▶ focusing housing (including rural residential development) and industrial development within town and villages and industrial estates, unless directly related to primary industry.
  - ▶ preventing excessive subdivision of agricultural land.
  - ▶ managing interfaces with residential areas.

In addition to the above, the Australian Government is still considering a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme under which major industrial companies may offset their pollution through the planting of carbon sinks. This is likely to have unintended consequences as industrial companies seek to purchase large tracts of agricultural land to revegetate. This may lead to a reduction in available arable land causing loss of income, employment and food production. It may also cause displacement of farm households and consequent adverse impacts on rural communities. It is necessary therefore to attempt to protect significant and productive agricultural land through an assessment of the likely social and economic impacts of any proposed carbon sinks. From an environmental point of view, it is also important that a diversity of plant species are used so that endemic natural ecosystems are restored or replicated as opposed to the planting of vegetation monocultures and/or the use of exotic species.

The value of agriculture to the economy is significant and it is the dominant employer. Protecting agricultural land is one way to protect the economy. It is therefore essential that the LEP applying to the Warrumbungle Shire recognises that rural areas will be used for primary production through a suitable land use zone.

Protecting primary production includes maintaining the availability of land for agriculture, avoiding unnecessary limitations on the use of the land and promoting agricultural enterprises that are consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development. Setting a minimum lot size for the zoned primary production lands is another way land use planning can protect agriculture. Other reasons for developing an appropriate minimum lot size for the Warrumbungle Shire is to:

- ▶ reduce opportunities for conflict with commercial agricultural enterprises by minimising residential uses that are not directly associated with commercial farms;

- ▶ provide greater security for all forms of agriculture and to facilitate opportunities for enterprise diversification and farm expansion;
- ▶ reduce the uncoordinated demand for roads, infrastructure and services on the wider community that can be caused by inappropriately located settlement for lifestyle purposes;
- ▶ setting a large minimum lot size is a disincentive to life style purchasers, but more importantly the size also needs to allow for entry by young farmers and the criteria should also allow for more intensive sustainable forms of agriculture where appropriate;
- ▶ enhance the natural resource outcomes associated with sustainable management of rural lands; and
- ▶ minimise settlement of rural areas for lifestyle purposes and encourage such development to be located after broad strategic land use assessment.

Warrumbungle Shire will nominate a minimum lot size in its general rural zone of 500 ha as per the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 (within the former Coonabarabran LGA) as well as 600 ha as per the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 (within the former Coolah LGA). Retaining these two minimum lot sizes is consistent with the SEPP (Rural Lands) 2008.

It should be noted that the SEPP (Rural Lands) 2008 overrides Council's LEP controls in relation to rural subdivision for agriculture. A lot size less than the minimum stipulated in Council's LEP can be requested as long as a dwelling does not exist and is not proposed for that lot.

#### 10.5.1 Actions – Agriculture

- ▶ Adopt a primary production zone in its LEP, which will aim to encourage a sustainable, diverse primary industry and minimise the fragmentation of resource lands.
- ▶ Prohibit inappropriate land uses from locating on agricultural land.
- ▶ Prevent incompatible and conflicting uses from locating in or near areas of primary industry activity.
- ▶ Protect primary industry through the identification of appropriate buffer areas that take into account anticipated future development.
- ▶ Include the 1(b) Rural General Zone under the Coonabarabran LEP 1990 under the primary production zone in its new LEP (refer to Figure 68).
- ▶ Warrumbungle Shire Council will nominate a minimum lot size in its general rural zone of 500 ha as per the Coonabarabran Local Environmental Plan 1990 (within the former Coonabarabran LGA) as well as 600 ha as per the Coolah Local Environmental Plan 2000 (within the former Coolah LGA).
- ▶ Recognise that farm size without dwellings is now governed by the SEPP (Rural Lands)
- ▶ Ensure the equitable and efficient allocation of land and other natural resources between agriculture and other sectors of the community.
- ▶ Ensure land use planning is undertaken, where appropriate, in association with agriculture to avoid conflict that may jeopardise agriculture's sustainability.



**Primary production is a major part of the landscape of the Warrumbungle Shire**

## **10.6 Agri-business**

Agribusiness includes those businesses and industries that are required to locate in rural locations due to their size or the nature of their processes, or the need to be near to an agricultural product or resource. Typical examples in the Warrumbungle Shire are the grain handling silos and structures for the storage and transport of wheat, fertiliser storage areas (particularly ammonium fertilisers), and abattoirs. Future agribusinesses that may be attracted to the Shire include bio fuel manufacturing from cereal crops and intensive livestock related uses such as sheep and cattle feed lots.

From a land use perspective it is important that such uses are permitted in a range of locations to ensure that they are efficient and viable. It is also important that existing sites not be subject to encroachment from inappropriate land uses that can limit their operation.

**Figure 29 Typical Agribusinesses with the Warrumbungle Shire - stockfeed and abattoirs**



### 10.6.1 Actions – Agri-business

- ▶ Allow for the development of value-adding activity, such as packing sheds and processing facilities, which complement primary industry in the local area.
- ▶ Identify existing agribusiness sites and use LEP provisions to protect them from encroachment from inappropriate land uses that can limit their operation.
- ▶ Maximise the use of productive land by encouraging the location of large-scale, value-adding activities outside areas of primary production significance.
- ▶ Examine opportunities for co-location of intensive primary industries and compatible processing activities to reduce land use conflict and achieve efficiencies in production, processing, distribution, energy efficiency and waste recycling taking into account environmental, infrastructure and rural amenity issues.

## 10.7 Forestry

Forests provide significant timber and non-timber resources. Forestry in the form of tree plantations and agro-forestry, is an important part of rural land use activities in the Warrumbungle Shire. Approximately 101,864 hectares (8.2%) of the Warrumbungle LGA is State Forests. The forest reserves of the Shire provide ongoing opportunities for sustainable forestry operations.

However, over the past decade the Shire has faced large-scale reductions in forestry. The forestry and logging industry has halved in number of employees in the two decades to 2006 (ABS Working Population Census).

Coolah lost its forestry industry in 1995, with the closure of the Coolah Sawmill following the cessation of forestry in the Warung State Forest and the proclamation of Coolah Tops as National Park (Rand, 2006).

Forestry in Baradine and Mendooran is based on the harvesting of logs from the native cypress forests of the Brigalow Belt South - Nandewar bioregion. The Brigalow Belt South-Nandewar bioregion is located on the western slopes and plains of NSW and extends from the Queensland Border south to Dubbo. In 2002, the Commonwealth Government identified these forests as a 'bio-diversity hotspot' that required permanent conservation. In February 2003 the NSW State Government placed a moratorium on logging in the forests, to enable investigation of their biodiversity and conservation status. In May 2005, the State Government announced that 348,000 hectares of these forests were to be permanently preserved, with logging not permitted. Forestry would continue in some areas within the bioregion. The Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act was gazetted in 2005, and impacted directly on the State

Forests in the Pilliga region and the Goonoo State Forest, which provide logs for the Shire's timber industry (Rand, 2006).

The Pilliga Forest is the largest native forest in NSW, west of the Dividing Range. The Forest, which is located in the northern part of the Shire, covers an area of approximately 500,000 hectares (420,000 as Forest Reserves and 80,580 in Nature Reserves). It extends from just north of Coonabarabran through to Narrabri and north-west, via Baradine to the village of Pilliga. Prior to 2005, the south eastern corner of the Forest was incorporated in the Pilliga Nature Reserve and managed by the Department of Environment and Climate Change & Water (DECCW), with the remainder being State Forest. In 2005, the Forest (excluding the Nature Reserves) became a Community Conservation Area (CCA), under the Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act (Rand, 2006).

The Goonoo State Forest adjacent to the south western corner of the Shire, in the area between Dubbo and Mendooran, was also declared a Community Conservation Area. Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area Act provides for 4 different management categories, Zones 1 to 4, with Zones 1, 2 and 3 to be managed by the DECCW with Zone 4 to remain State Forest. Most of the Forest lying within Warrumbungle Shire is now under the control of DECCW. The Goonoo Forest has been designated Zone 1, while the forests of the Pilliga have areas of Zone 1, 2, 3 and 4 forests. Zone 1 land will be managed as a National Park, Zone 2 as an Aboriginal Cultural site and Zone 3 as a State Conservation Area. Activities permitted in the Nature Reserves and the different CCA zones vary. For Nature Reserves the management priority is protection and conservation. Under this classification, DECCW cannot approve any development (e.g. visitor facilities) or commercial activities (e.g. eco-tours). The number of activities permissible within the Zones increases from Zone 1 through to Zone 4, with Zone 4 permitting the same activities currently permitted in the State Forests ( Rand, 2006).

The above changes in the Warrumbungle Shire has had significant impacts as outlined in the *Economic Development Strategy* (Rand, 2006). Some of the impacts include but are not limited to the following:

- ▶ Since 2003, two mills in Baradine and the Gwabegar Mill have closed, with the Baradine Sawmill continuing to operate.
- ▶ Prior to the Agreement, the available log supply quota for the 7 Baradine sawmills was for around 75,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum, with the forestry industry taking around 68,000m<sup>3</sup>. Under the new agreement, sustainable log supply has been reduced to 40,000m<sup>3</sup> per annum.
- ▶ Loss of a number of forest-related businesses including haulage, supply of firewood and the production of vineyard trellising and fencing materials as well as related retail and commercial businesses in town which in turn has increased unemployment significantly.
- ▶ Under the Brigalow-Nandewar Agreement logging and firewood collection are no longer permissible in the Goonoo Forest. 'Millabill Timbers' at Mendooran has lost its firewood business and the State Forest sourced logs component of its timber business. The Mill has been able to source its logs from private properties within the surrounding region, which has enabled it to continue trading. The future of the Mill is however highly uncertain.

Whilst much forestry exists outside of the jurisdiction of Council, the activities of the forestry industry nevertheless have some land use planning implications and impacts on other use and development

The forestry industry is currently in a state of flux and its future is a highly politicised issue. The land use planning system needs to ensure it can accommodate future directions in regard to those parts of the industry that do fall under its jurisdiction, for example; the establishment of new value-adding timber product manufacturing facilities.

Ensuring forestry and associated downstream processing can continue subject to appropriate impact assessments and without land use conflicts is important. With this in mind, it needs to be recognised that many areas, which may not have agricultural production value, still have other productive resource value and therefore a strong strategy minimising the impact of rural residential uses throughout the LGA is critical.

While recognising the benefits of forestry, there is, however, the potential for conflict between private forestry and other values including sensitive views and vistas, and neighbouring uses, (for example tourism operators), use of Council infrastructure and conservation. These potential conflicts must be resolved through the planning process.

Existing State Forests and possibly forest plantations registered under the *Plantation and Reafforestation Act 1999* should be recognised to allow the identification of interfaces between forestry and other land uses. This could be achieved either through the Forestry zoning under the new LEP template or development control mechanisms built into other rural zones.

#### 10.7.1 Actions - Forestry

- ▶ Existing State Forests and forest plantations registered under the *Plantation and Reafforestation Act 1999* should be rezoned an appropriate forestry zone under the new LEP.
- ▶ Future planning instruments will need to allow for farm forestry to enable flexibility in farm management.
- ▶ Any mills which have been closed should be retained in a zone that permits them to re-open if the economic situation improves.
- ▶ Buffers should be considered in the vicinity of state forest areas where they are in proximity to urban or rural residential areas or where future encroachment of these uses is likely.
- ▶ Ensure that the potential offsite impacts of forestry operations are assessed in the approval process, including the impacts on:
  - adjoining land uses
  - important views and vistas
  - sustainable use of natural resources
  - access to and use of Council infrastructure.
- ▶ Encourage the development of forestry in locations where, the impact on water resources is appropriately managed; the impact on threatened species and their habitats is manageable and existing transport routes can be utilised.

#### 10.8 Mining and Extractive Industries

Unlike many other industries, mining can occur only in specific locations, i.e. where mineral deposits are located. As new exploration techniques are developed and geological knowledge improves, there is potential for discovery of new deposits. Mineral resources close to urban areas are susceptible to encroachment from other land uses, particularly the expansion of residential areas. This can affect the viability of existing or potential mining operations.

The mineral resources of the Shire are closely associated with the geological regions. The Warrumbungle LGA is partly located in the Gunnedah Basin which covers approximately two thirds of the

region. Much of the area is underlain by potential coal resources in Gunnedah Basin strata. To the east of the LGA, the basin hosts coal resources at mine projects such as Werris Creek, Boggabri and Maules Creek. The importance of coal resource potential in the area is reflected by the coverage of the southern half of the LGA by current coal exploration titles (Andrew Neil, 2008).

The majority of the LGA is also covered by petroleum applications and exploration licences reflecting the prospects of the region for coal seam methane and conventional petroleum. Immediately north of the Warrumbungle LGA the Gunnedah Basin sediments host the Bohena, Coonarah and Wilga Park gas fields. The basin sediments overlie Ordovician to Devonian Lachlan Orogen strata which elsewhere are associated with world class deposits of gold, copper and tin. Interest in the mineral potential of the Lachlan Orogen strata in this region is reflected by several exploration titles in the south of the Warrumbungle LGA.

Unprocessed construction materials are quarried in the region including basalt from the Warrumbungle Volcanics near Coonabarabran and sandstone and gravels from sediments in the east. The Warrumbungle Volcanics also have some potential for diatomite occurrences whilst a number of deposits of flint clays in Permian and Jurassic sediments near Merrygoen may have some potential as a source of refractory clays. Minor limestone occurrences occur in the south near Leadville (Andrew Neil, 2008).

The southern area of the Shire is subject to exploration licence applications (ELA) and petroleum exploration licence applications (PELA). The majority of the Shire is covered by petroleum exploration licences (PEL), exploration licences (EL), petroleum special prospecting authorisation (PSPAUTH) and general mining authorisations (AUTH). A mining lease (ML) also allows the mining of clay minerals (brick and pottery clay, kaolin and structural clay) (Andrew Neil, 2008).

There are two significant projects

- ▶ **Cobbora Coal Mine Proposal:** A new coal mine is being proposed south of Cobbora on the Shire boundary. The proposed coal mine is 22 km from Dunedoo and 29 km from Gulgong It is being proposed by a joint venture between Macquarie Generation, Delta Electricity and Eraring Energy to supply coal to their coal fired power stations. It is proposed to be an open cut mine along with a coal handling and preparation plant, ancillary infrastructure, 2 water pipelines (one to the Cudgong River and the other to Ulan Coal Mine), as well as a 25km rail spur line to connect to the existing rail network. A major project application has been made to the Department of Planning along with a preliminary environmental assessment. This has yet to be assessed by the Minister.
- ▶ **Coal Seam Gas:** Santos has been exploring the coal seam gas reserves in the Gunnedah Basin (which includes the Warrumbungle Shire). They commenced initial exploration in May 2008 and have finished the first phase which showed results that indicated a second, two-year phase of exploration and appraisal was warranted. Before coal seam gas could be commercially extracted, several more years of testing, analysis and planning need to be carried out. At the moment, Santos only has NSW Government approval to explore for coal seam gas. No approval has been sought for commercial extraction of gas.

All mining, petroleum production and extractive industries are subject to State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007. This Policy applies to all of the State of NSW. It identifies a range of usually minor or ancillary works that are exempt development. It identifies other works that can be undertaken without Council consent on certain lands. Importantly, it stipulates that mining, petroleum production and extractive industries can be undertaken with Council

consent on any land where agriculture or industry are permitted. The SEPP will over-ride any Strategy or LEP that Council's may prepare.

In saying this, mining can be an important complementary industry to agriculture and provide diversity to rural economies that can assist in times of drought or poor agricultural commodity prices. Locating and securing mining operations of all types is essential in strategic planning. When unexploited resources can be identified (and this is not always the case) then incompatible land uses such as urban or rural residential uses need to be located away from what may be future mine sites. The Ministerial 117 Directions (Direction 1.3 Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries), aims to ensure future extractive industries are not compromised by inappropriate development. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the potential development in close proximity to proposed mine sites.

New mining operations can have significant population growth impacts on towns. The population of mining communities tends to be under estimated. Workers engaged in mining operations, who reside locally while on-shift but otherwise live outside of the area, are not categorised as 'residents' according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population estimates. Therefore, assumptions about potential growth should, as much as possible, be based on accurate population projections developed using the particular circumstances of individual mining communities as well as data describing the characteristics of communities e.g. assumptions about mining projects which are in start up phase, at peak production, or (alternatively) scaling down. The aim of growth management is to avoid the creation of longer-term social problems for the community either during the start up phase, the production phase or when there is a downturn in the mining industry.

This Strategy will guide the Shire towards orderly and proper planning of towns, which are impacted by mining projects. This includes the following:

- ▶ Assistance with affordable and timely housing through streamlining of applications, rental assistance programs, State provided public housing for teaching, medical and welfare staff and mining companies providing suitable housing for employees.
- ▶ Consideration of the appropriate mix of housing types to better match the mining workforce mix comprising transient and potentially permanent residents. The aim will be to avoid the inadvertent creation of longer-term social problems for the community when there is a downturn in the mining industry.
- ▶ New growth will be guided in such a manner as to preserve and protect the existing character of the towns without comprising existing and potential mining activities.
- ▶ Existing housing stock in the Shire is predominantly made up of single dwellings on relatively large lots. In addition to responding to the general housing shortage, there may be a need to address the demand for alternative forms of housing.
- ▶ The appropriateness of single persons' quarters/camp accommodation. Anecdotally, many who would settle permanently in mining towns are forced into the single persons' quarters due to a lack of other options.
- ▶ The potential loss of caravan park accommodation due to town expansion or medium density residential redevelopment. Alternative locations for new caravan park facilities should be considered.
- ▶ Urban design assessment to determine appropriate forms of small lot or medium density housing (and, if found to be appropriate, single persons' quarters).

- ▶ Flexible use of underutilised land holdings (e.g. reserves) should be considered to provide temporary accommodation options.
- ▶ Housing Affordability: Housing rents may increase and certain groups cannot afford housing at this price. Young people are forced to leave town. Poor health / overcrowding in some homes is evident – this may lead to neighbourhood problems. In addition, local non-mine employees are not able to compete with mine wages, and will not be able to afford to live in mining towns, as they cannot afford to rent or buy homes.

#### 10.8.1 Action – Mining

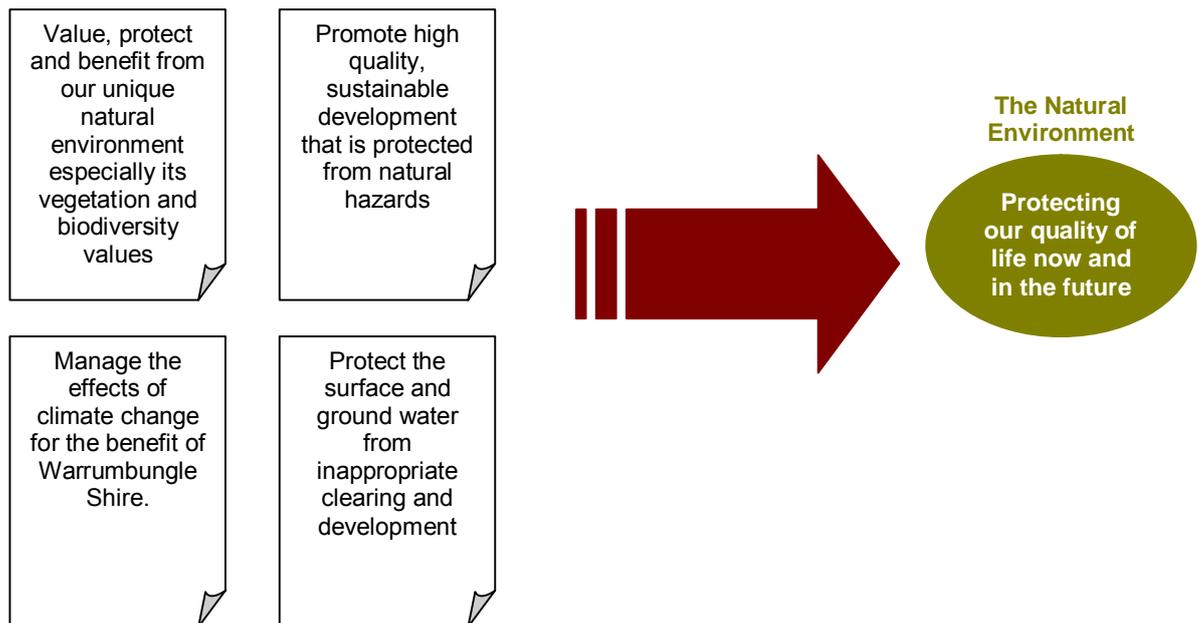
- ▶ Ensure that the new LEP recognises any significant extractive resources that are identified and implement a suitable buffer to protect them from encroachment of inappropriate uses.
- ▶ Identify the typical haulage routes for extractive resources and ensure that these are considered in planning controls for development in the locality.
- ▶ Planning instruments need to ensure that important potential extractive resource sites (where these are known) are also protected from encroachment of inappropriate uses.
- ▶ Ensure that LEP's recognise all mining sites and associated processing areas that have been identified and implement a suitable buffer to protect them from encroachment of inappropriate uses.
- ▶ Planning instruments also need to ensure that important potential mineral extraction sites (where these may be known) are also protected from encroachment of inappropriate uses.
- ▶ Identify the typical haulage routes and proposed rail links for mining sites and ensure that these are considered in planning controls for development in the locality.
- ▶ Identify areas affected by past mining activities (including mine subsidence areas) along with a suitable buffer and restrict development in these areas proportionate to the level of risk.
- ▶ Use urban design principles in a DCP to determine appropriate forms of small lot or medium density housing (and, if found to be appropriate, single persons' quarters) to cater for mining related growth in urban areas. Consider the appropriate mix of housing types to better match the mining.

## 11. Natural Environment

Warrumbungle Shire is renowned for the quality and diversity of its natural environment, including a number of distinctive features:

- ▶ Its climate, promoting healthy and enjoyable outdoor lifestyles;
- ▶ rich and diverse native flora and fauna;
- ▶ spectacular mountain ranges and protected areas including Coolah Tops National Park, Warrumbungle National Park and the Pilliga Nature Reserve;
- ▶ waterways and floodplains of the Castlereagh River; and
- ▶ generally good air and water quality and dark night sky.

The population of the Warrumbungle Shire and the associated urban and rural development is placing increased pressure on the natural environment. Continued loss of natural areas and degradation of natural environmental processes will adversely affect the Shire’s biodiversity, economic potential and public health, and ultimately will impact on liveability in the region. Protecting and managing the natural environment is fundamental to achieving a sustainable future for the Shire.



Each of the above topics which affect the natural environment within the Warrumbungle Shire is discussed in detail below.

## 11.1 Surface Water and Ground Water

The Shire straddles three major catchments – the Namoi, Castlereagh and Talbragar River systems. The Castlereagh River has its headwaters to the west of Coonabarabran and flows in a circle to exit the Shire to the south of Coonabarabran on the western side of the Shire. The Talbragar River system has its origin to the north east of Coolah then flows in a south westerly direction ending up in the Macquarie River. Cox's Creek starts in the Liverpool Range and flows in a northerly direction forming the Shire boundary near Mullaley. Other creeks in the north east of the Shire also flow into the Cox's Creek system which then flows into the Namoi River system. All of these rivers have significant floodplains that are heavily used for agriculture.

Surface water is vital for riparian vegetation and wetlands as well as for agriculture and urban use. Coonabarabran, Binnaway and Mendooran all rely to some extent on water from the Castlereagh River. Surface water quality for the Castlereagh and Talbragar were assessed as "fair" in 2000. Key threats to surface water quality are salinity and loss of riparian vegetation and ground cover, but failing onsite wastewater treatment systems and outflows from sewage treatment plants or intensive agricultural areas can also contribute to water quality problems. Excessive rural residential development that has stream frontage can also lead to problems with demand for water associated with riparian water rights.

The current condition of groundwater within the Warrumbungle LGA varies between fresh, marginal, brackish and saline. The majority of the groundwater (mapped in 2008), particularly to the North of the Shire is of marginal salinity condition (6030 km<sup>2</sup>) with areas of increased salinity developing to the South West. Fresh groundwater comprises approximately 490 km<sup>2</sup>, brackish 380 km<sup>2</sup> and saline 160 km<sup>2</sup>. The majority of the system appears to be in good to fair condition.

Groundwater is heavily used for agriculture as well as for urban use and also makes a significant contribution to aquatic ecosystems. Baradine, Coolah, Dunedoo, Kenebri, Bugaldine, Merrygoen and Leadville all rely on sub artesian water or alluvial aquifers for urban use. Many rural properties also rely on groundwater to supply water to their homes. Salinity and over use are the key threats to groundwater. Groundwater recharge areas are prone to pollution from onsite waste water systems or poor quality surface water from urban areas. Groundwater contamination can cause permanent damage to groundwater systems and result in impacts on adjacent surface water as well as groundwater dependant ecosystems. It is important that polluting development (such as industry, stormwater from urban areas, onsite waste disposal, rubbish tips, intensive horticulture or livestock production) avoid areas of high groundwater vulnerability. Such areas are mapped by the state government in some catchments and should be viewed as a limitation to some development.

Whilst having no role in the allocation of fresh water for irrigation or farm storage Council's planning controls can influence the ability of the LGA to productively utilise its water resources. Ecologically sustainable development relies on a balanced interdependency between quality of life, healthy ecosystems and economic growth. The supply and quality of water strongly influences that interdependency and is one of the most significant limiting factors to achieving sustainable development. Therefore, protection of water quality and quantity is one of the highest priorities for the LGA and attention must be given to the cumulative impact of land uses on this resource. Over time, climate change will also impact more heavily on water management and land use in the catchments of the Warrumbungle LGA.

### 11.1.1 Actions - Surface Water and Ground Water

#### Protecting surface and ground water quality

- ▶ The riparian zones for all of the perennial waterways in the LGA need to be protected from inappropriate clearing and excessive rural residential development. This will assist in maintaining biodiversity as well as assist with the maintenance of water quality. It will also limit the pressure on waterways by not adding to the automatic riparian water rights that go with lots with immediate access.
- ▶ Riparian buffer distances should be consistent with state government advice.
- ▶ Water sensitive urban design principles need to be included in planning instruments and implemented in new development areas.
- ▶ Land uses such as rural residential development with on site waste water disposal should be directed away from the immediate catchment of urban water supplies (e.g. Timor Dam and artesian bore fields). Industrial development and intensive horticulture or intensive livestock production should also be prohibited or closely controlled in urban water supply catchment areas.
- ▶ Groundwater vulnerability areas are mapped by the state government in some catchments and should be viewed as a limitation to some development.
- ▶ Climate change will be an issue that impacts directly on the frequency and severity of storm and flooding and is likely to lead to more extreme events. Consideration needs to be given to the management of surface and ground water resources in the longer term.

#### Salinity

- ▶ It is important that heavily salt affected areas not be used for rural residential or urban development. It is also important that riparian vegetation be maintained and the watercourses in the LGA not be subject to excess sediment load, nutrients, salt or other pollution that could further exacerbate problems.

#### Water extraction

- ▶ Development and land use that is likely to arise from the Strategy should be consistent with water sharing plans in the CMA.
- ▶ Avoid development with direct access to river systems so as to limit the increase of riparian access rights to water.

## 11.2 Vegetation, Biodiversity and Reserved Areas

Biodiversity is the variety of life: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part. Australia is one of the most diverse countries on the planet.

The native vegetation of the Warrumbungle LGA is diverse and complex with the existing distribution of species reflecting the diverse geology, soil types, topography, hydrological aspects and micro-climates found in the shire. The vegetation has been classified according to various mapping systems, the main formations (according to Keith, 2004) that are found in the Shire are:

- ▶ Western Slopes Grassy Woodlands
- ▶ Western Slopes Grasslands

- ▶ North-west Slopes Dry Sclerophyll Woodlands
- ▶ Pilliga Outwash Dry Sclerophyll Forests
- ▶ Northern Tableland Wet Sclerophyll Forests

Although vegetation patterns are changing and mapping is incomplete, studies to date have indicated the following Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs) occur within the Warrumbungle LGA:

- ▶ Fuzzy Box Woodland on alluvial soils of the western slopes, Darling Riverine Plains and Brigalow Belt Southern Bioregions (TSC Act)
- ▶ Brigalow within the Brigalow Belt South, Nandewar and Darling Riverine Plains Bioregions EEC and nationally endangered (TSC & EPBC Acts)
- ▶ Lowland Darling River aquatic ecological community (TSC & FM Act)
- ▶ White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland (TSC & EPBC Acts)
- ▶ Inland Grey Box Woodland in the Riverina, NSW South Western Slopes, Cobar Peneplain, Nandewar and Brigalow Belt South Bioregions
- ▶ Myall Woodland in the Darling Riverine Plains, Brigalow Belt South, Cobar Peneplain, Murray-Darling Depression, Riverina and NSW South western Slopes bioregions.

Another three EEC's potentially occurring in the LGA are:

- ▶ Coolibah-Black Box woodland of the northern riverine plains in the Darling Riverine Plains and Brigalow Belt South bioregions (TSC Act)
- ▶ Artesian Springs Ecological Community
- ▶ Native Vegetation on Cracking Clay Soils of the Liverpool Plains

These areas of remnant vegetation are under threat from a range of processes including land clearing, weeds, pest animals, fire regimes and climate change. In cases such as the White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland as little as 20 % of this EEC remains compared to what would have occurred in the LGA before Europeans arrived.

It has been reported that at least 23 species of vertebrate fauna are extinct in the Brigalow and a further 58 species are in danger of becoming extinct. Two species of plants are known to be extinct with a further 48 in danger of becoming extinct.

The Warrumbungle Shire has a total of 7 threatened flora species and 56 fauna species listed under the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995 (TSC), 15 threatened flora and 24 fauna species listed under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999 (EPBC), 10 of which are migratory species. Four threatened fish species are listed under the Fisheries Management Act, 1994. (FM). In total there are 17 threatened flora species and 66 threatened fauna species listed under all acts in the Shire. Although there will be debate as to the exact conservation status of some species in terms of their known range, these figures combined with the known extinctions from the bio geographical area indicate that the biodiversity of the Warrumbungle LGA is under threat.

In terms of iconic animal species the Warrumbungle LGA is home to a significant Koala population. Warrumbungle local government area is listed in Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection. This is due to the significant Koala population which has been documented in the Pilliga forest and Warrumbungle National Parks. However, recent anecdotal evidence has suggested that numbers have declined.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas is a term that the State government uses to describe land that should be considered for conservation purposes or is affected by environmental constraints such as flooding, a high water table or salinity. ESAs are mapped by the state government for most of the Warrumbungle LGA.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas include:

- ▶ Public land with existing native vegetation, particularly on Crown Land
- ▶ All wildlife corridors and road reserves containing native vegetation
- ▶ All wetlands, flood-prone lands, creek lines and land within 40 metres of rivers
- ▶ Known and potential threatened species, populations, communities and their habitats
- ▶ Regionally depleted, vulnerable, endangered, rare or restricted vegetation communities
- ▶ Vegetation in over cleared landscapes (i.e. Mitchell landscape types with <30% remaining vegetation)
- ▶ Vegetation within 100m of lands reserved under National Parks and Wildlife Act
- ▶ All known archaeological sites and Aboriginal places and locations important to Aboriginal communities
- ▶ Landforms predicted to contain high densities of Aboriginal objects
- ▶ All significant scenic landforms
- ▶ Areas classified as R4 for soil regolith
- ▶ Areas in land capability classes V, VI, VII and VIII.

Protection of remaining habitat and the preservation of biodiversity is consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development and the vegetation management catchment targets of the Central West Catchment Action Plan.

Local Planning Directions 2.1: Environmental Protection Zones, issued under s117(2) of the EP&A Act on 19 July 2007, clearly indicated to Councils that Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) must be identified and protected in Local Environmental Plans (LEPs). Despite this, these maps contain some inaccuracies and will need to be more closely examined as part of the LEP process.

Approximately 123,607 hectares of the Warrumbungle LGA (about 10%) is within National Parks, Nature Reserves or State Conservation Areas with another 101,864 hectares (8.2%) of land in State Forests.

The following National Parks, Nature Reserves and Conservation Areas are located, fully or partly, within the Warrumbungle Shire:

- ▶ Binnaway Nature Reserve
- ▶ Coolah Tops National Park
- ▶ Dandry Gorge CCA Zone 2 Aboriginal Area
- ▶ Dapper Nature Reserve
- ▶ Garrawilla CCA Zone 1 National Park
- ▶ Goodiman CCA Zone 3 State Conservation Area
- ▶ Goonoo CCA Zone 3 State Conservation Area
- ▶ Merriwindi CCA Zone 3 State Conservation Area

- ▶ Pilliga Nature Reserve
- ▶ Pilliga West CCA Zone 3 State Conservation Area
- ▶ Timallallie CCA Zone 1 National Park
- ▶ Tinkrameanah CCA Zone 1 National Park
- ▶ Warrumbungle National Park
- ▶ Weetalibah Nature Reserve
- ▶ Yarragin CCA Zone 1 National Park
- ▶ Yarrobil CCA Zone 1 National Park.

### 11.2.1 Actions - Vegetation, Biodiversity and Reserved Areas

- ▶ Biodiversity values of the Warrumbungle LGA should be identified (where possible) and protected. This would include the connection of habitat areas and the protection of riparian areas, wetlands and EEC's. Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) must be identified and protected.
- ▶ Reserved areas are important for the biodiversity of the Warrumbungle LGA. It may also be appropriate to consider whether such areas warrant further protection through buffer provisions in future planning instruments. This may affect the range of land uses that can be undertaken in proximity to reserved areas.
- ▶ State Forest areas are valuable both as a sustainable community resource and as habitat for native animals. They should be identified and zoned appropriately.

### 11.3 Hazards and Climate Change

Environmental hazards have the potential to make land unproductive and render it unsuitable for development and living. There are a number of environmental hazards that occur throughout the Warrumbungle LGA which include bushfire, flooding, salinity, contaminated land and land degradation. Such hazards can lead to loss or harm to the community, to the agricultural economy and to the environment.

Environmental protection is aimed at identifying and protecting the qualities of the environment conducive to the social and economic wellbeing of the community, neighbours and individuals. Council, as the responsible authority under environmental and planning legislation, is required to assess, manage and monitor activities, which have the potential to cause environmental harm. Land use planning is an effective management tool in minimising or avoiding the impact of these hazards. Emphasis should be on risk avoidance and, therefore, land that is prone to environmental hazards should not be developed unless that hazard can be managed appropriately.

Some parts of Warrumbungle LGA have extensive areas of State Forest, National Parks and Nature Reserves. This combined with a topography that includes large areas of often steep land designated as land capability class 4 and 5 (typically only suitable for grazing or timber production) means that there are extensive parts of the LGA that are bushfire prone. The largest areas are north of Coonabarabran in the vicinity of the Pilliga State Forests and Pilliga Nature Reserve, in the central part of the LGA east of Binnaway and in the southern part of the LGA on steep land between Merrygoen and Coolah. The land between Coonabarabran and the Warrumbungle National Park is also bushfire prone. The majority of flat land in and around the larger river systems has been cleared and cropped and is not bushfire prone.

Bushfires are a natural process in many Australian ecosystems, but periodically extreme events cause significant losses to stock, property and human life. Strategic planning that considers the level of hazard in relation to proposed land use changes allows for an evaluation of the risk at the outset.

It is particularly important that bushfire hazard be considered in relation to any proposed urban expansion or proposed rural residential areas to ensure that the proposed development is not within a hazard area, or if it is then the hazard can be managed responsibly and without loss of ecologically significant vegetation.

The recent comprehensive State of the Environment Report (Greater Western Region of NSW Councils, 2009) indicates that there are no registered contaminated sites in the Warrumbungle LGA, but that there are approximately 40 potentially contaminated sites known to Council. This is comparable with similar sized LGA's in the region.

SEPP 55 – Remediation of Land nominates a range of potentially contaminating uses many of which have occurred in the Warrumbungle LGA. It is reasonable to anticipate that some areas used for past activities such as service stations, land fills, industrial processing, sheep dips, chemical storage or the like may be contaminated. It is important that these sites be investigated if a land use change is proposed to a more sensitive activity. Where the Strategy indicates an intensification of use on land that may be contaminated the rezoning will need to be supported by documentation consistent with the requirements of SEPP 55.

Salinity has traditionally been the role of the agricultural sector with the assistance of the State government through remedial works, education and monitoring (Greater Western Region of NSW Councils, 2009). An agricultural census undertaken by the ABS in 2000/2001 indicated that 12% of 716 properties in the Warrumbungle LGA acknowledged that they had soil salinity on their land. More recently some Council's have recognised it as an urban issue and also one that needs to be considered if new urban or rural residential areas are planned. Salinity can affect urban infrastructure such as roads, buildings and driveways as well as limiting plant growth. An area affected by salinity is not going to be an ideal urban or rural residential area.

The three largest towns in the LGA (Coonabarabran, Coolah, and Dunedoo) are all located in proximity to waterways and are affected in some way by flooding when major flood events occur. In Coonabarabran this is limited to a small urban area west of the Newell Highway (and CBD). In Coolah it is limited to a small residential area south of Charles Street and fronting Binnia Street. While in Dunedoo it is part of the urban zoned land located north of the railway station.

Of the village and small village areas Baradine is severely affected by flooding with most of the land west of the railway line being flood affected (and some to the east at the southern edge of the village). In Binnaway the flood affected land is located in the south western corner of the village area in proximity to Cisco Street. Mendooran village is almost entirely flood affected in major events with only the lots on its northern edge remaining free from flood waters. Ulamambri village area is severely flood prone with almost all the existing dwellings in the area affected in a major flood event.

Flooding is a major constraint to urban and rural residential development in the Warrumbungle LGA and the Floodplain Development Manual (2005) is the guide to how local government needs to address the issue. Residential development should be given preference over rural residential development within areas that are flood free. Development within known flood affected areas needs to be subject to appropriate floor levels to minimise or avoid flood impacts on property. Severely flood affected land that

is currently undeveloped but zoned for urban purposes should be considered for inclusion in a rural zone (or another appropriate non urban zone) in a future LEP.

Climate change will be an issue that impacts directly on the frequency and severity of flooding and is likely to lead to more extreme events (McLuckie et al, 2007; CSIRO, 2007). Consideration needs to be given to the revision of flood studies and floodplain management plans to account for climate change if this has not already been included in any floodplain management reviews.

The IPCC Working Group II nominated six hotspots for climate change in Australia in April 2007. One of these is the Murray –Darling Basin (which includes the Warrumbungle LGA). The prediction of the Working Group is for:

*“A reduced water supply for irrigation, urban settlement, industry and environmental flows. Threats to freshwater wetlands such as the Macquarie Marshes, and reduced habitat for migratory wading birds”* (Woodruffe, 2008).

In relation to the land use issues in the Strategy, the main implications will be in relation to predicted increases in flood producing rainfall events which will increase the frequency of occurrence of key flood levels (McLuckie et al, 2007). Also affected will be the long term security of water supplies for urban, rural and environmental uses (CSIRO, 2007).

### 11.3.1 Actions - Hazards and Climate Change

#### Bushfires

- ▶ Bushfire hazard should be considered in relation to any proposed urban expansion or proposed rural residential areas to ensure that the proposed development is not within a high hazard area. If it is within a high hazard area then the hazard needs to be managed responsibly and without loss of ecologically significant vegetation.
- ▶ Consider applying a bushfire buffer around all National Parks and State forests within which certain development may be restricted.
- ▶ Development Control Plans that apply to areas containing bushfire prone land should include provisions addressing the required performance standards and controls on development within bushfire prone areas

#### Contaminated lands

- ▶ Where the Strategy indicates an intensification of use on land that may be contaminated, any subsequent rezoning will need to be supported by documentation consistent with the requirements of SEPP 55 (Remediation of Land). This may include the preparation of a report as well as site assessment.

#### Flooding and climate change

- ▶ Flooding is a major constraint in some urban areas in the Warrumbungle LGA and the Floodplain Development Manual (2005) is the guide to how local government needs to address the issue. Residential development should be given preference over rural residential development in flood free locations. Development in flood affected areas needs to be subject to appropriate floor levels to minimise flood impacts on property. Severely flood affected land that is currently undeveloped but zoned for urban purposes should be considered for inclusion in an appropriate non urban zone in the future.

- ▶ Climate change will be an issue that impacts directly on the frequency and severity of flooding and is likely to lead to more extreme events. Consideration needs to be given to the revision of flood studies and floodplain management plans to account for climate change if this has not already been included in upcoming floodplain management reviews.
- ▶ Review the energy efficiency of Council operations and functions to reduce energy consumption and consider the role of renewable energy as a replacement for current sources in the interests of reducing green house gas production.
- ▶ Implement energy efficiency through guidelines and conditions on development.
- ▶ Investigate any opportunities for Council to become involved in commercial carbon offset projects for development that may or may not be within its own LGA.



## 12. The Process Forward

This land use strategy is a framework to achieve good planning, management and development of the Warrumbungle Shire. By endorsing this strategy, Council and the State Government make a commitment to servicing of future development areas whilst balancing the considerations of the environment, social and economic considerations

Effective implementation requires cooperation by community stakeholders and coordination of State and local government activities and plans. Implementing the land use strategy involves coordinating and reviewing a range of plans, infrastructure and services.

### 12.1 Implementation

Some strategic actions specified in this Strategy will guide Councils' decisions relating to:

- ▶ non-statutory support for initiatives undertaken by other organisations and individuals;
- ▶ the establishment of formal arrangements, agreements and intergovernmental responsibilities for future decision making;
- ▶ liaison with external parties to improve land use planning, development and management;
- ▶ Councils' ongoing programs relating to infrastructure and service provision, and the delivery of economic and social services;
- ▶ Councils' ongoing program of internal strategic planning;
- ▶ Councils' ongoing program of introducing or improving specific policies and guidelines; and
- ▶ Existing statutory responsibilities, including applications for development and subdivision approval.

#### 12.1.1 Statutory Implementation

Warrumbungle Shire Council and the NSW Government will continue to work together to implement the Strategy. The Strategy actions and mapping will directly influence the LEP, related development control plans and other statutory documents.

The LEPs and DCPs provide the means of ensuring that development within the Warrumbungle Shire is consistent with the long-term land use vision and guiding principles identified in this Strategy.

#### 12.1.2 Potential Growth Areas

This Strategy will help guide future development in the Warrumbungle Shire up to at least 2036. This Strategy does not itself rezone land for development; however, it identifies broad areas for consideration and sets clear principles and outcomes to guide future development. The proposed growth areas are discussed throughout this document and are illustrated in the mapping. Various issues that have been outlined within these chapters will need to be addressed as part of a more detailed rezoning process.

#### 12.1.3 Local Environmental Plan

The New South Wales Government has recently introduced a range of reforms to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979; one of which requires each local government area within NSW to

prepare a new comprehensive Local Environmental Plan in accordance with the Standard Instrument for Local Environmental Plans that took effect on 31 March 2006.

Warrumbungle Shire Council must prepare the draft LEP in accordance with the standard instrument and incorporate the relevant mandatory provision before it can be publicly exhibited and then recommended for gazettal. The development of the new LEP for Warrumbungle Shire is a key implementation tool for this Strategy.

### Zoning

There are 34 standard zones to which a Council can add permissible uses and objectives in response to local needs. Some of these zones are outlined in the table below with a recommendation as to where they might be used in the Warrumbungle Shire. These zones are indicative only and it is not guaranteed that these changes will occur in the next LEP.

**Table 41 Possible Zones for the Warrumbungle Shire**

Zone	Description and location
<b>Rural Zones</b>	
RU1 Primary Production	<p>This zone applies to the majority of the rural areas within the local government area. It is generally intended to cover land used for most kinds of primary production as well as maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.</p> <p>The mixture of rural uses is to be retained with controls placed on the location of houses so that they do not create a conflict by being too close to the boundaries, thereby creating rural land use conflict. Agriculture uses are to be encouraged as are rural tourism and farm stay accommodation.</p> <p>A Lot Size Map will be prepared to indicate the minimum subdivision size across the RU1 zone. A 500 ha and 600 ha minimum are recommended.</p>
RU3 Forestry	<p>This zone aims to identify and protect land that is to be used for long-term forestry use. Uses authorised under the Forestry Act 1916 are permitted without consent</p>
RU5 Village	<p>The zone is generally intended to cover rural villages where a mix of residential, retail and other uses are to be established or maintained.</p> <p>Minimum lot size will be dependent on the services available to each village.</p>
<b>Residential Zones</b>	
R1 General Residential	<p>This zone is generally intended to provide for the general housing needs of the community and provide a variety of housing types and densities. In this instance, it will generally support standard residential densities, including dual occupancies.</p> <p>The zone also provides for additional uses that provide facilities or services to residents, including neighbourhood shops and child care centres.</p>

Zone	Description and location
R5 Large Lot Residential	<p>Applies to rural land located adjacent to existing urban areas. This zone is generally intended to cater for development that provides residential housing in a rural setting.</p> <p>A minimum lot size of 2 ha is recommended.</p>
<b>Business Zones</b>	
B2 Local Centre	<p>This zone is generally intended for centres that provide a wide range of uses including retail, offices, employment, entertainment and community uses.</p>
B6 Enterprise Corridor	<p>Generally this zone is intended to be applied to land where commercial or industrial development is to be encouraged along main roads. The sale of food and clothing is to be limited to ensure that Enterprise Corridors do not detract from the viability of centres.</p>
<b>Industrial zones</b>	
IN1 General Industrial	<p>It covers a wide range of industrial uses. Council could choose to supplement the existing mandated industrial and warehouse uses by permitting heavy, and offensive or hazardous industries, if appropriate.</p>
<b>Special purpose zones</b>	
SP1 Special Activities	<p>This zone is intended to cover a wide range of uses that are not covered by other zones and will apply to community uses, educational establishments and hospitals, as well as water catchment areas.</p>
SP2 Infrastructure	<p>This zone is generally intended to cover a wide range of physical and human infrastructure uses such as transport (e.g. roads and railways), utility undertakings and works, community uses, educational establishments (e.g. schools) and hospitals.</p> <p>This zone would be used for some facilities where previously a special uses zone may have been used. A map notation to identify the defined type of facility will be required. For example, a council adopting this zone for a school would mark 'SP2 (School)' on its zoning map.</p> <p>Where land is reserved for public infrastructure purposes (e.g. a railway), the land is to be outlined and annotated on the Land Reservation Acquisition Map and the relevant acquisition authority identified in the table in clause 24.</p>
<b>Recreation zones</b>	
RE1 Public Recreation	<p>This zone is generally intended for a wide range of public recreation areas and activities, including local and regional open space. Councils may generally permit typical public recreation uses in this zone. A range of land uses compatible with the recreation use of the land should be permitted.</p>

Zone	Description and location
RE2 Private Recreation	<p>This zone is generally intended to cover a wide range of recreation areas and facilities on land that is privately owned or managed.</p> <p>This will be applied to Crown land where it is subject to an exclusive use such as a golf course or showground.</p>
<b>Environment Protection Zones</b>	
E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves	<p>This zone replaces the existing zones of Natural areas and National Parks. It is generally intended to cover existing National Parks and Nature Reserves.</p> <p>It will not be used on privately owned land.</p>
E2 Environmental Conservation	<p>This zone is generally intended to protect land that has high conservation value. A number of land uses considered to be inappropriate for this zone have been mandated as prohibited uses.</p>
W1 Natural Waterways	<p>This zone will be applied to natural waterways where they are in or near an urban area. The zone is intended to prevent adverse impacts on the natural values of waterways and the banks immediately adjacent to them.</p>

### **Standard Clauses**

The LEP template includes a number of standard clauses for inclusion in new principal LEPs. Standard clauses are either compulsory or optional. Compulsory clauses cover common planning issues such as exempt and complying development and heritage conservation. Optional clauses cover matters such as building height, lot sizes, and preservation of trees and vegetation. If council adopts an optional clause its wording cannot be altered or added to.

Several clauses require Councils to insert their own development standards, prepare maps specific to their local area, or add additional criteria to tailor particular provisions to their local environment.

### **Standard definitions**

The dictionary contains approximately 240 standard terms. Only the terms used by a council in its LEP will appear in the dictionary for that council's plan. Councils are not able to modify the standard terms or add their own terms to the dictionary.

### **Land use table**

A land use table sets out the types of development that are permitted and prohibited in each of the standard zones. Each of the 34 standard zones has a set of mandated permitted and prohibited land uses that apply to ensure consistency across the state. Councils can add to the mandated permitted and prohibited uses to tailor the types of development permitted in zones to the needs of their local area.

### **Standard format**

The template provides a consistent format for all new principal LEPs in NSW. Provisions common to each LEP will be located in the same place under the same numbering in all LEPs.

### **Local Provisions**

Council can include statutory provisions within the LEP. Local provisions that address specific local circumstances, such as issues addressed in local strategic planning; section 117 directions; or regional

strategies, are able to be added to the template. A local clause must be consistent with any standard mandated clauses included in the draft LEP and any State and regional planning provisions. Local clauses should not be added to the draft LEP if the issue could be adequately addressed using any of the mandated standard clauses.

This Strategy recommends that the following provisions be included in the LEP.

- ▶ Rural and residential development provisions;
- ▶ Local provisions of planning controls that limit light emissions for all development
- ▶ Restrictions on the locations of restricted services; and
- ▶ Flood prone land provisions.

#### 12.1.4 Comprehensive Development Control Plan

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

Several actions within this Strategy recommend development controls. The DCP should be a single document, which contains guidelines of detailed provisions on all aspects of development. The DCP should supplement the provisions of the LEP and provide detailed design controls for residential, rural and industrial development as well as development of a heritage item or within a conservation area.

## 12.2 Monitoring

Monitoring plays a critical role in ensuring that the planning actions of this Strategy are realised. They provide a way of identifying the effectiveness of new policies that have been prepared, take account of shifting priorities and policies changes and recommend amendments where necessary.

Council must be able to respond to changes within a reasonable period of time and this can only occur if a monitoring program is implemented. The following actions are recommended for Council:

- ▶ Review this Warrumbungle Shire Land Use Strategy after five years to check on the assumptions and its effectiveness and implementation.
- ▶ The new LEP should be reviewed every five years. Elements of the Council strategies and other strategic studies and plans that inform the LEP will also be monitored and reviewed to update critical data and to assess the performance and currency of strategic directions. It would be best if each review will coincide with the release of ABS Census of Population and Housing data.
- ▶ Undertake annual monitoring of residential, rural residential, industrial and commercial land uptake to provide accurate development data to compare to population changes.

These three actions should be built into Council's five year Management Plan or ten year strategic plan, and incorporated into Council's yearly programs of activity.



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## Appendix A

# Open Space Inventory

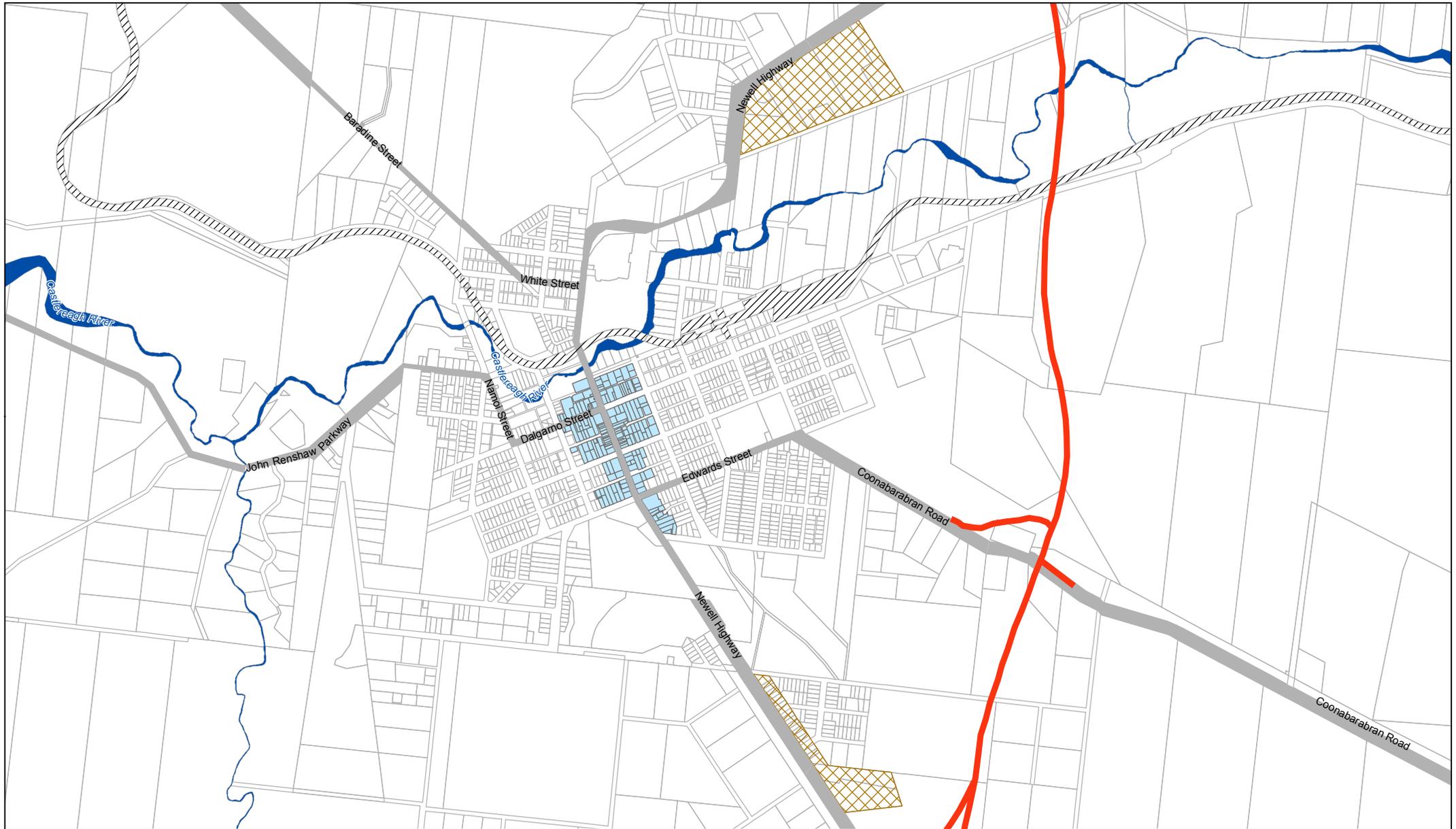
**Table 42 Open Space Inventory**

Sporting Facilities	Coonabarabran	Coolah	Dunedoo	Baradine	Binnaway	Mendooran
Playing Fields	3 ovals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cricket Pitch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netball Courts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Basketball Court	✓		✓	✓		
Tennis Courts	✓ includes lights	✓ includes lights	✓	✓	✓ includes lights	✓
Athletics Track	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Golf Course	✓ 18 hole	✓ Sand Greens	✓ 9 hole	✓ 9 hole	✓ Tar Greens	✓ 9 hole
Racecourse	✓				✓	✓
Swimming Pool	✓ 33m + toddler	✓ 25m + toddler	✓ 33m + toddler	✓	✓	✓ 25m
Gym / Fitness Ctr	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Skate Park	✓				✓	✓
Bowling Greens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Movies	✓					
Grey Hound Track	✓					
Youth Club	✓	✓			✓	
Showground	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Squash Courts	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Pony Club	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Moto X	✓		✓			
Pistol / Gun Club	✓			✓	✓	✓
Bushwalking	✓	✓			✓	
Archery	✓					
Flying / Gliding	✓	✓		✓		



## Appendix B

# Commercial Land



1:25,000 (at A4)  
 0 75 150 300 450 600  
 Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND

- Existing Commercial
- Proposed Enterprise Corridor
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



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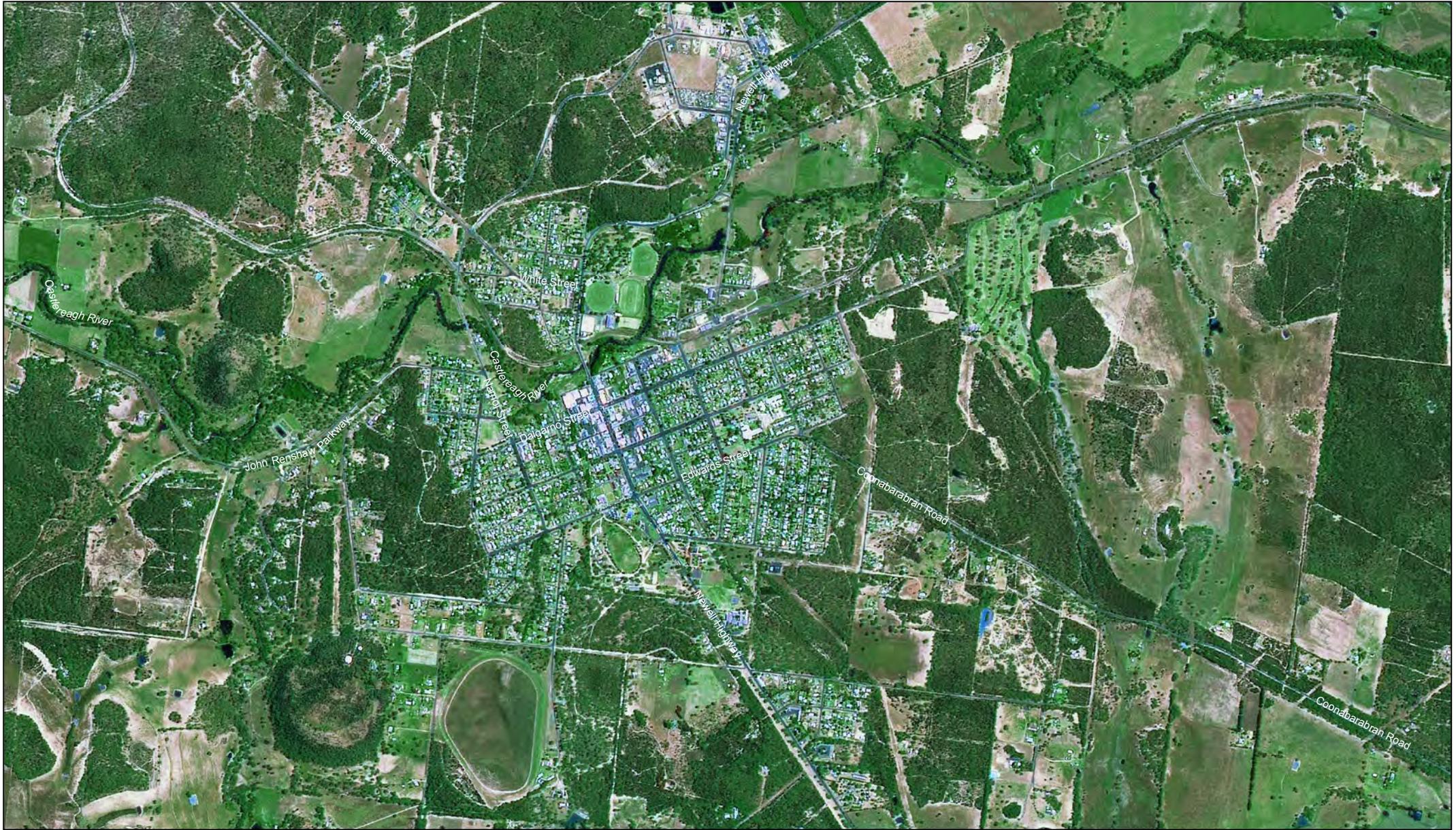
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Job Number | 22-15313  
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 Date | 11 FEB 2011

Coonabarabran Town Centre  
 Commercial Land

Figure 30

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1:25,000 (at A4)

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Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



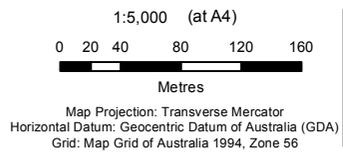
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Coonabarabran Town Centre  
Commercial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 31



LEGEND	
	Proposed Commercial Growth Area
	Proposed Enterprise Corridor
	Existing Commercial
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastral
	Proposed Highway Bypass



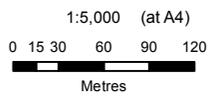
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**Dunedoo Town Centre  
 Commercial Land**

**Figure 32**

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LEGEND

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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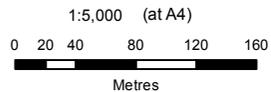
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Dunedoo Town Centre  
 Commercial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 33

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Commercial Growth Area
- Proposed Enterprise Corridor
- Existing Commercial
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



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**Coolah Town Centre  
 Commercial Land**

**Figure 34**



1:5,000 (at A4)  
 0 15 30 60 90 120  
 Metres



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

LEGEND



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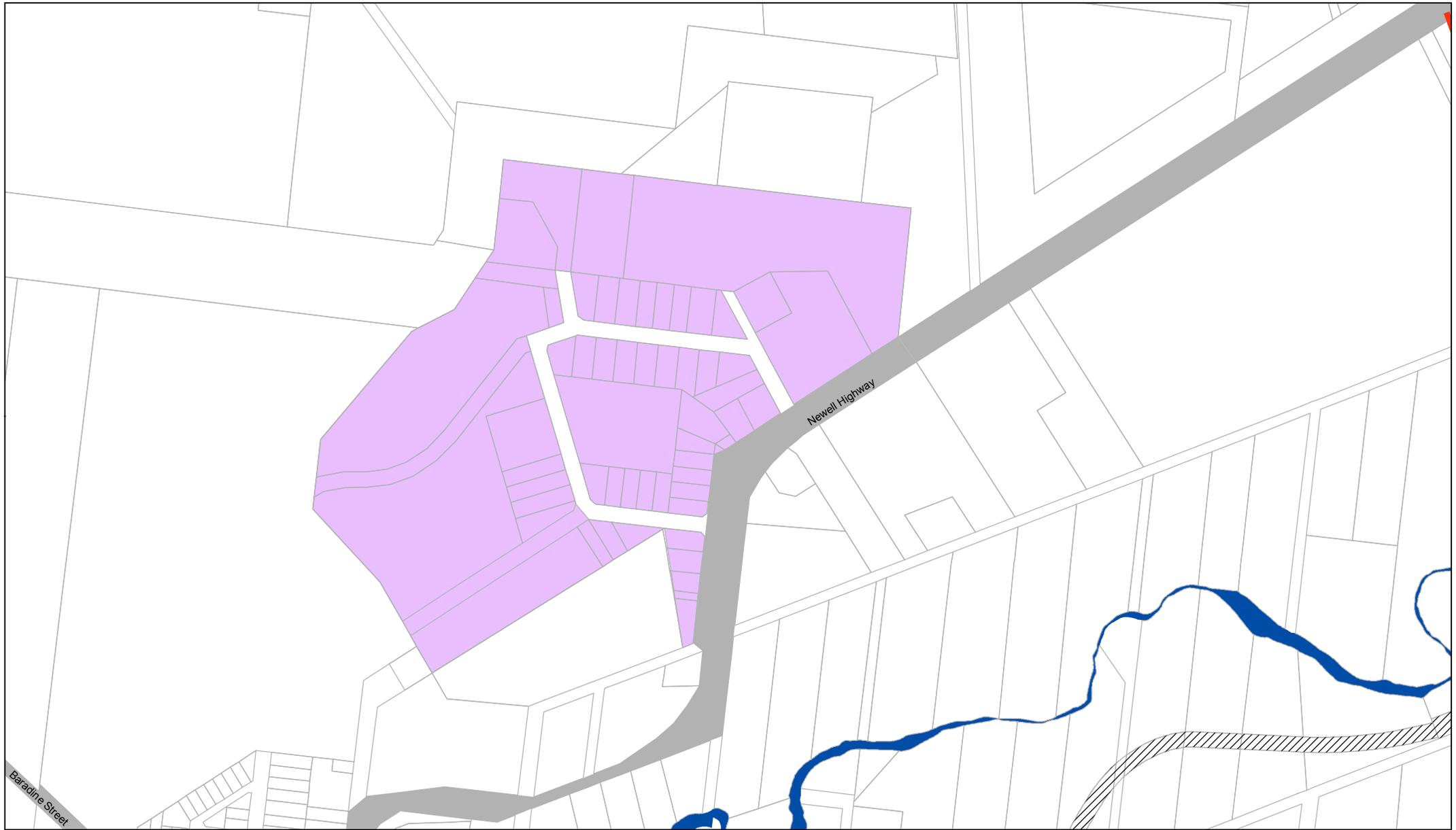
Coolah Town Centre  
 Commercial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 35



## Appendix C

# Industrial Land



1:10,000 (at A4)



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND

- Proposed Industrial Growth Area
- Existing Zoned Industrial Land to be Rezoned for Other Uses
- Existing Industrial
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre



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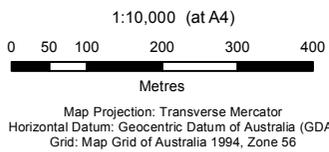
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Coonabarabran Town Centre  
Industrial Land

Figure 36

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LEGEND



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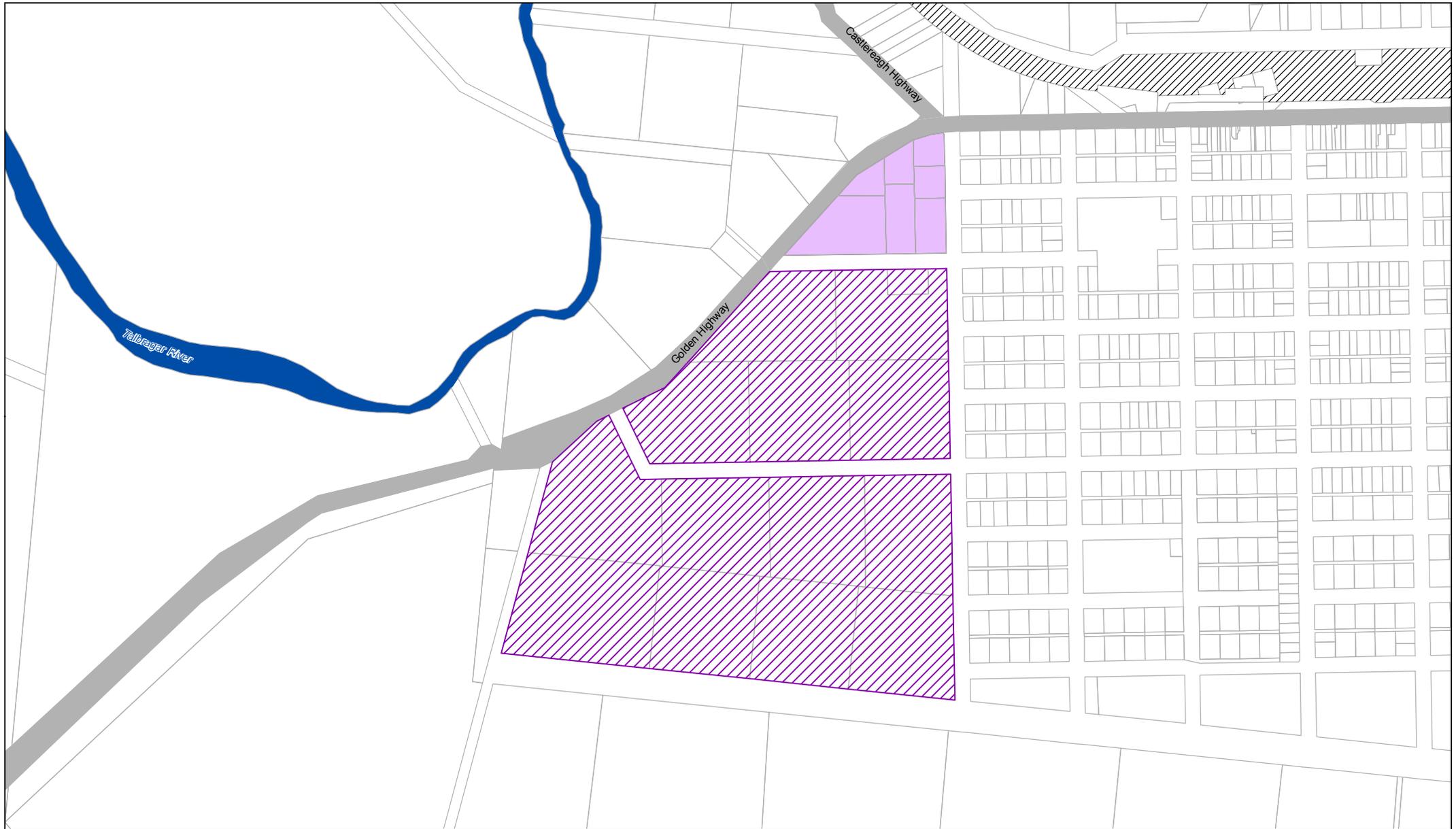
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Coonabarabran Town Centre  
 Industrial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 37

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1:10,000 (at A4)

0 50 100 200 300 400

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Industrial Growth Area
- Existing Zoned Industrial Land to be Rezoned for Other Uses
- Existing Industrial
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre



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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

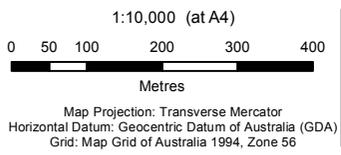
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**Dunedoo Town Centre  
Industrial Land**

**Figure 38**

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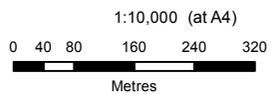
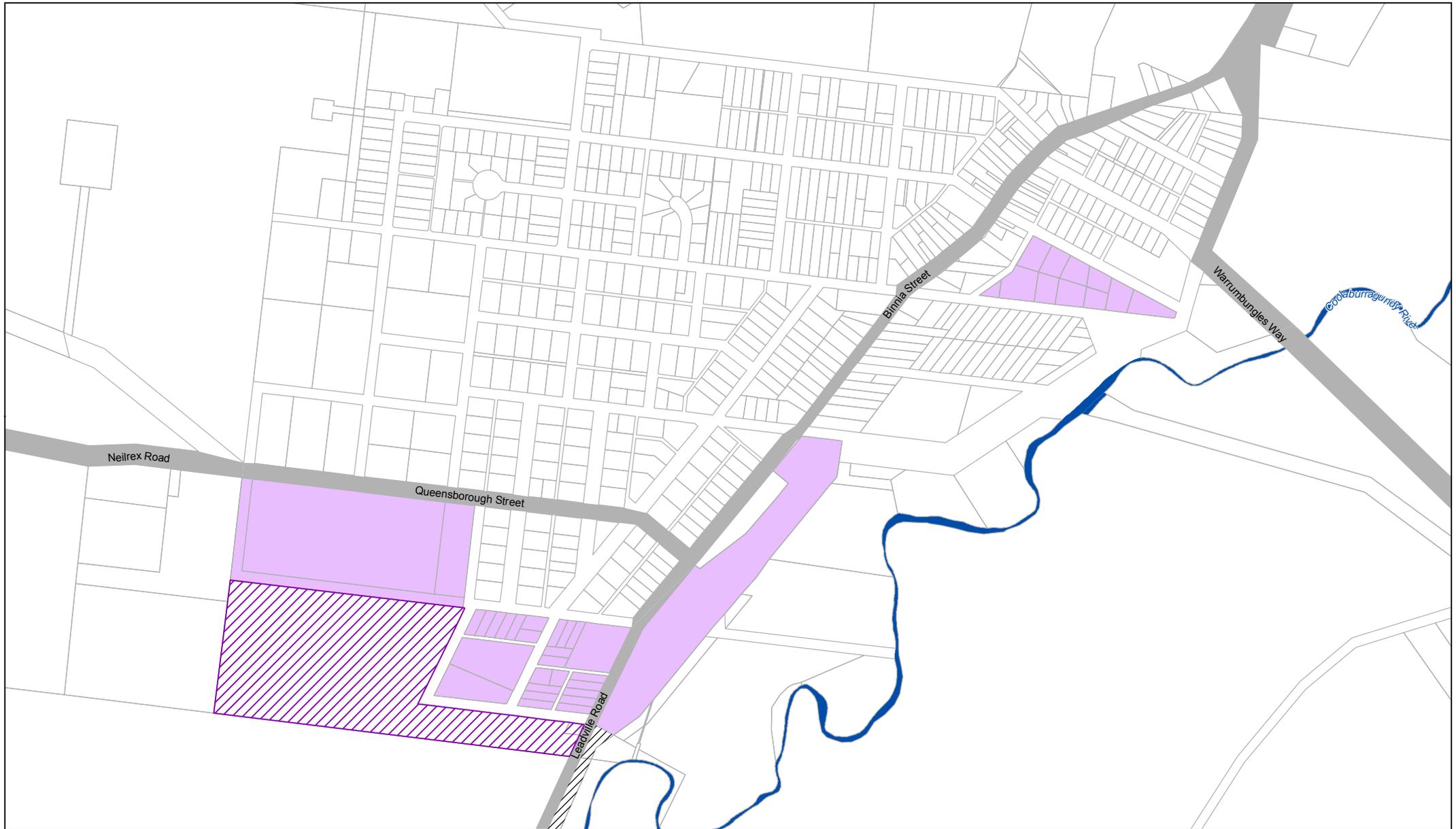
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Dunedoo Town Centre  
Industrial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 39

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**LEGEND**

- Proposed Industrial Growth Area
- Existing Zoned Industrial Land to be Rezoned for Other Uses
- Existing Industrial
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre



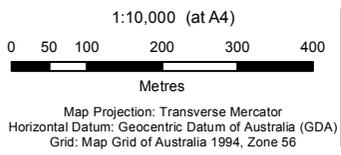
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**Coolah Town Centre  
 Industrial Land**

**Figure 40**

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LEGEND



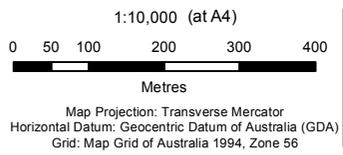
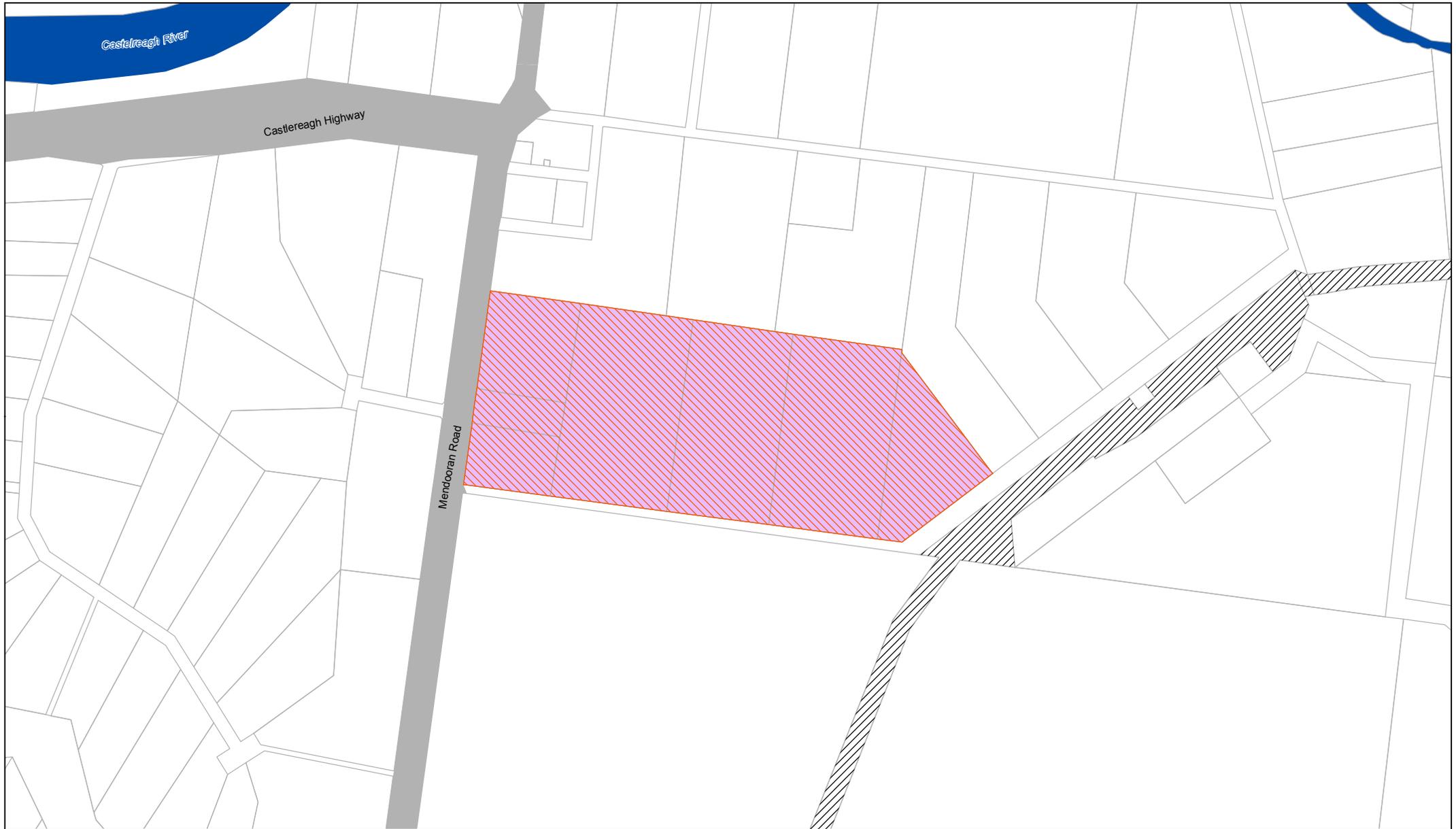
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Coolah Town Centre  
 Industrial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 41

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LEGEND	
	Proposed Industrial Growth Area
	Existing Zoned Industrial Land to be Rezoned for Other Uses
	Existing Industrial
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastre



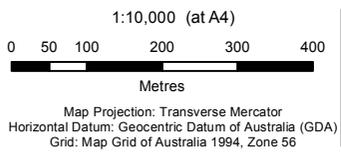
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### Mendooran Village Industrial Land

Figure 42

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LEGEND



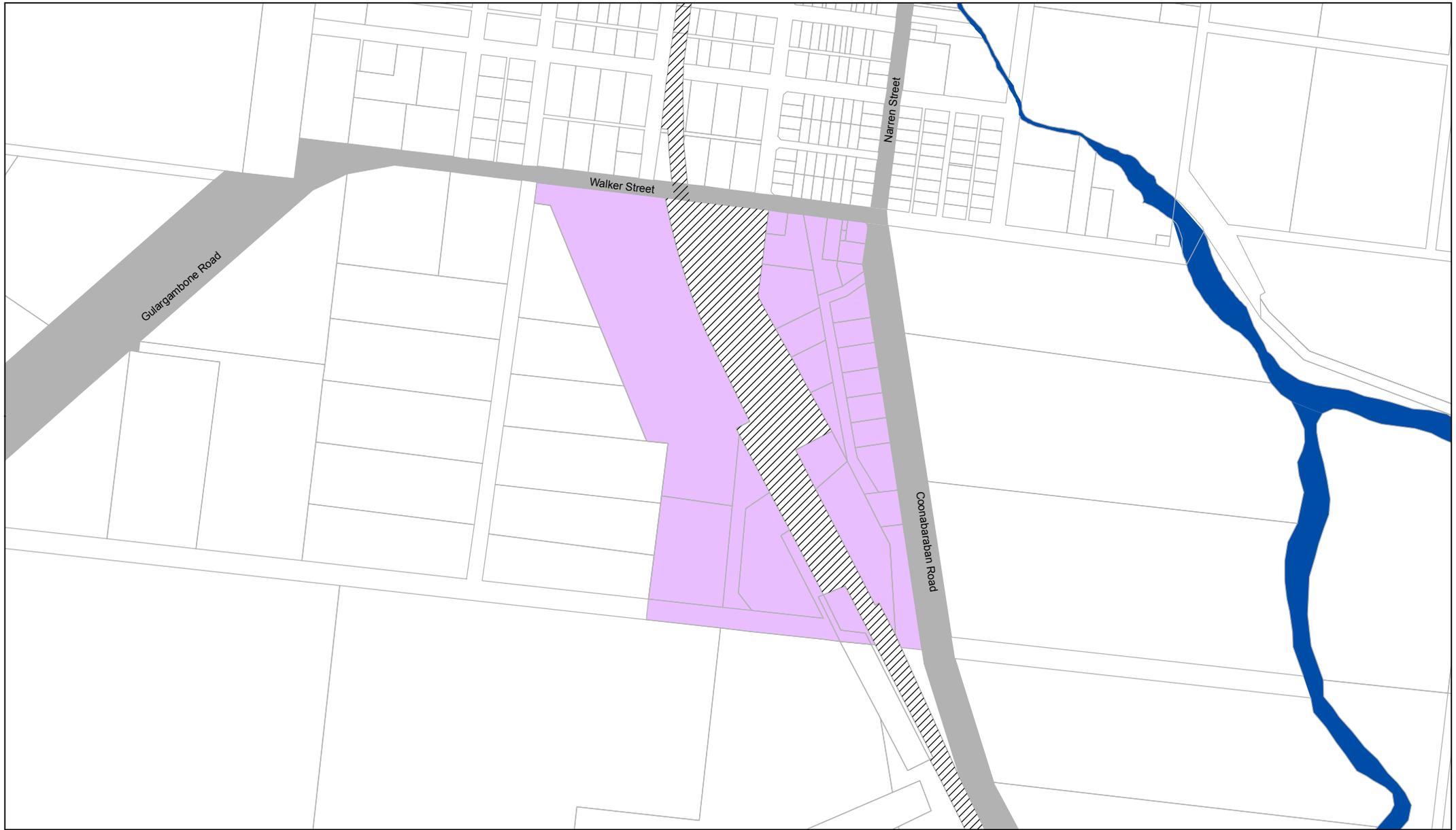
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number	22-15313
Revision	A
Date	22 JUN 2011

Mendooran Village  
Industrial Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 43

G:\22\15313\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\Land Use Strategy\2215313\_012\_Industrial\_LandUse\_Aerial\_ATLAS\_20110622\_A.mxd  
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1:10,000 (at A4)  
 0 40 80 160 240 320  
 Metres



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

**LEGEND**

-  Proposed Industrial Growth Area
-  Existing Zoned Industrial Land to be Rezoned for Other Uses
-  Existing Industrial

-  Major Routes
-  Railway
-  Major Waterways
-  Cadastre



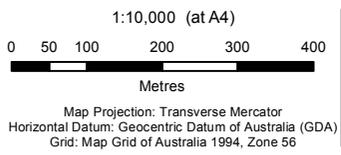
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Warrumbungle Shire Council  
 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number	22-15313
Revision	A
Date	23 JUN 2011

**Baradine Town Centre  
 Industrial Land**

**Figure 44**



LEGEND



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Revision	A
Date	23 JUN 2011

Baradine Town Centre  
 Industrial Land - Aerial Photo

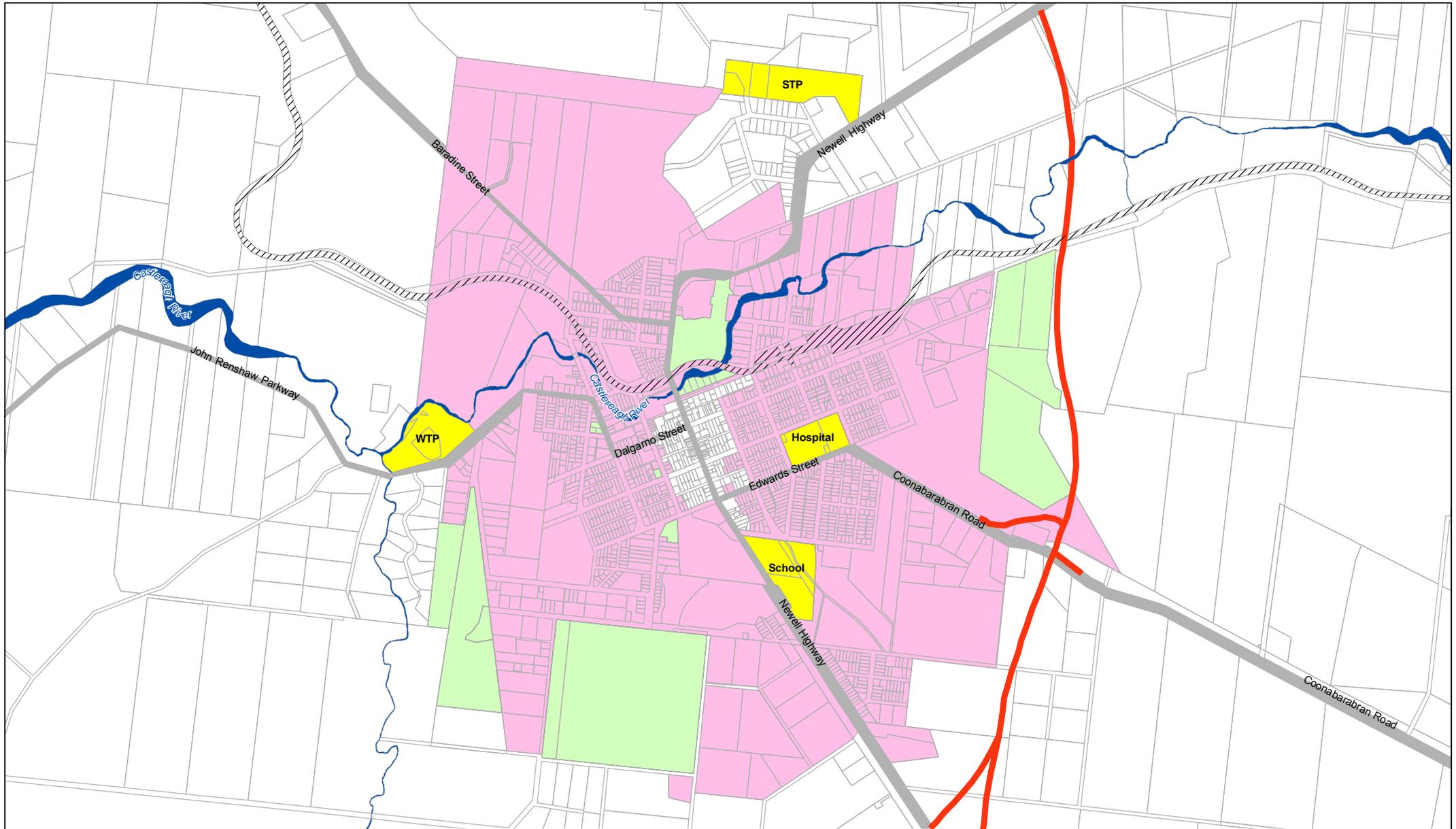
Figure 45

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## Appendix D

# Residential Land



1:30,000 (at A4)  
 0 137.5 275 550 825 1,100  
 Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- |                                  |                          |                         |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Proposed Residential Growth Area | Major Community Services | Railway                 |
| Existing Residential             | Open Space Recreational  | Proposed Highway Bypass |
| Major Routes                     | Major Waterways          | Cadastre                |



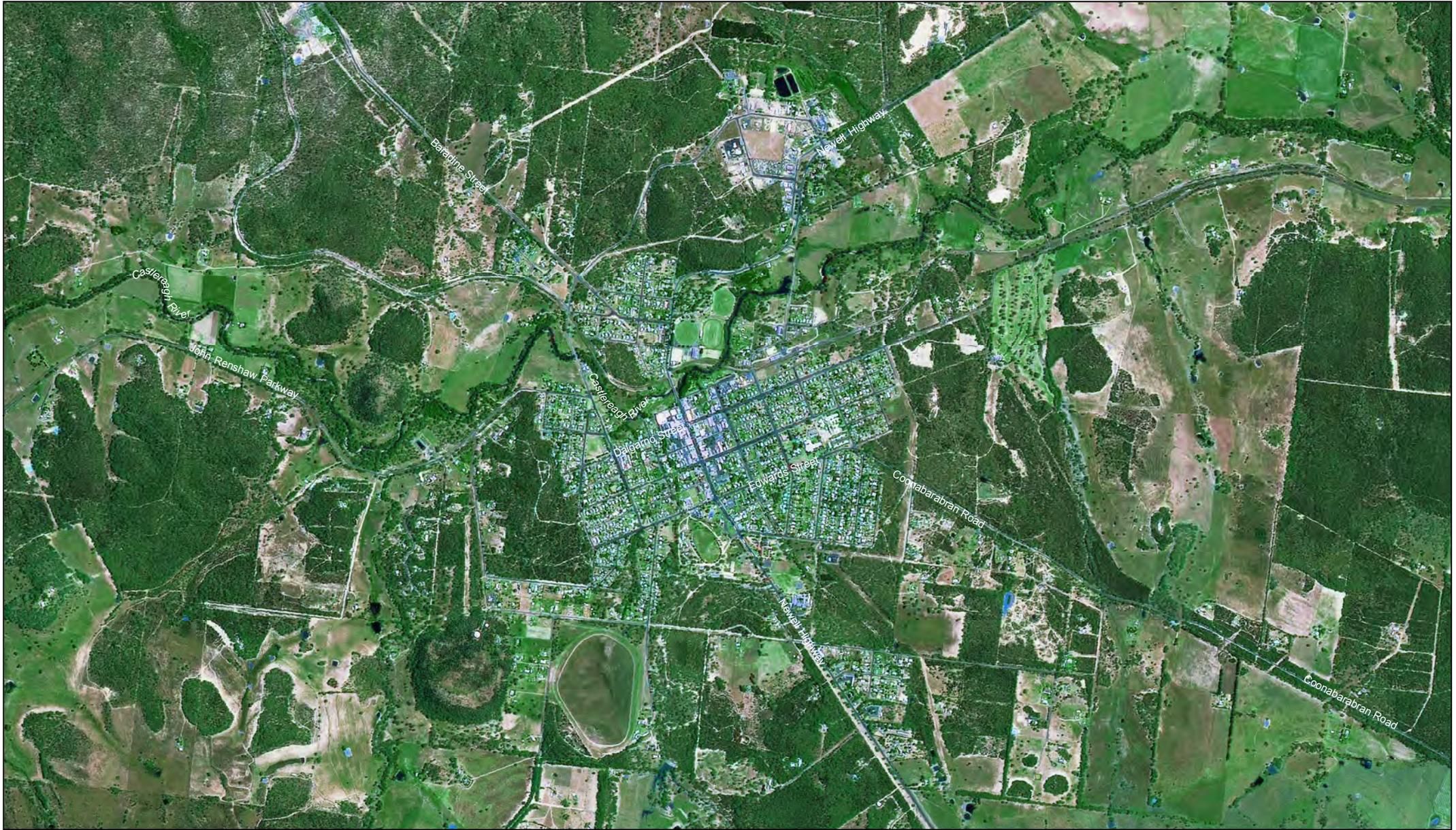
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number | 22-15313  
 Revision | A  
 Date | 09 MAR 2011

**Coonabarabran Town Centre  
 Residential Land**

**Figure 46**



1:30,000 (at A4)  
 0 137.5 275 550 825 1,100  
 Metres



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

LEGEND



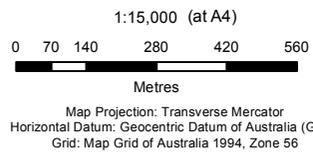
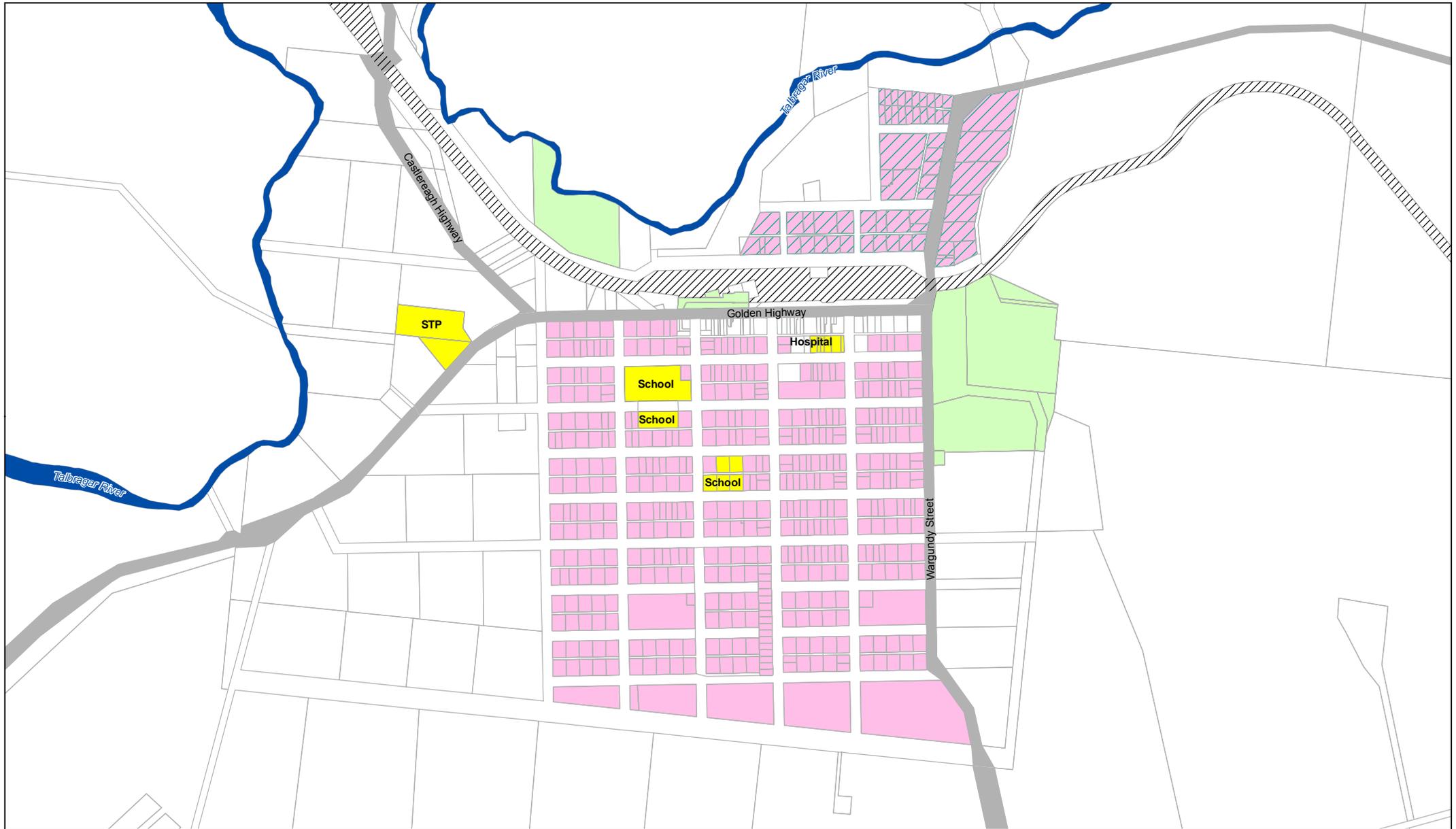
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision	A
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Coonabarabran Town Centre  
 Residential Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 47



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Residential Growth Area
- Existing Residential
- Major Community Services
- Open Space Recreational
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre



Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

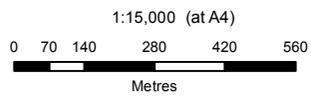
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Revision | A  
Date | 31 MAR 2011

**Dunedoo Town Centre  
Residential Land**

**Figure 48**

G:\2215313\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\Land Use Strategy\2215313\_005\_Residential\_LandUse\_ATLAS\_20101209\_A\_Defrag.mxd  
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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



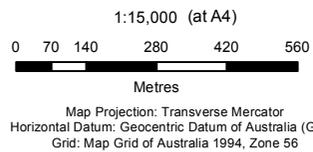
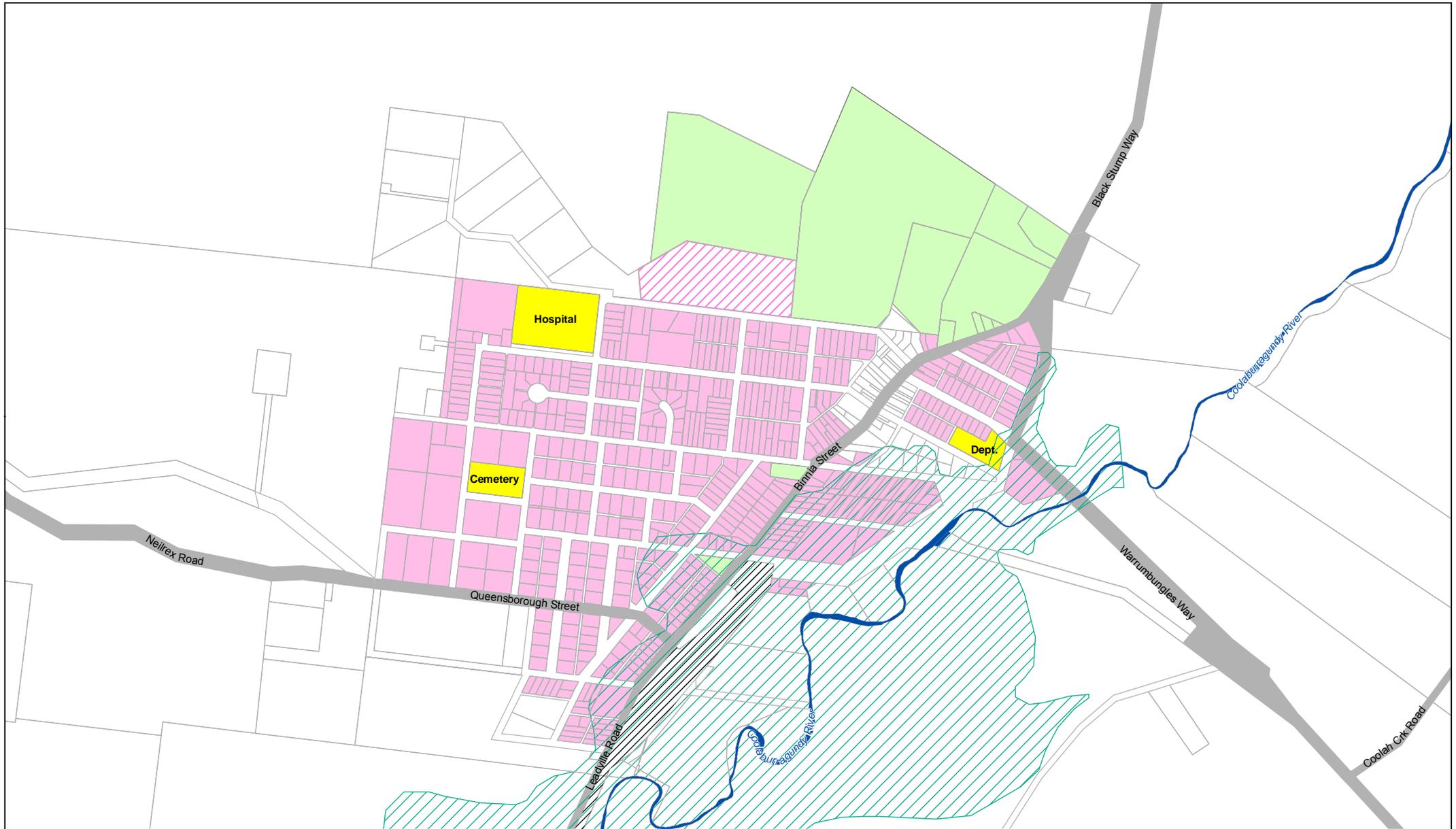
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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision	A
Date	22 JUN 2011

Dunedoo Town Centre  
Residential Land - Aerial Photo

Figure 49



**LEGEND**

- |                                    |                          |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Proposed Residential Growth Area   | Major Community Services | Major Routes |
| Existing Residential               | Open Space Recreational  | Railway      |
| Subject to Flood Planning Controls | Major Waterways          | Cadastre     |

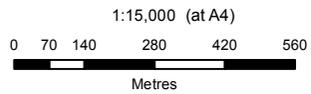


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Date | 09 MAR 2011

**Coolah Town Centre  
Residential Land**

**Figure 50**



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



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Coolah Town Centre  
 Residential Land - Aerial Photo

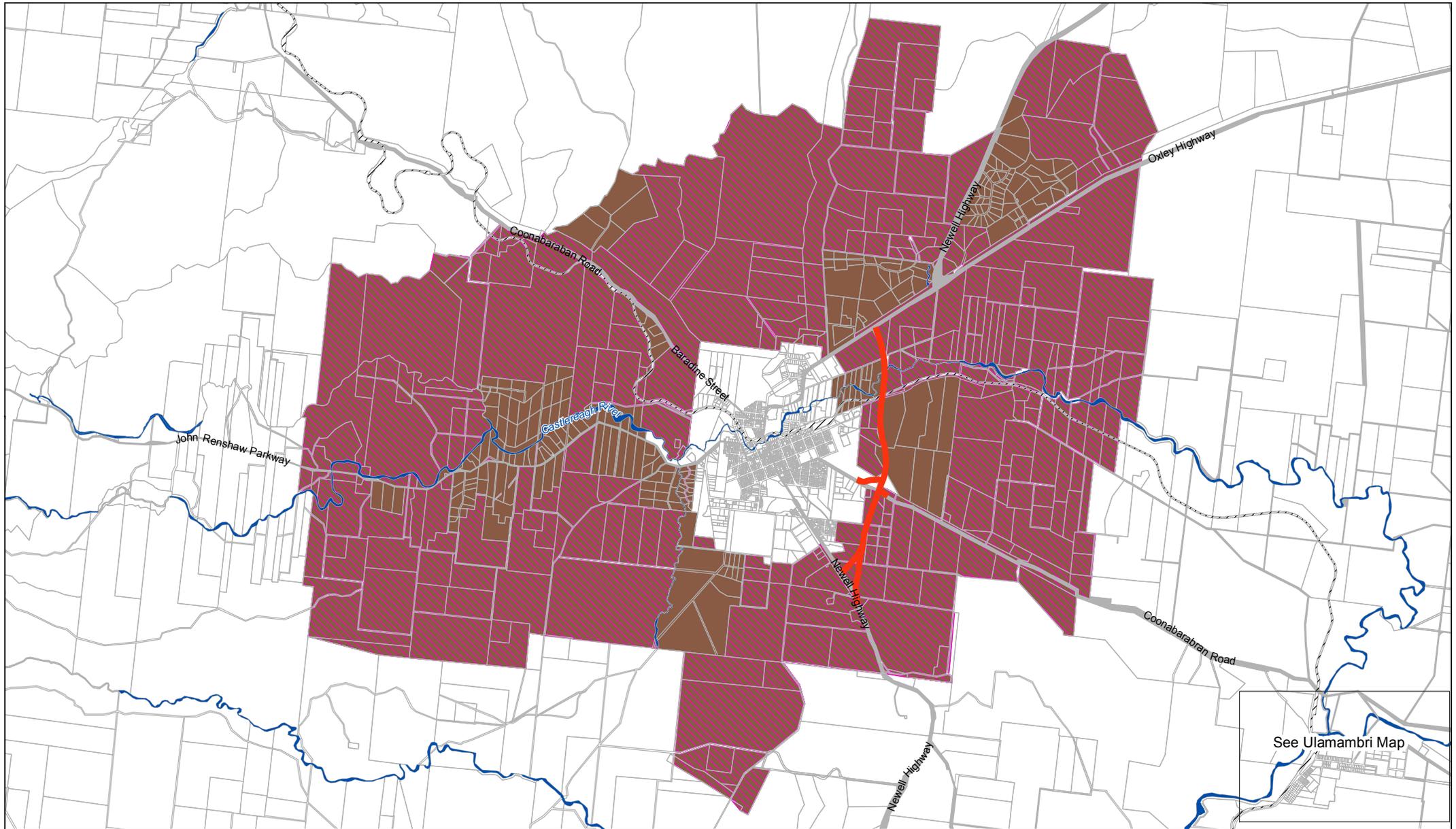
Figure 51

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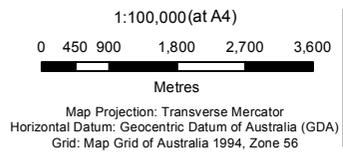


## Appendix E

# Rural Residential Land



See Ulamambri Map



**LEGEND**

- Existing Rural Residential to be zoned for other uses
- Existing Rural Residential
- Proposed Highway Bypass
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways



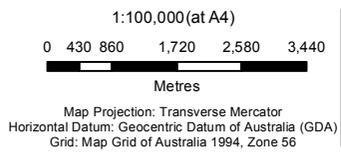
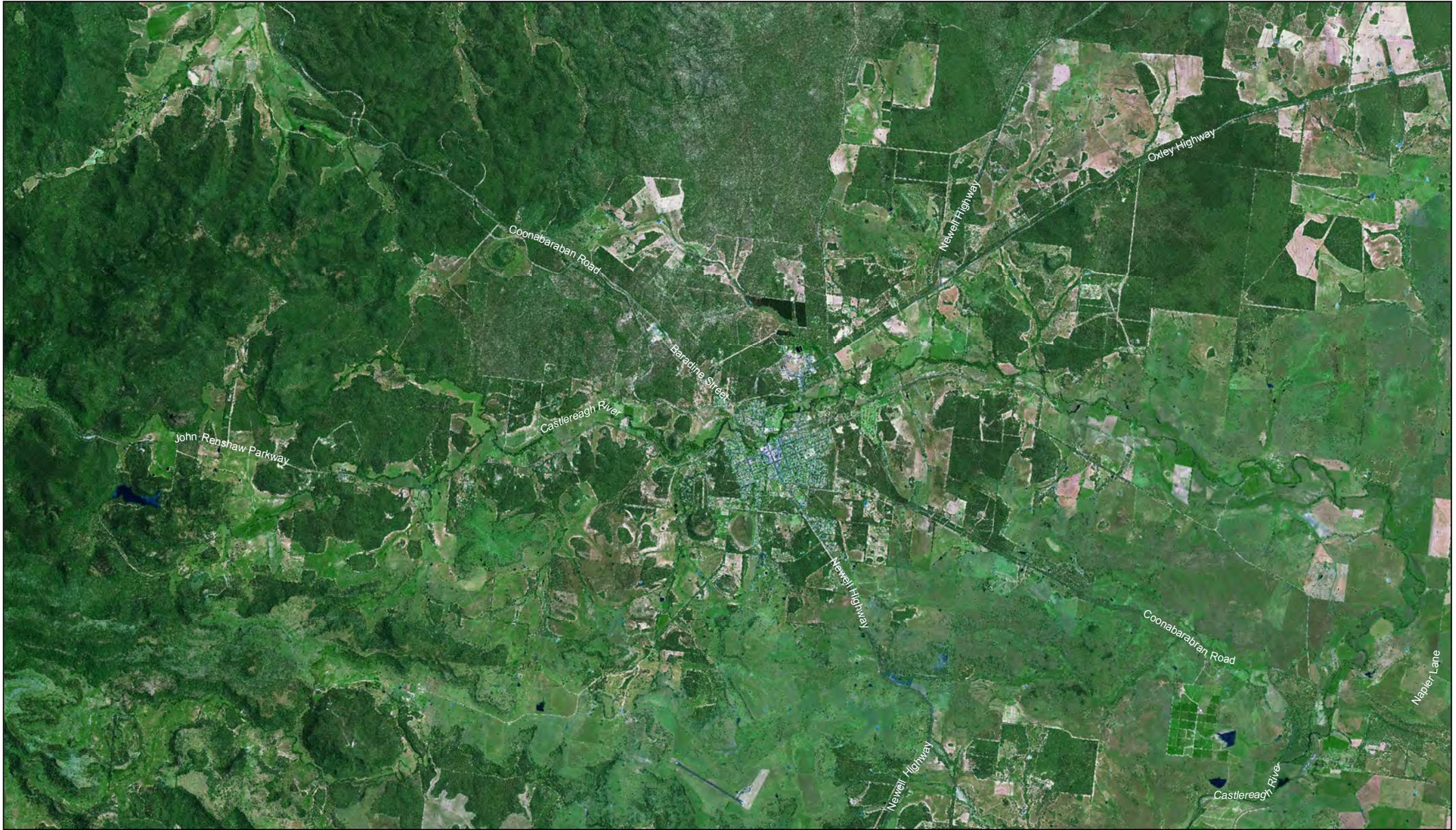
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Revision A  
Date 30 MAR 2011

**Coonabarabran Town Centre  
Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 52**

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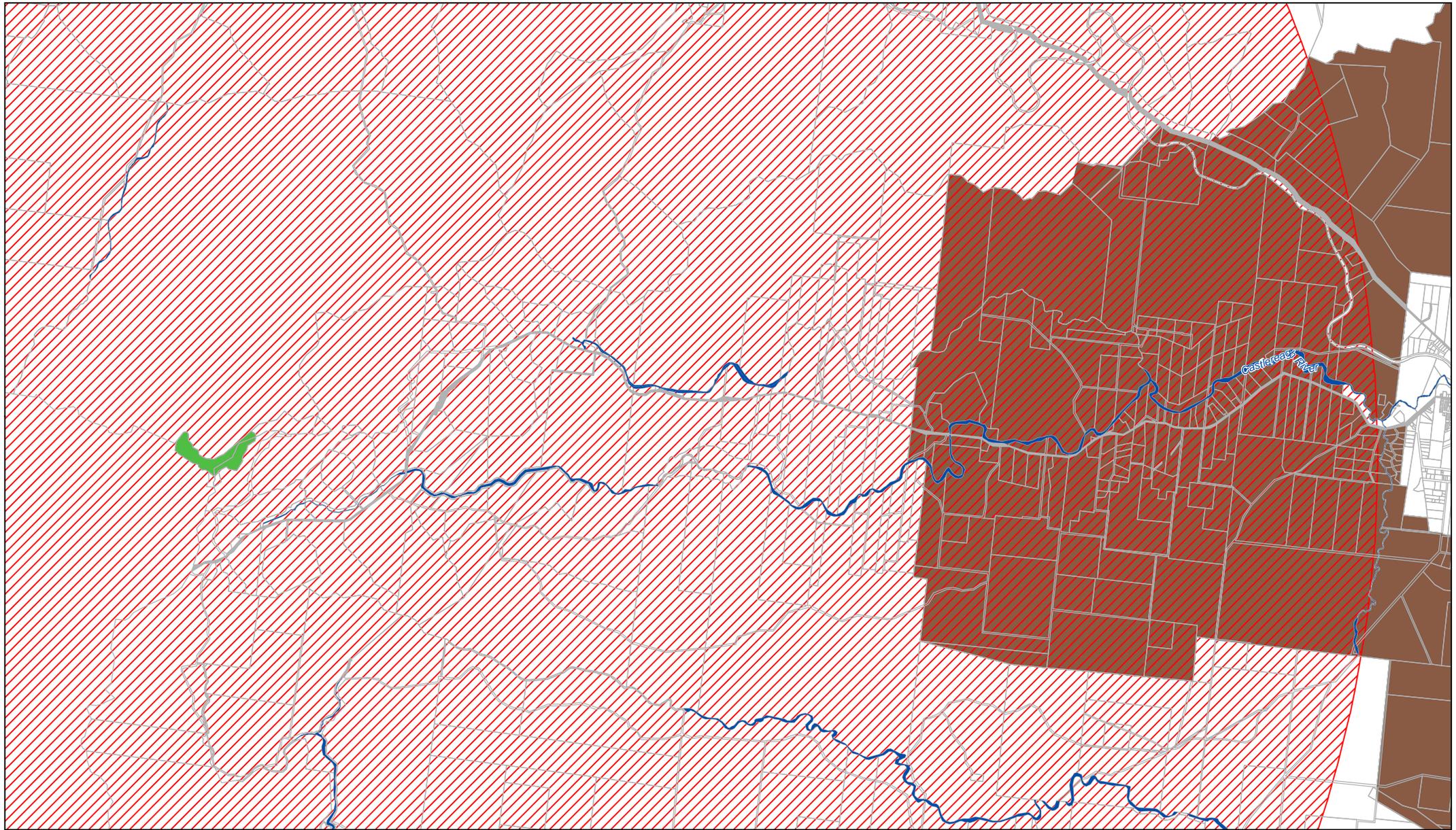


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Revision	A
Date	22 JUN 2011

Coonabarabran Town Centre  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 53**

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1:80,000 (at A4)

0 360 720 1,440 2,160 2,880

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Rural Residential
- Major Routes
- Major Waterways
- Future Development Restriction Area
- Siding Springs Observatory
- Cadastre



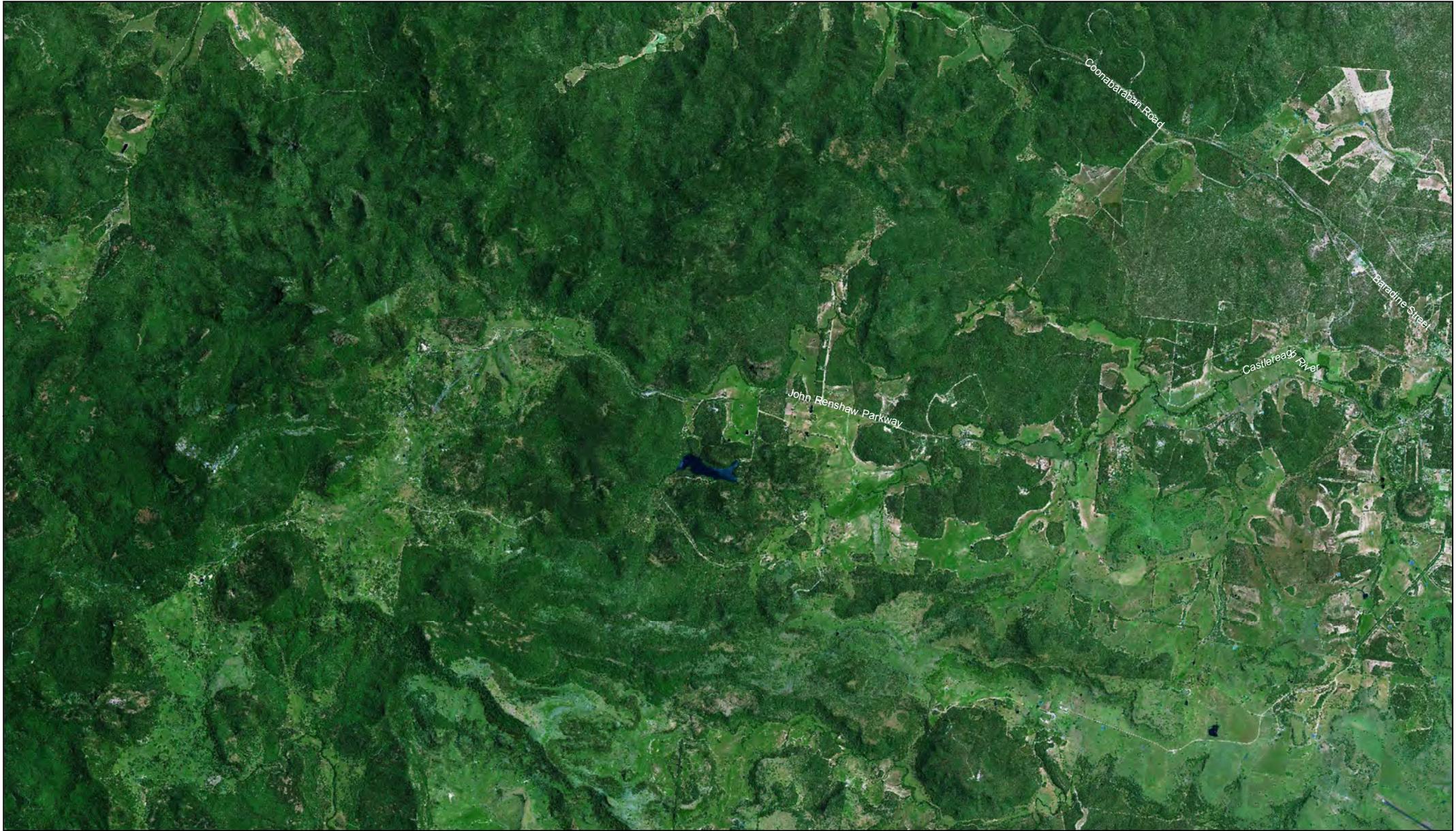
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
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Date | 28 JAN 2011

**Siding Springs Observatory**

**Figure 54**

G:\22\15313\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\Land Use Strategy\2215313\_008\_SidingSprings\_Observatory\_LandUse\_20110128\_A.mxd  
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1:80,000 (at A4)

0 325 650 1,300 1,950 2,600

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator

Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)

Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND

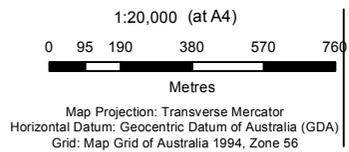
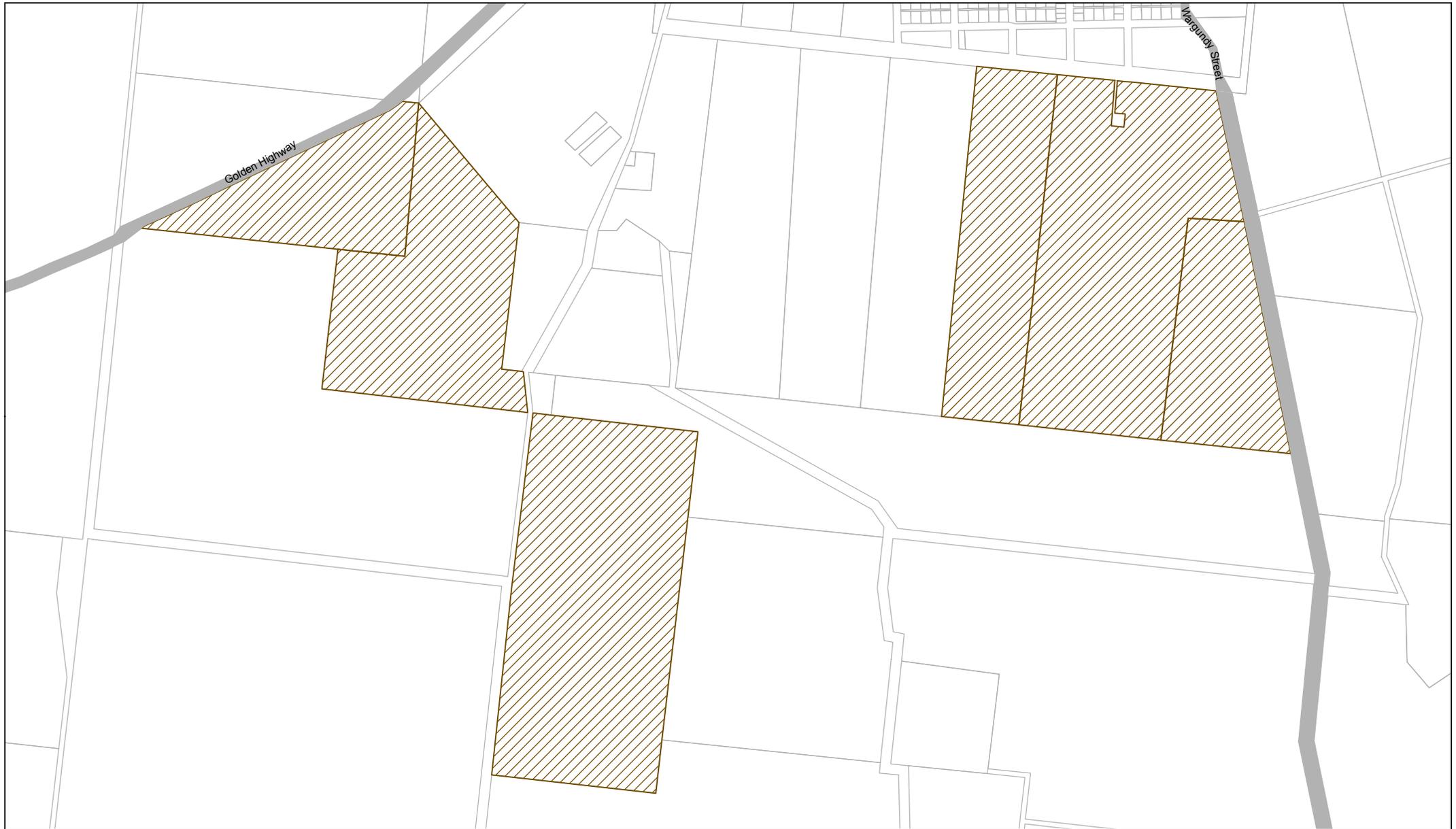


CLIENTS | PEOPLE | PERFORMANCE

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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number	22-15313
Revision	A
Date	22 JUN 2011

Siding Springs Observatory  
Aerial Photo



**LEGEND**

-  Proposed Rural Residential Growth Area
-  Major Routes
-  Railway
-  Cadastre
-  Major Waterways



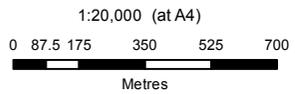
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision | A  
Date | 30 MAR 2011

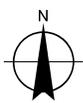
Dunedoo Town Centre  
Rural Residential Land

**Figure 56**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND

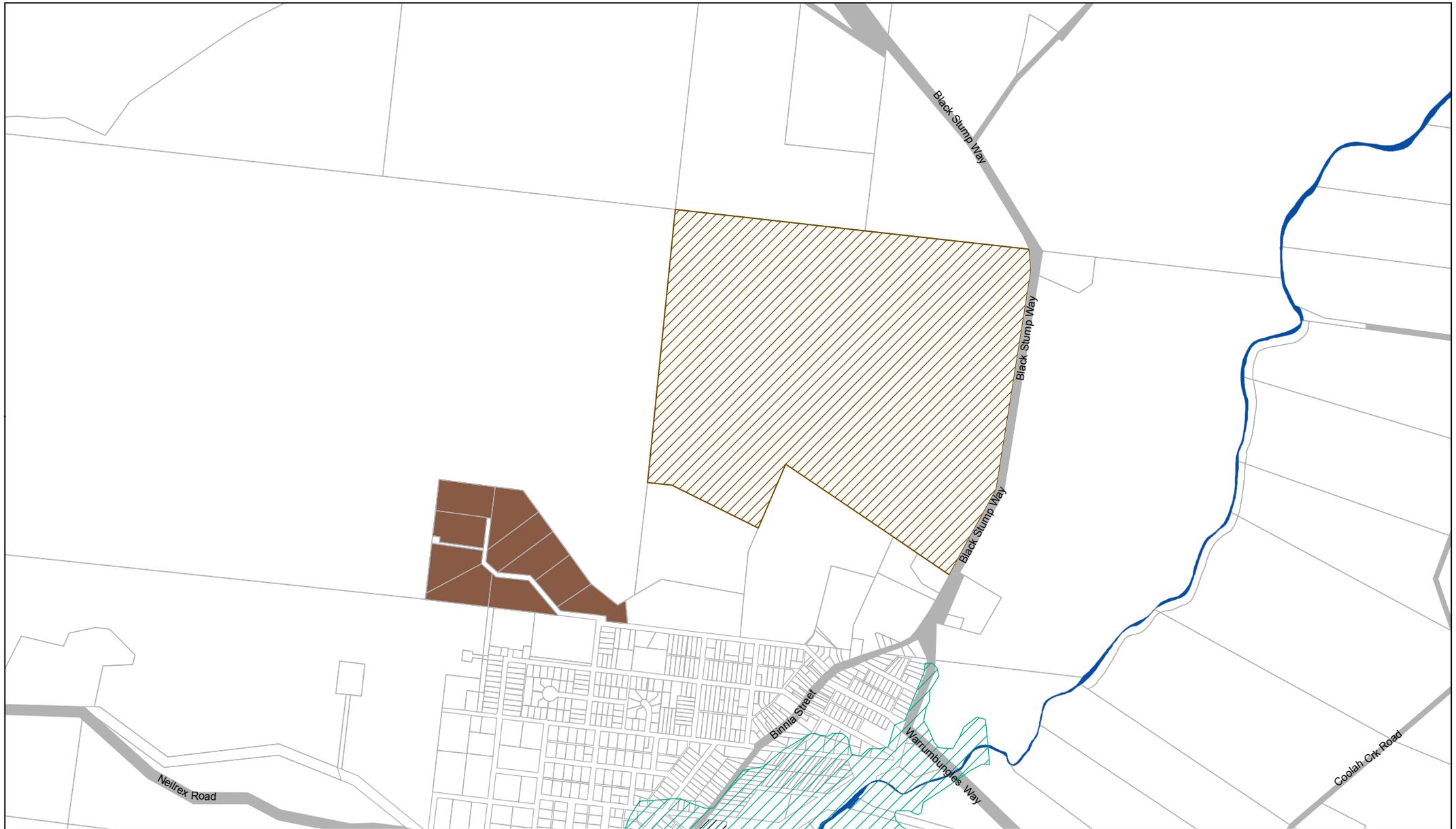


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Date	22 JUN 2011

Dunedoo Town Centre  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 57**



1:20,000 (at A4)  
 0 87.5 175 350 525 700  
 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Rural Residential Growth Area
- Existing Rural Residential
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls



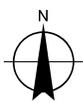
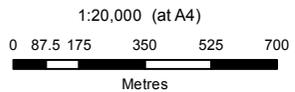
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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 Revision | A  
 Date | 09 MAR 2011

**Coolah Town Centre  
 Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 58**

G:\2215313\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\Land Use Strategy\2215313\_006\_RuralResidential\_LandUse\_ATLAS\_20110203\_A.mxd  
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LEGEND

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

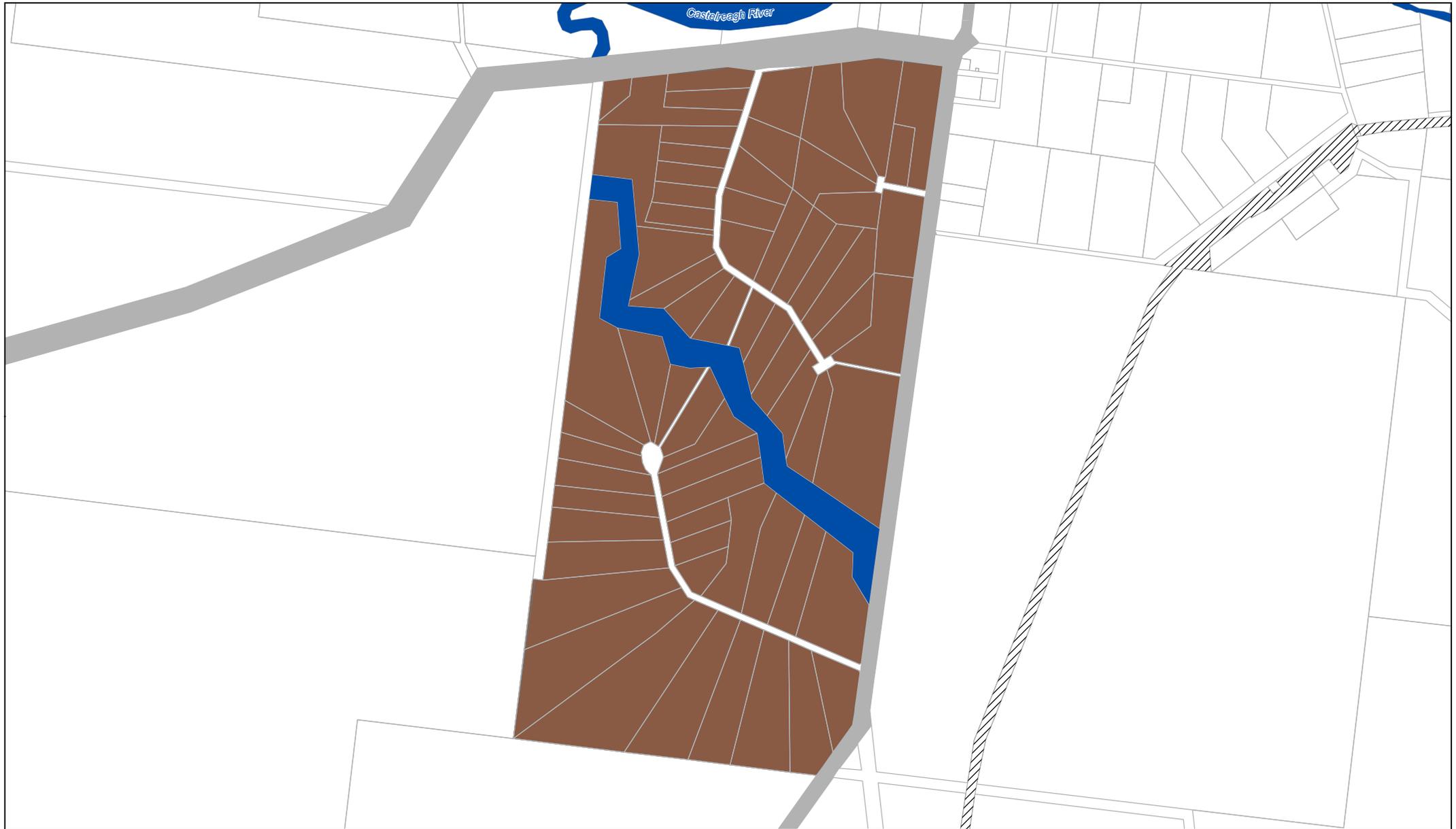


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Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision	A
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Coolah Town Centre  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 59**



1:20,000 (at A4)

0 87.5 175 350 525 700

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

Existing Rural Residential

Major Routes

Railway

Cadastre

Major Waterways



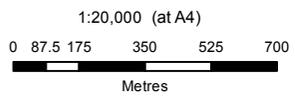
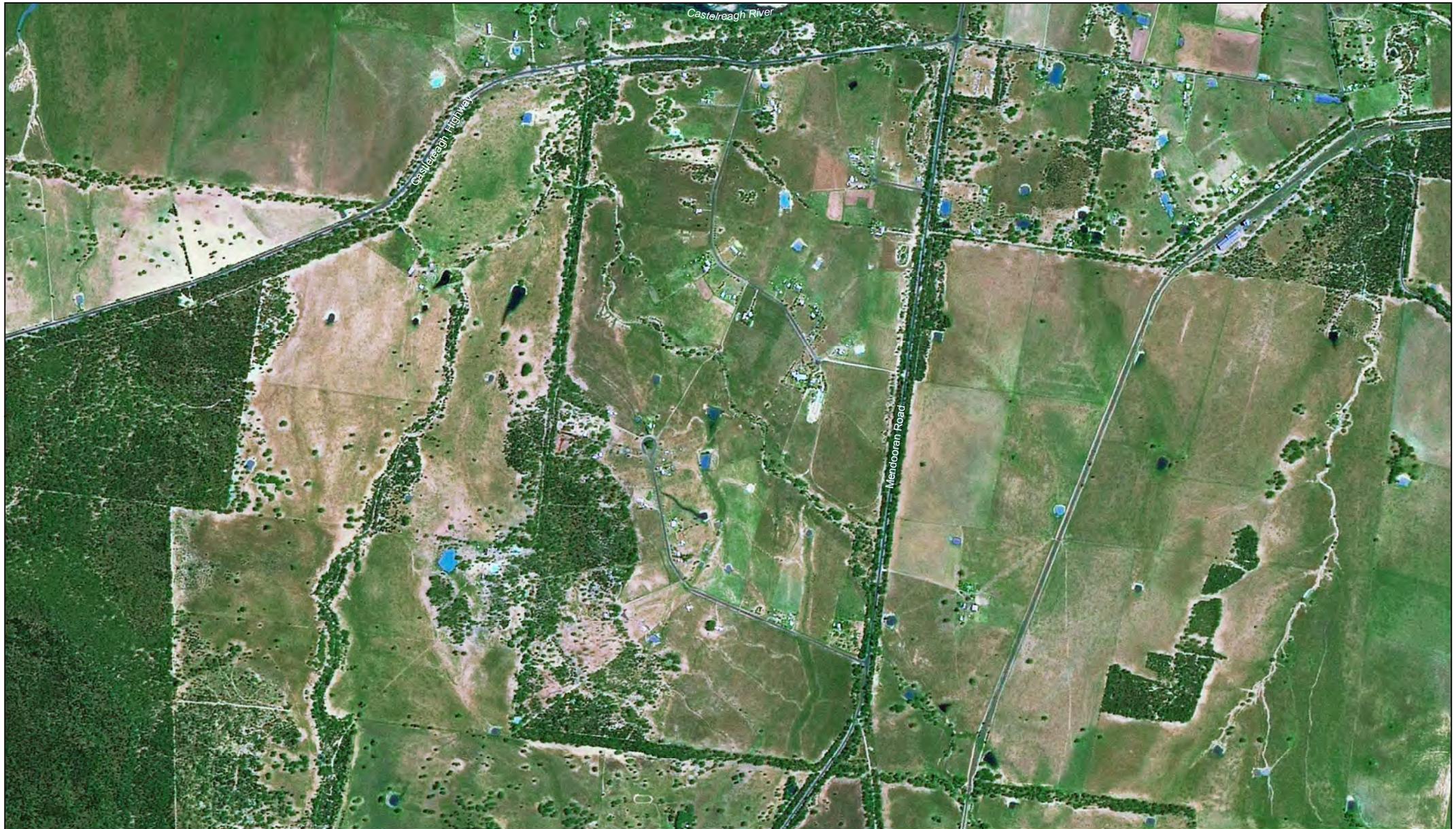
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision | A  
Date | 09 MAR 2011

**Mendooran Village Area  
Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 60**

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LEGEND

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Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

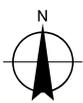
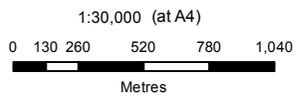
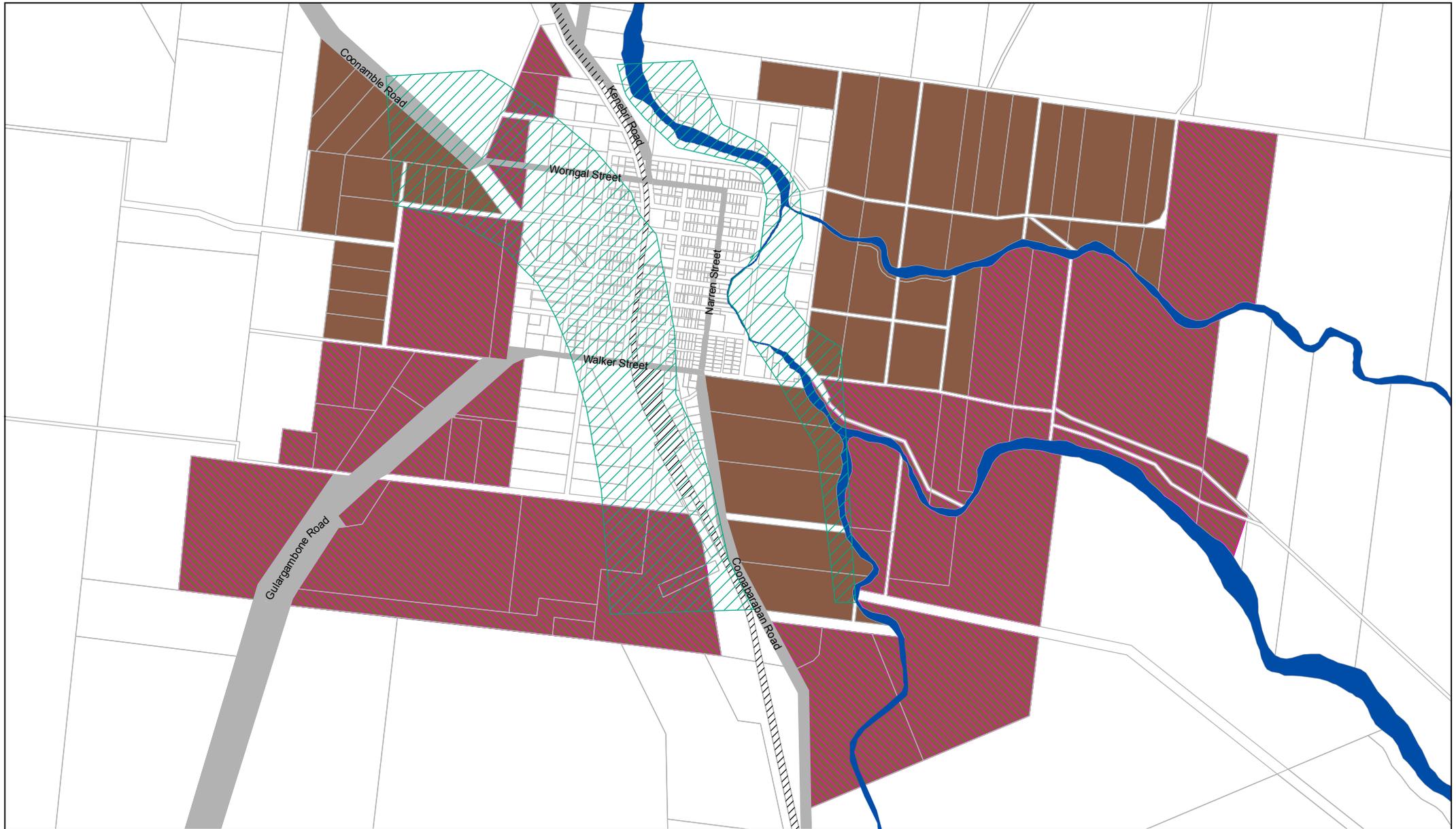


CLIENTS | PEOPLE | PERFORMANCE

Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number	22-15313
Revision	A
Date	22 JUN 2011

Mendooran Village Area  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 61**



**LEGEND**

- Existing Rural Residential to be zoned for other uses
- Existing Rural Residential
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways
- Major Routes



CLIENTS | PEOPLE | PERFORMANCE

Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

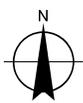
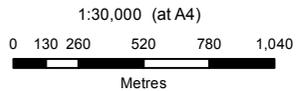
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Revision | A  
Date | 30 MAR 2011

**Baradine Village Area  
Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 62**

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LEGEND

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

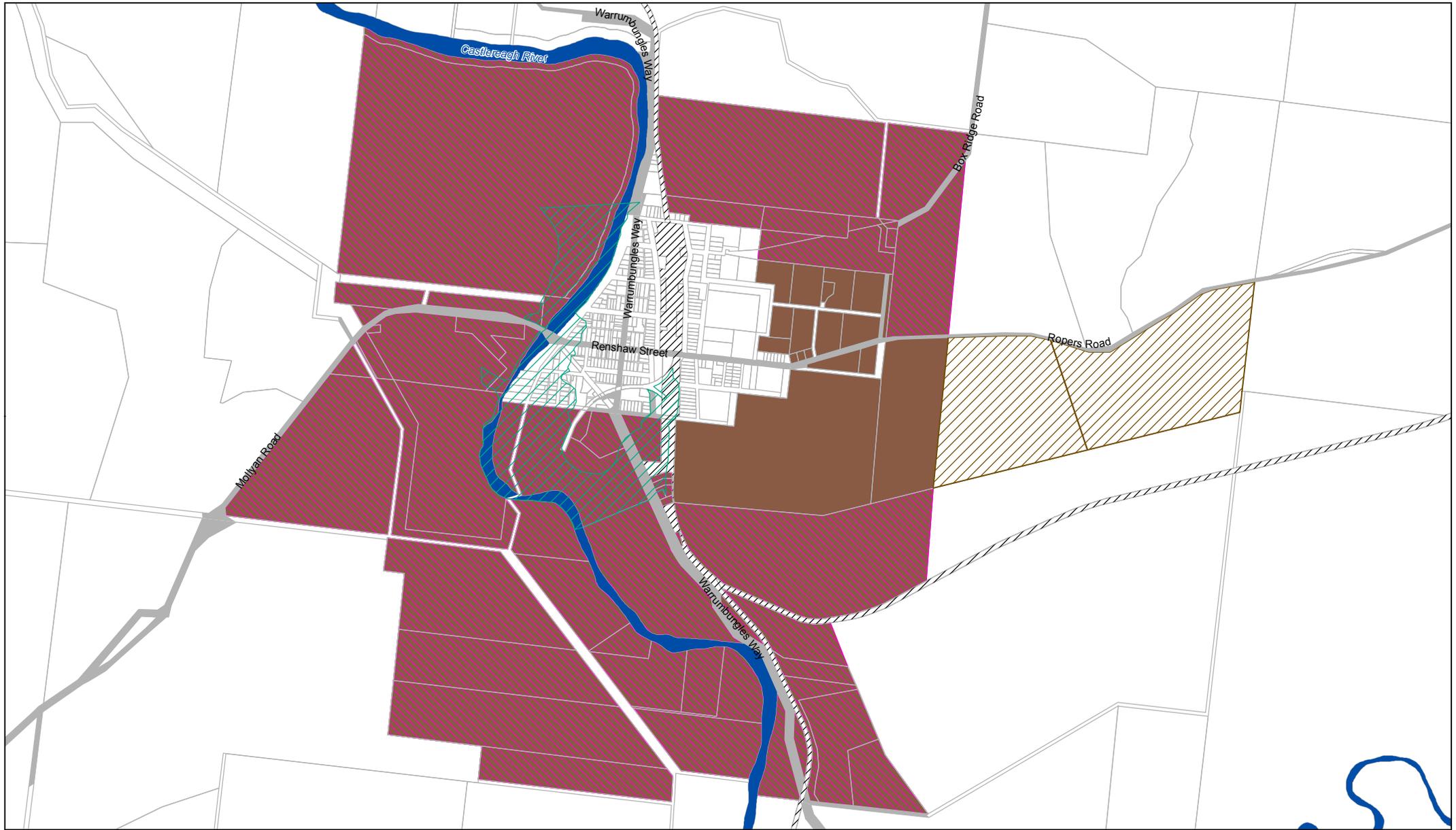


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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Baradine Village Area  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 63**



1:30,000 (at A4)  
 0 130 260 520 780 1,040  
 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

Proposed Rural Residential Growth Area	Major Routes	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
Existing Rural Residential to be zoned for other uses	Railway	Cadastre
Existing Rural Residential	Major Waterways	



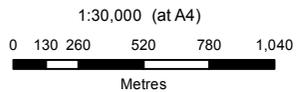
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number | 22-15313  
 Revision | A  
 Date | 09 MAR 2011

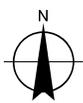
**Binnaway Village Area  
 Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 64**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
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LEGEND

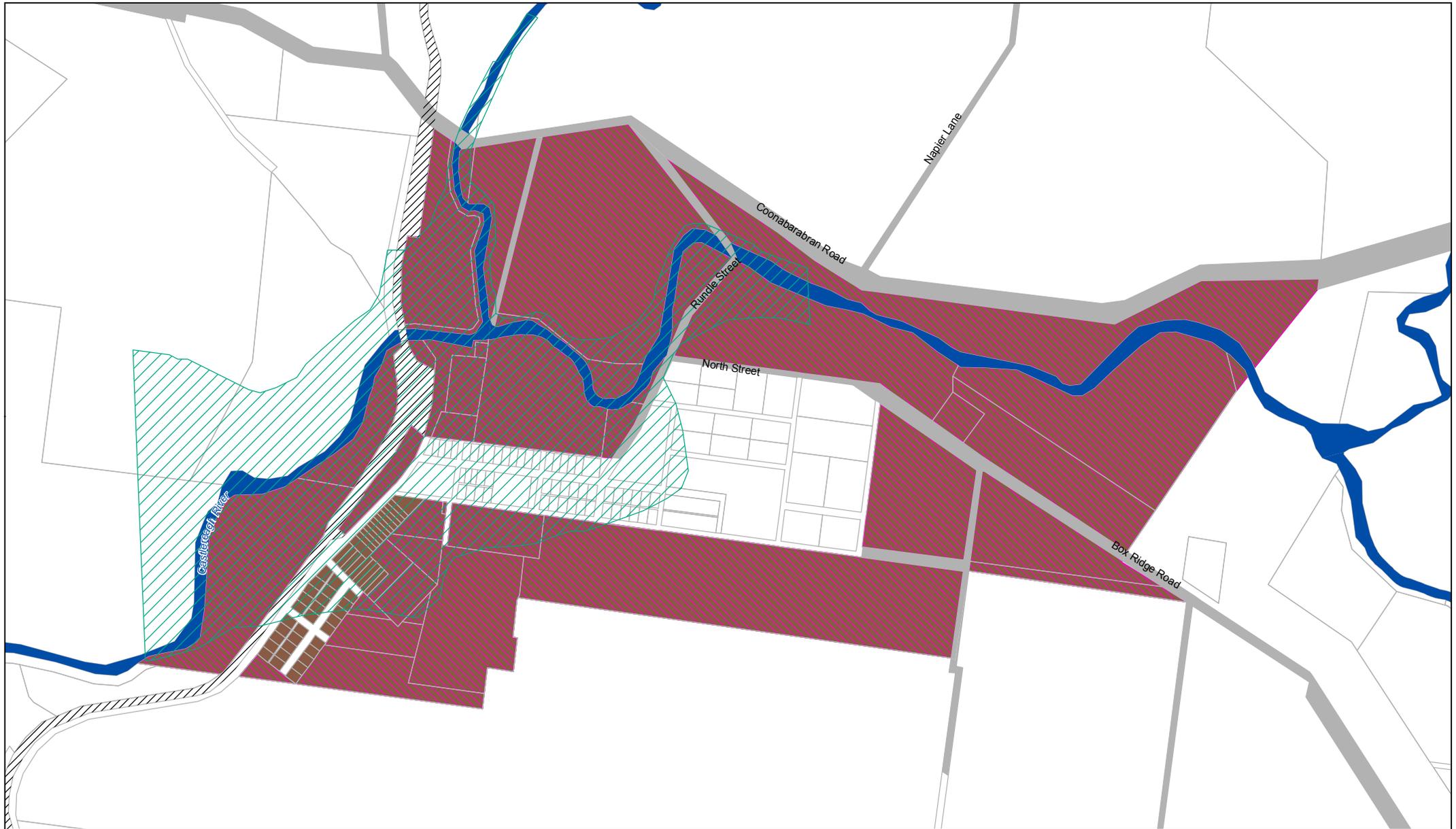


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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Binnaway Village Area  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 65**



1:20,000 (at A4)

0 87.5 175 350 525 700

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Rural Residential to be zoned for other uses
- Existing Rural Residential
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls



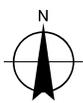
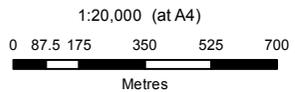
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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**Ulamambri Village Area  
 Rural Residential Land**

**Figure 66**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

LEGEND

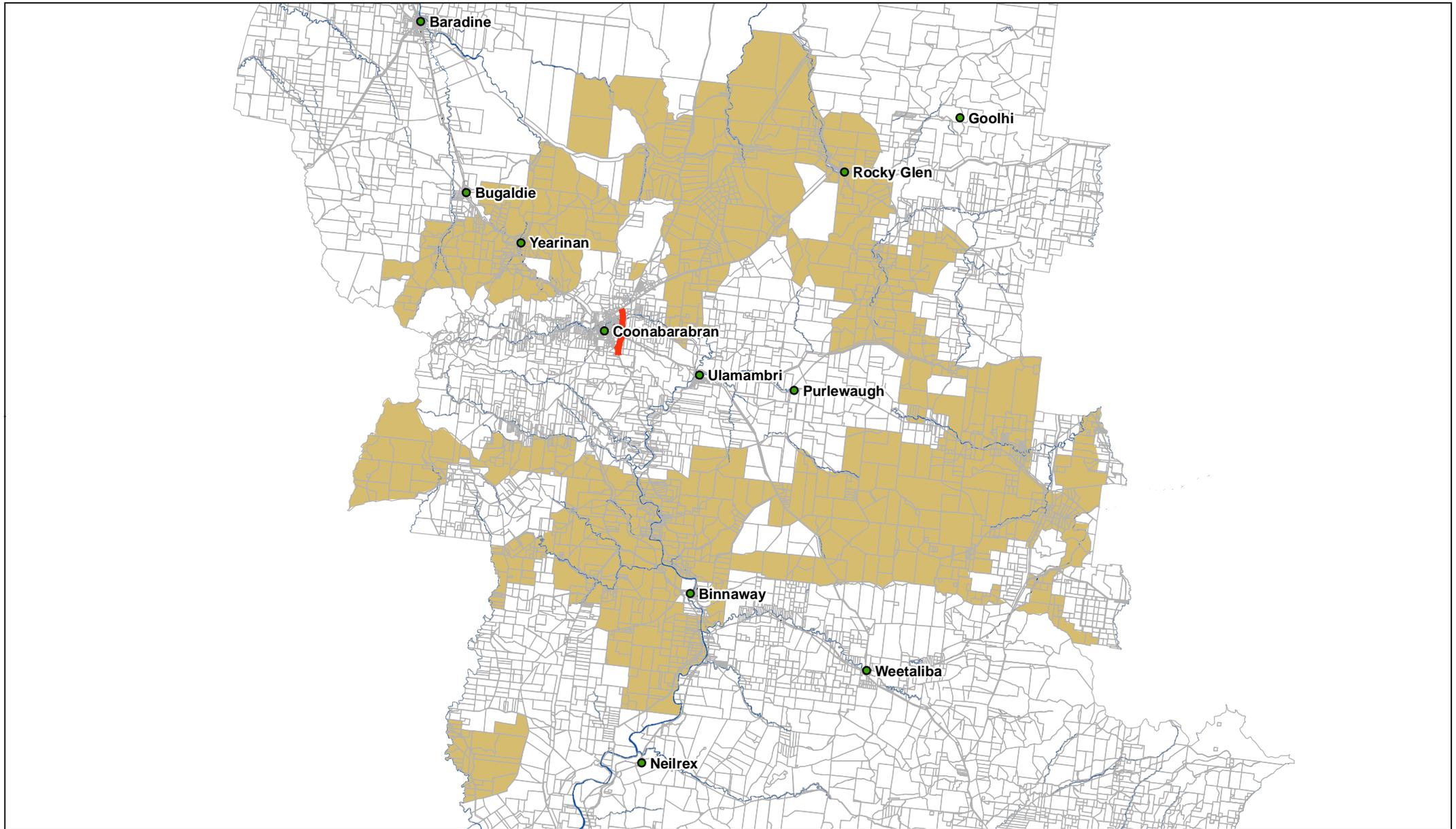


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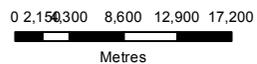
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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision	A
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Ulamambri Village Area  
Rural Residential Land - Aerial Photo **Figure 67**



1:600,000 (at A4)



**LEGEND**

- 1(b) Rural General Zone to be zoned to Primary Production
- Major Waterways
- Major Routes
- Proposed Highway Bypass
- Railway
- Cadastre



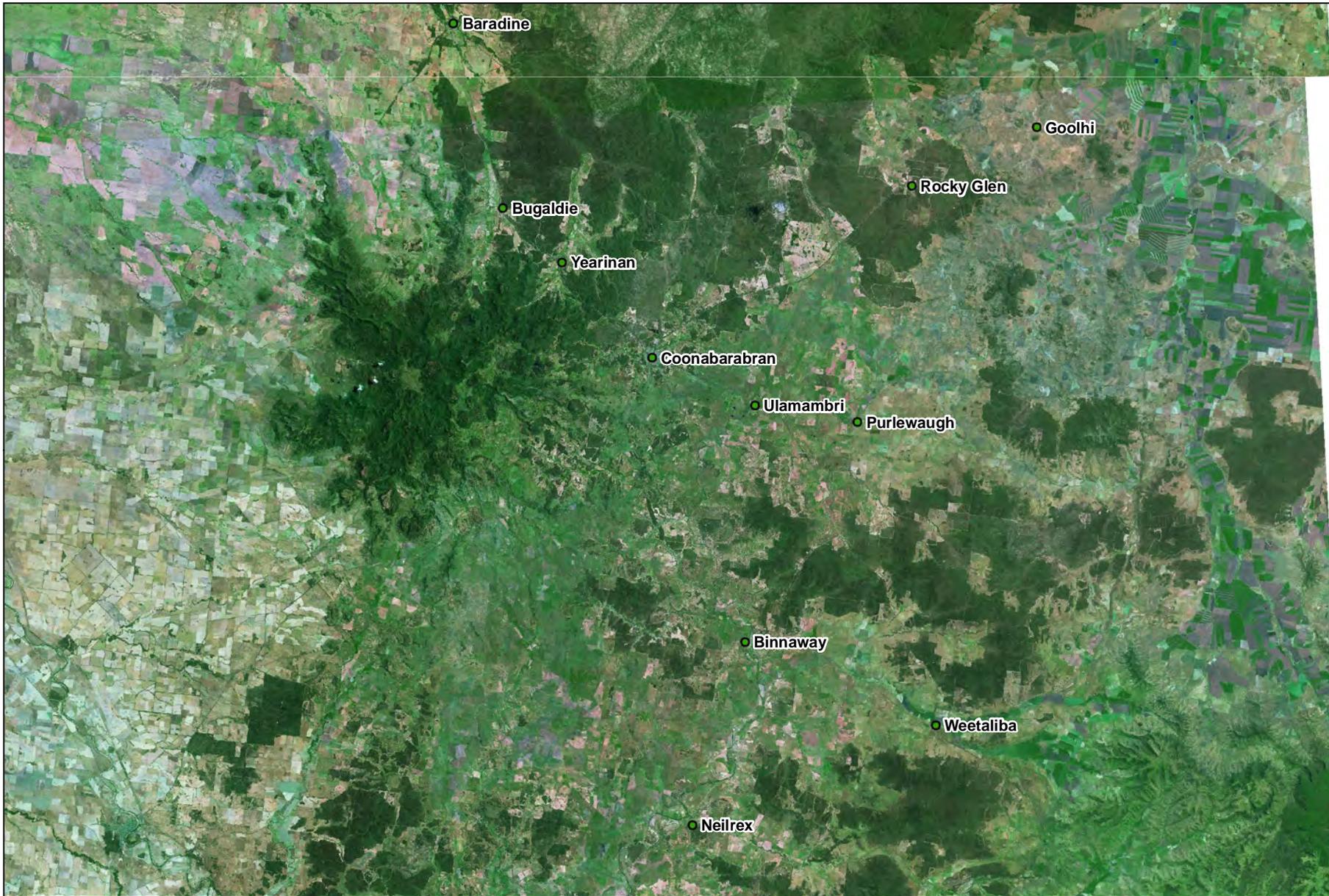
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**1b Rural General Zone  
Coonabarabran LEP 1990**

**Figure 68**



1:600,000 (at A4)

0 2,150 300 8,600 12,900 17,200



Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



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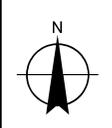
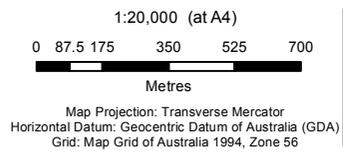
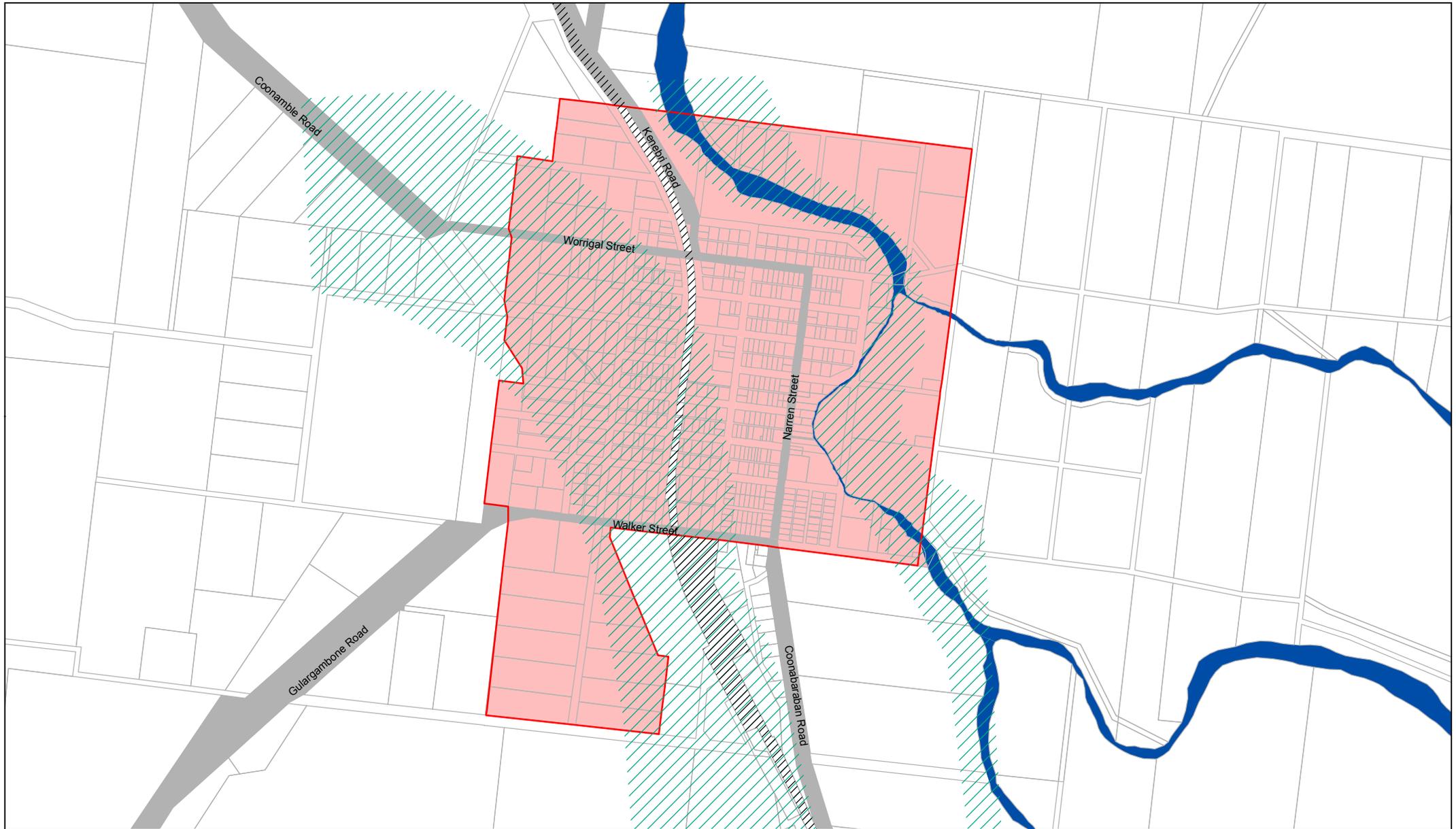
1b Rural General Zone  
Coonabarabran LEP 1990 - Aerial Photo

Figure 69



## Appendix F

# Village Land



LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastre
	Proposed Highway Bypass



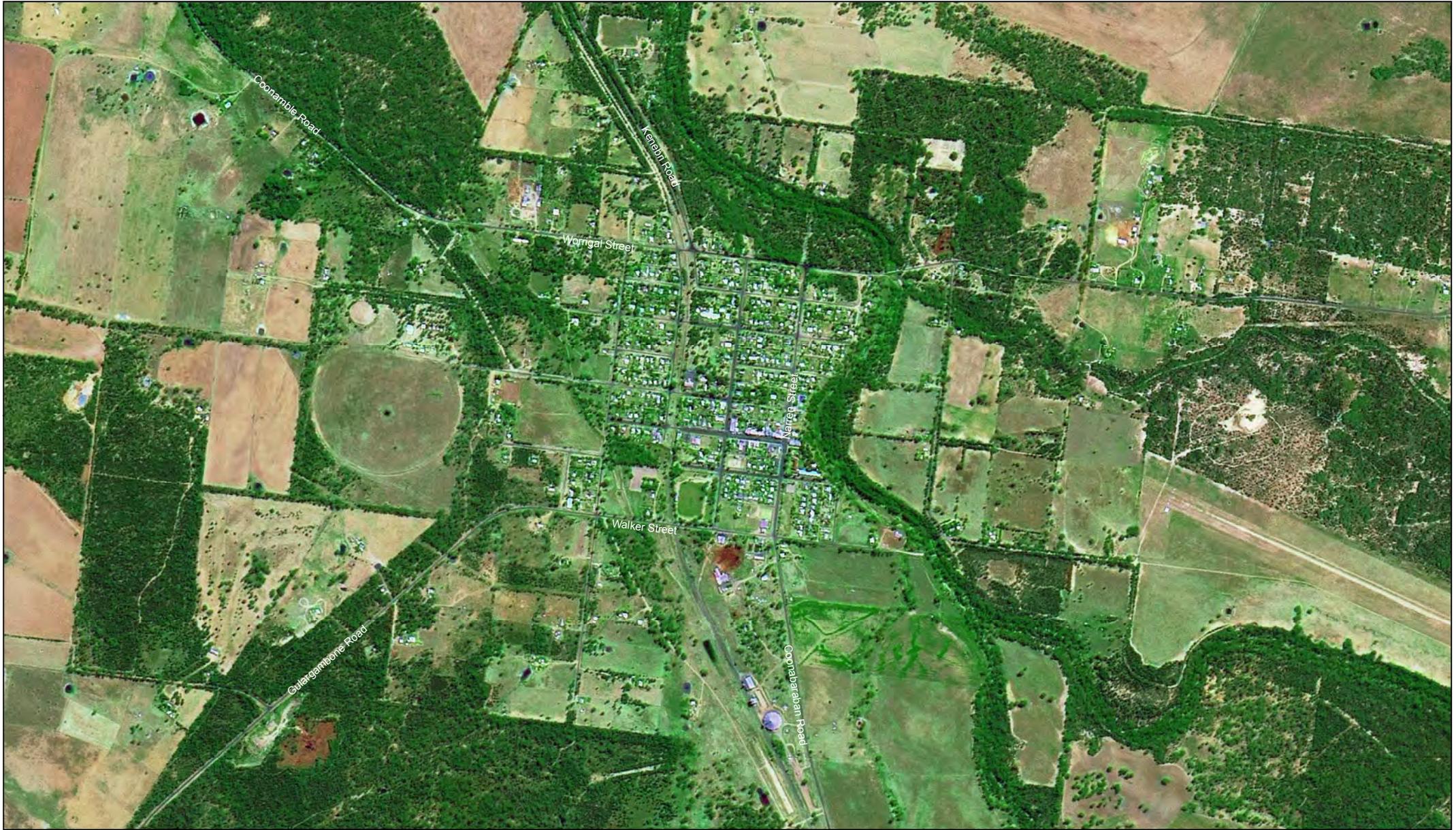
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### Baradine Village Land Use

Figure 70

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1:20,000 (at A4)

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Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



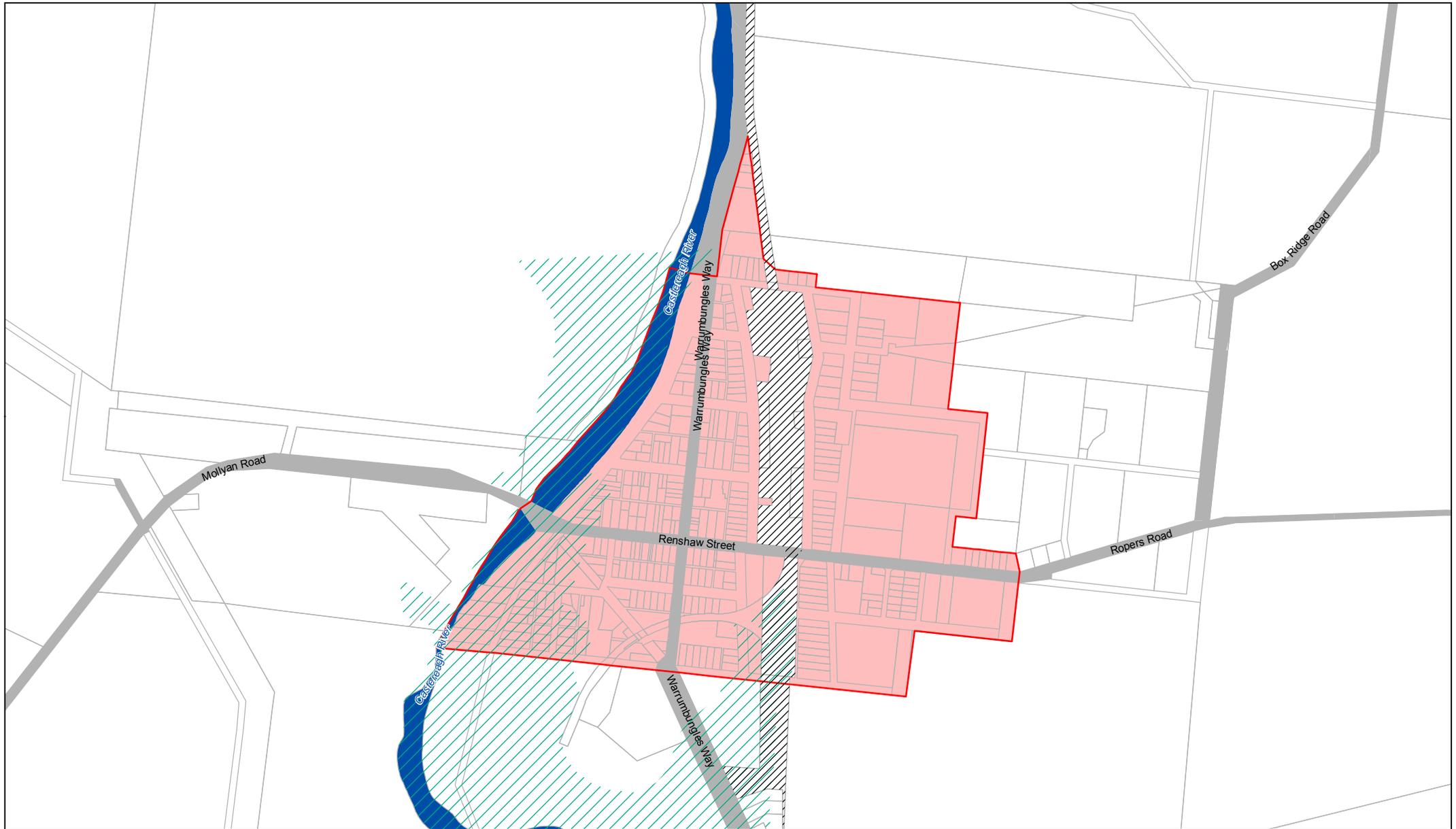
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Baradine  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 71

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1:15,000 (at A4)  
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 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Proposed Village Area
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Waterways
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Cadastre
	Proposed Highway Bypass



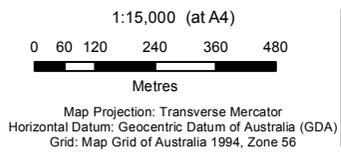
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### Binnaway Village Land Use

Figure 72

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LEGEND



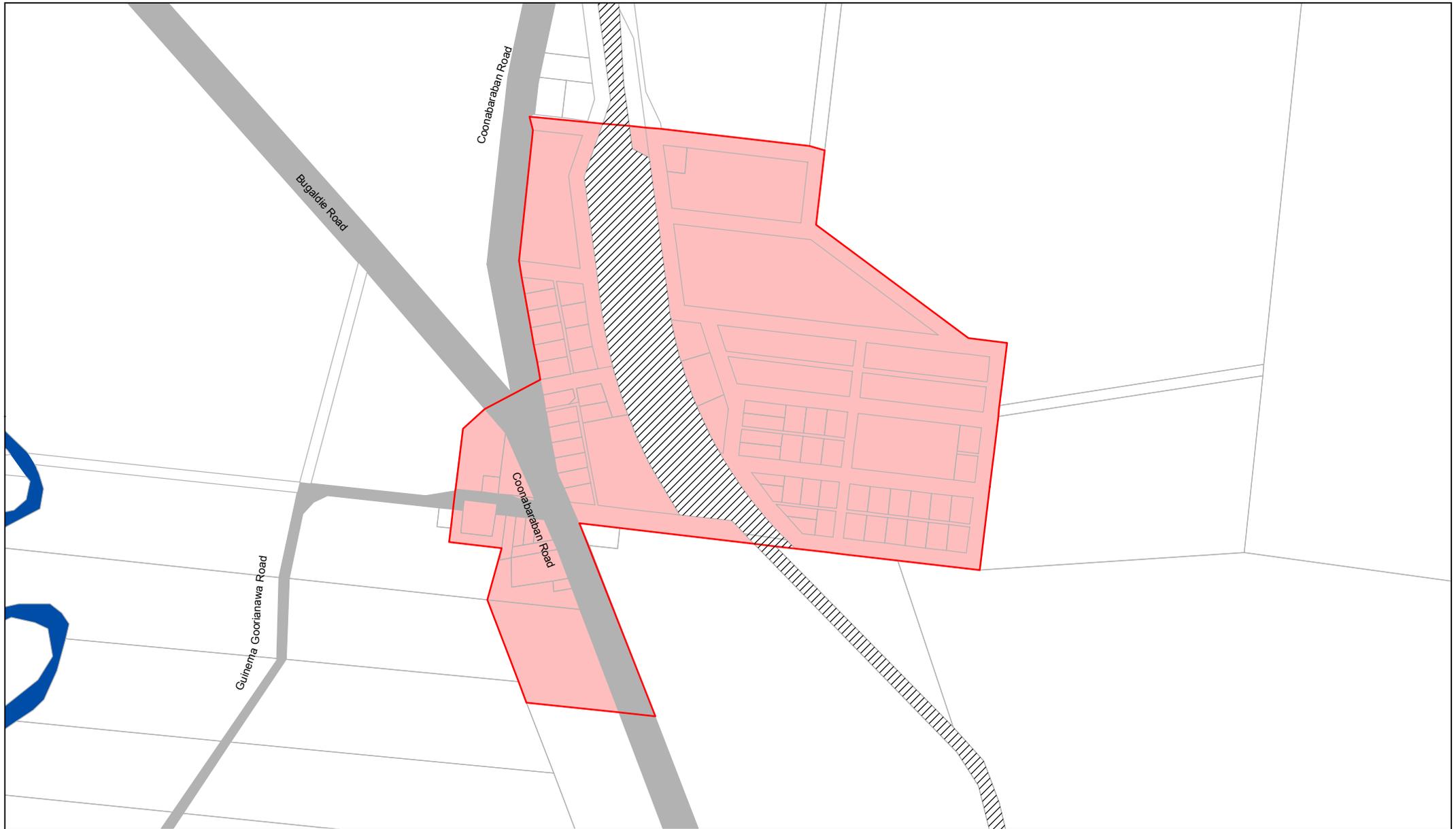
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Binnaway  
Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 73

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 0 40 80 160 240 320  
 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



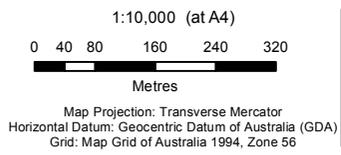
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
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 Date | 12 JAN 2011

**Bugaldie  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 74**

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LEGEND



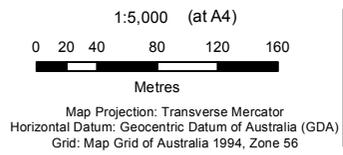
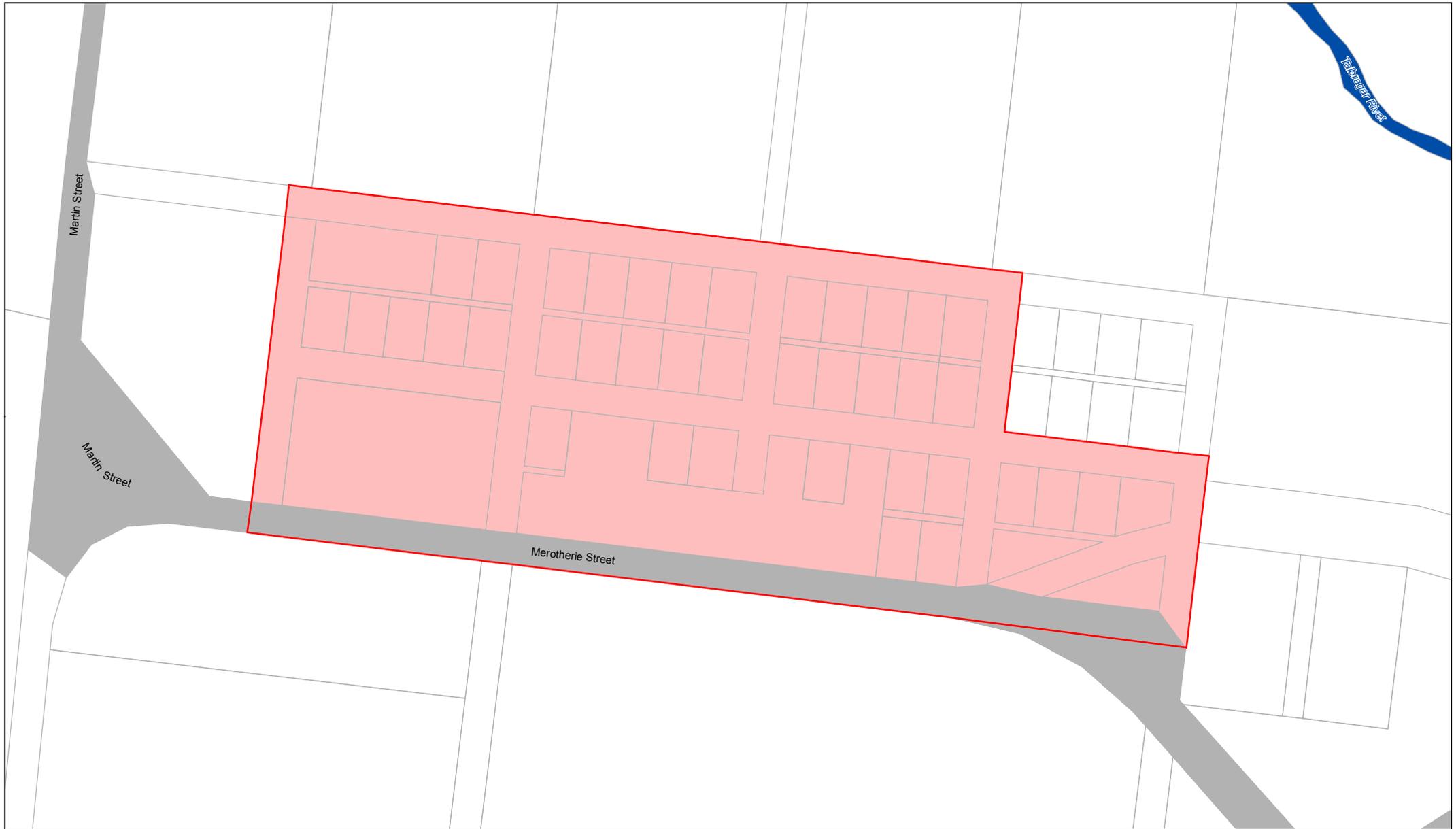
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Bugaldie  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 75

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LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Proposed Village Area
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastre
	Proposed Highway Bypass



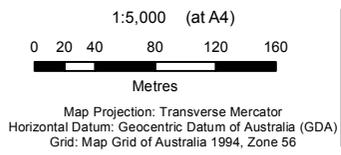
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**Cobborra  
Village Land Use**

**Figure 76**

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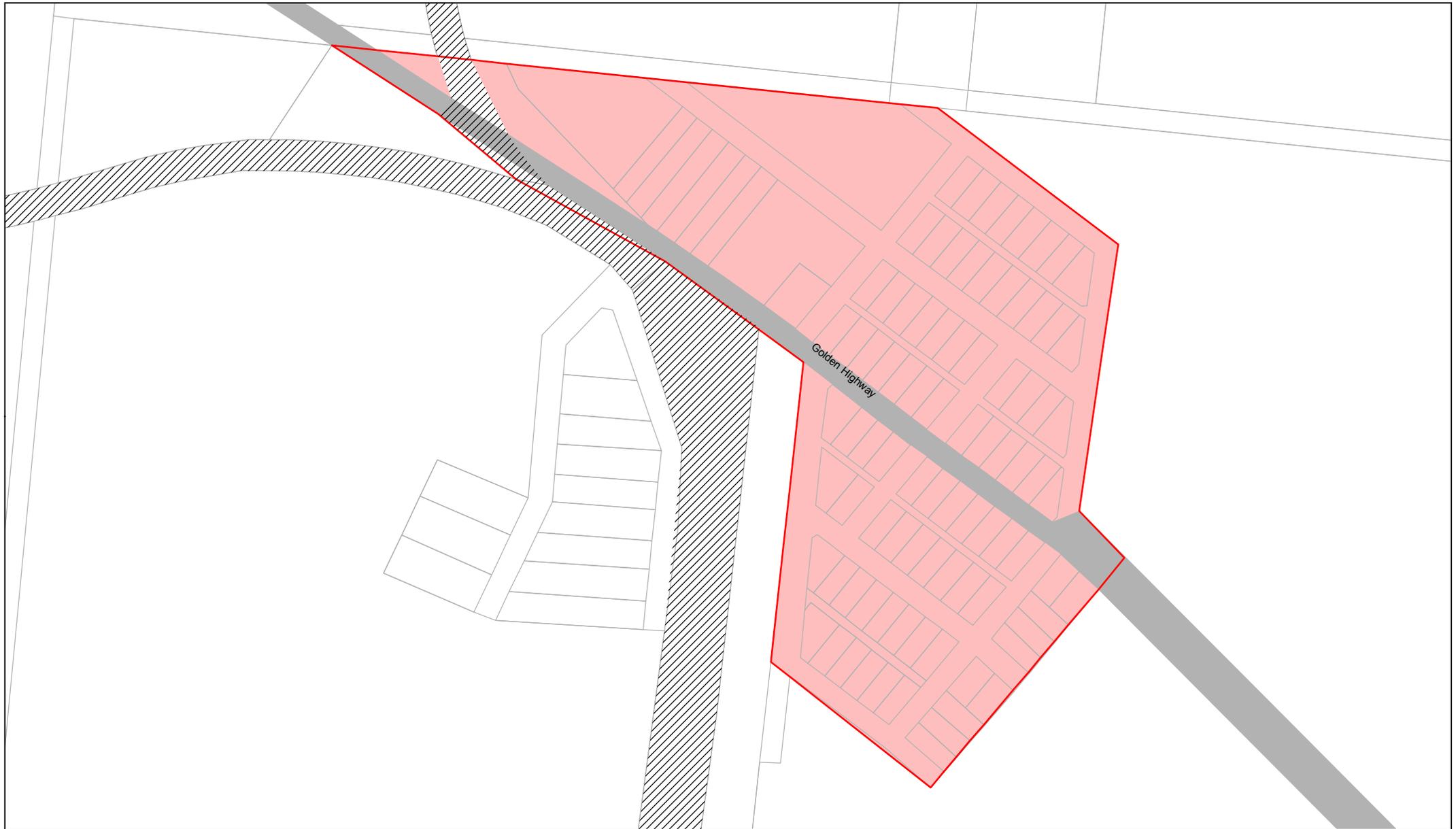
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Cobbara  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 77

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 0 20 40 80 120 160  
 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



- LEGEND**
- Existing Village
  - Proposed Village Area
  - Subject to Flood Planning Controls
  - Major Routes
  - Railway
  - Major Waterways
  - Cadastre
  - Proposed Highway Bypass



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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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**Craboon  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure ï ì**

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LEGEND



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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Craboon  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 79

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 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



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**Kenebri  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 80**

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Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



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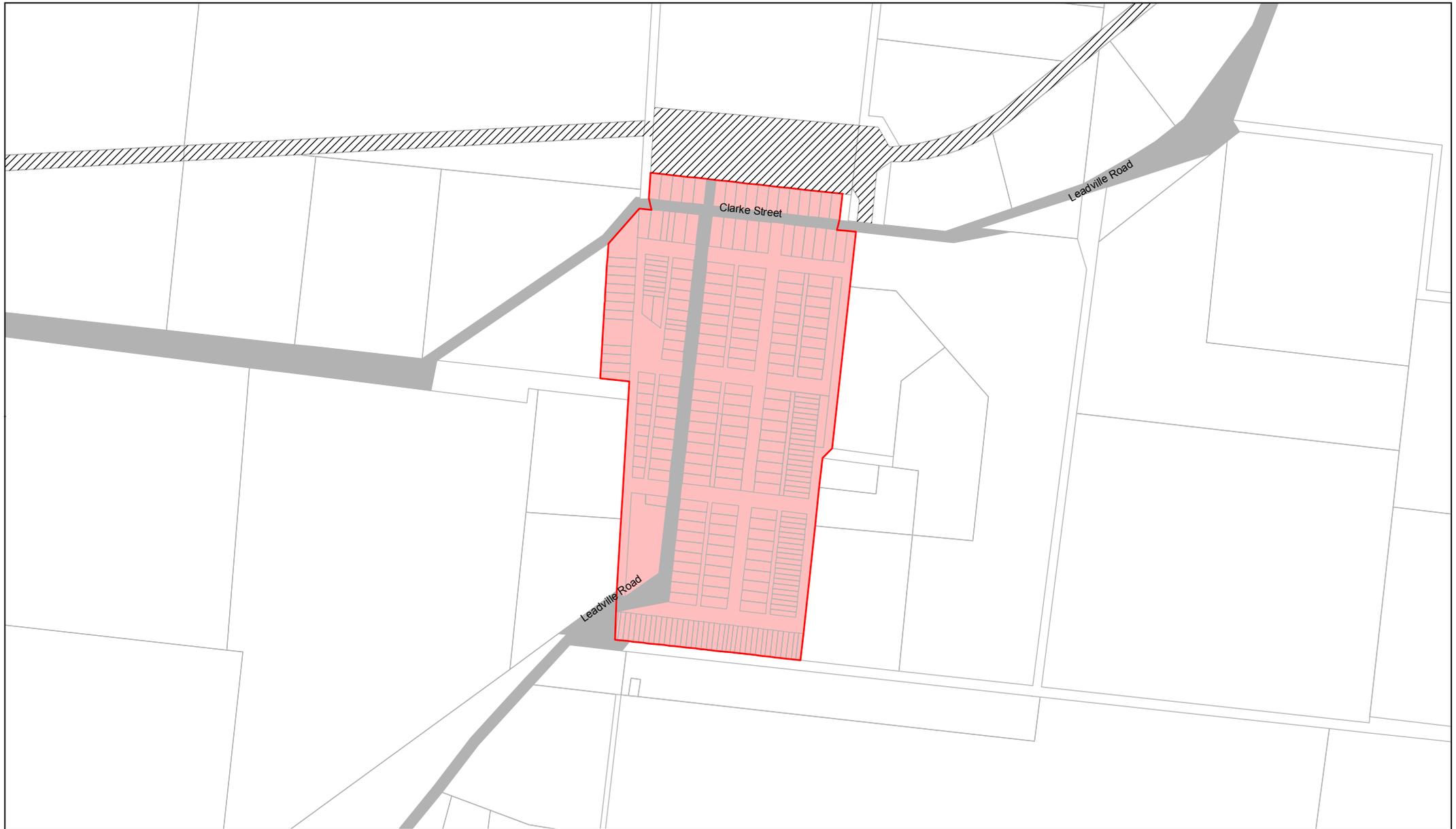
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Kenebri  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 81

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1:10,000 (at A4)

0 40 80 160 240 320

Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Proposed Village Area
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastrate
	Proposed Highway Bypass



Warrumbungle Shire Council  
Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Revision	A
Date	12 JAN 2011

### Leadville Village Land Use

Figure 82

G:\22\15313\GIS\Maps\Deliverables\Land Use Strategy\2215313\_007\_Villages\_LandUse\_ATLAS\_20101215\_A.mxd  
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1:10,000 (at A4)

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Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



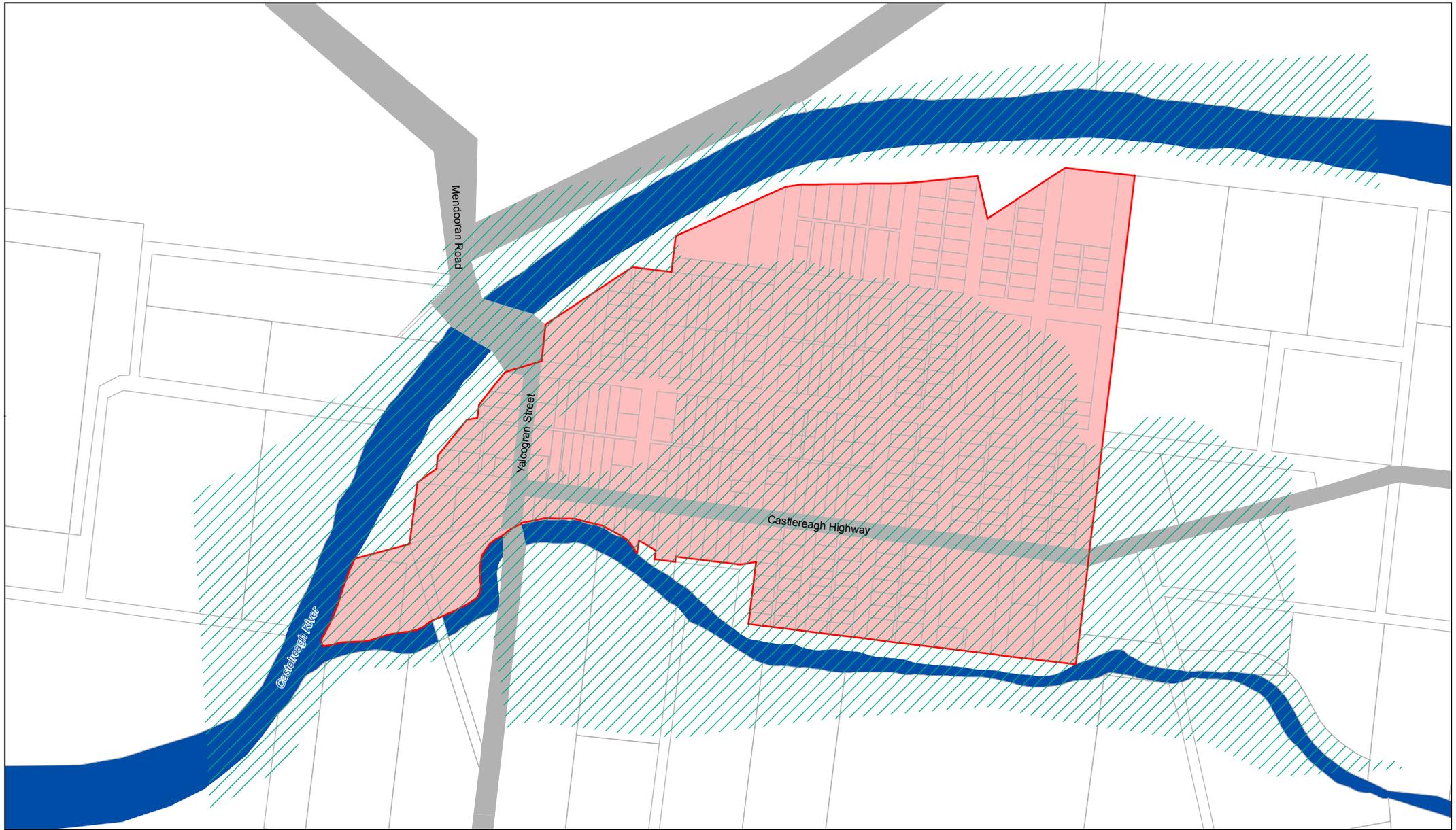
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Leadville  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 83

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1:10,000 (at A4)  
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 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Proposed Village Area
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastrate
	Proposed Highway Bypass



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Mendooran  
 Village Land Use

Figure 84

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Metres

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
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LEGEND



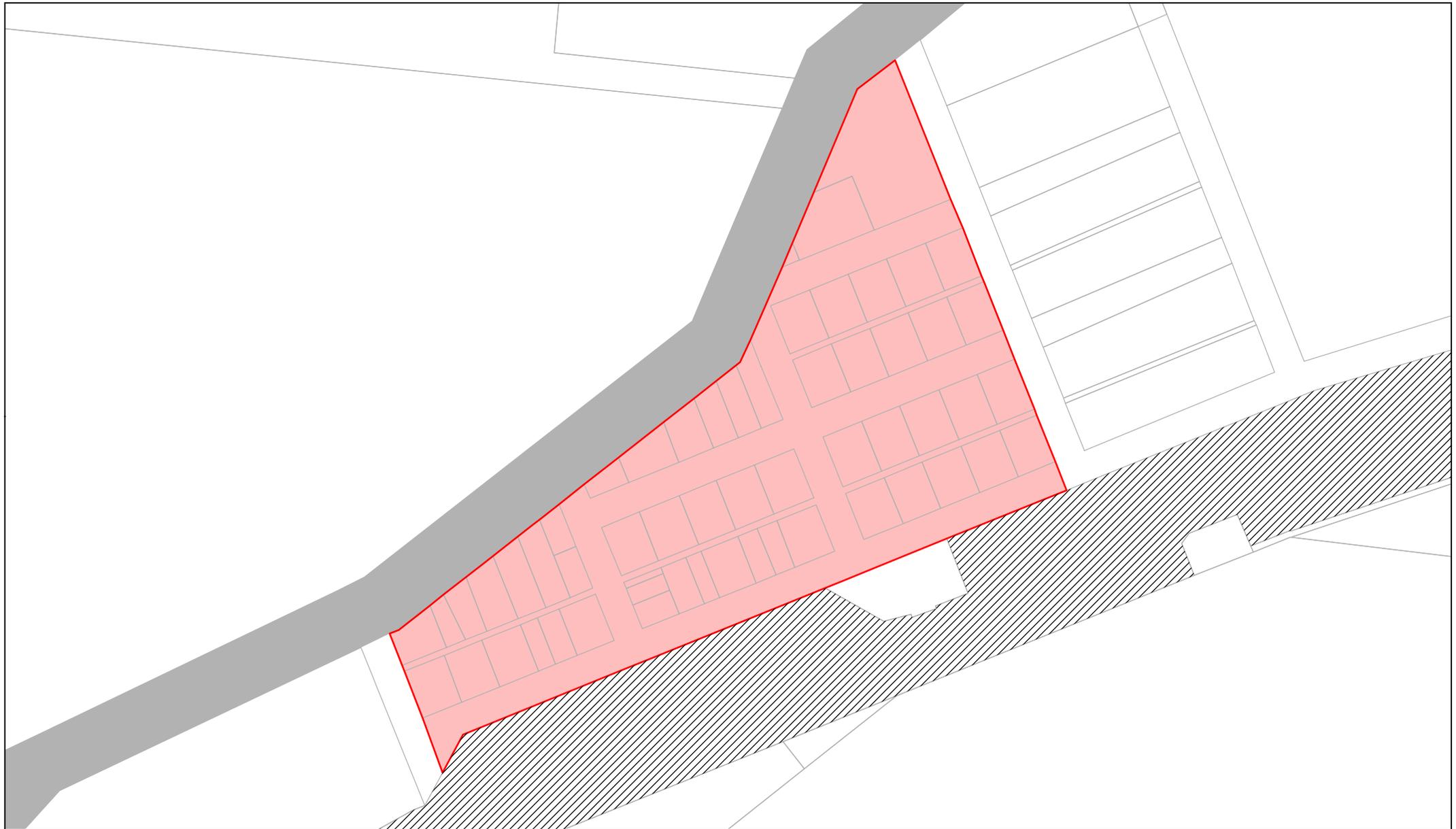
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Mendooran  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 85

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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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**Merrygoen  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 86**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND

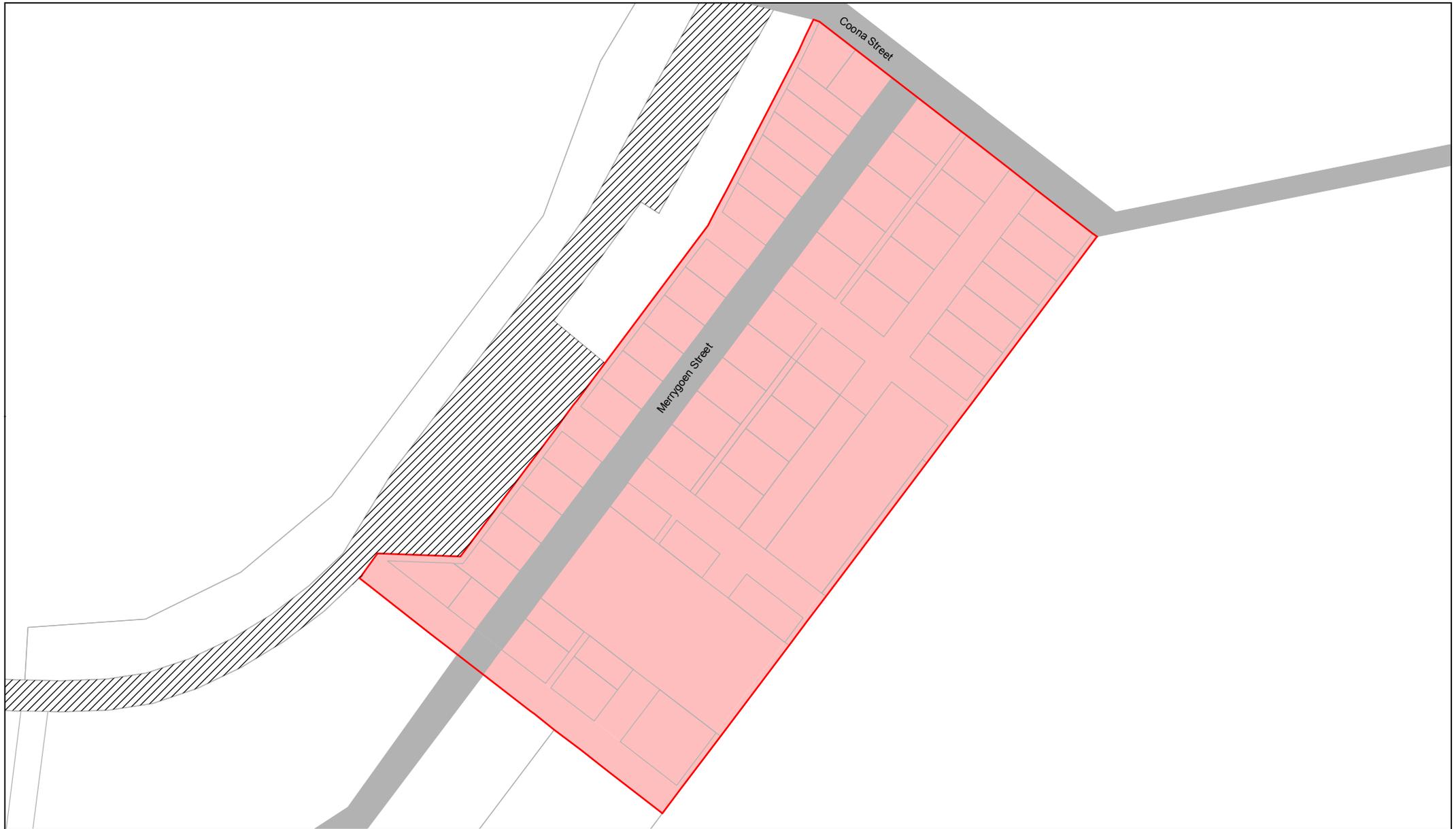


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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Date	22 JUN 2011

Merrygoen  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 87



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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



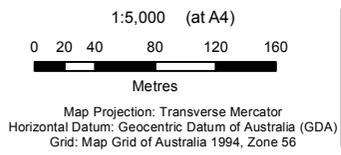
Warrumbungle Shire Council  
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Date	12 JAN 2011

Neilrex  
 Village Land Use

**Figure 88**

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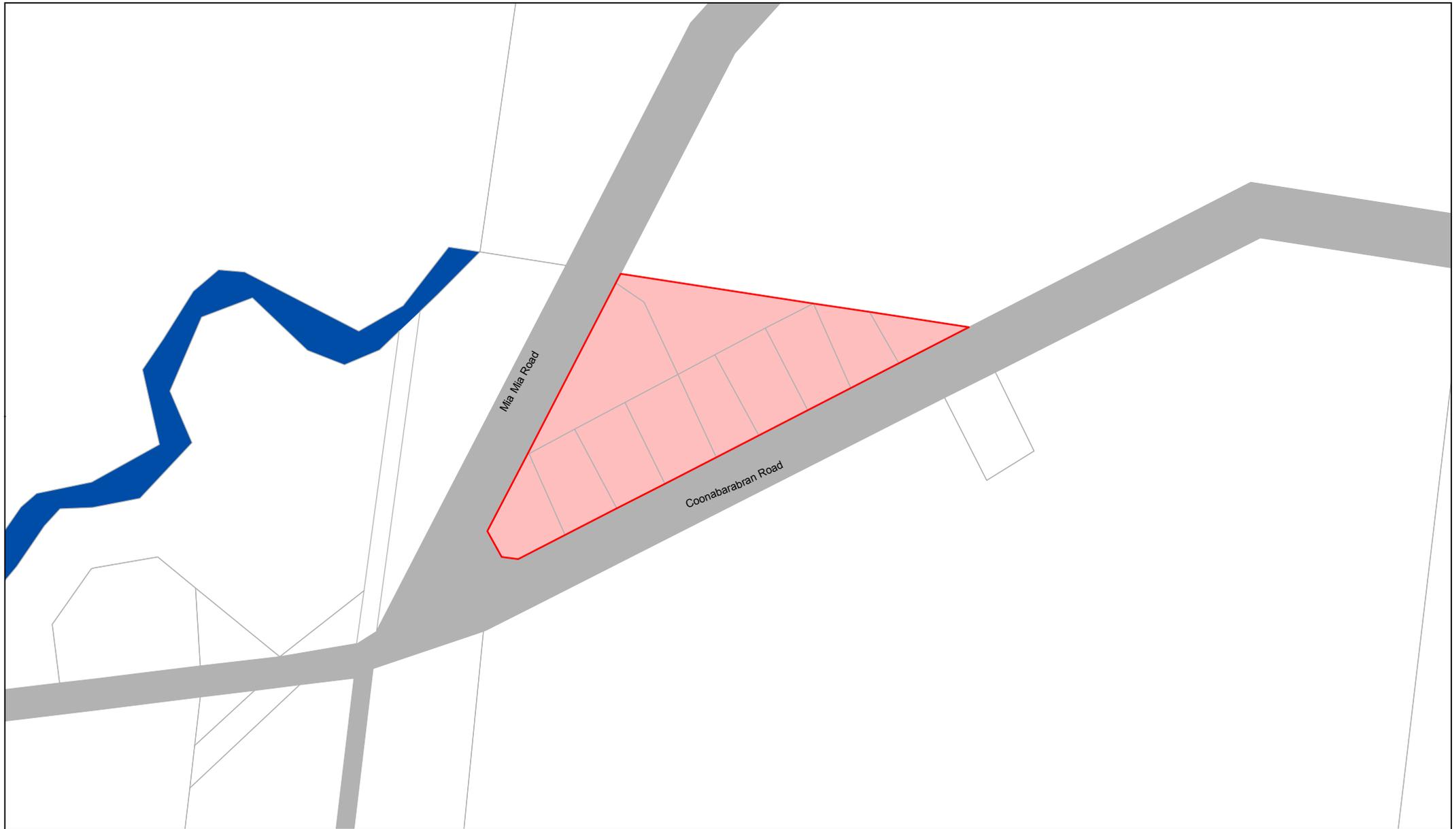
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Neilrex  
Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 89

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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass

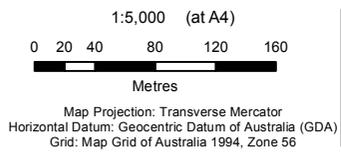


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Purllewaugh  
 Village Land Use

**Figure 90**



LEGEND



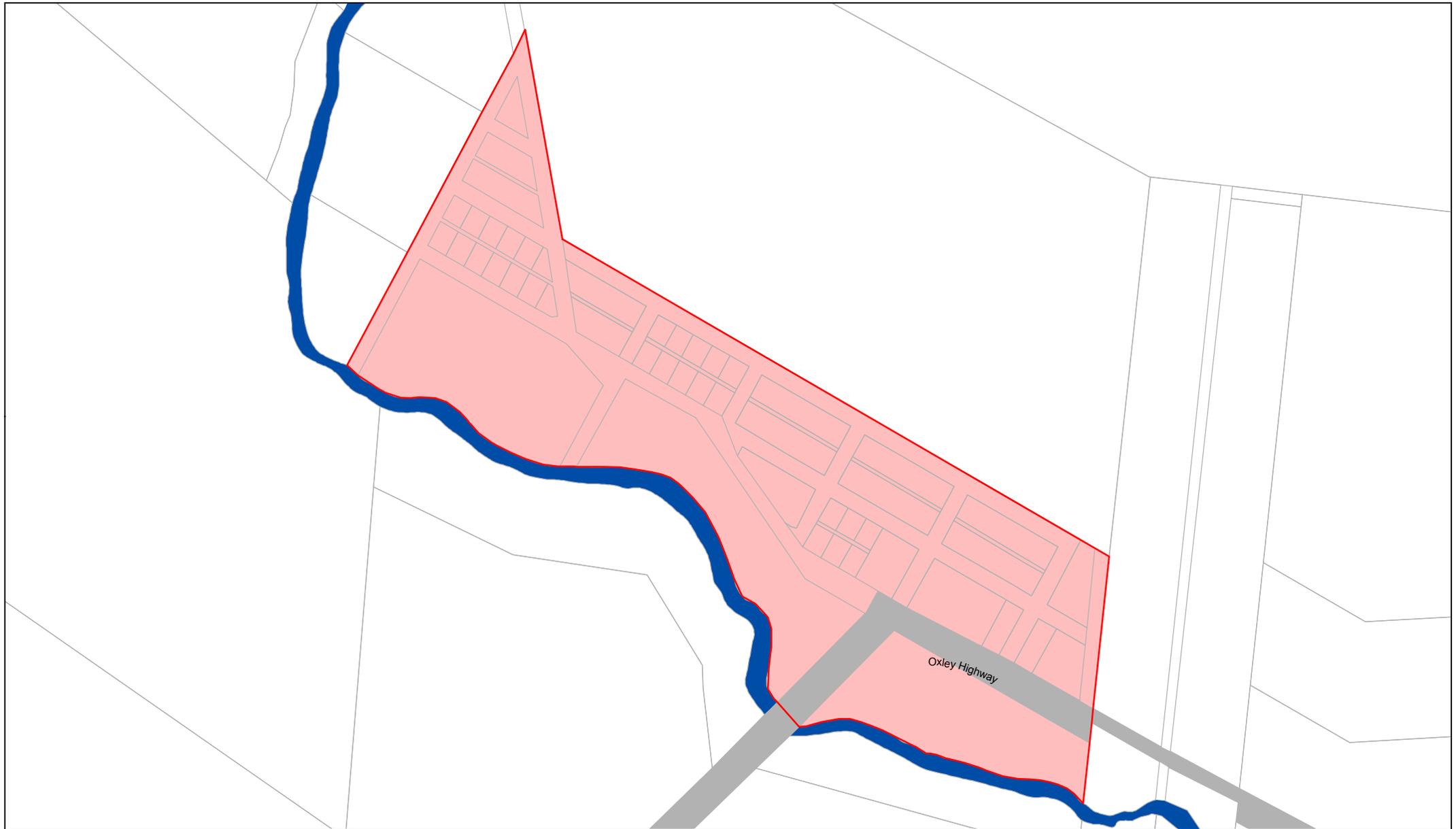
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Purlewaugh  
Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 91

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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Major Waterways
- Cadastrate
- Proposed Highway Bypass
- Railway



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**Rocky Glen  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 92**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



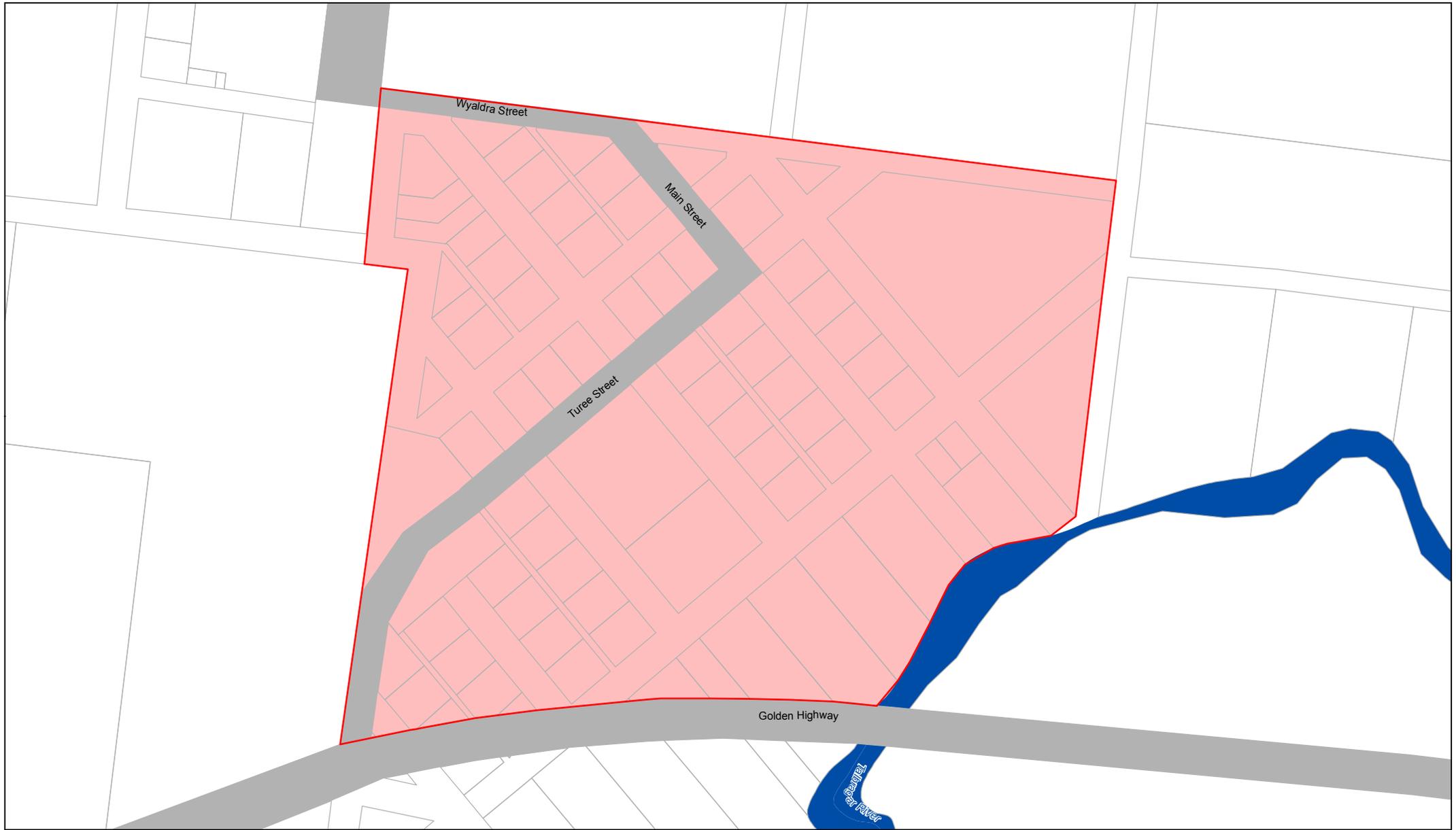
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Rocky Glen  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 93

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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastrate
- Proposed Highway Bypass



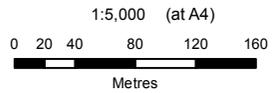
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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

Job Number | 22-15313  
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 Date | 12 JAN 2011

**Uarby  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 94**

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LEGEND



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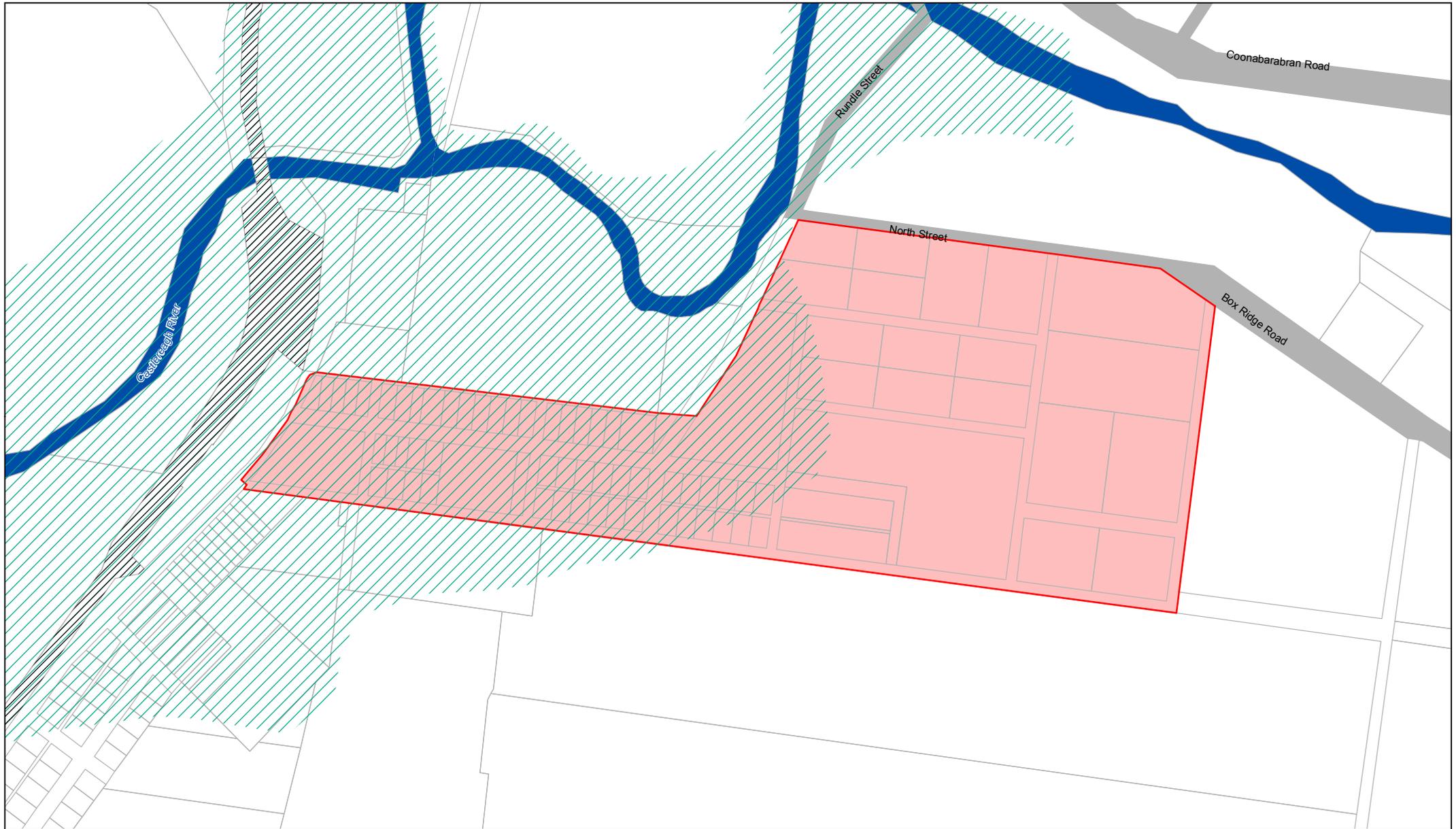
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Uarby  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 95

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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND	
	Existing Village
	Proposed Village Area
	Subject to Flood Planning Controls
	Major Routes
	Railway
	Major Waterways
	Cadastrate
	Proposed Highway Bypass



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Ulamambri  
 Village Land Use

Figure 96

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LEGEND



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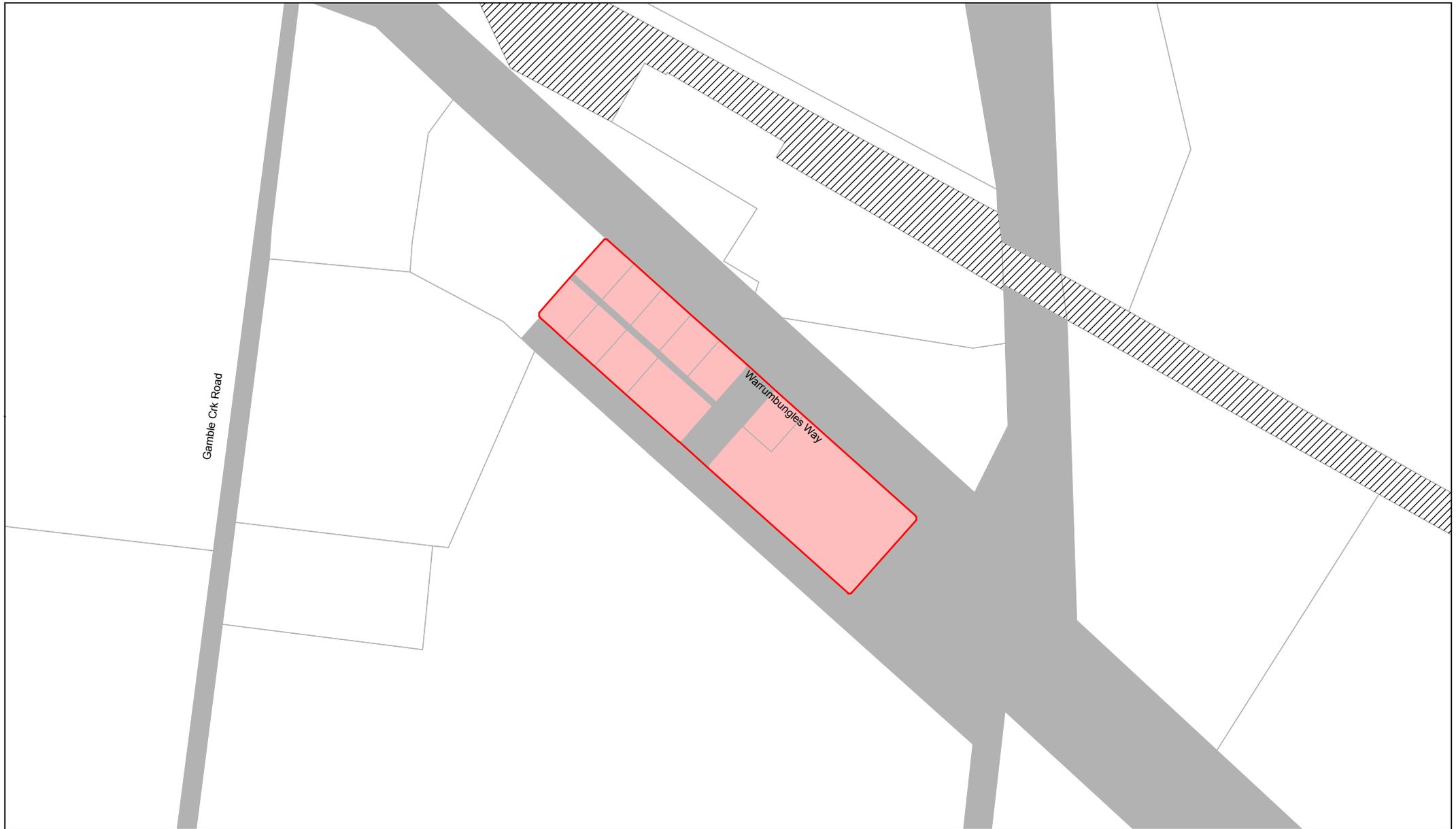
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Ulamambri  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 97

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 Metres



Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56

**LEGEND**

- Existing Village
- Proposed Village Area
- Subject to Flood Planning Controls
- Major Routes

- Railway
- Major Waterways
- Cadastre
- Proposed Highway Bypass



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**Weetaliba  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 98**



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LEGEND



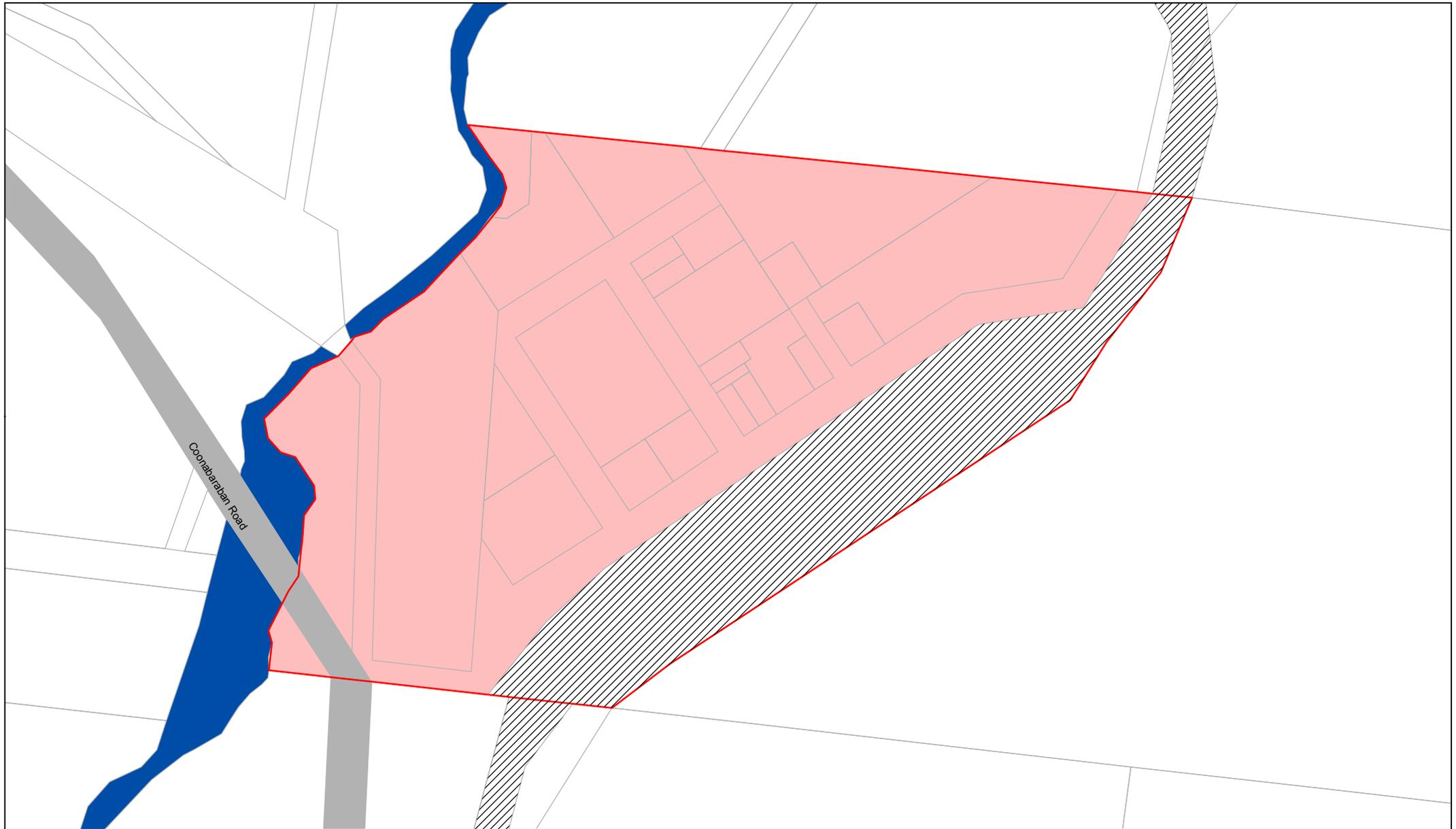
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Weetaliba  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

Figure 99

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 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



- LEGEND**
- Existing Village
  - Proposed Village Area
  - Subject to Flood Planning Controls
  - Major Routes
  - Railway
  - Major Waterways
  - Cadastre
  - Proposed Highway Bypass



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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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**Yearinan  
 Village Land Use**

**Figure 100**

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LEGEND



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 Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Yearinan  
 Village Land Use - Aerial Photo

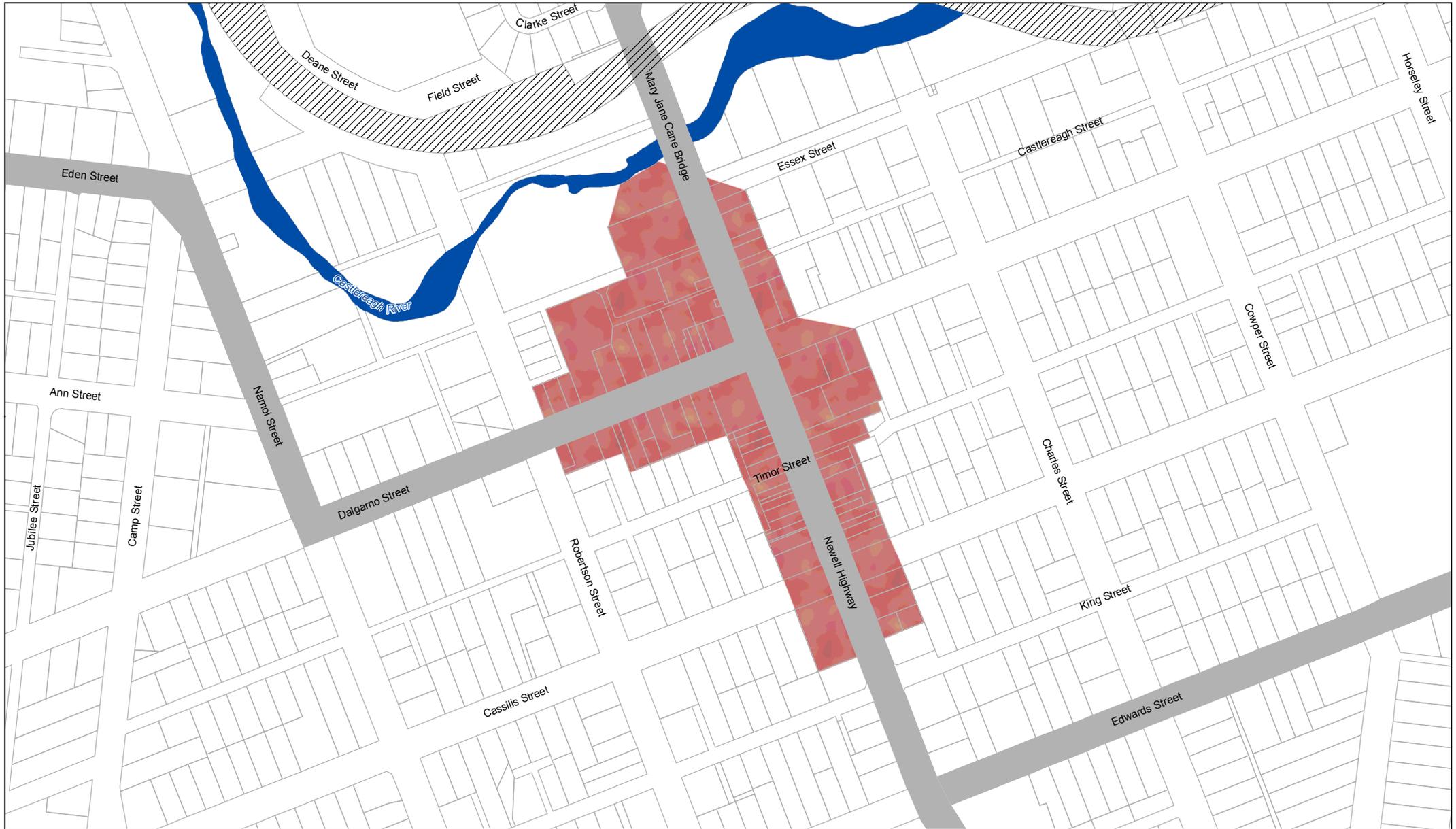
Figure 101

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## Appendix G

# Conservation Areas



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 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
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**LEGEND**

- Heritage Conservation Area
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways

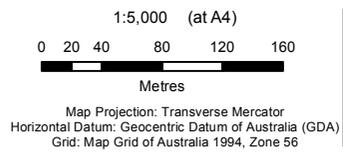


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**Coonabarabran  
 Heritage Conservation Area** **Figure 102**

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 Data Source: Andrew Neil: Heritage Conservation - 2010. Created by: TMorton, tmorton, fmackay  
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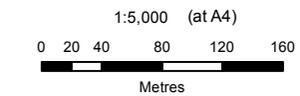


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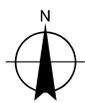
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Coonabarabran  
Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo **Figure 103**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

- Heritage Conservation Area
- Major Routes
- Railway
- Cadastre
- Major Waterways



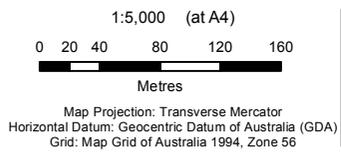
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Coolah  
Heritage Conservation Area

Figure 104



LEGEND



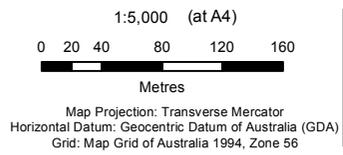
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Coolah  
Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo **Figure 105**

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LEGEND		
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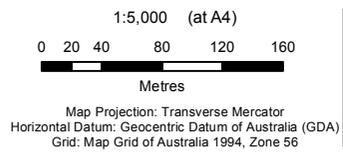
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Date | 09 MAR 2011

Dunedoo  
Heritage Conservation Area

Figure 106

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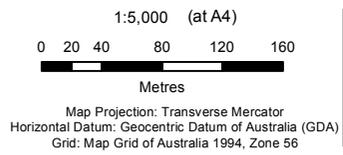


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Dunedoo  
Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo **Figure 107**

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LEGEND			
	Heritage Conservation Area		Major Waterways
	Major Routes		Railway
			Cadastral



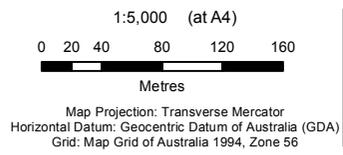
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**Baradine  
Heritage Conservation Area**

**Figure 108**

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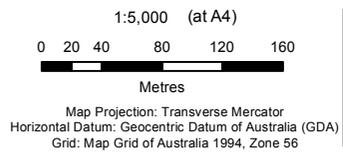


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**Baradine  
Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo Figure 109**

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 Data Source: Andrew Neil: Heritage Conservation - 2010. Created by: TMorton, tmorton, fmackay



LEGEND			
	Heritage Conservation Area		Railway
	Major Routes		Cadastral
	Major Waterways		

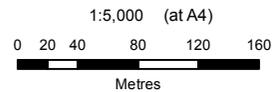


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**Binnaway  
Heritage Conservation Area** Figure 110

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LEGEND

Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



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Warrumbungles Land Use Strategy

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Binnaway  
Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo **Figure 111**



1:5,000 (at A4)  
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 Metres  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



**LEGEND**

Heritage Conservation Area	Railway	Major Waterways
Major Routes	Cadastre	

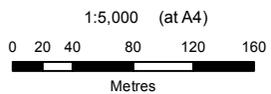


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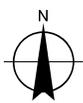
Job Number 22-15313  
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 Date 09 MAR 2011

**Mendooran  
 Heritage Conservation Area** **Figure 112**

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Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia (GDA)  
 Grid: Map Grid of Australia 1994, Zone 56



LEGEND



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Mendooran  
 Heritage Conservation Area - Aerial Photo **Figure 113**



## Appendix H

# Consistency with the Rural SEPP



## ***Consistency with State Environmental Planning Policy (Rural Lands) 2008***

A Section 117 Direction issued by the Minister for Planning on 9 May 2008 applies to any Council preparing a draft LEP that affects land within an existing or proposed rural or environment protection zone or affects the minimum lot size for lands in these zones. The Direction requires that Councils prepare the LEP so that it is consistent with the Rural Planning Principles and Rural Subdivision Principles in State Environmental Planning Policy (Rural Lands) 2008. The following section demonstrates that this Warrumbungle Strategy provides a sound basis for the preparation of Shire-wide LEP that will be consistent with the Section 117 Direction and the SEPP (Rural Lands) 2008.

### ***Rural Planning Principles***

---

#### ***(a) Promotion and protection of opportunities for current and potential productive and sustainable economic activities in rural areas***

The Strategy emphasises the role of agriculture and agribusiness in the economy of the Warrumbungle Shire and recommends a range of actions to protect sustainable activities in the rural zones of each of the LGA. This includes recommending planning controls for intensive agriculture and small holding development in appropriate locations.

#### ***(b) Recognition of the importance of agriculture and the changing nature of agriculture in the region***

This Strategy documents at length the value of agriculture to the Shire and local economies. The Strategy promotes flexibility in LEP's to permit a wide range of rural land uses that can cater for change and emerging opportunities.

#### ***(c) Recognition of the significance of rural land uses to the state and rural communities including social and economic benefits***

The Strategy identifies factors that make the Warrumbungle Shire distinctive and contribute to its competitive advantage. These include existing transport infrastructure (road, rail and air) tree change lifestyle opportunities, cost competitive industrial land, and strategic location to markets e.g. agriculture, agribusiness and mining.

It also acknowledges the need to have a healthy and vibrant rural community to support the productive rural lands of the Warrumbungle Shire

#### ***(d) Balance the social, economic and environmental interests of the community***

The need for employment through diversifying rural land use is recognised in the Strategy through the promotion of on farm tourism, ecotourism and home based businesses that can offset farm income without disrupting the primary production of the area. This is linked to the changing nature of regional centres, the effect of information and communication economies and changing lifestyle preferences.

#### ***(e) Identification and protection of natural resources, maintaining biodiversity, protecting native vegetation and water resources and avoiding constrained land***

The Strategy addresses surface and aground water issues to the extent that it can, including riparian issues and constraints, water sensitive urban design, on site waste water disposal, ground water vulnerability and salinity. It recommends that the biodiversity values of the Warrumbungle Shire be protected in future planning instruments including Environmentally Sensitive Areas.



The Strategy also identifies the issues of bushfires, flooding and climate change as relevant to the Warrumbungle Shire and issues that will need to be addressed at some level in future planning instruments.

***(f) The provision of opportunities for rural lifestyle, settlement and housing that contribute to the social and economic welfare of rural communities***

One of the key functions of this Strategy is to analyse supply and demand for residential, rural residential and employment lands to ensure that realistic stocks of land are or can be made available to respond to legitimate demand for these land uses. This is undertaken transparently for the Warrumbungle Shire and recommendations are made for each land use. Where appropriate, “greenfield sites” are nominated based on best available information.

***(g) Consideration of the impacts on services and infrastructure and appropriate location when providing for rural housing***

One of the key factors in identifying potential new rural residential locations in the Strategy is to consolidate on existing rural residential areas. It is acknowledged that access to roads, school bus services and proximity to work, health and education services are important in making such areas liveable and reducing car reliance. The Strategy also identifies locations that are the least physically constrained based on best available information.

### ***Rural Subdivision Principles***

---

***(a) Minimisation of rural land fragmentation***

Warrumbungle Shire the Strategy recommends back zoning some areas of land currently zoned to permit rural residential development. These lands are proposed to go to a general rural zone which better reflect the land’s physical characteristics and location.

In order to rationalise area potential rural residential land is identified in areas that are generally not affected by major constraints to rural residential development and are consistent with existing rural settlement patterns. The quantity of land identified is based on an analysis of supply and demand and is realistic for each LGA. This approach will minimise the fragmentation of rural land.

***(b) Minimisation of rural land use conflicts***

The Strategy recommends that industries and rural industries be protected from encroachment by residential or rural residential uses over time. It also recommends that new industries be located where the potential for conflict can be minimised. The establishment of buffers consistent with *Living and Working in Rural Areas*, (DPI, 2007) are recommended.

***(c) The nature of existing agricultural holdings, existing and planned rural residential land and lot sizes for rural lands***

Lot sizes are discussed for Warrumbungle Shire within the Strategy. It is recognised that the Standard LEP provides the opportunity to apply different minimum lot sizes in different areas in the same zone. Warrumbungle Shire have lot sizes considerably smaller than the market appears to be demanding and in these cases Councils should consider increasing minimum lot sizes in future rural residential areas to reflect realistic market demands. Maintaining minimum lot sizes that are considerably smaller than the prevailing lot size demanded by the market creates excessive supply capacity in zoned areas that is unlikely to be realised.



***(d) The consideration of the natural and physical constraints and opportunities of land***

Warrumbungle Shire currently has relatively large minimum lot sizes in rural areas. This reflects both the agricultural quality of the land and the type of agriculture that is carried out in the Shire as well as the natural and physical characteristics of the land.

All potential rural residential, residential or industrial areas recommended in the Strategy are evaluated against typical land suitability constraints.

***(e) Ensuring that planning for dwelling opportunities takes account of those constraints***

Rural dwellings are dealt with in this Strategy. In particular, dual occupancy and secondary dwellings in rural areas, rural workers dwellings, existing holdings and concessional lots. The Strategy recommends that concessional lots be abandoned and existing holdings be abandoned or phased out over a defined period. It also recommends that rural workers dwellings be confined to areas of genuine agricultural production and clustered. It also recommends that dual occupancy and secondary dwellings be permitted as a concession to affordable housing in rural locations, but that they should be clustered with shared access to minimise rural land impacts.



Appendix I

# Addendum to Strategy following LEP Development

# Appendix I

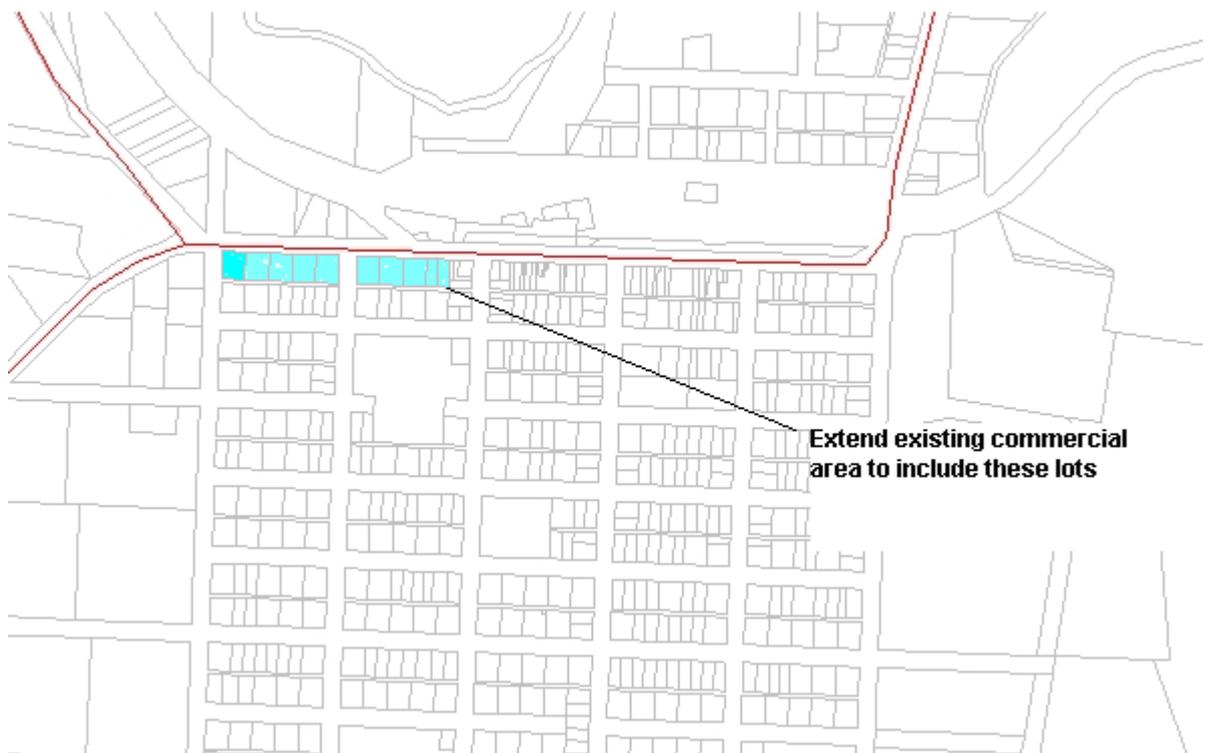
## Amendments to the Warrumbungle Shire Council – Land Use Strategy

### Background

The Land Use Strategy prepared by GHD P/L is dated August 2011 and as a result of several councillor workshops on the draft Local Environmental Plan and the impending commencement of a significant coal mine in the Dunedoo region it has been necessary to alter some to the mapping shown in the body of the August 2011 strategy. Rather than amend the strategy content it was considered more appropriate to amend the strategy by use of this appendix which highlights the changes proposed.



Amendment to Figure 30 Coonabarabran Town Centre Commercial Land to extend the commercial area to incorporate the current Visitor Information Centre and the current sites of the former Council depot which may be adapted for business use in the future.



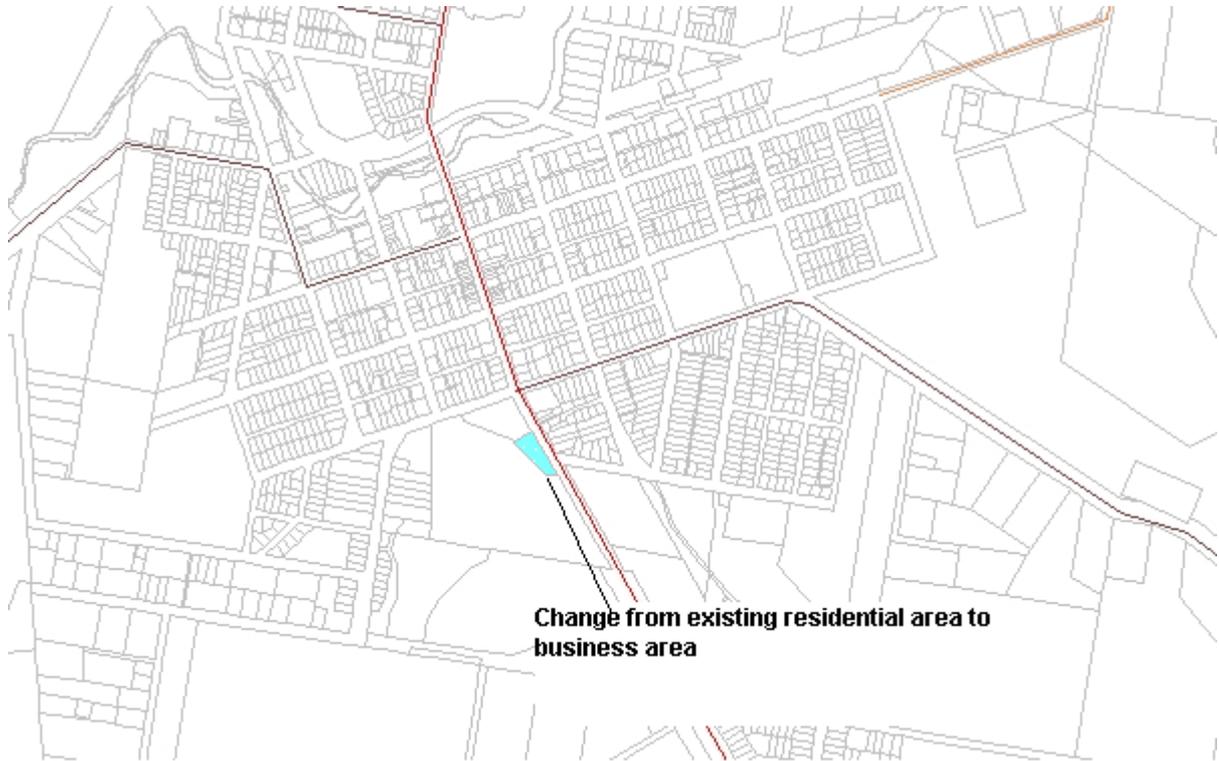
Amendment to Figure 32 Dunedoo Town Centre Commercial Land to incorporate the whole length of the main street to take in existing commercial uses in the highlighted area.



Amendment to Figure 34 Coolah Town Centre Commercial Land to better reflect existing uses in the area

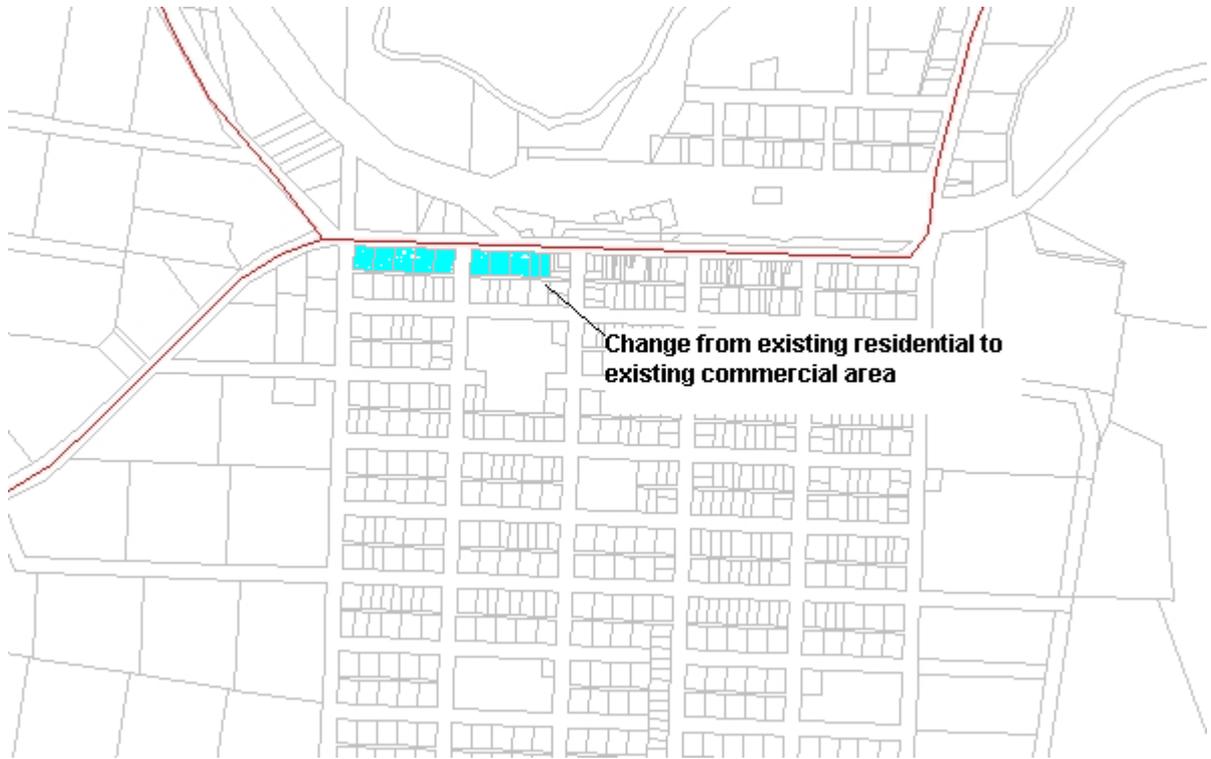


Amendment to Figure 38 Dunedoo Town Centre Industrial Land to incorporate existing industrial uses and to allow for future urban growth for residential land expected as a result of the coal mine.



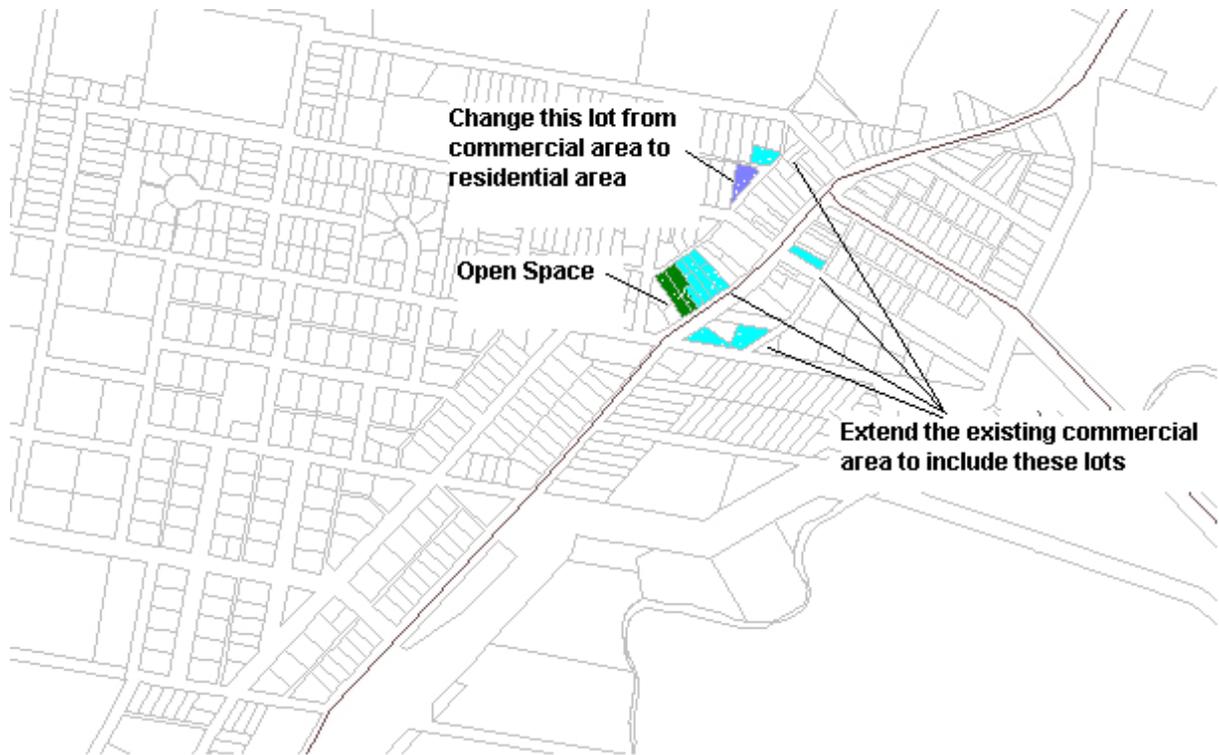
**Change from existing residential area to  
business area**

Amendment to Figure 46 Coonabarabran Town Centre Residential Land to remove VIC land from residential land.

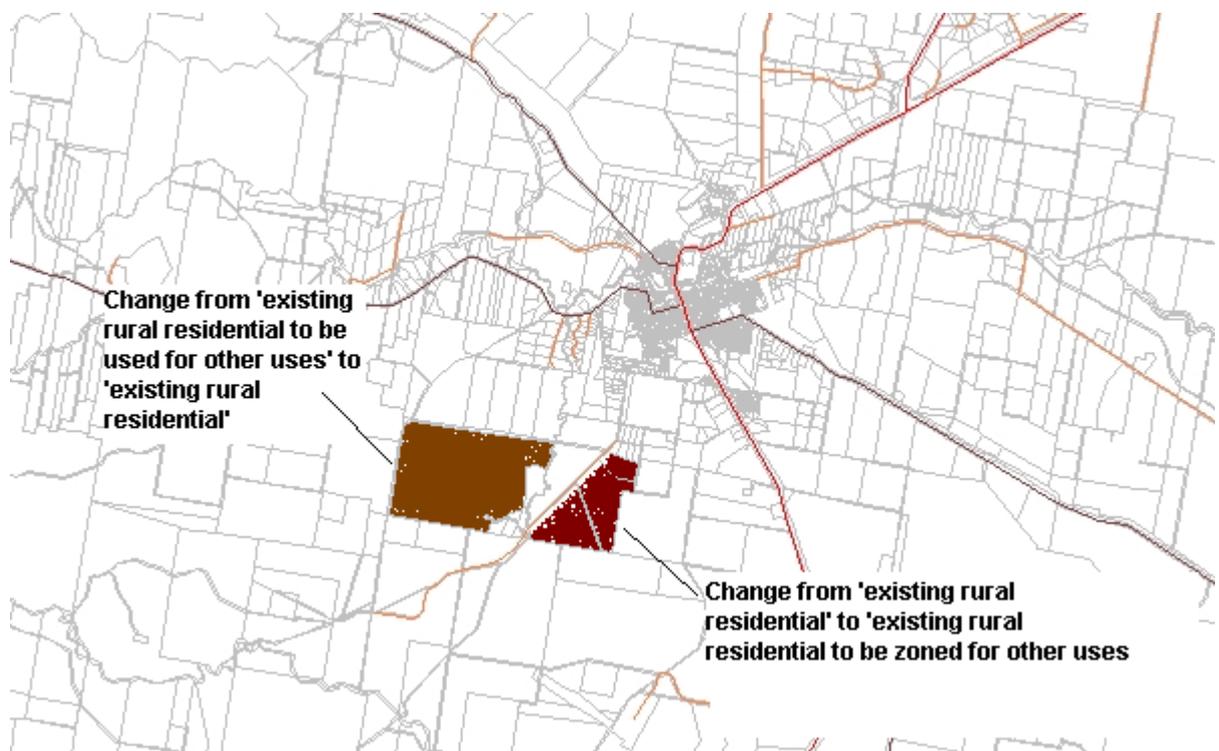


**Change from existing residential to  
existing commercial area**

Amendment to Figure 48 Dunedoo Town Centre Residential Land to remove main street commercial land from proposed residential land



Amendment to Figure 50 Coolah Town Centre Residential Land to alter residential land map to reflect changes proposed elsewhere.



Amendment to Figure 52 Coonabarabran Town Centre Rural Residential Land to remove the land to the east of Bingie grumble Rd from proposed large lot residential proposal and back zone to general

rural due to heavier vegetation cover making it unsuitable for development into smaller lots and replacing it with the land to the west of Bingie Grumble Rd which is partially developed into smaller lots and is far less vegetated.



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**GHD**

230 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450  
PO Box 1340, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450  
T: 61 2 6650 5600 F: 61 2 6650 5601 E: cfsmail@ghd.com

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**Document Status**

Rev No.	Author	Reviewer		Approved for Issue		
		Name	Signature	Name	Signature	Date
D.	K. Burbidge M. Svikis	M. Svikis	<i>M. Svikis</i>	M. Svikis	<i>M. Svikis</i>	25.8.11
0	K. Burbidge M. Svikis	M. Svikis	<i>M. Svikis</i>	M. Svikis	<i>M. Svikis</i>	06.3.13