



Planning &
Environment

2036

**New
England
North
West**

**Regional
Plan**

NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST REGIONAL PLAN 2036
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Foreword



Ranging from World Heritage listed rainforests along the Great Dividing Range to the agriculturally productive plains around Narrabri and Moree, the New England North West is one of the most dynamic, productive and liveable parts of NSW.

The New England North West is also one of the State's largest agricultural and food producers. Intensive agriculture, grazing, food processing, broadacre cropping and wide tracts of productive agricultural land are the foundations for a strong and prosperous future.

The region is perfectly placed to expand supply chains across national and global markets, with extensive freight networks and key freight connections to the Port of Newcastle, Sydney and ports and airports in South East Queensland.

Agribusiness, education and healthcare, manufacturing, extractive industries and increasing opportunities for renewable energy and new technologies will make the economy one of the most diverse in NSW.

We will continue to protect the outstanding natural environment for future generations, including world recognised wetlands at Moree, tableland rainforests extending from Walcha to Tenterfield and the ancient volcanoes at Mount Kaputar outside Narrabri.

These outstanding natural attractions, coupled with many industry and cultural festivals, such as AgQuip and the Tamworth Country Music Festival, will be leveraged to ensure the region remains a leading tourist destination.

The New England North West is renowned for its vibrant communities and beautiful centres rich with heritage at Glen Innes, Inverell and Gunnedah. This Plan focuses on retaining local character, promoting the growth of all centres and delivering diverse housing choices to meet the needs of changing communities.

The regional cities of Tamworth and Armidale will accommodate much of the projected population growth over the next 20 years, supporting critical jobs growth and providing the region with key health and education services.

By focusing population growth in centres, prime agricultural land and the natural environment will be protected for future use and future generations.

The Anaiwan, Banbai, Bundjalung, Githabul, Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kwaimbul, Ngoorabal and Dunghutti are the traditional custodians of the region and are key partners in the development of the regions' social, economic and environmental future. We will work with them to ensure a prosperous future.

The New England North West Regional Plan 2036 encompasses a vision, goals, directions and actions aiming to deliver greater prosperity in the years ahead for those who live, work and visit this important region.

I look forward to working with the local communities and stakeholders to support the success of the New England North West.

A stylized blue ink signature of Anthony Roberts MP.

Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing
Special Minister of State





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Introduction

Maximising opportunities provided by rich natural resources and strong communities

From the tablelands of the Great Dividing Range to the wide open black soil plains, the New England North West is one of Australia's most productive agricultural areas. It is home to nationally recognised tourist destinations, a growing mineral resource sector and significant biodiversity. This strong economic base will provide opportunities in emerging industries across renewable energy, green technology and food and fibre processing to meet growing demand from Asia.

Strategically located between Sydney and Brisbane, the high-quality transport networks to Newcastle, Sydney and South East Queensland will provide ready access to domestic and international markets and services.

Regional cities and centres will provide opportunities for new jobs, housing, education and health services to create healthy and thriving regional communities supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy.

The next 20 years will be an exciting period of change and growth as new industries emerge, communities grow and connect, and the regional economy continues to flourish. The *New England North West Regional Plan 2036* is the blueprint to deliver this exciting future.

The Plan will guide the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions to 2036. It is not intended to be a step-by-step approach to all land use planning. Rather, it provides an overarching framework to guide subsequent and more detailed land use plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions.

The Implementation Plan that accompanies this Plan includes Priority actions as well as medium- and longer-term actions to coincide with population and economic change.

Priorities for each council are set out in Local Government Narratives, which will guide further investigations and implementation.

The Plan is the product of extensive consultation with councils, stakeholders and the wider community, conducted around the draft Plan which was released in 2016. The feedback from this consultation is integral to this final *New England North West Regional Plan 2036*.

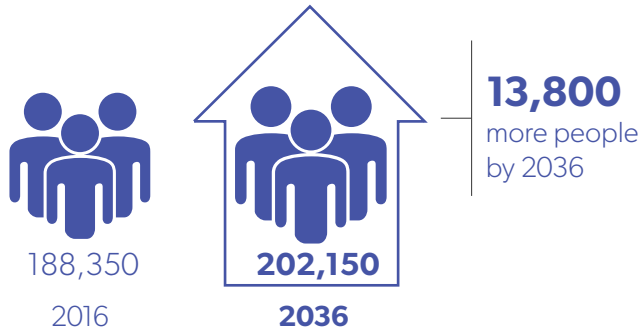
Investment in New England North West

NSW Government investments in the New England North West include:

- more than \$240 million to secure water for the region with \$213 million to upgrade Keepit Dam and \$31 million for Chaffey Dam;
- more than \$60 million to upgrade Armidale Hospital;
- \$17 million to upgrade Moree East Public School and Narrabri Public School; and
- more than \$5 million to upgrade Gunnedah Police Station.

Population Growth

2016-2036

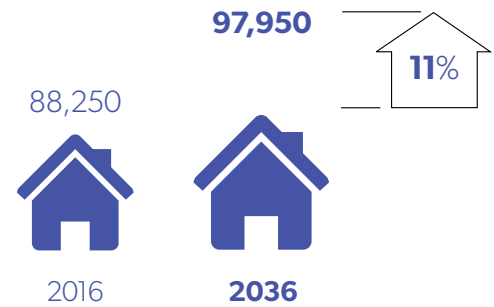


Projected Dwelling Growth

2016-2036

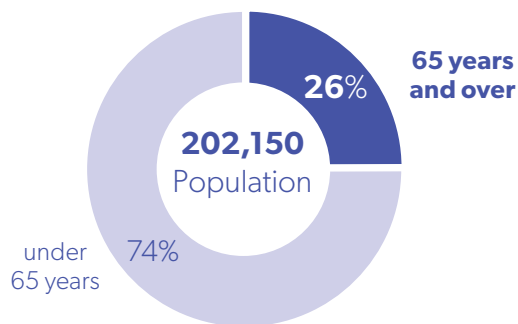
9,700

additional dwellings required (2036)



Ageing Population

2036



Gross value of Agricultural commodities

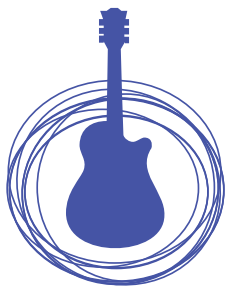
2014-2015

\$2.1b



Tamworth Country Music Festival®

2016



\$50m

economic benefit

50,000+

visitors

University of New England®

2016

une

oldest
Regional Australian
University

Est. 1938

22,000+ enrolments

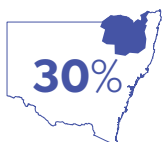
Share of State Agricultural Production

2014-2015

Beef



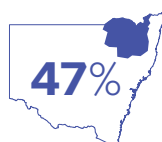
\$679m



Cotton



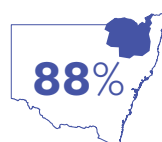
\$272m



Sorghum



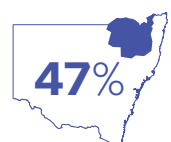
\$158m



Tomato



\$15m



Delivering the Plan

The NSW Government's commitment

To implement the *New England North West Regional Plan 2036*, all levels of government, the private sector and the community will need to work together. The Plan will be incorporated into each stakeholder's future activities.

Coordination

The NSW Government has established the New England North West Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee to deliver, coordinate and be accountable for achieving the vision and goals of the Plan (see Figure 1). This new dedicated body comprises councils and State agencies. It will listen and work with stakeholders to align growth with infrastructure to support growth and change in the region.

Delivery

The Committee will take ownership for implementing this Plan, prioritising the actions needed to seize on immediate and emerging opportunities for the region.

In the short term, its focus will be on supporting cities, important farmland, renewable energy projects and tourism opportunities. Over time, the Committee will identify new priorities to support growth and change.

Funding will be coordinated for regional infrastructure covering transport, health, education, open space, recreation, emergency services and justice.

This Plan sets regional planning priorities and provides guidance and direction for regional and local planning decisions. It identifies where to focus new housing and jobs to deliver social and economic benefits. The Plan sets in place strategic, line-of-sight land use planning for the region and each local government area.

Line-of-sight planning will support strategic-led planning and transparency by establishing clear objectives that will guide on-the-ground outcomes.

An Implementation Plan for 2017-2019 accompanies this Plan.

Figure 1: **New England North West Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee**

New England North West Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee		
Coordination	Delivery	Accountability
- Aligning across Government - Partnering with local government - Informing infrastructure priorities - Guiding investment - Listening to the community	- Actioning the Implementation Plan - Directing local growth - Supporting local planning	- Monitoring activity and trends - Publishing annual reports and information - Revising and adjusting directions towards goals

Regional district planning may be undertaken through partnership with stakeholders, led by the Committee. Priorities for regional district planning are highlighted in this Plan where matters cross jurisdictional boundaries.

The *New England North West Regional Plan 2036* will replace the current strategic plan for the region, the *New England North West Strategic Regional Land Use Plan*.

A Government direction will be issued to councils so that new planning proposals or updated local planning controls are consistent with the directions and actions outlined in the Plan.

The Committee will support the preparation of local growth management strategies that translate the vision and guiding principles of this Plan into more detailed priorities for growth and change that can applied locally.

Accountability

The Committee will monitor and review progress towards achieving the vision and goals for 2036 to help prioritise infrastructure delivery and influence policy settings.

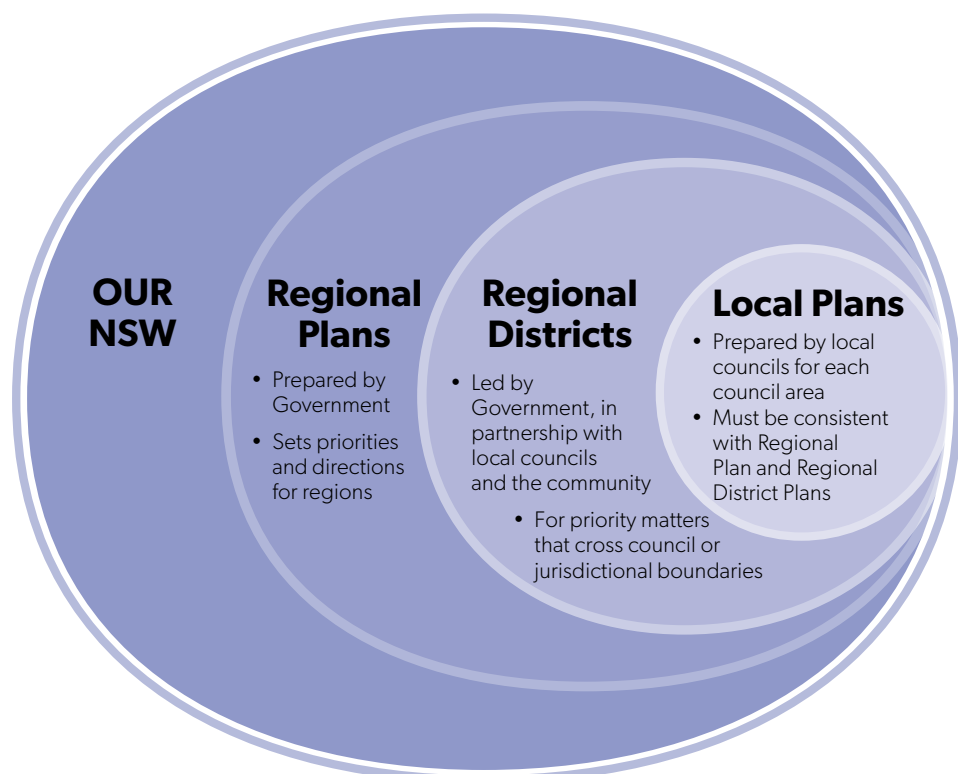
An annual report will present indicators for housing, employment, communities and the environment, as well as advice to government on the delivery of short-term actions. This monitoring will be conducted in partnership with councils.

The Plan will be reviewed and adjusted every five years, or as necessary, to help realise the vision for 2036.

Local growth management strategies

Local growth management strategies will be developed by councils and endorsed by the Department of Planning and Environment prior to preparing a local environmental plan to rezone land for residential, rural residential, commercial and industrial land uses. Guidelines will be prepared to help councils develop local growth management strategies and to ensure the strategies reflect the directions and actions of this Plan.

Figure 2: **State planning hierarchy**



Vision



Nationally valued landscapes and strong, successful communities from the Great Dividing Range to the rich black soil plains

Diverse landscapes, rich natural resources and strong communities make the New England North West a dynamic and prosperous region that capitalises on its past and is building for the future.

Growth in agriculture, agribusiness, livestock meat production, mineral resource development, renewable energy, health and education is providing jobs and supporting thriving local communities.

Primary production, intensive agriculture and food processing sectors take advantage of the rich soils and climate. National and international demand for energy is the impetus for the thriving renewable energy sector harnessing the high solar and wind potential.

Strategically located, with close links between some of Australia's fastest growing areas – South East Queensland, Newcastle and Sydney - is attracting industry investment. Upgrades to airports, the Newell, New England, Oxley, Gwydir and Kamilaroi Highways, and the development of the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail and intermodal freight terminals are making it easier for goods, services and people to move across the region and beyond.

The National Broadband Network drives innovation, research and new industries that support traditional sectors to deliver an economically sustainable future. The University of New England remains at the forefront of technological change and opportunities to grow the region.

Important agricultural land, such as the Liverpool Plains, is protected and agricultural producers lead sustainable and water-efficient food and fibre production to meet demand from domestic and international markets.

Communities are well connected, attractive, healthy, safe and prosperous. They are places with a strong sense of community identity, resilience and respect for country. People access a range of employment opportunities, housing choices, vibrant events and festivals and high-quality education, health, recreational and other community services.

Nature based and cultural heritage tourism, visitation to the World Heritage-listed New England and Oxley Wild Rivers National Parks and many festivals and events is attracting investment in world-class facilities and vibrant communities.

Residents and visitors enjoy a beautiful and healthy natural environment that includes the Gwydir Wetlands. Sustainable and innovative approaches utilise and maximise important water resources.

Acknowledging, protecting and celebrating Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage reinforces the character of the region, while consolidating community wellbeing and a strong sense of belonging.

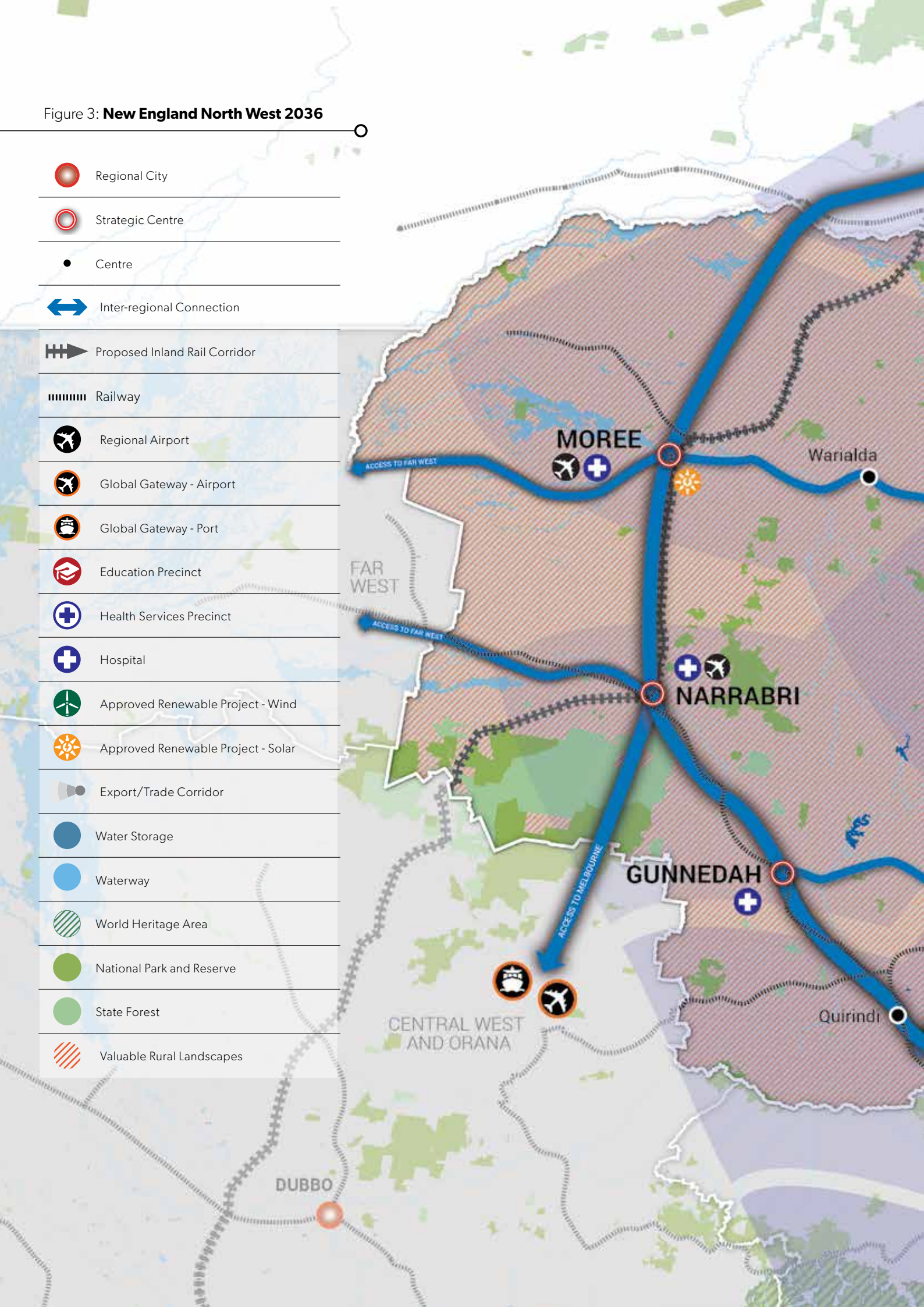
***To achieve this vision,
the NSW Government has:***

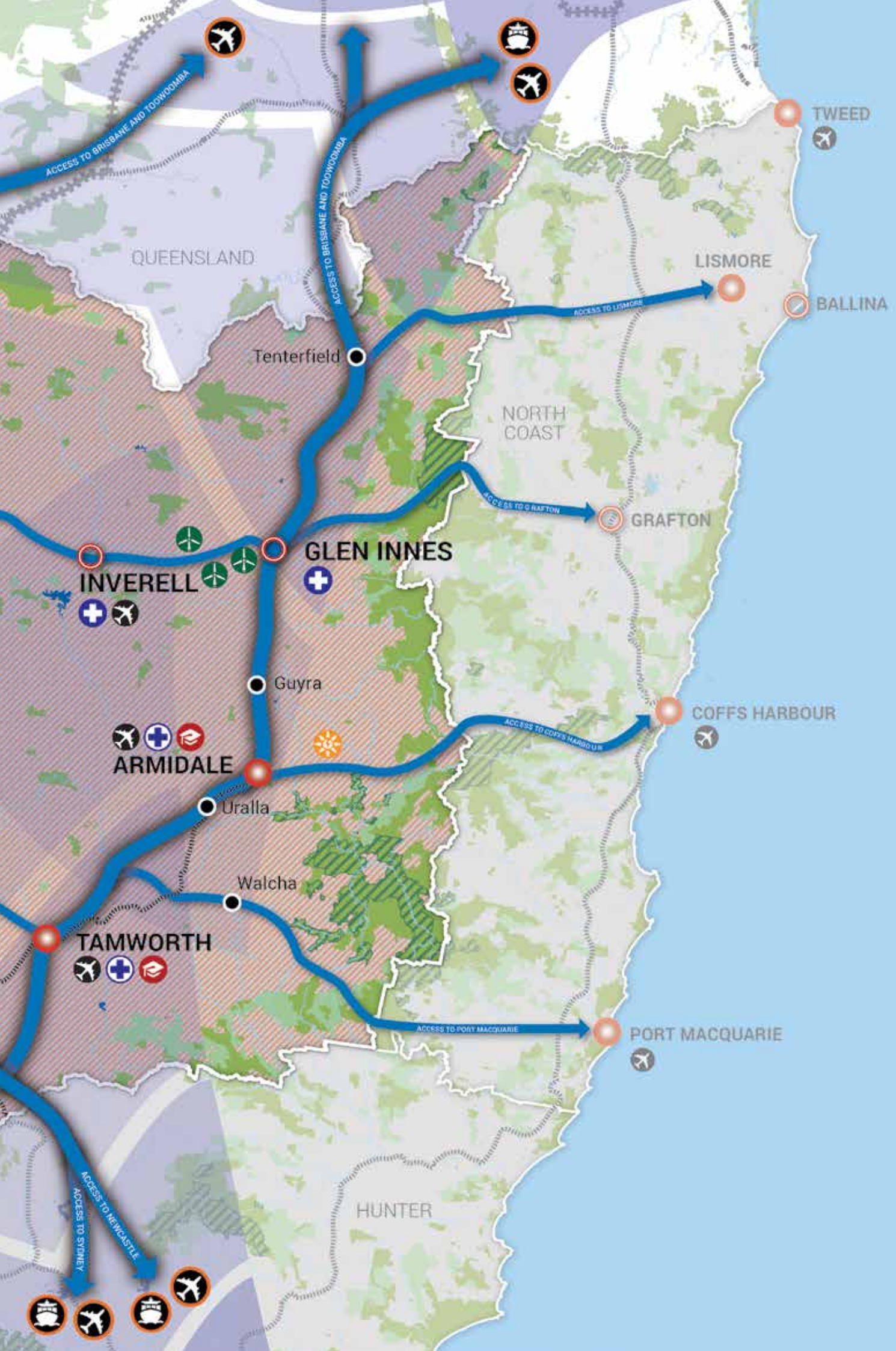
***acknowledged the opportunities
provided by natural resources and
strong communities and...***

***set the following regionally focused
goals:***

- **A strong and dynamic regional economy**
- **A healthy environment with pristine waterways**
- **Strong infrastructure and transport networks for a connected future**
- **Attractive and thriving communities**

Figure 3: **New England North West 2036**





Leveraging existing strengths to be a leading 21st Century regional economy

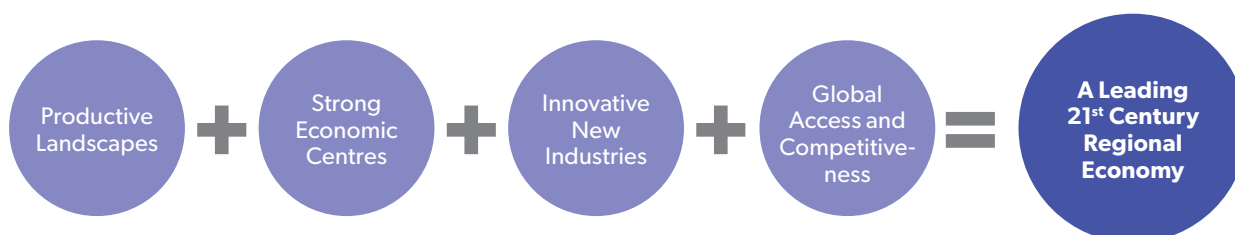
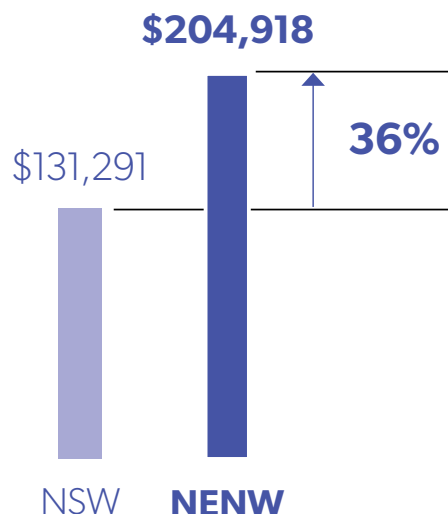
A key component in the New England North West's success

The New England North West's landscapes range from cooler and more temperate tablelands to the western slopes and plains. These diverse landscapes underpin productive agriculture and rich biodiversity. Driving one of NSW's strongest regional economies and one of the State's top agricultural producing regions. Intensive agriculture and agribusiness is growing, capitalising on increased demand from Asia.

From this strong economic base and the strategic position between Sydney and South East Queensland, new opportunities for employment will be offered in emerging renewable energy and green technology industries.

A network of strong centres and cities has developed from the region's productive natural resources. Each community has its own character and identity, and each contributes to economic diversity and growth. These places will be the focus for new homes for the growing population, along with the jobs and services that will continue to support high-quality lifestyles.

Agricultural Output Per Person
2013



Developing 21st Century industries

The world is moving into an age where the contribution of knowledge, creativity, innovation and design skills will directly influence economic competitiveness. New and innovative industries can take advantage of the region's natural assets providing opportunities to expand and diversify the economy.

Young families will be drawn to the diverse and expanding economy, which will create flow-on demand for population-focused business and services. New renewable energy generation and 'green' industries provide eco-friendly alternatives and solutions to environmental issues and challenges.

The strong education sector based around the University of New England and TAFE NSW creates collaboration and networks between business, industry and research institutions. Armidale is the headquarters for TAFE Digital, contributing to the education sector in the region. As demand for a skilled workforce grows, the region will be better able to support future populations with diversified employment choices.

Feeding the state

Growing broadacre and grazing sectors and expanding intensive agriculture and food processing will drive economic prosperity and jobs growth. The size and wealth of the Asian middle class creates opportunities for Australia's premium agricultural exports.

The intensive agriculture and food processing sectors are rapidly expanding. The poultry industry has grown around Tamworth and into Gunnedah and the Liverpool Plains. This and other emerging sectors can diversify the agricultural economy, promote value-adding opportunities and create employment.

Continued agricultural innovation and technology, led by research and development facilities in Narrabri, Glen Innes, Tamworth and Armidale offer the potential to diversify and grow broadacre agriculture and grazing that will make the region a leader in 21st Century agricultural production.

A Regional Intensive Agribusiness Strategy will guide how industry can capitalise on local grain and feed production, freight networks and access to national and international markets.

Green Industries

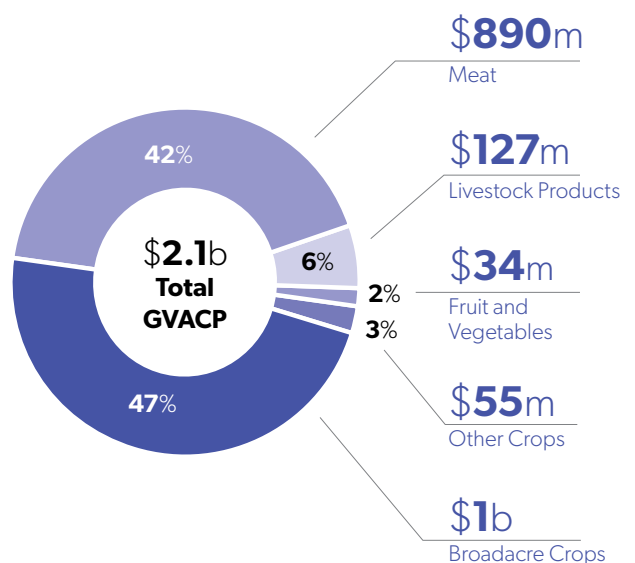
Green industries are businesses, facilities, services or technologies that provide sustainable alternatives or solutions to environmental challenges. Examples include bottle recycling plants, waste management and treatment or research and development for clean energy.

Australian Recycled Plastics

Australian Recycled Plastics in Narrabri is a regional green industry success story. The facility processes recycled plastic waste that it obtains by 'back loading' empty cotton haulage trucks returning from Newcastle and Sydney. Each week, the facility turns 50 tonnes of recycled plastic bottles into a flake material used in products from supermarket meat trays to outdoor decking material. The growing business now employs 42 people.

Gross value of Agricultural Commodities

2016



GVACP: Gross Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced

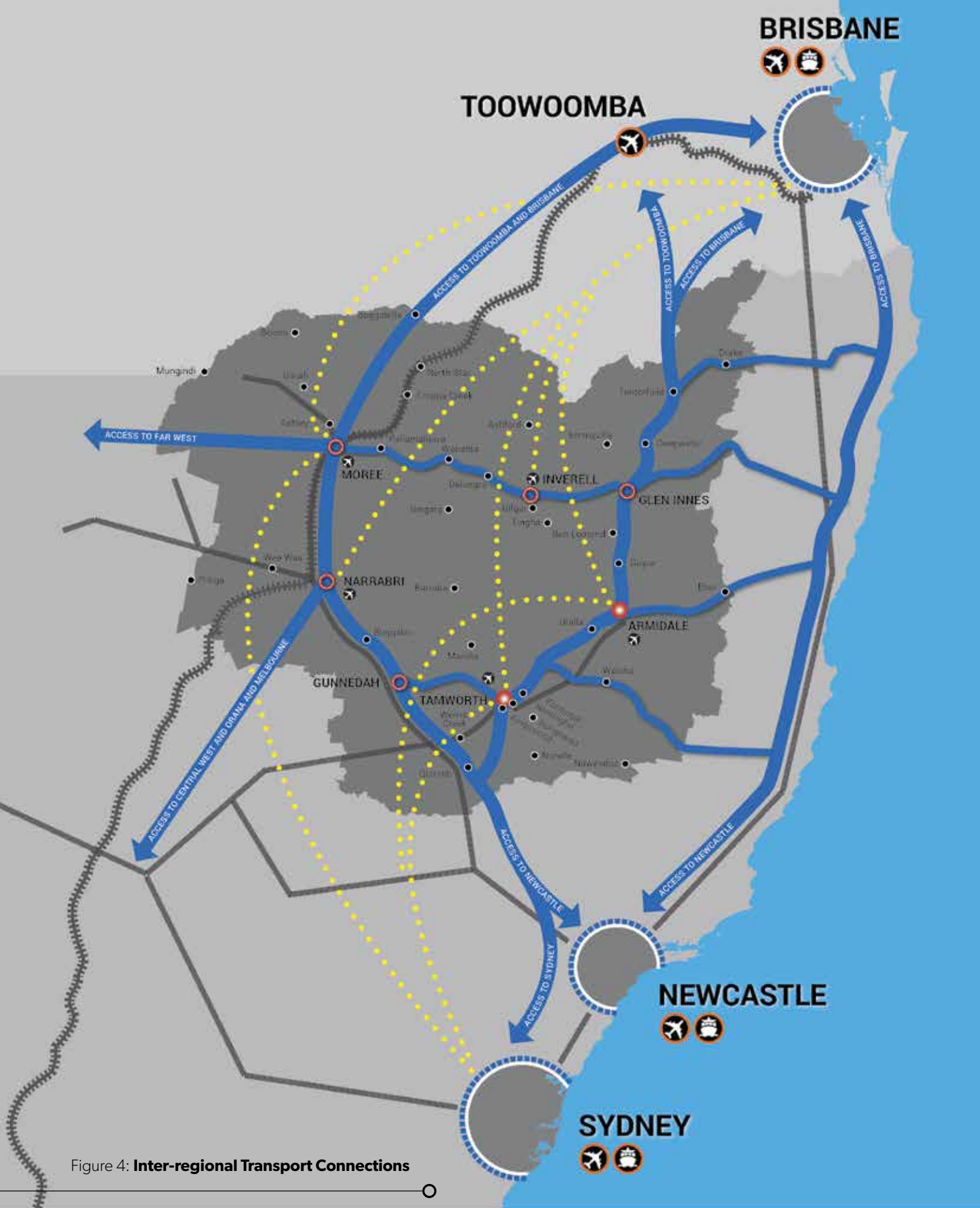


Figure 4: **Inter-regional Transport Connections**



Regional City



Strategic Centre



Centre



Railway



Global Gateway - Airport



Global Gateway - Port



Key Strategic Regional Corridors



Proposed Inland Rail Corridor



Air Transport Passenger Route

Strong economic centres Accessing the world

The network of regional cities and centres support diverse industries. As these industries grow, centres will thrive and require high-quality health, education and recreation options.

The regional cities of Tamworth and Armidale, and the strategic centres of Gunnedah, Narrabri, Moree, Inverell and Glen Innes will be the focus for employment and services. Tenterfield, Uralla, Guyra, Walcha, Wyalda and Quirindi will service their local communities.

The regional cities and centres cluster economic activity around local industries, acting as a source of economic diversity and skilled job opportunities. With health and education the fastest growing employment sectors, activities associated with Tamworth Hospital and the University of New England can foster economic activity through new jobs and services.

Tourism and major events, such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Autumn Festival in Armidale, the Australian Celtic Festival at Glen Innes, and AqQuip - Australia's largest and premier primary industry field days - in Gunnedah, will support the vitality of centres and will continue to offer regional growth opportunities.

Industries rely on efficient freight networks and ready access to domestic and international markets. Connectivity to gateway airports and ports in Newcastle, Brisbane and Sydney through strong transport networks and new telecommunications choices, will be the backbone of the economy and communities.

The Newell, Oxley, Gwydir, Kamilaroi and New England highways, and the rail line to Newcastle and Sydney, provide bulk shipping and high capacity freight networks that contribute to productivity and competitiveness. Strengthening these connections will attract investment, business and residents.

New international freight opportunities through the Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, expanded Tamworth Regional Airport, and the proposed Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail project will open access to new markets.

Growth in freight volumes, both within the region and along Australia's east coast, is driving demand for more efficient and higher-capacity freight and logistics facilities. Investment in intermodal facilities will maximise efficiencies and could shift agricultural freight from bulk to smaller volumes by packaging in containers for a greater range of export destinations.

Technology, including the National Broadband Network, will provide new access and greater opportunities. Armidale's advantages as Australia's first mainland centre connected to the National Broadband Network must be replicated in all centres and facilitate innovation and growth.

Top Five Industries by Economic Contribution

2013

\$1.3b

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing

\$686m

Education and Training

\$677m

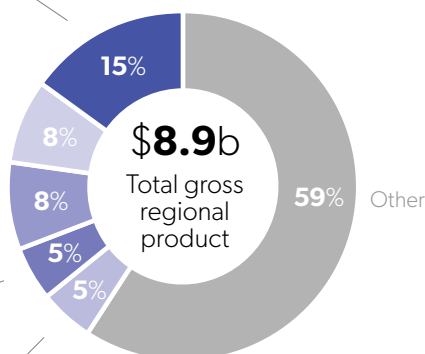
Health Care and Social Assistance

\$481m

Public Administration and Safety

\$481m

Manufacturing





WOOL MARK
REGISTERED
MAY 2008



GOAL 1

A strong and dynamic regional economy

The New England North West includes some of Australia's most productive agricultural land, along with a network of vibrant cities and centres across diverse landscapes. These assets will be the foundation of a prosperous future.

The strong economic base will underpin new and emerging industries to create one of the most dynamic regional economies in NSW.

The focus of the future is to leverage the distinctive regional identity to promote intensive agriculture, horticulture, green industries, renewable energy generation and tourism.

The natural environment, cultural features and events will continue to attract tourists and offer diversity within an economically sustainable region.

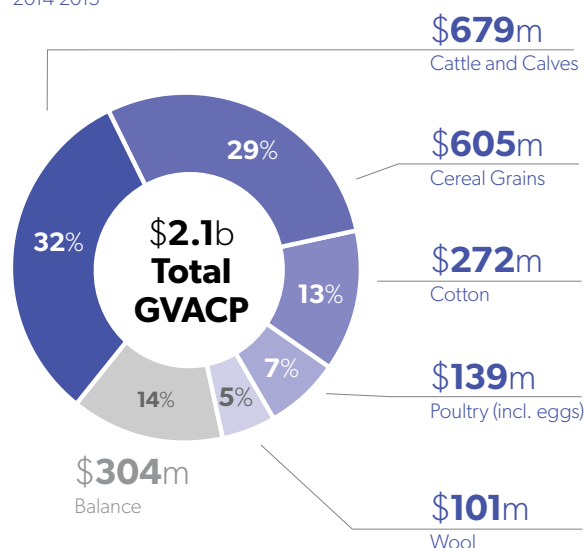
Agricultural production accounts for 17.5 per cent of the State's gross agricultural value, the second highest regional contribution in NSW.¹ The strength of the sector will rely on favourable climate and soils, access to national and international markets, strong broadacre cropping and grazing sectors and emerging intensive agriculture and food processing sectors.

The region's cities and centres are rich in heritage, history and character. As the principal places for jobs, commerce, health, education and industrial activity, they will be a focus for economic activity.

The Tamworth Regional, Armidale Regional, Inverell, Narrabri, Gunnedah, Glen Innes and Moree Plains local government areas will be home for most of the expected population in 2036.

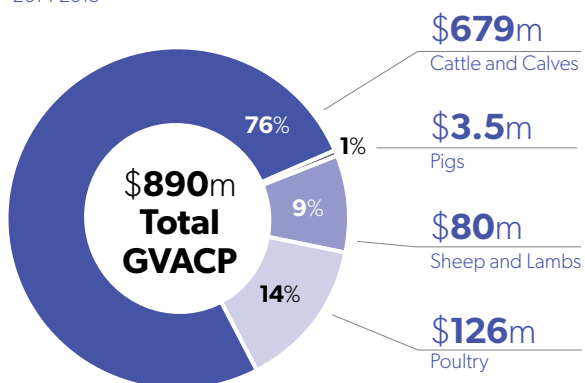
Top Five Agricultural Commodities

2014-2015



Livestock Meat Industry Production

2014-2015



NSW's highest value producer region for livestock meat



Direction 1: Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors

Intensive agriculture and food processing are the fastest growing agriculture-related sectors. A more diverse agricultural sector will offset the challenges of agricultural restructuring.

Large livestock and food processing facilities, such as abattoirs and milling operations, can leverage changing global population and food consumption trends. Potential expansion of these sectors is demonstrated by the already growing poultry sector around Tamworth, Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains.

A strategic approach to intensive agriculture and food processing will avoid land use compatibility issues and protect the long-term viability of their operations, while also facilitating opportunities for expansion across different rural sectors and communities.

Agribusiness plays a vital role in supporting agricultural production, and includes professional agricultural services, storage and warehousing, machinery and equipment, transport and logistics, and food, beverage and other product outlets. These uses should be permitted in a range of locations and existing agribusiness sites protected from the encroachment of inappropriate land uses that might limit their operations.

Appropriate co-location of related industries will maximise infrastructure, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract investment. Industries that co-locate also have the potential to use the by-products and waste materials of other industries to create new products and services.

Actions

- 1.1 Prepare a Regional Intensive Agribusiness Strategy to foster ongoing investment and to specify guidelines for intensive agriculture, food processing and mapping for suitable future precincts for these uses.
- 1.2 Promote the expansion of agribusiness and associated value-adding activities through local plans.
- 1.3 Protect intensive agriculture clusters in local plans to avoid land use conflicts, particularly with residential and rural residential expansion.
- 1.4 Encourage commercial, tourist and recreation activities that complement and promote a stronger agricultural sector, and build the sector's adaptability.

SMART Region Incubator

Funded under a \$1 million grant from the NSW Department of Industry's Boosting Business Innovation Program, the University of New England's SMART Region Incubators are smart workspace hubs in Tamworth and Armidale.

The incubators support sustainable employment and jobs growth, assist the establishment of small to medium enterprises and focus on youth employment. They bring like-minded and entrepreneurial individuals and teams together, often resulting in shared creative thought and collaboration.

The Tamworth incubator provides access to research data for commercial agribusiness and agricultural technology opportunities.



Direction 2: Build agricultural productivity

The New England North West is home to some of Australia's largest, most efficient and productive farmers and graziers.² This expertise is a competitive advantage that must be harnessed for the region to remain one of the State's food and fibre heartlands.

The NSW Department of Industry is developing and implementing 10-year action plans under the *Agricultural Industry Action Plan* to guide industry and government investment and activities to grow the cotton, broadacre grains and livestock grazing sectors.

Fostering innovation and competitiveness will be essential to securing sustained growth in the agricultural sector over the next 20 years. Agricultural research and development, the presence of institutions like the University of New England, and SMART Farm Innovation Centre in Armidale, will continue to nurture agricultural innovation.

The region's institutions lead the way in research and development into farm efficiency and technologies that can sustain productivity, foster environmental sustainability, open market opportunities and maintain a competitive edge. Reliable telecommunications will also be critical to enabling farming innovations.

The New England North West can maximise opportunities associated with growing global connectivity and international trade agreements. By harnessing new markets presented through these processes, the entire supply chain can benefit, including transport infrastructure and facilities such as silos, abattoirs and saleyards, supporting secondary processing facilities, and transport and logistics industries.

The New England North West is uniquely positioned to foster stronger relationships with the adjoining Darling Downs in Queensland and develop new supply chains to export produce to Asian markets via the Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport, while also maximising export opportunities associated with Tamworth Regional Airport and the Port of Newcastle.

Actions

- 2.1 Develop industry-specific action plans to grow cotton, broadacre grains and grazing sectors and address sector-specific considerations through local plans.
- 2.2 Facilitate research and development institutions through local plans and identify opportunities to grow and promote innovation in the agricultural sector.
- 2.3 Promote investment in the agricultural supply chain through local plans by protecting these assets from land use conflict and the encroachment of incompatible land uses.



Direction 3: Protect and enhance productive agricultural lands

Fertile and productive agricultural land needs to be protected for long-term food and fibre security and to capitalise on increasing demand for agricultural products. Highly productive agriculture requires ready access to water (including irrigation), high-quality soils and suitable climate.

The NSW Government's Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land mapping identifies agricultural land that is significant to the State (see Figure 5). There is an opportunity to complement this mapping with regional-scale mapping that reflects regional climatic and geological conditions.

Mapping of important agricultural land will be prepared to inform land use planning decisions. This mapping will be supported by guidelines that outline matters for consideration when determining development on or in proximity to important agricultural land.

Agricultural land has historically been protected by limiting rural land subdivision. Minimum subdivision standards for rural zones will be used to enhance the viability of the agricultural sector, and maximise production efficiencies by limiting land fragmentation. Limiting the development of dwellings that are not a primary residence or associated with agriculture will also help to avoid potential conflicts with agricultural activities.

Before approving secondary dwellings or detached dual occupancies in rural areas, councils should consider possible land use conflicts and impacts on local agricultural activities. Local environmental plans can also support the agricultural sector, with farm boundary adjustments and subdivisions creating a primary production lot without a dwelling and rural worker dwelling controls. The provisions should offer flexibility and opportunity while preventing fragmentation.

Identifying suitable areas for smaller agricultural holdings that can support activities (such as horticulture) will minimise land use incompatibility and prevent ad hoc fragmentation of land. Councils can also identify certain agricultural areas for inclusion in the primary production small lot zone.

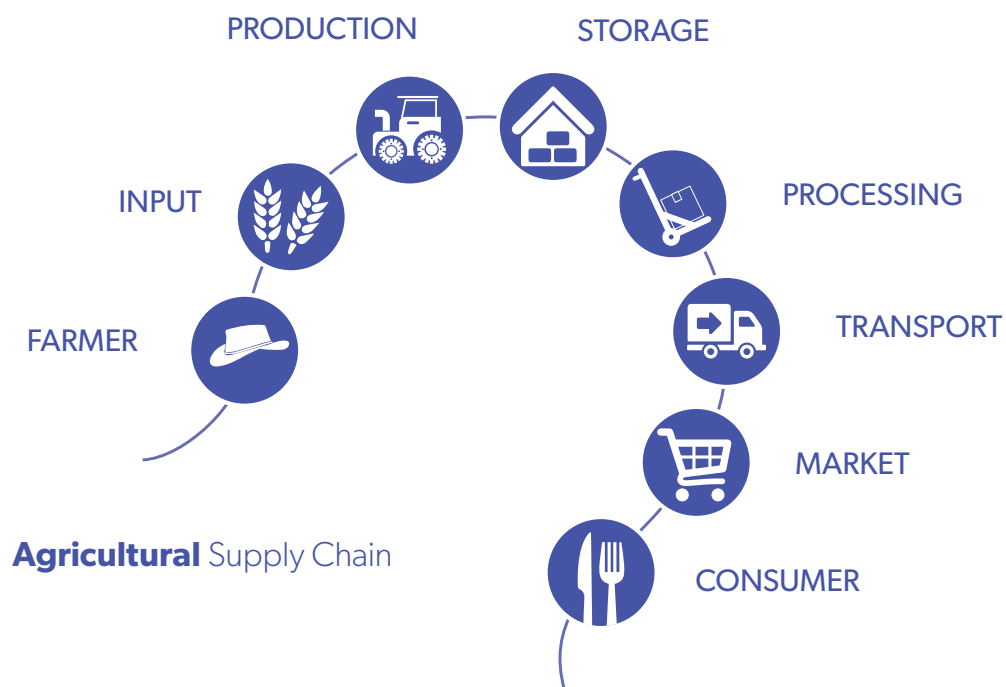
Biosecurity risks increase as a result of trade, the spread of feral and exotic species, tourism, climate variability and competing priorities for resources, can threaten agricultural land.³ Biosecurity risks can be minimised through risk assessments, taking into account biosecurity plans and applying appropriate buffer areas.

Forests support tourism and recreation activities, and provide wood products. They play a strong environmental role in terms of water quality, native habitat and connectivity with other forests, such as national parks. Planning for long-term timber supplies must balance the value and compatibility of agricultural lands with plantation forestry. Protecting timber supplies, processing facilities and related forestry industries from encroachment of incompatible land uses is essential.

Travelling Stock Reserves move livestock and provide supplementary grazing areas in times of drought. These reserves can contain significant biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage values and must be carefully managed to balance the needs of travelling stock and the conservation of native species.

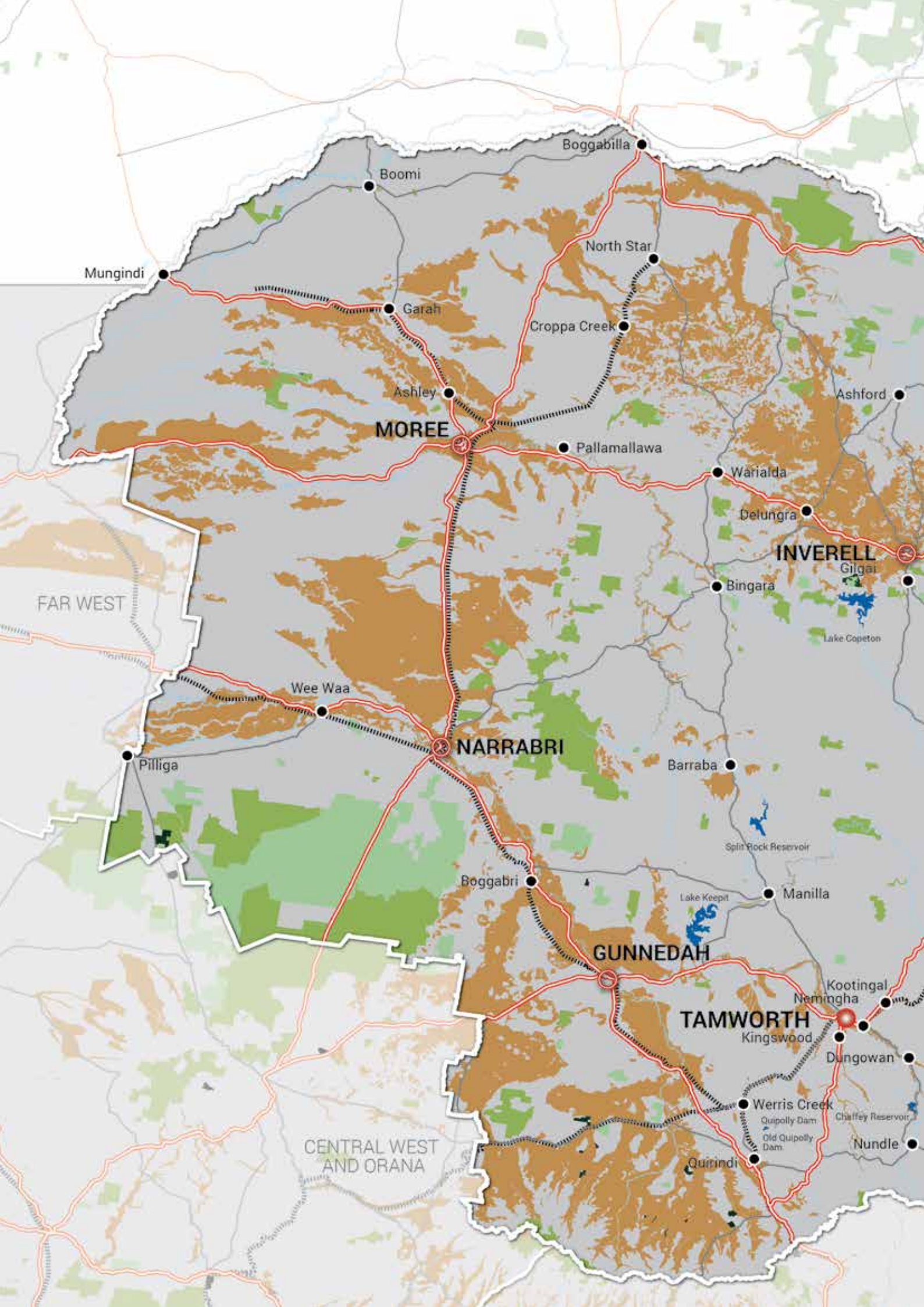


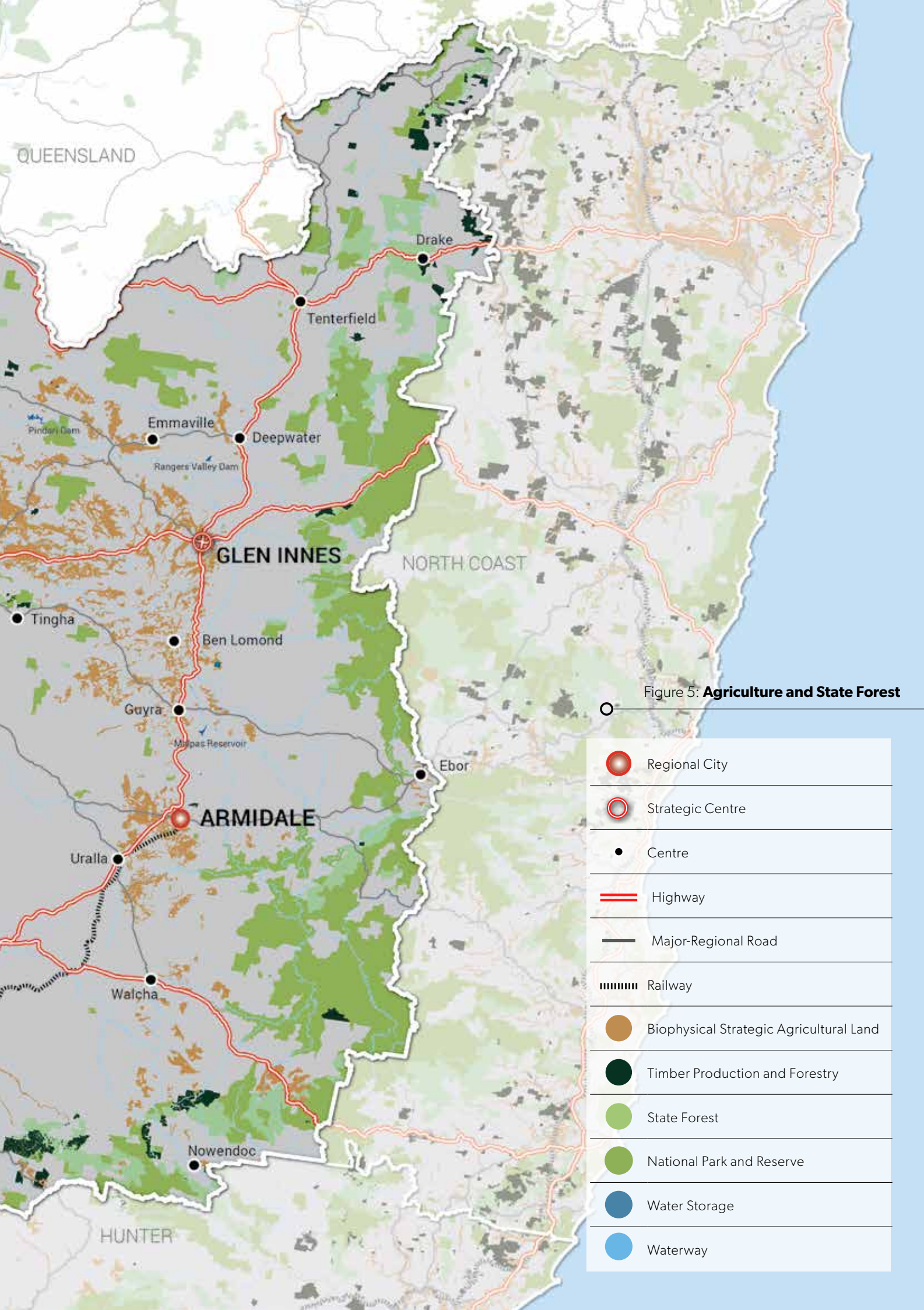
Pecan trees, Moree



Actions

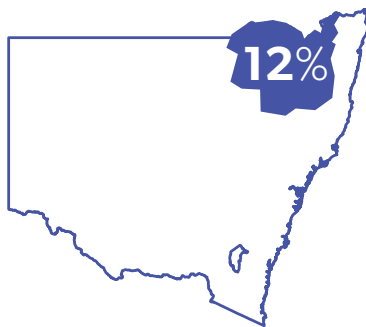
- 3.1 Map important agricultural land and develop guidelines to support the implementation of the important agricultural land mapping through local plans.
- 3.2 Limit urban and rural residential development on important agricultural land, including mapped Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land, unless it is in a strategy that is:
 - agreed between council and the Department of Planning and Environment; and
 - consistent with the guidelines for councils on important agricultural land.
- 3.3 Manage the interface between important agricultural lands and other land uses by incorporating controls in local plans that manage compatibility between land uses, and undertaking land use conflict risk assessments where potential conflicts are identified through rezoning processes.
- 3.4 Secure the ongoing agricultural viability of rural land holdings by:
 - incorporating appropriate minimum subdivision standards and local planning provisions for rural dwellings in local plans to manage potential conflicts with agricultural activities; and
 - monitoring annual changes in landholding sizes for each local government area.
- 3.5 Minimise biosecurity risks by undertaking risk assessments, considering biosecurity plans and applying appropriate buffer areas.
- 3.6 Facilitate long-term requirements for plantation forest land and processing facilities by restricting the encroachment of incompatible land uses.
- 3.7 Finalise a NSW Travelling Stock Reserve State planning framework to guide the management of travelling stock reserves and help guide the development of regional travelling stock reserve management plans.





Coal Reserves

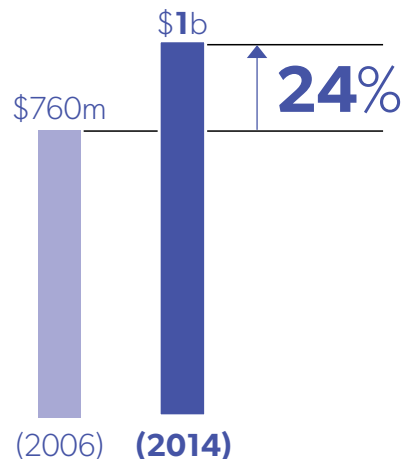
2017



of State reserves

Mining Production Value

2006-2014



Direction 4: Sustainably manage mineral resources

The region's diverse geology has potential for mineral and energy exploration and production. The Gunnedah coal basin contains the State's third largest coal reserves and coal seam gas potential. The New England North West also contains deposits of gemstones, industrial minerals and extractive materials, with many small-scale mines in operation.

The NSW Government has recognised the importance of protecting important farmlands such as the Liverpool Plains and continues to seek a reduction in the encroachment of exploration licenses into these areas.

New England North West's resources provide the raw materials for major infrastructure projects, new housing, and industrial and agricultural businesses. These resources must not be affected or sterilised by the encroachment of sensitive land uses. Mining activities need to be undertaken sensitively to minimise negative impacts on the environment, important agricultural land, neighbouring businesses and the community.

Mineral resource extraction can benefit and affect communities in different ways during the mining lifecycle. The sustainable management of mineral resources must consider and balance varying impacts to produce sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes.

While mining activities have specific operational needs that can compete with other land uses, they are also temporary and depend on the productive life of the facility or resource. Once extraction sites have been identified, there may be opportunities to identify interim activities that will enable productive use of the land without sterilising the potential of the underlying resource.

Local land use strategies must respond to the lifecycle of mining to give all stakeholders, including investors, certainty around the long-term productive value of land. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Standing Council on Energy and Resources Multiple Land Use Framework includes planning principles in this regard.

Information about the location of current exploration and mining production titles in NSW, explanations of mining and production titles, and the roles of community and government in the decision-making process for mining and resources projects is available at www.commonground.nsw.gov.au.

The NSW Government has developed a draft *Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum* (including coal seam gas). This identifies the process for the controlled, strategic release and competitive allocation of new exploration licences. Under the draft Framework, new exploration licences would only be issued after an assessment of resource potential; economic, environmental and social factors; and community issues. The draft Framework is a transparent and informed approach, consistent with the NSW Government's broader land use resources strategy.

Moree Solar Farm



Potential to supply **24,000** homes

One of Australia's
largest solar
farms

White Rock Wind Farm

Stage 1



Projected to supply **75,000** homes

Saving **1.9** million tonnes
of greenhouse gas
emissions by 2020

Actions

- 4.1 Consult with the NSW Division of Resources and Geoscience when assessing applications for land use changes (strategic land use planning, rezoning and planning proposals) and new developments or expansions.
- 4.2 Protect areas of mineral and energy resource potential through local strategies and local environmental plans.
- 4.3 Protect infrastructure that facilitates mining from development that could affect current or future extraction.

Direction 5: Grow New England North West as the renewable energy hub of NSW

The region can be a leader in renewable energy, thanks to potential sources of solar, bio-waste, hydro, wind and geothermal. It receives 19 to 20 megajoules daily of solar exposure, making it the second highest solar penetration region in NSW.

Renewable energy potential maps can be found at: www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/investors/renewable-energy/renewable-resources-map.

A strategic and integrated approach to renewable energy projects will leverage new opportunities and help meet the NSW Government's goal of a carbon-neutral NSW by 2050.

The Department of Industry's *Renewable Energy Action Plan* (2013) guides renewable energy development. It streamlines negotiations between network service providers and investors to make timeframes for grid connections more competitive.

Existing proposals for large wind and solar farms will generate employment and investment from construction, operations and connection to the State's electricity grid.

Incorporating small-scale cogeneration measures into the design of new developments and providing employment lands for research and development opportunities will further support the sector's growth.

Actions

- 5.1 Diversify the energy sector by identifying renewable energy resource precincts and infrastructure corridors with access to the electricity network.
- 5.2 Facilitate appropriate smaller-scale renewable energy projects using biowaste, solar, wind, hydro, geothermal or other innovative storage technologies.



Direction 6: Deliver new industries of the future

Green industries will emerge as businesses identify new opportunities and productivity gains associated with environmental sustainability. These sectors will be at the heart of considerable innovation and can gain greater success with local partnerships between industry, government and educational institutions.

Green industries will lead to the development of high-tech infrastructure or research and technology. In doing so, industry can underpin activity in other complementary manufacturing sectors.

Identifying an adequate supply of employment land with the necessary infrastructure will attract investment in existing and emerging industry sectors. Consideration should also be given to the location of industries that can promote resource and infrastructure sharing and policies.

Opportunities for research and development institutions will be secured with suitable employment land, including the creation of clusters around key education institutions, and by incorporating tools into local planning policies to encourage establishment. These industries may also require land with access to transport and freight corridors, protected from encroachment by sensitive or incompatible uses.

Actions

- 6.1 Encourage green industries by reviewing local plans to ensure land use zonings reflect industry requirements.
- 6.2 Prepare a regional economic development strategy that promotes opportunities for the diversification of the economic base by identifying key enabling infrastructure and other policy interventions to unlock growth.

Direction 7: Build strong economic centres

Growing cities and centres as places of commerce, retail and social activity will support tourism, foster a strong sense of place, and enable services to be efficiently delivered for residents and adjoining communities.

Commercial and Industrial

Clusters of economic activity around precincts will continue to be a source of economic diversity and higher skilled employment. The vitality of central business precincts within cities and centres will be promoted. New commercial precincts should be avoided outside of centres. Where out-of-centre commercial areas are proposed, they must be of an appropriate size to their service catchment.

Well-located employment land is a key component to a successful centre. Employment land supply will be encouraged in locations supported by freight access and protected from encroachment by incompatible development. Certain industries may need to be located away from centres due to their type, scale and nature, and this should be addressed in local growth management strategies.

Health and Education

The ageing population will increase demand for health care and social assistance. Encouraging the growth of health precincts around hospitals will enable complementary business co-location, shared infrastructure and a more convenient experience for patients. Accommodation options for patients and their families may also need to be identified to support people who travel to access health services.

The education and training sector will continue to attract and retain younger residents who will deliver services to the growing and ageing population.

The NSW Department of Education is reviewing its approach to asset and network planning through a strategic plan to 2036 to identify schooling needs and improve education delivery.



Above: Australian telescope, Narrabri

Right: Solar farm, Moree



The University of New England is also building on its strong agricultural, agribusiness, education and medical focus to provide specialist courses that can capitalise on global industry and workforce changes.

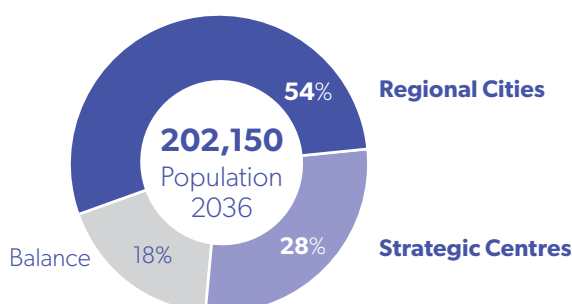
The National Broadband Network will enhance digital connections and facilitate innovation, knowledge-intensive industries and small businesses. It will also give people more options to enjoy the region's lifestyle, while accessing wider markets. The growth of knowledge industries will drive demand for purpose-built business facilities in well-located accessible areas that offer the benefits of agglomeration, corporate prestige, amenities and proximity to cost-effective labour.

- maintain the strength of the regional economy;
- are consistent with the Interim Settlement Planning Principles at Appendix A;
- respond to retail supply and demand and innovations in the retail sector;
- maximise existing infrastructure (including public transport and community facilities) commensurate with the scale of the proposal; and
- enhance the value of the public realm.

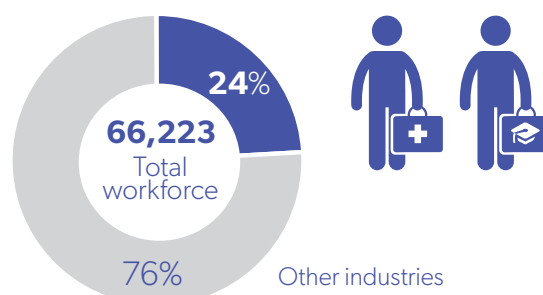
Actions

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>7.1 Develop local growth management strategies and use local plans to reinforce regional cities and centres as the primary locations for commerce, housing, tourism, social activity and regional services.</p> <p>7.2 Focus retail and commercial activities in central business precincts and develop place-making focused planning strategies for centres.</p> <p>7.3 Develop proposals for new commercial centres only where they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate positive social and economic benefits for the wider community; | <p>7.4 Facilitate economic activity around industry anchors, such as health and education facilities, through planning controls that encourage clusters of complementary uses and address infrastructure needs.</p> <p>7.5 Promote an appropriate mix of land uses and prevent the encroachment of sensitive uses on employment land through local planning controls.</p> <p>7.6 Deliver an adequate supply of employment land through local growth management strategies and local environmental plans.</p> <p>7.7 Ensure employment land delivery is maintained through an annual New England North West Housing and Land Monitor.</p> |
|--|--|

Projected Population Distribution 2036



Health Care and Education Employment 2011





Direction 8: Expand tourism and visitor opportunities

The New England North West hosts major events including the Australian Celtic Festival in Glen Innes, AgQuip in Gunnedah, Armidale Autumn Festival and the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

There is an opportunity to expand tourism visitation and expenditure given the spectacular environment, diverse landscapes, climate and friendly communities.

Additional nature-based and adventure-based prospects such as the Sport UNE Mountain Bike Trails and the Moree Water Park will continue to attract additional visitors. Broadacre farming areas and other agricultural pursuits can also offer farm-based tourism. The region's many cultural sites will provide the potential for regional tourism trails linked by scenic drives.

Destination management plans or other tourism-focused strategies will showcase existing tourism sites and activities, build relationships with the network of regional airports and capitalise on emerging tourism trends. Consultation throughout the preparation of these plans with Destination NSW is encouraged to maximise opportunities.

Tourism generates employment and business growth that contributes to better economic outcomes for Aboriginal communities. Destination NSW's *Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan* is being updated for 2017-2020 to support the development of Aboriginal tourism experiences and businesses. This will lead to economic and social benefits for Aboriginal people, both as operators and employees.

The region's first people, the Anaiwan, Banbai, Bundjalung, Githabul, Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kwaimbul, Ngoorabel and Dunghutti, have a rich cultural heritage. Consultation with local Aboriginal people will identify opportunities to celebrate and recognise this cultural heritage, which in turn could provide opportunities to empower local Aboriginal communities.

Actions

- 8.1 Facilitate tourism and visitor accommodation and supporting land uses where appropriate through local growth management strategies and local plans.
- 8.2 Prepare destination management plans or other tourism-focused strategies that:
 - identify culturally appropriate Aboriginal tourism opportunities;
 - encourage tourism development in natural areas that support conservation outcomes;
 - strategically plan for a growing international tourism market; and
 - align with the Destination Management Plan prepared by Destination NSW.
- 8.3 Promote opportunities to expand visitation to regionally significant nature-based tourism places, such as the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, Mount Kaputar, Gwydir Wetlands State Conservation Area, hot artesian mineral waters at Moree and koala colonies at Gunnedah.
- 8.4 Advocate for large-scale and high-quality tourism development in regional cities and other areas identified within the Destination Management Plan prepared by Destination NSW.
- 8.5 Implement Destination NSW's Draft *Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2017 – 2020* when finalised.



Above: Tamworth Country Music Festival



Regional **Tourism**

2015

\$740m
Regional Economy



Highest tourism expenditure
in inland NSW

AgQuip 

One of the
world's largest
agricultural events

100,000 visitors | **3,000** companies

Direction 9: Coordinate growth in the cities of Armidale and Tamworth

Armidale and Tamworth will accommodate over half of the region's population by 2036. Each city has assets that support a growing population and the provision of services to the wider region.

Development of accommodation, health, education, food and entertainment will add further value to city economies. These opportunities will be magnified by upgrades to airport infrastructure, promoting greater visitation to the cities and New England North West. Armidale and Tamworth will continue to develop their own distinct identity.

The expansion of Armidale Hospital, greater enrolments and services at University of New England and place-based planning initiatives will be the catalysts for development of Armidale city centre. New residents will be attracted to Armidale's employment opportunities, health services, education, lifestyle, art and cultural facilities.

Tamworth's higher-order health facilities and regional sports and entertainment precinct will support residents and attract visitors for major events. Tourism and community life will be further bolstered by retail and commerce along Peel Street and recreation at Bicentennial Park.

Precinct plans for each city will ensure development is well placed, fosters local character and maximises place-based opportunities. High-quality design outcomes will be a priority for each city, particularly for high-order facilities, landmark developments and gateway sites. Libraries, civic centres, parks and emergency service facilities can be an exemplar for best practice design, energy and water conservation and place-making.

These holistic plans will be supplemented with activation plans, developed collaboratively between councils and the Department of Planning and Environment to provide a framework for immediate opportunities and coordinated investment. The activation plans will provide a design-led approach to support the city centres as vibrant focal points of community activity.

Actions

- 9.1 Deliver precinct plans to provide a holistic vision and planning framework for the regional cities.
- 9.2 Prepare activation plans for the regional cities.

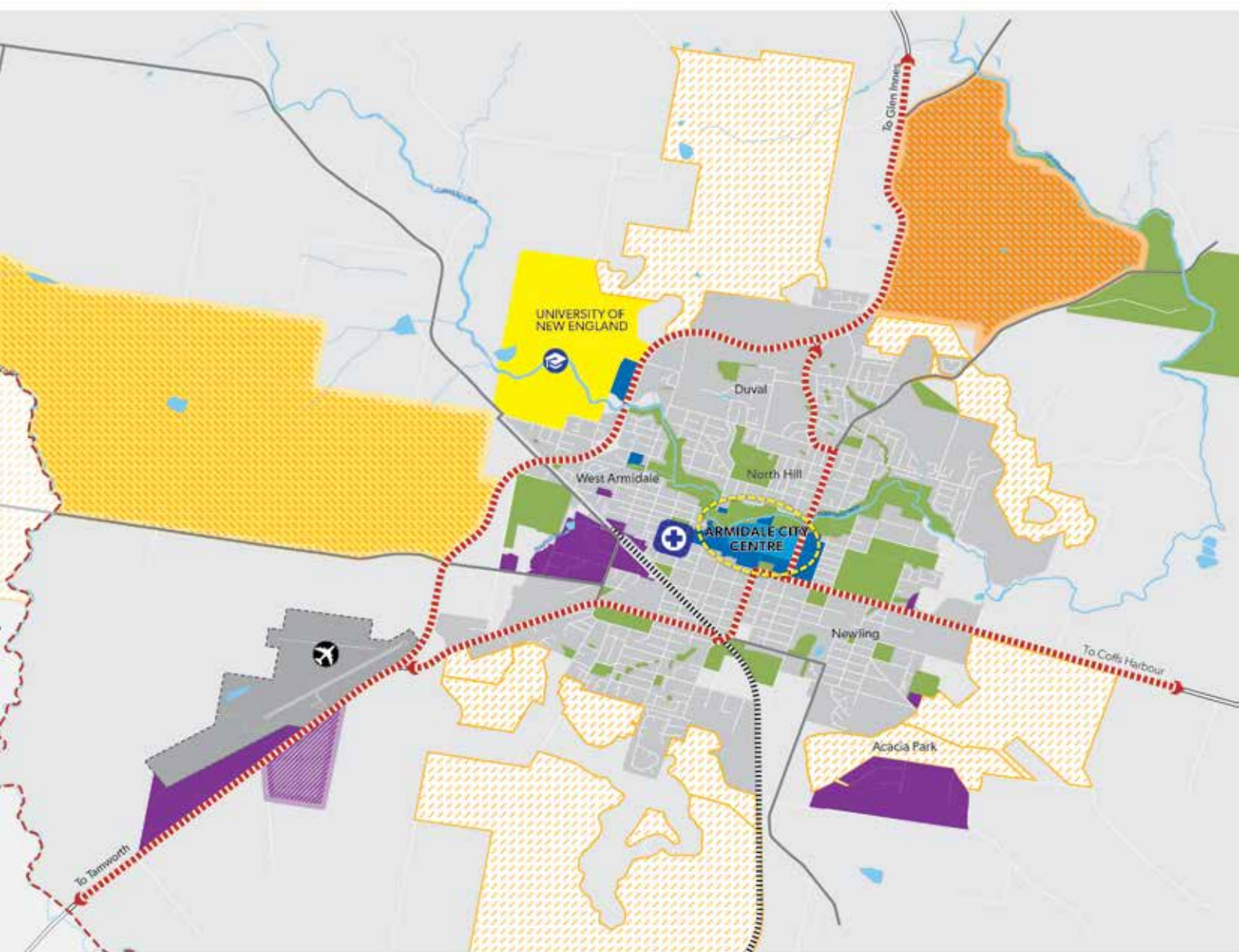


Figure 6: **Armidale Regional City Growth Precincts**



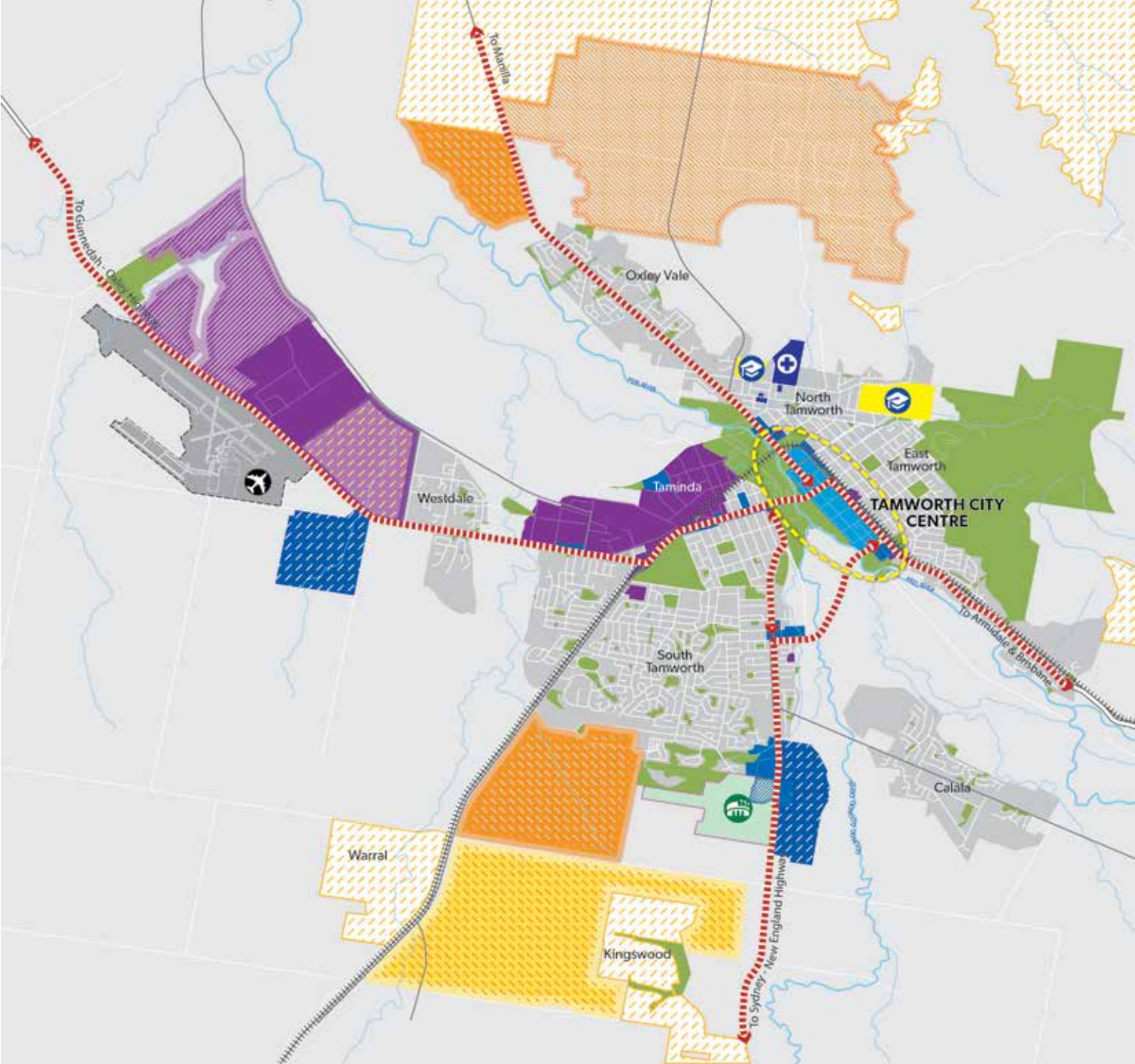


Figure 7: **Tamworth Regional City Growth Precincts**

	City Centre		Industrial/Employment Area		Urban Area
	Health Precinct		Future Industrial Investigation Area		Developing Residential Area
	Education Precinct		Commercial Core		Future Residential Investigation Area
	Regional Airport		Commercial Business Area		Existing Large Lot Residential Area
	Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct		Future Business Investigation Area		Future Large Lot Residential Investigation Area
	Key Transport Connections		Developing Business Park		Parks and Reserves
	Railway		Enterprise Investigation Area		Watercourse



GOAL 2

A healthy environment with pristine waterways

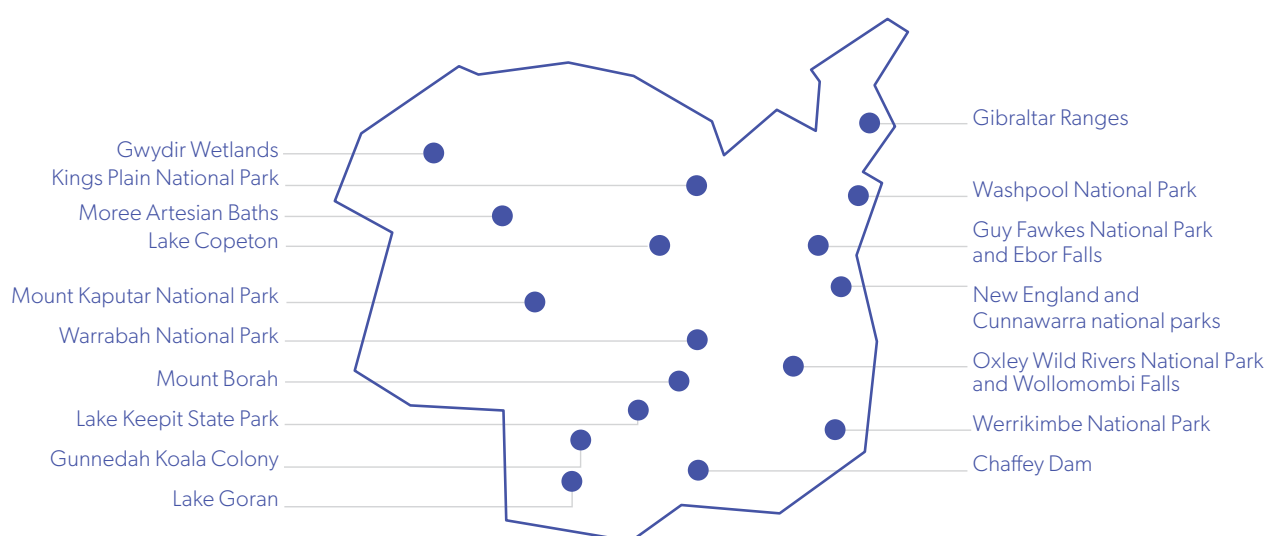
The New England North West's natural environment is one of its distinguishing features. Environmental assets include protected ecosystems, World Heritage-listed rainforests (such as the Oxley Wild Rivers), internationally recognised wetlands in the Moree Plains and rare sub-alpine communities at Mount Kaputar near Narrabri that occur nowhere else on the planet.

These natural assets sustain productive agriculture, deliver clean air and water, and improve community wellbeing. Strengthening regional environment assets will also diversify opportunities for nature-based tourism and help grow the \$740 million tourism sector.⁴

Water quality and supply supports the agricultural sector, industry, urban areas and the environment. A holistic management approach will maximise productive capacity, while preserving water catchments and environmental values.

Ecosystems and communities are subject to natural hazards that will be exacerbated by climate change. Building resilience, innovation and adaptation will help to manage water, harness renewable energy and prepare for natural hazards. Land use and infrastructure planning must respond to these risks and opportunities.

Environmental Tourism Assets





Direction 10: Sustainably manage and conserve water resources

Water extraction from rivers contributes to economic prosperity, but too much extraction may severely affect aquatic ecosystems, especially during periods of low river flows.

Water Management

The *Murray Darling Basin Plan* (2012) aims to sustainably share water between all users, including the environment. The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage is developing long-term water plans in response to the Basin Plan. These will identify priority water-dependant assets, environmental water requirements and strategies to improve environmental outcomes.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries allocates water to landholders through water-sharing plans and licences. These protect the health of rivers and groundwater, while giving water users perpetual access licences, equitable conditions and opportunities to trade water.

The scale of potential changes from water trading and water sharing is not yet fully understood. Monitoring the effects on river health, agricultural land use and settlements will guide future policy responses.

Some water catchments are at risk of very low water supplies at certain times. The Gwydir catchment is a priority under the Rebuilding NSW Regional Water Security and Supply Fund.

The Cap and Pipe the Bores Program gives landholders in the Great Artesian Basin financial incentives to cap and pipe their bores to increase artesian pressure, and to improve water efficiency and water quality.

Water sensitive urban design can limit water loss from buildings and extend the life and reliability of water supplies. Councils can improve water efficiency through building design; planning controls that avoid or mitigate impacts of development on drinking water catchments; and using wastewater for council parks or in agriculture.

Water quality and aquatic habitats

Protecting water quality and maintaining water flows sustains healthy aquatic ecosystems. To support ecosystem health, water quality should be managed to meet the objectives of the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Maintaining key freshwater habitats preserves fish communities and the recreation and productivity of aquaculture industries. Key fish habitats mapped by the Department of Primary Industries include many waterways and lakes, such as the Namoi and Gwydir rivers. These maps will guide council strategic planning and local plans, together with fish community status and aquatic threatened species distribution maps.

The fragility of the landscape means that water resources are more vulnerable to individual and cumulative impacts. New development should be located to minimise impacts on aquatic habitats such as waterways and wetlands, including downstream impacts. There are many vegetated areas that help to protect waterways and aquatic environments, such as riparian corridors. Councils should consider identifying the importance of these areas through their local planning processes to help protect aquatic habitats.

Actions

- 10.1 Implement the *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* to balance social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- 10.2 Monitor the impacts of water-sharing plans on river and groundwater health, agriculture and settlements.
- 10.3 Investigate projects that deliver sustainable water outcomes in high-risk water catchments including the Gwydir.
- 10.4 Adopt an integrated approach to water cycle management to consider regional climate change, water security, sustainable demand and growth, and the natural environment.
- 10.5 Incorporate measures to improve water efficiency in urban and rural settings, including water sensitive urban design for new developments, into local planning policies.

Above: Ebor Falls,
courtesy of Destination NSW

Right: Bald Rock National Park



- 10.6 Encourage the use of alternate water sources on local government assets, including playing fields.
- 10.7 Minimise the impact of development on key native fish habitat, address the cold water pollution impacts of Copeton Dam and mitigate barriers to fish movement.
- 10.8 Ensure local plans manage water catchment areas and groundwater sources to avoid potential development impacts.

Water Sensitive Urban Design⁵

Water Sensitive Urban Design can be incorporated into homes, streets, parking areas, subdivisions, public land, and multi-unit, commercial and industrial developments. It includes:

- permeable paving of footpaths, common areas and parking spaces above underground water storage facilities;
- water-efficient fittings and appliances;
- maintaining fixtures (stopping leaks and drips from plumbing and taps);
- green roofs and living walls (plantings on roofs and down walls);
- appropriate landscaping (efficient irrigation, mulching, wind and sun protection, minimising lawn area and selection of suitable plants);
- purpose-built wetlands to capture and treat water run-off;
- capture and storage of rainwater and stormwater for residential re-use, or to irrigate parks, sporting fields and other open space; and
- capture, treatment and re-use of wastewater.

Direction 11: Protect areas of potential high environmental value

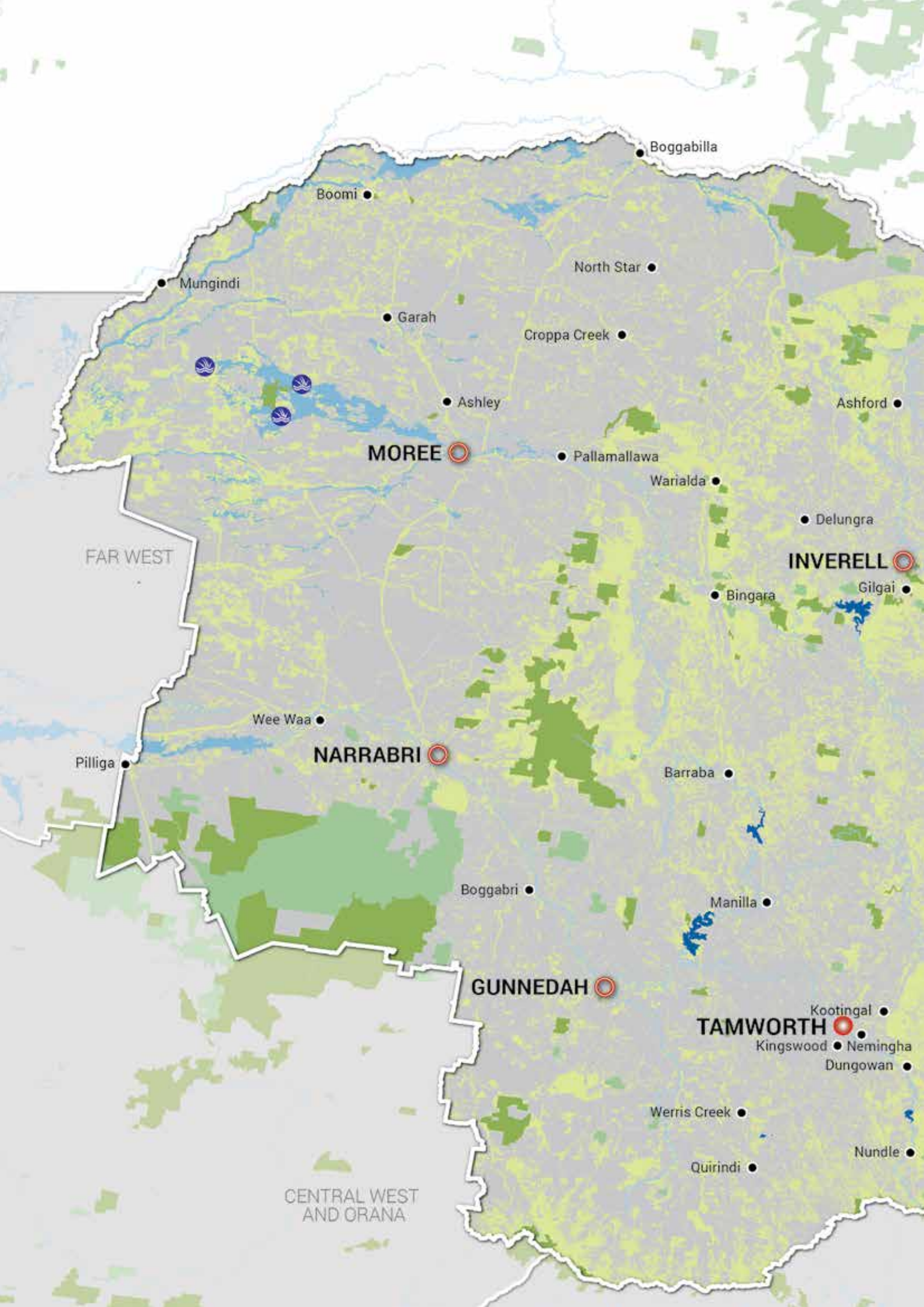
The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has mapped potential high environmental value areas, including groundwater-dependent ecosystems. Improved data will allow early consideration of the potential impacts of new development on these areas during strategic planning.

The map showing areas of potential high environmental value will inform opportunities for biodiversity offsetting, council planning strategies and local environmental plans. Using an evidence-based approach to identifying high environmental value areas and protecting important assets will help to maintain diversity and habitat for flora and fauna.

The Anaiwan, Banbai, Bundjalung, Githabul, Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kwaimbul, Ngoorabal and Dunghutti are the first people of the region and have a strong connection to community, country and culture. The Aboriginal community has significant knowledge and skills in the protection of local biodiversity and natural resources. Consideration should be given to Aboriginal community involvement in natural resource management and planning.

Actions

- 11.1 Focus development to areas of least biodiversity sensitivity and implement the 'avoid, minimise, offset' hierarchy to biodiversity and areas of high environmental value.
- 11.2 Ensure local plans consider areas of high environmental value to avoid potential development impacts.
- 11.3 Encourage the identification of vegetated areas adjacent to aquatic habitats and riparian corridors in local plans.







Mapping high environmental value areas

A range of criteria was used to map high environmental values land including:

- existing conservation areas, including national parks and reserves, declared wilderness areas, Crown reserves dedicated for environmental protection and conservation, and flora reserves;
- native vegetation of high conservation value, including vegetation types that have been over-cleared or occur within over-cleared landscapes, old growth forests and rainforests;
- threatened ecological communities and key habitats;
- important wetlands and lakes; and
- sites of geological significance.

The data used to identify high environmental value land in the Plan is intended to provide a regional-level overview for the purposes of strategic planning.

This data will continue to be updated as information becomes available. Interested parties should contact the Office of Environment and Heritage for current data and further support.

Projected climatic changes in New England North West

The region will experience:

- increased occurrence of heatwaves, hot days and fire risk;
- potential for increases in seasonal extremes, particularly rainfall events and droughts;
- increased autumn rainfall and decreased winter rainfall in both the near and far future, with rainfall patterns to vary across the region;
- increased short and intense rainfall events, resulting in increased localised flooding from smaller urban streams and urban drainage systems;
- increase in maximum temperatures in the near future (2020–2039) by 0.7°C and in the far future (2060–79) by 2.2°C to 2.5°C; and
- increase in minimum temperatures in the near future by 0.7°C and in the far future by 2.3°C.

The CSIRO and Department of Primary Industries are researching how best to adapt agricultural production to climate change, including breeding and evaluating new plant varieties for agriculture and forestry.





Direction 12: Adapt to natural hazards and climate change

The *New England North West Climate Change Snapshot* (2014) projections indicate a warmer climate will result in altered rainfall patterns and more intense bushfires, droughts and floods to 2050 and beyond.⁶ Equipping communities with the right tools and access to the best available information will help people and businesses to meet the challenges of the future.

The New England North West Enabling Regional Adaptation Project led by the Office of Environment and Heritage provides a structured process to understand projected climate impacts and identify opportunities to address regional vulnerabilities.

Land use planning can help minimise and manage the impacts of climate change. Local environment plans can identify hazard-prone land and apply provisions to exclude these areas from development, unless hazards can be managed.

Flooding is a major hazard in some areas. Councils are responsible for managing flood risks, including the development and implementation of floodplain risk management plans. These plans use a merit-based approach that balances social, economic, environmental and flood-risk parameters to determine the appropriate use of flood-prone land.

The region is projected to experience an increase in average and severe bushfires in the future. Accurate up-to-date information can reduce bushfire risk. Maps of bushfire prone land prepared by councils identify bushfire hazards and risks. These maps must be regularly updated to reflect predicted changes to bushfire-prone land.

Naturally occurring asbestos is found in the Great Serpentine Belt from Tamworth to Bingara. Asbestos only poses a risk to people if the fibres are inhaled, which can occur through natural weathering or if disturbed during agricultural or building activities. Relevant councils can effectively manage risks associated with naturally occurring asbestos through local risk management strategies.

The Office of Local Government's *Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Councils* (2015) helps councils to formulate asbestos policies and promotes a consistent approach to managing asbestos.

Actions

- 12.1 Minimise the risk from natural hazards and the projected effects of climate change by identifying hazards, managing risks and avoiding vulnerable areas, particularly when considering new urban release areas.
- 12.2 Incorporate new knowledge on regional climate projections, including flooding and bushfire risk, related cumulative impacts, and findings of the New England North West Enabling Regional Adaptation Project in local plans for new development.
- 12.3 Review and update floodplain and bushfire mapping to manage risk, particularly where urban growth is being investigated.
- 12.4 Encourage councils where naturally occurring asbestos occurs to map the extent of asbestos and develop an asbestos policy to manage associated risks.



GOAL 3

Strong infrastructure and transport networks for a connected future

Located between Sydney and Brisbane, with strong transport links to Newcastle and South East Queensland, the New England North West is well positioned to access domestic and international markets. The freight network's efficiency influences the productivity of agriculture, manufacturing and natural resource sectors.

Freight and logistics industries will be a focus for investment to grow social and economic ties across communities and borders. Investment, integration and alignment of road, rail, port, utility and airport infrastructure will foster emerging industries.

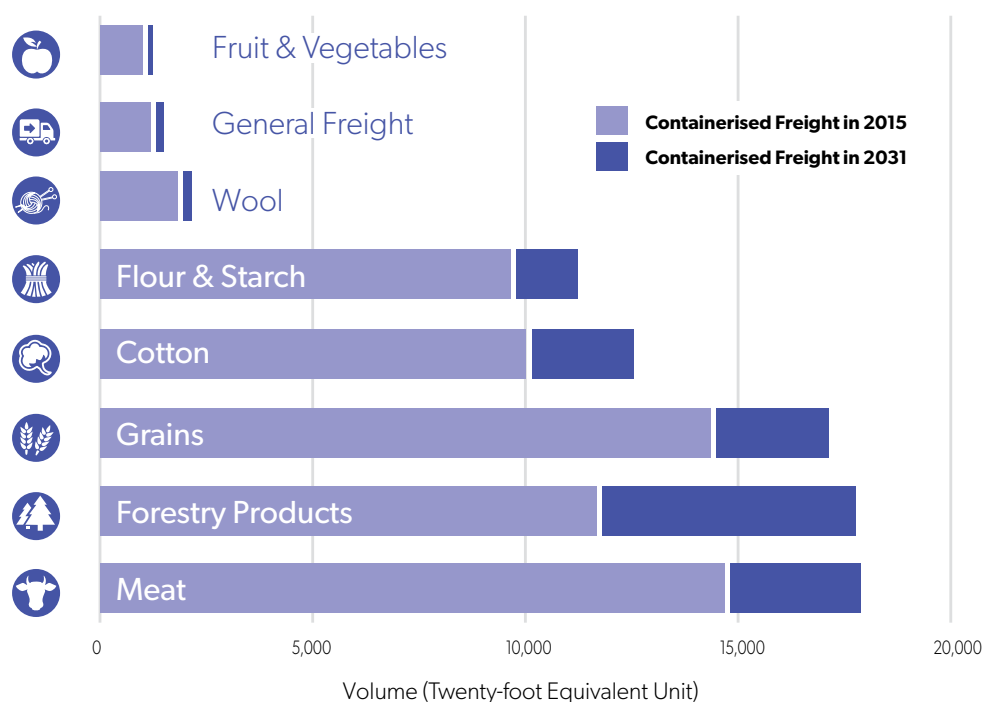
Protecting transport assets and expanding export-related and value-adding industries will encourage investment, attract industry and provide certainty to industries.

Stronger links and relationships across communities and borders will provide access to services and markets in the Hunter and South East Queensland.

Transport for NSW's *Future Transport Strategy* will include comprehensive engagement with the community and industry across NSW to understand and address local needs.

The coordination and provision of cost effective utility and local infrastructure will support the quality and diversity of lifestyles on offer in the region and enable the timely and affordable release of land for development.

Containerised Freight Growth in NENW Projection 2015-2031





Direction 13: Expand emerging industries through freight and logistics connectivity

The region is uniquely positioned to leverage opportunities associated with growing global and domestic markets. Port Botany at Sydney, Port Waratah at Newcastle, the Port of Brisbane, Brisbane International Airport and Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport at Toowoomba are global gateways for industries and businesses. Work to provide capacity for international freight at Tamworth Regional Airport is also underway.

Enhanced cross-border connectivity between NSW and Queensland will accommodate the forecast growth of freight movements into the Darling Downs, Toowoomba and Port of Brisbane.

The proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail has the potential to reshape freight movements. The 2010 *Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail Alignment Study*, prepared by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), identified the preferred corridor for inland rail, passing through Narrabri and Moree. The fine-scale alignment of the corridor is yet to be settled, and planning, engineering design and assessment will be finalised by the Australian Government and ARTC. The NSW Government will work with councils and the Australian Government during this period.

Growth in containerised freight of grain and meat products could require new intermodal terminals and supporting rail infrastructure. Narrabri, Moree and Tamworth support existing and proposed intermodal terminals and will continue to be significant areas for outbound containerised freight.⁷

Any new freight and logistics hubs and intermodals must be close to freight network corridors and infrastructure. These assets should also be protected from urban encroachment and incompatible land uses to protect freight and cargo handling capacity.

Narrabri Shire Council is developing a transport and manufacturing hub masterplan that will take advantage of existing intermodal facilities and investment in rail and natural gas infrastructure.

Actions

- 13.1 Implement local planning controls to protect freight and logistics facilities from encroachment of sensitive land uses.
- 13.2 Work with the Australian Government and councils as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor project progresses.
- 13.3 Integrate cross-border transport planning between NSW and Queensland.
- 13.4 Locate freight and logistics facilities to maximise existing infrastructure, support future industrial development and capitalise on inter-regional connections and external markets.

New England North West freight task

More than 13.6 million tonnes of freight moves through the New England North West every year,⁸ mainly by road, with rail used to transport coal and grains to the Port of Newcastle and Port Botany.

Agriculture and coal makes up much of the outbound freight task with movements to Brisbane, Newcastle and Sydney. The movement of agricultural commodities (including bulk grain, cotton, wool, horticulture and fresh produce) is forecast to grow between one and three per cent each year, while substantial growth in refrigerated truck transport is expected over the next five years.

Ongoing highway upgrades will enable safer and faster travel times for the movement of freight.

A number of the freight issues affecting agricultural producers arise outside the New England North West, including access, load scheduling and capacity at port facilities. The *NSW Freight and Ports Strategy* aims to grow port capacity to match commodity throughput demands and improve agricultural export opportunities.



Direction 14: Enhance transport and infrastructure networks

NSW's freight volumes are projected to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.⁹ A large share of this growth is expected in the New England North West. The region needs to enhance the quality, capacity and efficiency of freight, transport and infrastructure networks to move more freight and to better connect local producers and suppliers.

The Hunter Valley rail network transports coal from the Gunnedah Basin and agricultural produce to the Port of Newcastle. Coal dominates the rail freight network and the industry funds improved track and network capacity. The NSW Government will continue to explore opportunities for a suitable second freight route across the rail line at Gunnedah as part of the *Bridges for the Bush* Program.

Corridor strategies for State roads identify connectivity improvements to consistently manage and plan the State road network. The *Newell Highway Corridor Strategy* (2015) outlines the investment priorities to develop, manage and maintain the Newell Highway. Corridor strategies for the New England, Oxley, Kamilaroi and Gwydir highways are also being prepared. The strategies will respond to current and future challenges and issues, and set short-medium and long-term priorities and actions.

Limiting inappropriate development along existing and proposed transport corridors will protect productivity and safety. The location of existing and proposed utility or other infrastructure, including pipeline infrastructure, should be considered in relation to sites proposed for urban land release to avoid any conflict or encroachment that would compromise distribution networks.

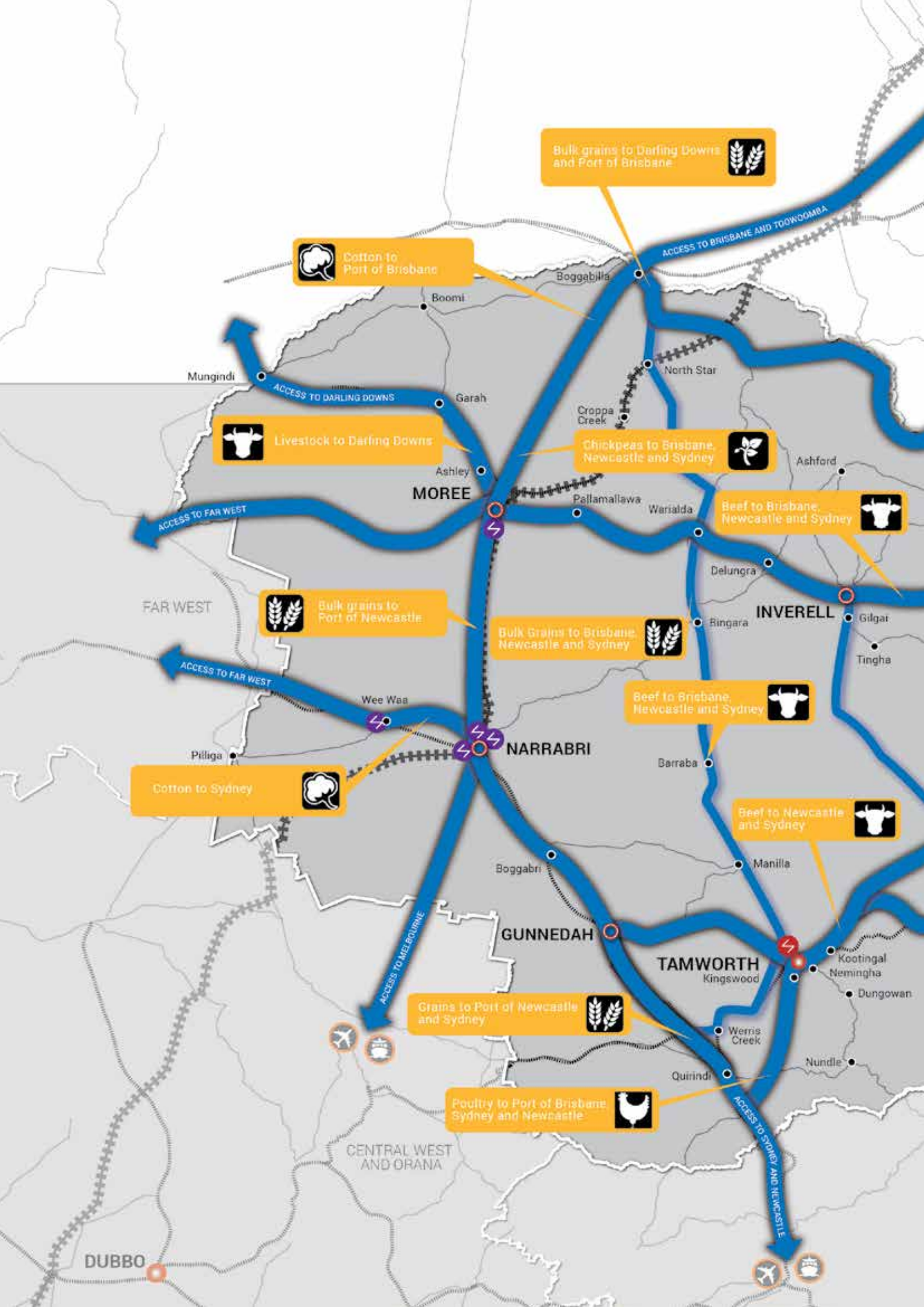
The Newell Highway is the eastern limit for road trains, however, concessional access extends to Gunnedah and Inverell.¹⁰ The Namoi Joint Organisation of Councils is undertaking further analysis to identify infrastructure constraints and impediments to extending the road train network to additional centres.

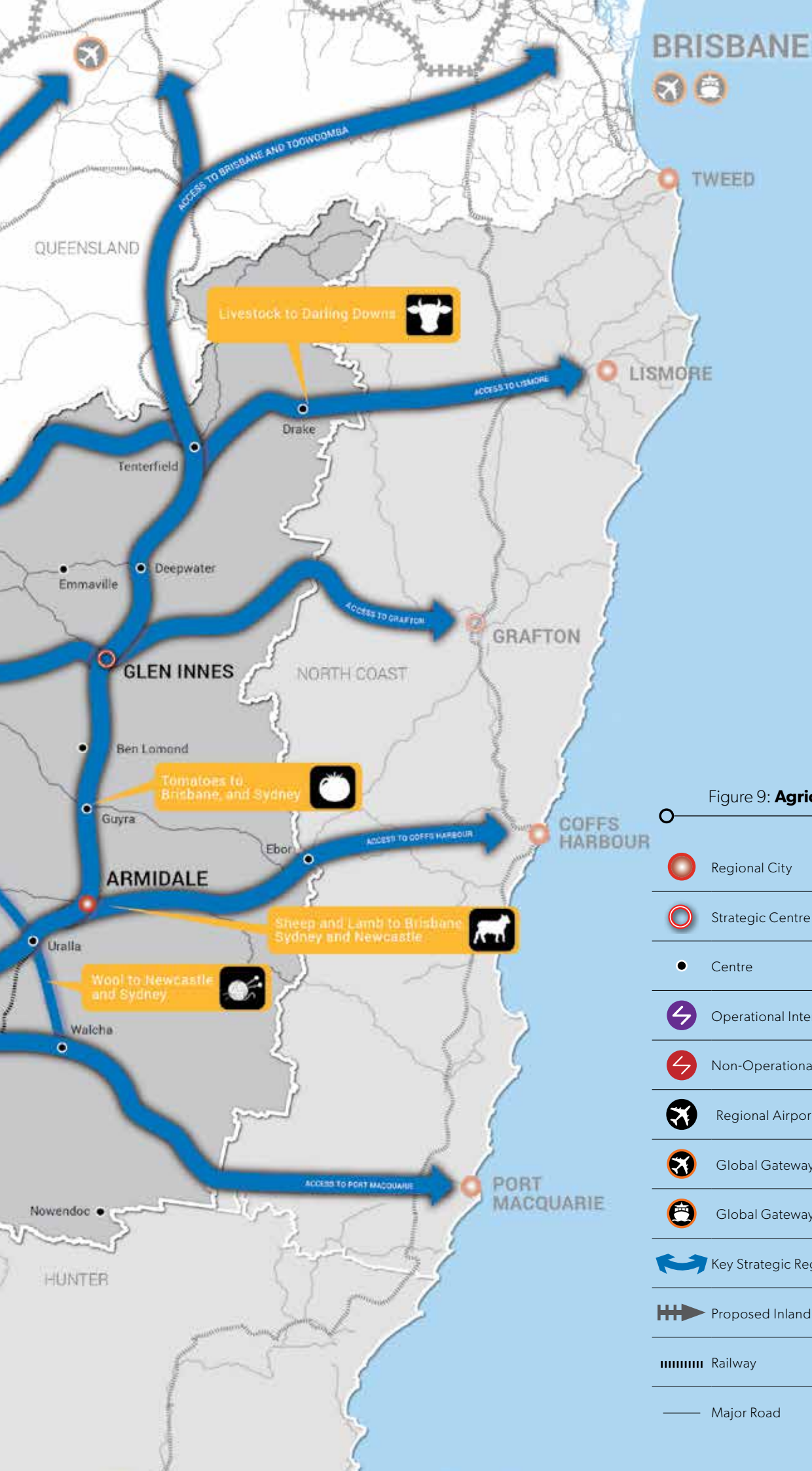
Local roads play a vital role in connecting communities and freight movements. Some local roads are failing under the pressure of freight movements, or limit the ability to move freight due to their condition or alignment. Local pinch points limit connections with the State and national road network and hinder productivity. The NSW Government will help councils to prioritise a rolling program of works to upgrade and improve local roads.

The NSW Government's *Fixing Country Roads* and *Bridges for the Bush* programs fund vital road and bridge upgrades to better connect local and regional roads to highways and freight hubs such as silos, saleyards, rail heads, supermarket distribution centres, industrial parks and depots.

Actions

- 14.1 Protect freight and utility infrastructure and corridors through local plans and strategies to protect network opportunities and distribution from incompatible land uses or land fragmentation.
- 14.2 Minimise the impact of development on the regional and State road network and rail corridors by identifying buffer and mitigation measures.
- 14.3 Support councils to investigate opportunities to provide greater access for high productivity vehicles.
- 14.4 Prioritise projects that address impediments to the regional freight network and work with stakeholders to upgrade transport network capacity as demand changes.







Direction 15: Facilitate air and public transport infrastructure

Regional airports are important gateways for business, tourism and personal travel and high-value freight. They also provide services for fly-in fly-out workers and access to specialist health, education and commercial facilities.

Local growth management strategies should investigate opportunities for compatible and complementary aviation-related industries on land adjoining airports. Airport facility operations must not be impeded by the encroachment of incompatible development and retail and bulky-goods uses must be avoided in these areas.

The NSW Government does not support changes to protections for existing regional flights to Sydney Airport, noting the importance of this access to regional communities. Continued access to South East Queensland via Brisbane Airport will also support economic and social links.

The passenger rail network connects regional cities and other centres to Newcastle and Sydney every day, while bus and coach networks connect to Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane.

Efficient and practical transport connections to and from surrounding settlements will improve access to health services, education and job opportunities.

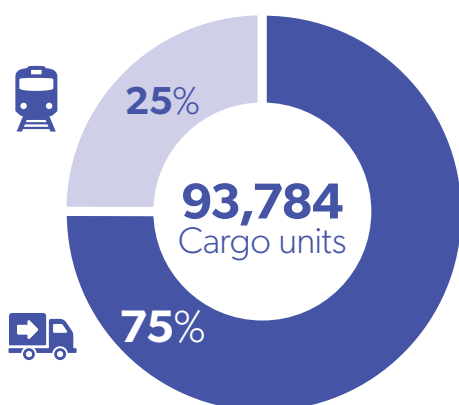
Public transport connectivity to employment areas and regional services like hospitals, tertiary education campuses and regional airports must be catered for where feasible.

Transport for NSW will investigate opportunities to improve bus operations in centres and their connections with regional communities by working with bus operators to develop routes and timetables to improve services.

Actions

- 15.1 Promote aviation-related employment opportunities and precincts.
- 15.2 Protect airports from the encroachment of incompatible development.
- 15.3 Provide public transport to major services and employment areas where the size of the urban area has the potential to generate sufficient demand.

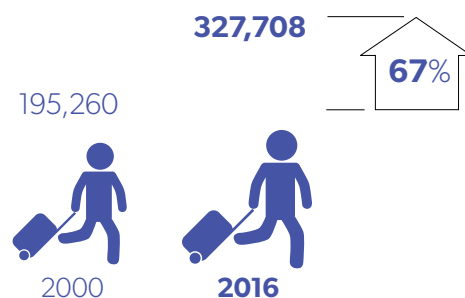
Containerised Freight 2015



Regional Airport Passenger Growth 2000-2016

132,448

additional passengers arrived



Above: Airport, Armidale

Right: Construction of Moree Solar Farm



Direction 16: Coordinate infrastructure delivery

Urban growth must be directed to areas with infrastructure capacity, or where upgrades or new infrastructure is cost-effective.

Local growth management strategies will plan for timely and economically viable infrastructure and support proposals that minimise expenditure or duplicated services. Rezoning will only occur when proposals for land release or development demonstrate that servicing can occur from existing infrastructure or that new infrastructure can be properly funded.

Communications infrastructure facilitates local employment opportunities and satisfies day-to-day needs. In accordance with the Australian Government's National Broadband Network, a fibre-ready pit and pipe network that allows for the installation of Fibre To The Premises broadband service should be considered as part of local infrastructure planning.

Infrastructure and utility providers need to identify appropriate sites and capacity to provide for water security, wastewater service capacity, electricity supply, emergency service facilities, cemeteries and crematoria.

Funding and servicing models for utility infrastructure must provide sufficient flexibility to support new industries with high energy or water needs. New models for utility infrastructure, such as cost-sharing between industries, will support and stimulate growth in agribusiness and value-added manufacturing industries, as well as other development.

To support cross-border, inter-regional and intra-regional communities, councils should collaborate across borders. This will strengthen relationships, coordinate growth and deliver infrastructure more efficiently.

The New England North West Housing and Land Monitor will detail annual rates of housing and employment land take up. This information will guide planning and investment for future infrastructure and services.

Actions

- 16.1 Undertake detailed infrastructure service planning to establish that land can be feasibly and economically serviced prior to rezoning.
- 16.2 Maximise the cost-effective and efficient use of infrastructure by focusing development on existing infrastructure or promoting co-location of new infrastructure.
- 16.3 Work with stakeholders and infrastructure providers to investigate funding models for utility infrastructure.
- 16.4 Integrate cross-border land use planning between NSW and Queensland.



GOAL 4

Attractive and thriving communities

The strength, diversity and character of the New England North West's communities will drive a successful future. New opportunities and challenges will emerge as changes in agricultural methods, transport connectivity, climate and demography reshape these communities. An attractive lifestyle and high-quality employment, housing, health and education options will contribute to population growth of 13,800 people by 2036.

Greater housing diversity will support the increasing number of single person and couple-only households. Healthy, safe and inclusive places will enhance active and inclusive lifestyles.

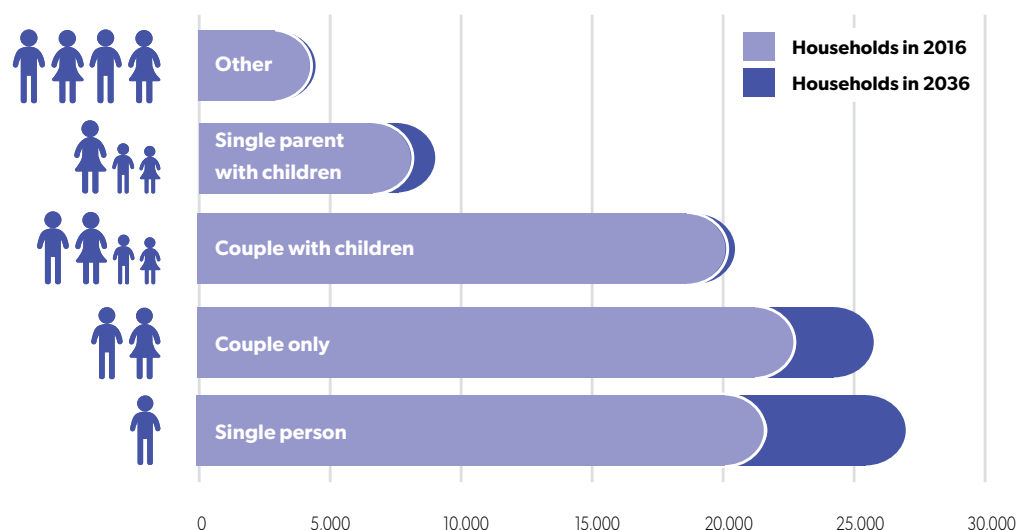
Population growth will not be evenly distributed. The highest rates of growth are projected in regional cities and some strategic centres. The population of other centres is likely to remain stable or in some cases decline.

These numbers do not reflect the dynamic nature of many of these communities that often have transient workers, tourists, and populations that fluctuate at different times of the year. Increasing the number of value-adding opportunities and delivering greater housing choice will make these communities more resilient and adaptive to growth and change.

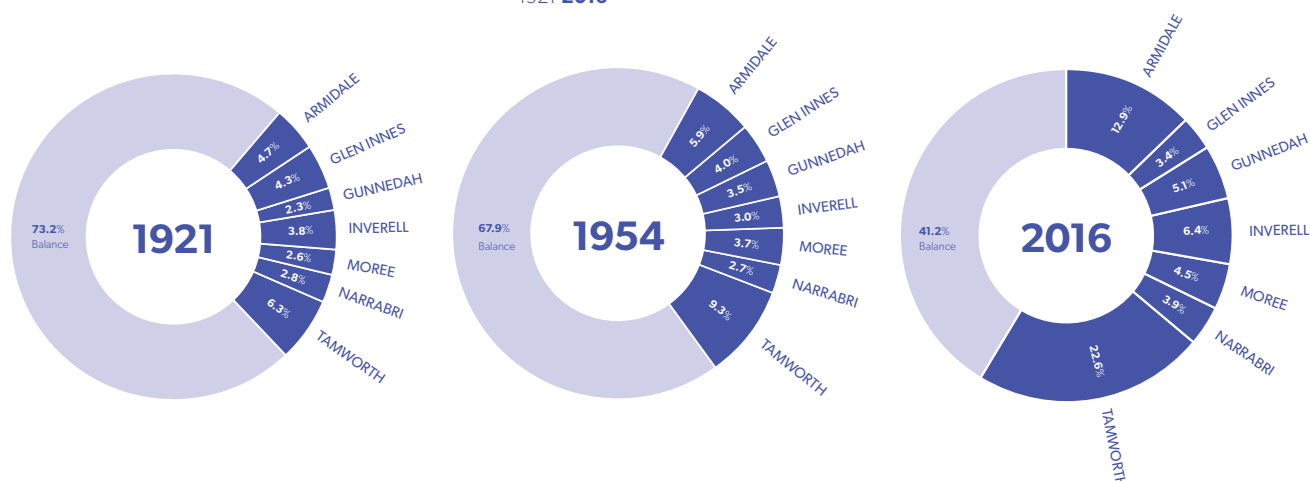
Rich and diverse Aboriginal and historic heritage contributes to the charm and identity of New England North West. The Anaiwan, Banbai, Bundjalung, Githabul, Gumbaynggirr, Kamilaroi, Kwaimbul, Ngoorabal and Dunghutti are the first people of the New England North West. They have a spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional land and waters.

Aboriginal cultural heritage and communities will be respected and supported. Historic heritage assets will be protected through revitalisation, supporting thriving communities and great places to live.

Household Composition Forecast 2016-2036



Historical Urban Centre Population 1921-2016



Direction 17: Strengthen community resilience

Communities need to be informed, proactive and collaborative in meeting the challenges ahead. Centres must be robust and dynamic places to increase their appeal for residents and contribute to growth and prosperity.

Over the last century, the population has increasingly concentrated in regional cities and centres. This is expected to continue, and some communities are projected to experience lower growth rates, stabilisation, or, in some cases, population declines.

Smaller centres and rural communities can provide more affordable housing and attractive lifestyles - these should be supported with good access to the network of regional cities and strategic centres for higher-level services.

Establishing strong networks within the region, with centres in adjoining regions and Queensland will build community resilience and capacity. This will be a shared responsibility between communities, organisations, businesses and government.

Local strategies should identify and manage drivers of change and capitalise on community strengths. Based on increased collaboration between community leaders and industry sectors, these strategies should promote local opportunities to expand and diversify economic activity; attract investment; retain and attract younger people, including families and professionals; and integrate infrastructure and transport planning.

Local economic prospectuses or investment strategies can showcase local opportunities and address barriers to growth and investment. Targeted expansion of service-based sectors, agribusiness and tourism, including coordinating and attracting events and festivals, should also be addressed.

Tools for Resilient Communities

Economic attraction:

The New England North West's established and emerging industries are expected to flourish. Councils or wider collaborations need to market their area, champion local economic and investment opportunities, connect investors and accelerate opportunities.

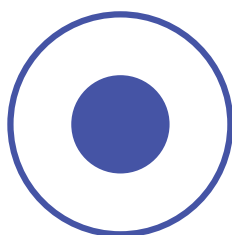
Precinct planning:

Precinct planning establishes a clear local vision and provides a planning framework that facilitates and maximises investment opportunities.

NSW Government frameworks:

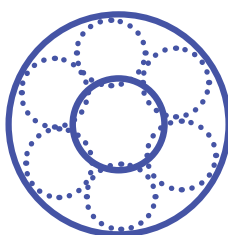
The NSW *Strengthening Rural Communities Resource Kit* (2001 - to be updated), *NSW Drought Strategy* (2015) and the Western NSW Mining and Resource Development Taskforce provide information to help communities capitalise on social and economic opportunities and address challenges.

Pillars of the Settlement Planning Guidelines



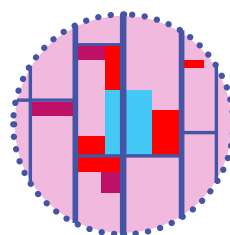
1.

Identify serviceable, unconstrained land that supports the existing centre



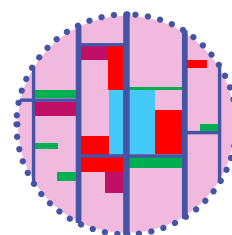
2.

Ensure neighbourhoods in the growth area are designed around smaller, walking-friendly catchments



3.

Provide a variety of land use and housing types within each neighbourhood to meet residents' needs



4.

Support neighbourhoods with active transport, social infrastructure and parks

Actions

- 17.1 Develop local plans and economic strategies that:
 - raise the profile of the area and awareness of opportunities for employment, business development and quality of life;
 - target opportunities for younger demographics; and
 - foster collaboration with business sectors to develop employment opportunities that can attract and retain younger people and professional and skilled workers.
- 17.2 Prepare precinct plans to guide development and establish appropriate land use zoning, development standards and developer contributions.
- 17.3 Implement the outcomes of the Western NSW Mining and Resource Development Taskforce to harness the economic benefits of mining, and help communities plan for the implications of mining.
- 17.4 Update the *Strengthening Rural Communities Resource Kit*.

Direction 18: Provide great places to live

Around 9,700 additional homes will be required to support future growth and provide for changing household types over the next 20 years.¹¹ Changes to household structure and average household size mean that housing demand will remain strong.

Developed in consultation with communities, local growth management strategies will analyse land suitability and local housing needs to direct development to the right locations. These strategies will enable communities to consider and assess the broader implications and consequences of identifying locations for future development. Further consultation will occur when rezonings are proposed for urban expansion or rural residential use.

A ready supply of well located land for residential development will create downward pressure on house prices, maximise infrastructure use and protect environmental and agricultural values. Focusing growth in existing urban centres, or in areas adjacent to existing urban development will foster liveability and a stronger sense of community. This approach will support existing commercial areas, reduce infrastructure cost and maximise walking, cycling and other transport connections.

Interim Settlement Planning Principles (Appendix A) will ensure that new development is well located; responds to existing urban and rural settlements; addresses land constraints; and fosters great places to live, work and play. The guidelines will be used to consider whether proposals for urban expansion and local growth management strategies will be endorsed.



Actions

- 18.1 Identify future areas of urban expansion or intensification in local growth management strategies that are consistent with the Interim Settlement Planning Principles, (Appendix A) or comprehensive settlement planning guidelines once released.
- 18.2 Secure an appropriate supply of residential land to meet projected housing needs within local growth management strategies endorsed by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- 18.3 Develop comprehensive settlement planning guidelines.
- 18.4 Monitor the supply of residential land and housing through the New England North West Housing and Land Monitor.

Direction 19: Support healthy, safe, socially engaged and well connected communities

The structure and design of communities, including streetscapes, recreation areas and community facilities can influence community health, wellbeing and social cohesion.

Housing services and facilities within walking distance of each other, or easily accessible by public transport, make it easier for people to be active while accessing services. The NSW Government is developing healthy living guidelines to support active living.

More people will use expanded recreational walking and cycling trails to experience a range of communities and natural areas. Accessible public transport links and high-quality pedestrian and cycling infrastructure should be a priority in all communities.

With an increase in the ageing population, public and community transport will assume greater importance. Appropriate transport links will allow older people to continue living in their home or community.

All communities need access to social infrastructure, such as child care facilities and emergency accommodation. Councils should establish benchmarks to support communities with timely social infrastructure delivery and create focal points for social participation.

Crime prevention through environmental design principles can reduce the potential for crime through design and place management, helping people to feel safe and more comfortable. Safe, active and lively community spaces are often supported by events and promotion. This fosters healthy living through physical activity, social interaction and community pride.

Actions

- 19.1 Deliver best-practice guidelines for planning, designing and developing healthy built environments.
- 19.2 Facilitate more recreational walking and cycling paths, linkages with centres and public transport, and expand inter-regional and intra-regional walking and cycling links.
- 19.3 Establish social infrastructure benchmarks, minimum standards and social impact assessment frameworks within local planning.
- 19.4 Deliver crime prevention through environmental design outcomes through urban design processes.



Above: Family day out, Warialda

Right: Kingfisher Drive, Inverell



Direction 20: Deliver greater housing diversity to suit changing needs

Greater housing diversity will address projected demand for smaller housing types,¹² changing household needs and different household budgets. With 90 per cent of current dwellings single-detached,¹³ opportunities exist to establish targeted planning and development incentives that promote a more diverse range of housing within new and existing urban areas.

Local growth management strategies must consider local housing needs based on household and demographic changes, and plan for a range of housing choices.

Regional cities and centres will accommodate most new housing. Encouraging a wider range of housing in appropriate locations, including shop-top housing, townhouses and small-lot homes, will take advantage of established services and infrastructure while also supporting the vitality of business areas. In other centres, planning provisions and incentives can also support a wider range of lot sizes and building forms such as secondary dwellings and dual occupancies.

Older people will find it easier to stay in their homes through the development of liveable homes that are easy to enter and navigate, responsive to the changing needs of occupants and relatively easy to adapt (for injured, disabled or elderly residents). Local growth management strategies should also identify potential locations for retirement villages and nursing homes.

Housing to meet community need across a range of incomes can help address housing affordability and social housing needs. Appropriate planning controls and incentives include:

- reduced contributions or other development incentives that may boost construction of secondary dwellings as alternative affordable housing;
- planning incentives or negotiated planning agreements to encourage private investment in social and affordable housing;
- promotion of caravan parks and manufactured home estates on unconstrained land in existing settlements and new land release areas; and
- local affordability analysis in local growth management strategies and planning proposals that identify responsive lot size and planning controls.

Construction of large-scale infrastructure and resource projects and seasonal agricultural employment can increase transient populations and place pressure on housing and accommodation supply. Peaks in housing demand may be satisfied through short-term workers' accommodation as an alternative to expanding permanent housing stock, which can lead to an oversupply in the longer term. Temporary housing villages should contribute positively to the entire community and not unnecessarily duplicate existing services and facilities.

Mechanisms for Housing Diversity



Local strategies

Local strategies help councils and communities understand housing needs and how best to meet demand for new homes.



Precinct planning

Precinct planning supports urban renewal and expansion, economic clusters, coordinated infrastructure delivery and local character.



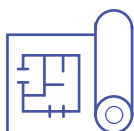
Planning standards

Flexible planning standards in local plans can support more housing close to services, a variety of housing types, building forms and lot sizes.



Bonus provisions

Density or height bonus schemes can provide additional development capacity in exchange for a public benefit, such as affordable housing.



Development incentives

Contribution or application fee concessions and servicing discounts can encourage housing that targets specific needs, such as affordable or special needs housing.



Education and promotion

Consumer and industry education and collaboration on local housing needs and innovative housing responses will promote awareness and can deliver greater housing choice.

Actions

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>20.1 Develop local growth management strategies to respond to changing housing needs, including household and demographic changes.</p> <p>20.2 Prepare guidelines for local housing strategies that will provide guidance on achieving greater housing diversity and planning for local affordable housing needs.</p> <p>20.3 Promote ageing-in-place by adopting elements of Livable Housing Australia's <i>Livable Housing Design Guidelines</i> in development controls for housing, where possible.</p> | <p>20.4 Deliver more opportunities for affordable housing by incorporating policies and tools into local growth management strategies and local plans that will incentivise private investment in affordable housing.</p> <p>20.5 Facilitate housing and accommodation options for seasonal and itinerant workers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing planning guidelines for seasonal and itinerant workers accommodation to inform the location and design of future facilities; and • working with councils to consider opportunities to permit such facilities through local environmental plans. |
|--|--|

Direction 21: Deliver well planned rural residential housing

Rural residential housing is a popular lifestyle housing option. If not appropriately located, it can conflict with important agricultural, urban, industrial or resource lands or increase pressure for new services and infrastructure outside existing settlements.

New rural residential housing must promote sustainable land use outcomes. Local growth management strategies will identify appropriate locations for new rural residential land release areas and broader land use implications.

Local growth management strategies must consider and address Principles 1-5 of the Interim Settlement Planning Principles (Appendix A) when identifying new rural residential release areas. The interim framework will apply until a more a comprehensive framework is prepared.

Actions

- 21.1 Enable new rural residential development where identified in a local growth management strategy prepared by council and endorsed by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- 21.2 Deliver rural residential development consistent with Principles 1-5 of the Interim Settlement Planning Principles (Appendix A) or comprehensive framework once released.

Direction 22: Increase the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities

There are significant opportunities to build wealth and strengthen economic independence in Aboriginal communities. Economic strength will assist in community empowerment and participation, and the protection of cultural heritage. Economic opportunities can stem from a range of sources, including land held by Aboriginal communities, promotion of language and culture and from the enterprise and innovation already empowering many Aboriginal communities.

OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment) is the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal communities. It focuses on revitalising and promoting Aboriginal languages and culture; creating opportunities and capacity; providing choice, and empowering Aboriginal people to exercise that choice; and providing the tools to help Aboriginal people to take responsibility for their own future.

Aboriginal Affairs NSW and the Department of Planning and Environment will work with Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify their landholdings and to map the level of constraints for each site. Aboriginal communities can then consider potential uses of the land for housing and employment opportunities. This could provide economic returns to local communities that can be invested in community programs.

Other approaches to increasing economic independence include developing tailored training on the planning system, to assist in knowledge sharing and the empowerment of local Aboriginal communities, devising targeted procurement policies that engage Aboriginal consultants and contractors, and supporting place-based initiatives that identify opportunities to support local communities, such as Aboriginal cultural tourism.

Average Dwelling Approvals

2010-2013



New rural residential dwellings



Actions

- 22.1 Deliver opportunities to increase the economic independence of Aboriginal communities through training, employment and tourism.
- 22.2 Foster closer cooperation with Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify the unique potential and assets of the New England North West's communities.
- 22.3 Identify priority sites with economic development potential that Local Aboriginal Land Councils may wish to consider for further investigation.

Direction 23: Collaborate with Aboriginal communities to respect and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage

The New England North West has a rich Aboriginal heritage. Significant cultural sites and Aboriginal places include the resting place of the spiritual creature, Garriya (the rainbow serpent) at Boobera Lagoon and the Myall Creek Massacre and Memorial Site. The connection of Aboriginal communities to their ancestral country is a result of passing down histories and 'place awareness' through generations. Consultation processes on future land use planning should acknowledge, respect and consider Aboriginal interests and responsibilities through the planning process.

Aboriginal heritage includes places and objects of significance to Aboriginal people because of their traditions, observances, lore, customs, beliefs and history, such as pre-contact, habitation and usage sites, burial sites, battle sites and camping, hunting or fishing sites. Aboriginal cultural heritage also relates to the connection and sense of belonging that people have with the landscape and with each other.

It is likely that objects and sites of Aboriginal heritage significance are under-recorded, which makes them more vulnerable to accidental damage, and consequently, improper conservation management.

Engagement and partnerships with Aboriginal communities will increase information sharing and better manage cultural heritage.

Local planning strategies and plans prepared in consultation with Aboriginal communities will build trust and tap into their unique local knowledge. This will empower Aboriginal communities to identify their own issues, strategic directions and solutions. It requires mechanisms that acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal communities and the resources needed to participate.

Harm to Aboriginal objects and places - or areas of significance to Aboriginal people - should be avoided. Any proposed management or development activity must consider the potential impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Actions

- 23.1 Ensure Aboriginal communities are engaged throughout the preparation of local planning strategies and local plans.
- 23.2 Prepare maps to identify sites of Aboriginal heritage in new land release areas, where culturally appropriate, to inform planning strategies and local plans to protect Aboriginal heritage.
- 23.3 Develop partnerships with Aboriginal communities to facilitate engagement during the planning process, including the development of engagement protocols.
- 23.4 Undertake Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments to inform the design of planning and development proposals so that impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage are avoided and appropriate heritage management mechanisms are identified.
- 23.5 Develop local heritage studies in consultation with the local Aboriginal community and adopt appropriate measures in planning strategies and local plans to avoid and protect Aboriginal heritage.



Direction 24: Protect the region's historic heritage assets

The New England North West's historic heritage assets enrich its identity and character and attract visitors to support local economies and communities.

Local heritage studies, developed with the community, will identify, protect and manage heritage items.

Regeneration of heritage assets through adaptive re-use, as has been successfully achieved at the Sir Henry Parkes School of Arts building in Tenterfield and the Roxy Theatre in Bingara, can preserve and restore heritage items and deliver unique places.

If impacts from development to heritage items and areas cannot be avoided, proposals that reduce impacts through sympathetic design must be developed in accordance with relevant statutory processes.

Actions

- 24.1 Prepare, review and update heritage studies in consultation with the wider community to identify and protect heritage items, and include appropriate local planning controls.
- 24.2 Ensure best-practice guidelines are considered such as the *Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* and the *NSW Heritage Manual* when assessing heritage significance.
- 24.3 Develop conservation management policies for heritage items and areas to provide for sympathetic and adaptive use of heritage items and assets.

Heritage items and places

2017

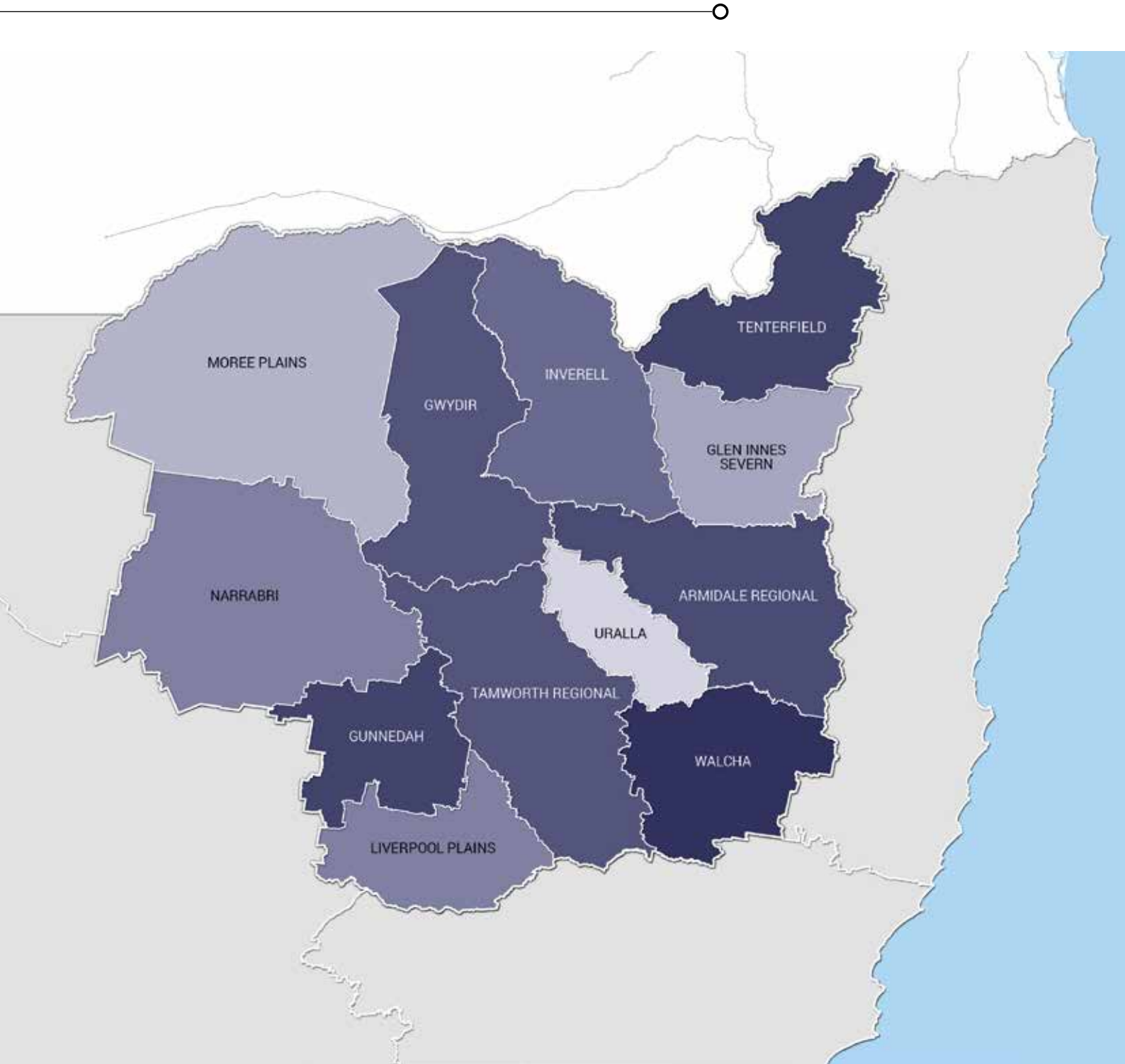


65 State heritage items

1,660 Local heritage items

1,775ha Aboriginal places

Figure 10: **Local government areas of the New England North West**





Local Government Narratives

The NSW Government will work with each council to deliver the directions and actions set out in this Plan.

Priorities for each council are set out in the following section and will guide further investigations and implementation. The priorities build on the directions and actions in this Plan to achieve outcomes on the ground.

Planning will encourage infrastructure delivery that targets the needs of its communities. It will also encourage efficiencies in the allocation of resources and investment to improve the liveability and sustainability of the region.

The NSW Government will assist councils to translate these into local plans.

Armidale Regional

Armidale Regional is in the heart of the New England area and enjoys a prosperous economy, diverse community, outstanding natural assets and access to high level services.

Settlement is centred on the regional city of Armidale which serves the wider New England area with higher-order services including health, retail and professional services. A strong education focus is founded around digital opportunities provided by the NBN, the University of New England, numerous public and private schools and the NSW TAFE Digital Hub. Ben Lomond, Guyra, Ebor, Hillgrove and other smaller settlements service the communities outside of Armidale.

Armidale Regional has significant natural assets including the World Heritage-listed rainforest protected within the Oxley Wild Rivers and New England national parks and spectacular waterfalls-gorges. Cool climate vineyards, fine food and a fascinating cultural heritage attract visitors.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Armidale and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Ben Lomond, Guyra and Ebor.
- Foster the growth of knowledge-based, education and health-services industries and cluster related activity around the Armidale Rural Referral Hospital and the University of New England.
- Maximise the opportunities of Armidale Regional Airport to meet demand and provide greater access to tourism opportunities.
- Support the development of employment lands such as Acacia Park.
- Support opportunities to grow businesses enabled by the establishment of NBN fibre to the premises.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Support the New England Regional Arts Museum and other arts organisations to position the LGA as a recognised arts and cultural centre in regional Australia.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Glen Innes Severn

Glen Innes Severn is located in the north east of the New England Tablelands. Glen Innes sits at the cross roads of the New England and Gwydir highways and provides essential retail, commercial and community services to local communities. Emmaville and Deepwater fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character.

Glen Innes Severn provides iconic visitor experiences including the Australian Standing Stones, where the Australian Celtic Festival is celebrated each May. Its abundant environmental assets include World Heritage-listed Washpool and Gibraltar Range national parks.

The Shire has a rich agricultural and mining history and its location atop the Great Dividing Range has seen growth in wind farming. The region's first wind farm is currently under construction with a second and third to follow.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Glen Innes and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Emmaville and Deepwater.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Support new and emerging job opportunities associated with Glen Innes District Hospital.
- Maximise innovation and efficiencies in the agricultural sector including those arising from the Glen Innes Agricultural Research and Advisory Station.
- Identify opportunities to expand nature based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences by leveraging environmental and iconic assets such as the Australian Standing Stones.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Gunnedah

The Gunnedah LGA has a history in agricultural production, agribusiness and mineral resource production. The Gunnedah strategic centre, at the junction of Oxley and Kamilaroi highways, provides essential retail, commercial and community services to local communities. Curlewis, Mullaley, Tambar Springs, Carroll, Breeza, Kelvin and Emerald Hill fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Gunnedah's economy continues to attract and support jobs, including a thriving commercial, cultural and retail service sector as well as value-adding industries in manufacturing and processing.

The nation's biggest agricultural field day, Agquip, is held at Gunnedah each August. Farmers markets and the Gunnedah Sunday Session and Markets provide an alternative market place for artists, makers, foodies and alternative and unique product producers. One of Australia's healthiest koala colonies calls Gunnedah LGA home.

Priorities:

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

Gwydir

Gwydir Shire stretches from the Queensland border to the Endear Range in the south. Its diverse landscapes of steep and undulating lands to flat open plains attract tourists, particularly those seeking eco-tourism and adventure tourism experiences.

Bingara and Wialda provide local retail, commercial and community services and a high quality of life for residents and visitors. Gravesend, Cobbadah, Upper Horton, Croppa Creek, North Star and Wialda Rail fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Gwydir has a strong and growing economy based on agriculture and supports the 'Golden Triangle' around North Star, famous for its high yielding crops such as wheat, barley, sorghum, maize, chick peas, canola and cotton.

Gwydir has abundant environmental assets, including part of Mt Kaputar National Park and Copeton Dam, and the Gwydir and Horton rivers. This rich environment underpins the area's important tourism sector. Managing these assets will deliver a healthy environment and a strong economy.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Bingara and Wialda, and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Gravesend, Cobbadah, Upper Horton, Croppa Creek, North Star, and Wialda Rail.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Support the development of employment lands.
- Expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.

- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Inverell

Inverell LGA is nestled alongside the Macintyre River on the western slopes of New England. Inverell is the focal centre located on the Gwydir Highway and provides essential retail, commercial and community services to a range of local communities. Ashford, Gilgai, Yetman and Delungra fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Inverell has a strong and growing economy based on agriculture, particularly beef cattle and cropping. It is the operating centre for a large beef processing company, the largest employer in Inverell. Inverell is also a major contributor to Australia's sapphire production and offers a popular tourist attraction in gem fossicking.

Copeton Dam is the largest water storage in New England North West, providing the water source for environmental flows to the Gwydir catchment and irrigation. Copeton Dam provides a reliable domestic and industrial water supply for Inverell and is a popular water-based recreation area.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Inverell and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Ashford, Gilgai, Yetman and Delungra.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Support the development of employment lands.

- Expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences by leveraging the area's environmental and iconic assets including Copeton Dam.
- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Liverpool Plains

Liverpool Plains is located in the south-west of the region and is strategically located to access Sydney and Newcastle. Quirindi and Werris Creek boast rural charm, providing essential retail, commercial and community services to a range of local communities. Willow Tree, Wallabadah, Caroonna, Walhallow, Currabubula, Premer, and Spring Ridge fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Liverpool Plains has some of the most productive land in NSW due to its rich black soils underlain by extensive ground water resources. Not only is it an important food producing area it is also located at the southern end of the Gunnedah Coal Basin. Improved transport connections to Sydney and Newcastle will continue to support future economic opportunities.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Quirindi and Werris Creek and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Willow Tree, Wallabadah, Caroonna, Walhallow, Currabubula, Premer and Spring Ridge.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Support the development of employment lands.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.

- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Moree Plains

Moree Plains is located in the north-west of the region adjoining the Queensland border. Moree provides essential retail, commercial and community services to a range of local communities. Mungindi, Boggabilla, Ashley Biniguy, Boomi, Pallamallawa, Gurley and Weemalah fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Moree is one of the top agricultural producing areas in Australia. Large-scale cereal and chickpea crops as well as cotton are significant export and domestic industries. The area also supplies pecan nuts, sheep, cattle, oil seeds and olives which contribute significantly to the national economy.

Moree is one of the key locations for the potential Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. Moree has abundant tourism assets, including artesian spa baths, art deco architecture and water park. These assets continue to draw tourists and contribute to attractive lifestyles.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Moree and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Mungindi, Boggabilla, Ashley, Biniguy, Boomi, Pallamallawa, Gurley and Weemalah.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.

- Support Moree as a 'Smart City' to reduce costs and enhance services for agribusiness and dependent business suppliers.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences, including Moree Artesian Aquatic Centre and the Moree Water Park as major regional sports, recreation and cultural facilities.
- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy opportunities.

Narrabri

Narrabri LGA is located on the western border of the New England North West. At its heart is the Namoi Valley renowned by its rich fertile soils producing some of the world's highest quality wheat, cotton, lamb and beef.

Narrabri provides essential retail, commercial and community services to a range of local communities. The centres of Wee Waa and Boggabri, with a number of smaller settlements including Pilliga, Gwabegar, Baan Baa and Bellata, fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Narrabri has a strong and growing economy centred on agricultural production, agribusiness and mineral resource production and includes several research institutions. It is home to the Pilliga State Forest or Pilliga Scrub, which is the largest semi-arid woodland in the state. This rare forest type supports approximately 900 native plants and over 100 native animal species.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Narrabri and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Wee Waa, Pilliga, Bellata, Gwabegar, Baan Baa and Boggabri.
- Support economic diversification and strengthening including upskilling health and education workers.

Tamworth Regional

Tamworth Regional is strategically positioned in the south of the region with access to Sydney and Newcastle. Tamworth is a regional city that provides one in three of the region's homes and jobs and a variety of high-level services, including civic, entertainment and cultural venues. These include Tamworth Base Hospital, TAFE NSW and national sporting facilities like the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre.

The balance of the urban population lives in surrounding smaller settlements including Manilla, Kootingal, Barraba, Nundle and Moonbi.

Tamworth's strong agricultural foundations in industries such as poultry, beef cattle and cropping, are well serviced by rail, road and air networks. The manufacturing industry, retail and commercial services, aviation and tourism are also important economic generators. The Tamworth Country Music Festival attracts more than 50,000 festival goers each year.¹⁴

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Tamworth and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Manilla, Kootingal, Barraba, Nundle, Moonbi and other areas.
- Foster the growth of knowledge-based, education and health-services industries and cluster related activity around the Tamworth Base Hospital and TAFE NSW.

- Maximise the opportunities of Tamworth Regional Airport to meet growing demand and provide greater access to tourism opportunities.
- Identify and protect intensive agriculture clusters and encourage opportunities for agribusiness including research and development to maximise innovation and efficiencies in the agricultural sector.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Support the development of employment lands including Glen Artney.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Tenterfield

Tenterfield LGA is the northern gateway to New England adjoining the Queensland border. Tenterfield provides essential retail, commercial and community services to local communities. Drake, Urbenville and other settlements fulfil local service needs and contribute to the unique local character of the area.

Tenterfield has a strong and growing economy based on agriculture and mineral resource production. Retail trade, health, education and tourist accommodation also are also important economic generators.

Tenterfield has a rich historic heritage. It is known as the 'Birthplace of our Nation' - Sir Henry Parkes delivered his Federation Speech in the Tenterfield School of Arts in 1889, which ultimately led to Federation in 1901. Tenterfield has abundant environmental assets, such as Bald Rock and Boonoo Boonoo national parks. This rich environment underpins the area's tourism sector. Managing these assets will deliver a healthy environment and a strong economy.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Tenterfield and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Drake and Urbenville.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Leverage cross-border opportunities with South East Queensland particularly with Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport and Brisbane.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.

Uralla

Uralla LGA is located on the western edge of the New England Tablelands. Uralla is the main centre with other settlements including Bundarra, Arding, Rocky River, Kingstown, Invergowrie and Kentucky.

Uralla provides retail, commercial and community services. It enjoys strong social and economic links with Armidale. Residents are attracted to Uralla for its unique country lifestyle and heritage.

The LGA's primary rural industries are fine wool and beef production. Boutique industries including vineyards and breweries have helped to establish Uralla as a gastro-tourism destination. Uralla showcases over 50 buildings of historic significance, antique stores, art galleries and specialty stores. Community-led renewable energy projects will support the town's journey to become a Zero Net Energy Town (Z-NET).

Priorities:

- Support new housing in Uralla and protect the unique character of centres including Bundarra and settlement areas of Arding, Rocky River, Kingstown, Invergowrie and Kentucky.
- Grow and diversify the local agricultural base by encouraging opportunities for agribusiness and research and development institutions.
- Support emerging boutique food and tourism-based cottage retail enterprises.
- Investigate the potential for wind and solar production and encourage renewable energy opportunities.
- Expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism by leveraging the area's environmental and iconic assets.
- Raise the area's profile and awareness of employment, business development and lifestyle opportunities, particularly for younger people.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.

Walcha

Walcha LGA is located on the south-eastern edge of the New England Tablelands and sits on the Oxley Highway and Thunderbolts Way. Walcha is the focal centre and provides essential retail, commercial and community services to local communities including a modern multi-purpose health service facility and primary and secondary schools. The centre of Nowendoc fulfils local service needs and contributes to the unique local character of the area.

Walcha's rich basalt soil supports some of the world's best fine wool as well as beef production and forestry. Walcha has abundant environmental assets, such as Oxley Wild Rivers and Werrikimbe national parks and contains World Heritage-listed rainforest. Iconic visitor experiences such as trout streams and spectacular waterfalls will continue to draw domestic and international tourists, contribute to attractive lifestyles and grow the local economy.

Priorities:

- Deliver a variety of housing options in Walcha and promote development that contributes to the unique character of Nowendoc.
- Encourage diversification in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness to grow these sectors and harness domestic and international opportunities.
- Continue to develop access and logistics infrastructure on appropriate sites to encourage new industry opportunities.
- Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism places and enhance visitor experiences.
- Identify and promote wind, solar and other renewable energy production opportunities.
- Promote a vibrant, youthful and mobile workforce and provide services for the ageing population.
- Raise the area's profile and awareness of employment, business development and lifestyle opportunities, particularly for younger people.
- Foster resilience and diversification in the agricultural industry to respond to the ageing farming workforce and climate change.

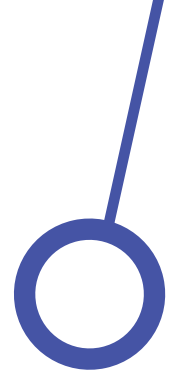


Appendix A

Interim Settlement Planning Principles

	Principles	
Land suitability	1	- New land release areas are to be located adjacent to existing urban settlements to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, including water, sewer, road and waste services. - Where new development is proposed away from existing settlements, the provision of essential infrastructure must have no cost to government. - The location, structure and layout of rural residential release areas should promote clustering to encourage a sense of community and facilitate the long-term expansion of existing centres and residential areas.
	2	Direct new land release areas to unconstrained land by avoiding areas of high environmental value, cultural, and heritage significance and/or areas affected by natural hazards such as flooding or bushfire.
	3	New land release areas should avoid and manage the potential for land use conflicts with existing and likely future adjoining uses and infrastructure, including important agricultural land, and productive resource lands.
Development structure and form	4	Require new land release areas to provide links to adjoining areas to ensure new areas are well integrated and maximise efficiency and shared use of services and facilities.
	5	Recognise, protect and be compatible with any unique topographic, natural or built cultural features essential to the visual setting, character, identity, or heritage significance of the area.
	6	Support and maintain strong multi-functional central business precincts and support the viability of centres.
	7	Provide housing diversity targets to support a variety of dwelling types and a choice in location, form and affordability.
	8	Design and locate land uses to minimise the need to travel; to maximise opportunity for efficient public transport and pedestrian access options; and to encourage energy and resource efficiency.
	9	Design and locate development to maximise total water cycle management and promote passive environmental design principles. Water sensitive urban design techniques should be incorporated into the design of dwellings, streets, parking areas, subdivisions and multi-unit, commercial and industrial developments.
	10	Create walkable communities within the hierarchy of settlement.
	11	Provide for local services that meet the day to day needs of residents and areas for open space and recreation.

Glossary



Affordable housing

Housing for very low and low income households where rent or mortgage payments are below 30 per cent of gross household income or the household is eligible to occupy rental accommodation under the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

Agribusiness

A business that earns most or all of its revenues from agriculture. An agribusiness could include food and fibre production, agrichemicals, seed supply, farm machinery, wholesale and distribution, freight, logistics, processing, marketing and retail sales.

Biodiversity

‘Biodiversity’ or ‘biological diversity’ describes the variety of life on Earth – the life forms, the different plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain and the ecosystems they form. It is usually considered at three levels: genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity.

Biosecurity

Measures that are taken to protect the economy, environment and community from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds.

Bio-waste

Waste material derived from living organisms. Bio-waste can be used to generate energy.

Centres

Centres provide jobs and services such as shopping, dining, health and personal services to meet the daily and weekly needs of the local community.

Climate change

A change in the state of climate that can be identified by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer (Garnaut Review, 2008).

Employment lands

Land zoned for industrial or similar purposes (i.e. land zoned B5 Business Development or B7 Business Park in planning instruments). These are generally lower density employment areas containing concentrations of businesses involved in: manufacturing; transport and warehousing; service and repair trades and industries; integrated enterprises with a mix of administration, production, warehousing, research and development; and urban services and utilities.

Green Industries

Green industries are businesses, facilities, services or the development of technologies that are aimed to provide sustainable alternatives or solutions to environmental challenges. Examples include bottle recycling plants, waste management and treatment or research and development for clean energy.

Gross Regional Product (GRP)

A measure of the size of a region’s economy and productivity. The market value of all final goods and services produced in a region within a given period of time.

Housing choice

The types of housing available to meet the current or future needs of the community. Housing choice is driven by factors such as the make-up of the population, affordability and lifestyle trends.

Household size

The average number of people living in a dwelling in a State, region or locality.

Housing types

Forms of housing, such as single dwellings, boarding houses, dual occupancies, group homes, hostels, multi-dwelling housing, residential flat buildings, secondary dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, seniors housing and shop top housing.

Important agricultural land

The existing or future location of local or regionally important agricultural industries or agricultural resources, mapped using the NSW Department of Primary Industries important agricultural lands methodology.

Local growth management strategies

Local growth management strategies will be prepared by councils to reflect the directions and actions contained in this Plan. Guidelines will be prepared to help councils develop local growth management strategies, which will be developed prior to preparing a local environmental plan to zone land for residential, rural residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

Local Plans (Local Environmental Plans or Development Control Plans)

Statutory and non-statutory plans prepared by council for a local government area to guide planning decisions by local councils. Through the use of land zoning and other development controls, a local plan is typically the main mechanism for determining the type and amount of development which can occur on each parcel of land in NSW. Local plans are the main planning tool that shapes the future of communities and ensures local development is appropriate.

Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA)

Naturally occurring fibrous silicate minerals found in rock, sediment or soil. NOA distinguishes these natural occurrences from manufactured products that contain asbestos. In NSW the three main areas known to have NOA are: The Great Serpentine Belt (near Barraba), The Gordonbrook Serpentine Belt (near Baryulgil) and The Coolac Serpentine Belt (near Gundagai). The risk to humans from NOA is very low particularly if the site is left undisturbed. Only testing of site material will confirm if NOA is present.

Nature-based tourism

Tourism based on the natural attractions of an area. Examples include birdwatching, photography, stargazing, camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, scuba diving, mountain biking, wakeboard and water skiing.

New England North West region

The Local Government Areas of Tenterfield, Glen Innes Severn, Inverell, Armidale Regional, Uralla, Walcha, Gwydir, Tamworth Regional, Liverpool Plains, Gunnedah, Narrabri and Moree Plains.

Precinct planning

The preparation of a blueprint for an area which involves investigations into appropriate land use and built form options, physical environment constraints, infrastructure requirements, community values and expectations and tenure arrangements.

Regional city

Centres with the largest commercial component of any location in the region and that provides a full range of higher-order services, including hospitals and tertiary education services. Tamworth and Armidale are the regional cities of the New England North West.

Riparian corridor

A riparian corridor forms a transition zone between the land and a watercourse or aquatic environment.

Strategic centres

Centres of regional strategic importance including Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah, Glen Innes and Inverell.

Sustainability

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.





Endnotes

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14. Tamworth Country Music Festival 2017, Festival Info <http://tcmf.com.au/festival-info/>



*For more information about the New England North West Regional Plan 2036
visit planning.nsw.gov.au*