



Planning &
Environment

2036

**Central
West and
Orana**

**Regional
Plan**

CENTRAL WEST AND ORANA REGIONAL PLAN 2036
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Cover image: *F.O.O.D Week at Borrodell Vineyard, Orange, courtesy of Destination NSW*

Foreword



The Central West and Orana sits at the heart of New South Wales and is poised to take advantage of this pivotal position to make for an exciting future.

We've heard community and stakeholder aspirations for the region, and drawn on this feedback to create a Regional Plan that focuses on a diverse economy, supported by expanded connections to the rest of NSW and beyond, with vibrant communities and prosperous centres.

The Plan celebrates the distinct landscapes and natural environment and their important role in new economic opportunities, including significant agribusiness, value-added manufacturing developments and unique tourism experiences.

The Plan promotes further development of the renewable energy, mining, health and education sectors to unlock economic potential and drive diversification across the Central West and Orana.

Upgrades to transport and freight networks will facilitate economic growth and diversification by unlocking new export opportunities, strengthening the region's cities and centres and enhancing productivity of the agricultural, mining and natural resources sectors.

The development of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, alongside upgrades to the Newell and Golden Highways, has the potential to transform the Central West and Orana into one of the key freight and logistics destinations in Australia. In doing so, it will create more dynamic and resilient communities adapting to changing economic, social and environmental circumstances.

Regional cities and strategic centres will experience the highest rates of population growth over the next 20 years, alongside Cabonne and Blayney local government areas. The regional cities and strategic centres will be the service hubs for surrounding communities, providing access to jobs, health and education services.

Smaller communities will play an increasingly important role in attracting visitors and new residents through their lifestyle choices and countryside. These areas will make important contributions to the regional economy through taking up new jobs in agribusiness and tourism.

The Plan aims to meet the needs of changing communities, particularly for the ageing population, by promoting greater housing choices, improved housing affordability, access to health and education services and public and community transport.

We recognise the Wiradjuri, Gamilaraay and Wayliwan people as the original custodians of the Central West and Orana. They are important partners in the economic, social and environmental future of the region and we will continue to work together and increase collaboration.

The Central West and Orana Region Regional Plan 2036 encompasses a vision, goals and actions focused towards delivering new and diversified opportunities in the years ahead for those who live, work and visit this region.

I urge everyone committed to the Central West and Orana to collaborate and support its success.

A blue ink signature of Anthony Roberts MP, written in a cursive style.

Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing
Special Minister of State





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Introduction



The Central West and Orana is one of NSW's most diverse regional economies, increasingly connected with cities to the east and building the capacity of its freight and logistics infrastructure

The Central West and Orana sits at the heart of NSW, with access to all corners of the State and beyond. Its varied landscapes support a diverse and productive economy that leverages connections to Sydney, Canberra and, increasingly, Newcastle. These connections – along with domestic and international supply chains to the north, south and west – create a diverse and productive economy.

Investment in roads, rail networks and telecommunications will boost opportunities for agribusiness, advanced and value-added manufacturing, mining and tourism sectors.

By 2036, the region's population will increase to more than 300,000 people, who will mainly live in the regional cities of Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo, the strategic centres of Lithgow, Mudgee and Cowra, and the twin centres of Parkes and Forbes. These places will provide new options and opportunities for surrounding networks of communities.

Internationally recognised environmental assets, such as the Macquarie Marshes and Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, along with major attractions, including the Taronga Western Plains Zoo and festivals and events, will attract increasing numbers of visitors.

This makes for an exciting future for the region, and the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036* is the blueprint for that future.

The Plan will guide the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years. 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.

Local Government Narratives set out priorities for each council to guide further investigation and implementation.

The *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036* is the product of extensive consultation with councils, stakeholders and the wider community, following the release of a draft Plan in 2016. The feedback from this consultation has been integrated into this document.

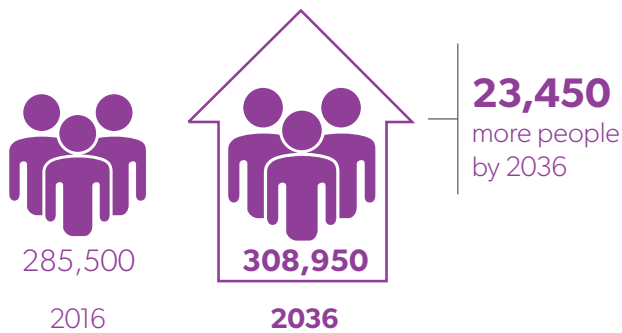
Central West and Orana infrastructure investments

NSW Government investments in the Central West and Orana include:

- \$241.3 million for the Dubbo Base Hospital redevelopment;
- \$60 million to upgrade Mudgee Hospital;
- \$140 million towards construction of a third bridge crossing at Dubbo;
- \$28 million towards the Bells Line of Road upgrade;
- \$21 million for a five-stage potable water supply pipeline from Orange to Blayney and Carcoar Dam;
- \$17 million for a potable water pipeline from Orange to Molong Dam, and from Molong to Cumnock and Yeoval;
- \$2.5 million for the new Molong Ambulance Station; and
- establishment of Multi-Purpose Services at Molong, Coolah and Rylstone.

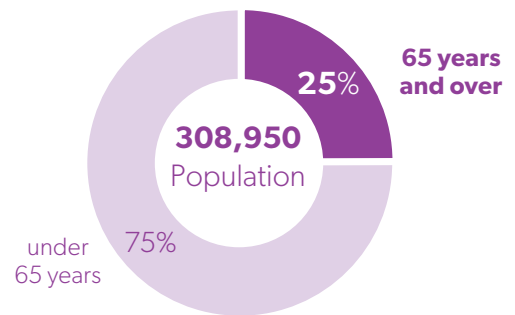
Population Growth Forecast

2016-2036



Ageing Population

2036

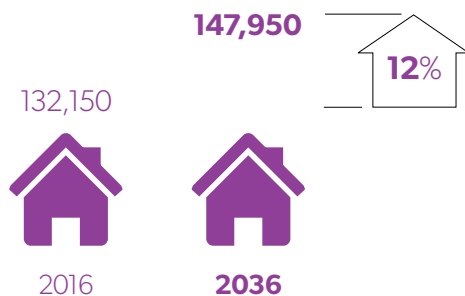


Dwellings Growth Forecast

2016-2036

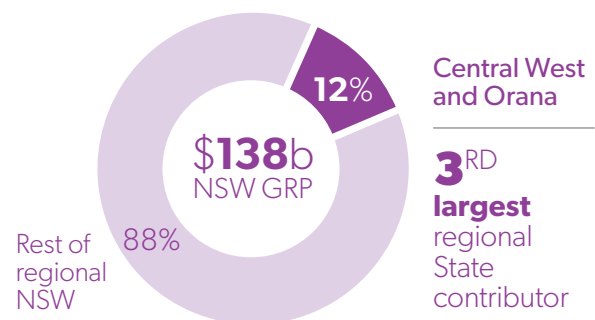
15,800

additional dwellings required (2036)



Gross Regional Product Contribution

2011



Largest Gross Regional Product Contributor

2011

Mining



\$2.5b

5% jobs

Second Largest Gross Regional Product Contributor

2011

Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing



\$1.3b

11% jobs

Bathurst 1000[®] Motor Race

2015



200,000+

visitors

Taronga Western Plains Zoo[®]

2015



226,000+

visitors

Delivering the Plan

The NSW Government's commitment

To deliver the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036*, all levels of government, the private sector and the community will have to work together. The Plan needs to be incorporated into each stakeholder's future activities.

Coordination

The NSW Government has established the Central West and Orana Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee to deliver, coordinate and be accountable for achieving the vision and goals of this Plan. This dedicated new body comprises of representatives from Joint Organisations, Regional Organisations of 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 growing the agribusiness, advanced manufacturing, mining and renewable

energy sectors; planning for growth and change in the region's centres; and enhancing the regional freight network. Over time, the Committee will identify new priorities to support regional growth.

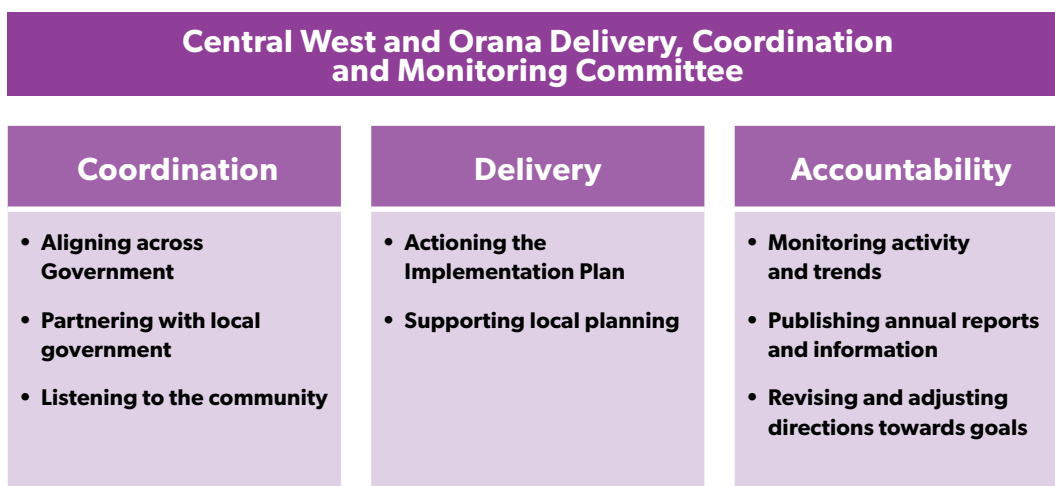
The Plan sets regional planning priorities and provides a framework for regional and local planning decisions. The NSW Government will use it to advise infrastructure agencies about the timing of new developments, and to inform the ongoing planning and delivery of infrastructure, asset management and services.

The Plan sets in place line-of-sight land use planning for the region and local government areas to identify and resolve issues. Line-of-sight planning will allow issues to be identified and resolved early, rather than at the development application stage.

This Plan is accompanied by an Implementation Plan for 2017-2019.

Regional district planning may be undertaken in partnership with all stakeholders, led by the Committee. The Plan highlights potential priorities for regional district planning where matters cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Figure 1: **Central West and Orana Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee**



A Government direction will be issued so that when councils prepare new planning proposals or update local planning controls, they are consistent with the vision and guiding principles of this Plan.

The Local Government Narratives provide guidance for each council as they prepare local land use strategies. The Committee will support this work to ensure local plans translate the vision and guiding principles of this Plan into local priorities for growth and change.

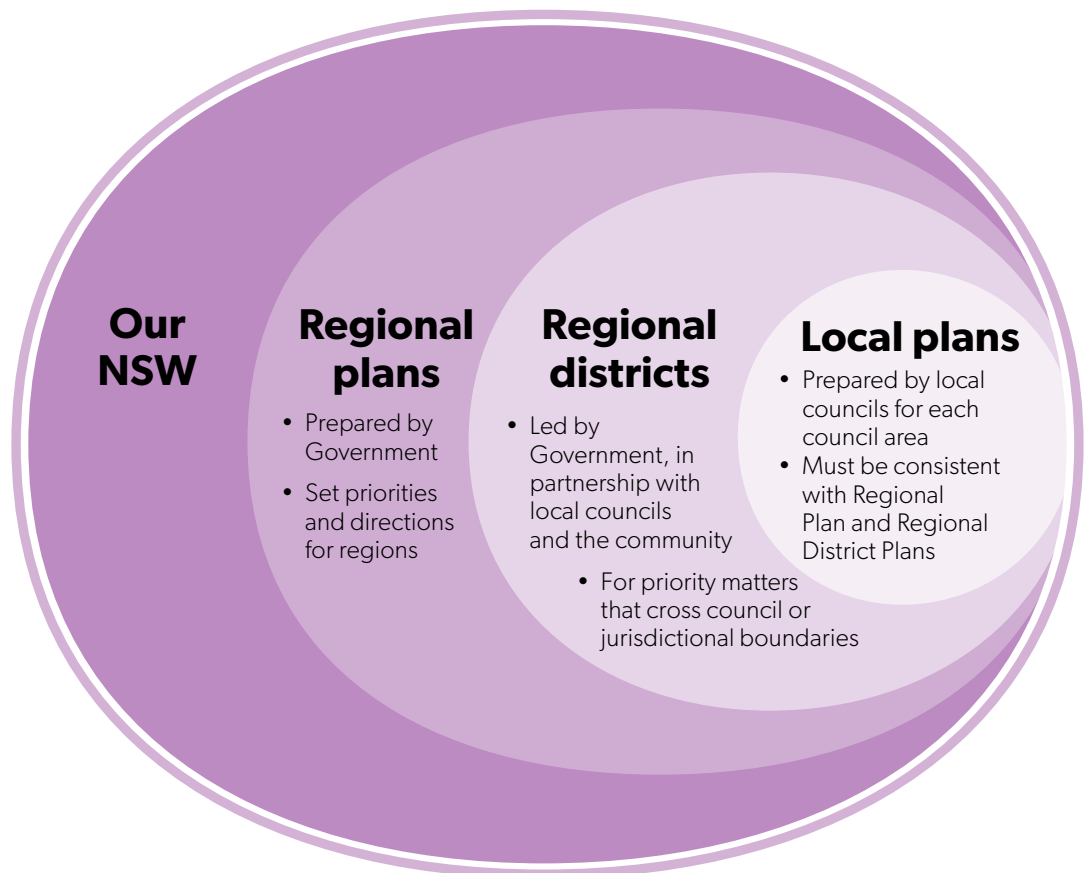
Accountability

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 measure performance against indicators for housing, employment, communities and the environment, and include advice to Government on the delivery of short-term actions.

The Committee will review the Plan every five years, or as necessary, to help realise the vision for 2036.

Figure 2: **State planning hierarchy**



Vision



The most diverse regional economy in NSW with a vibrant network of centres leveraging the opportunities of being at the heart of NSW

The Central West and Orana is home to more than 300,000 people. People from metropolitan areas are attracted to its vibrant regional cities and centres, historic towns and villages, diverse lifestyles, and community festivals and events.

The region makes a major contribution to the State's economy, building on its proud agricultural heritage and embracing innovation. Its rich soils, mountains and vast plains form a mosaic of beautiful landscapes.

Productive and diversified agribusiness, manufacturing, mineral and renewable energy resources provide local job opportunities. Tourism, health and education drive a growing service economy that underpins community vibrancy and creates more diverse job opportunities. The region identifies, protects, and sustainably farms its high-quality agricultural lands.

Ongoing leadership in agricultural innovation makes the region a preferred destination for food processing, packaging and associated industries. These industries produce high-quality products that are distributed domestically and around the world.

Improved transport connections with Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle, together with the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, provide capacity and connectivity for agribusiness, manufacturing, tourism and mining. Investment in roads and logistics facilities provide a more efficient network, making the region a nationally significant freight hub.

The mineral and energy resources sectors make a significant economic contribution, with new mining opportunities emerging across the region. Landmark solar, wind and bioenergy projects distinguish the region as a leader in renewable energy development.

Significant and internationally recognised landscapes, including the Blue Mountains, the western plains and expansive river systems and wetlands, enrich the lives of residents and visitors and are providing opportunities for future generations. Increasing numbers of visitors enjoy diverse cultural festivals and events and unique attractions, such as Taronga Western Plains Zoo and Mount Panorama raceway.

The regional cities of Bathurst, Orange and Dubbo and other centres capitalise on their proximity to Sydney, Newcastle and Canberra and their location at the junction of nationally significant road and rail corridors.

These connections and centres allow people living in rural communities to access high quality health, aged care and community services and facilities. Local service centres benefit from increased economic activity in the agribusiness, tourism and service sectors. Greater housing diversity and choice across the region meets community demand.

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

***acknowledged the two diverse parts
of the region: one connecting with
metropolitan cities to the east, and the
other taking advantage of freight and
logistics infrastructure to access
domestic and global markets and...***

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

- **The most diverse regional economy in NSW**
- **A stronger, healthier environment and diverse heritage**
- **Quality freight, transport and infrastructure networks**
- **Dynamic, vibrant and healthy communities**

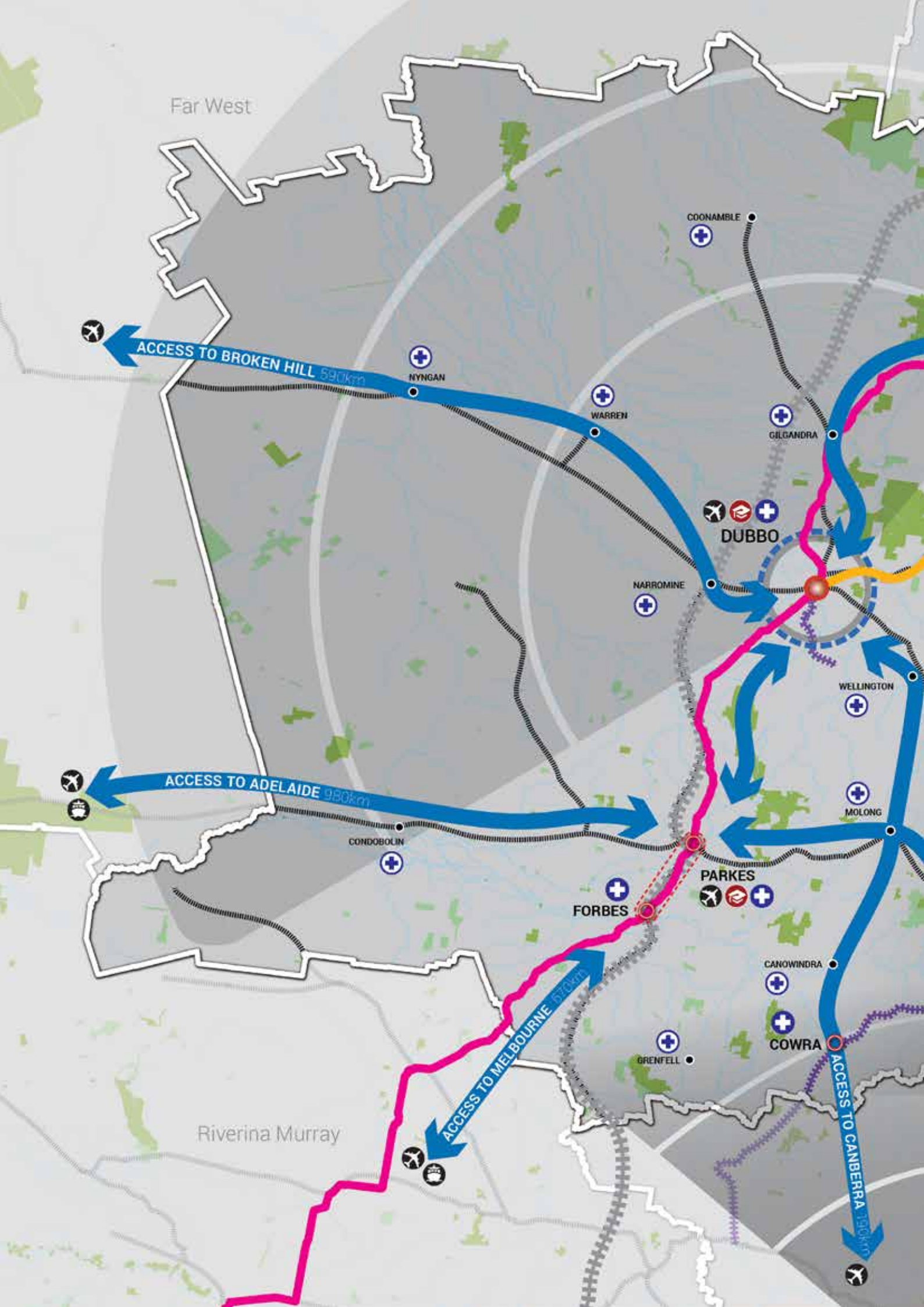
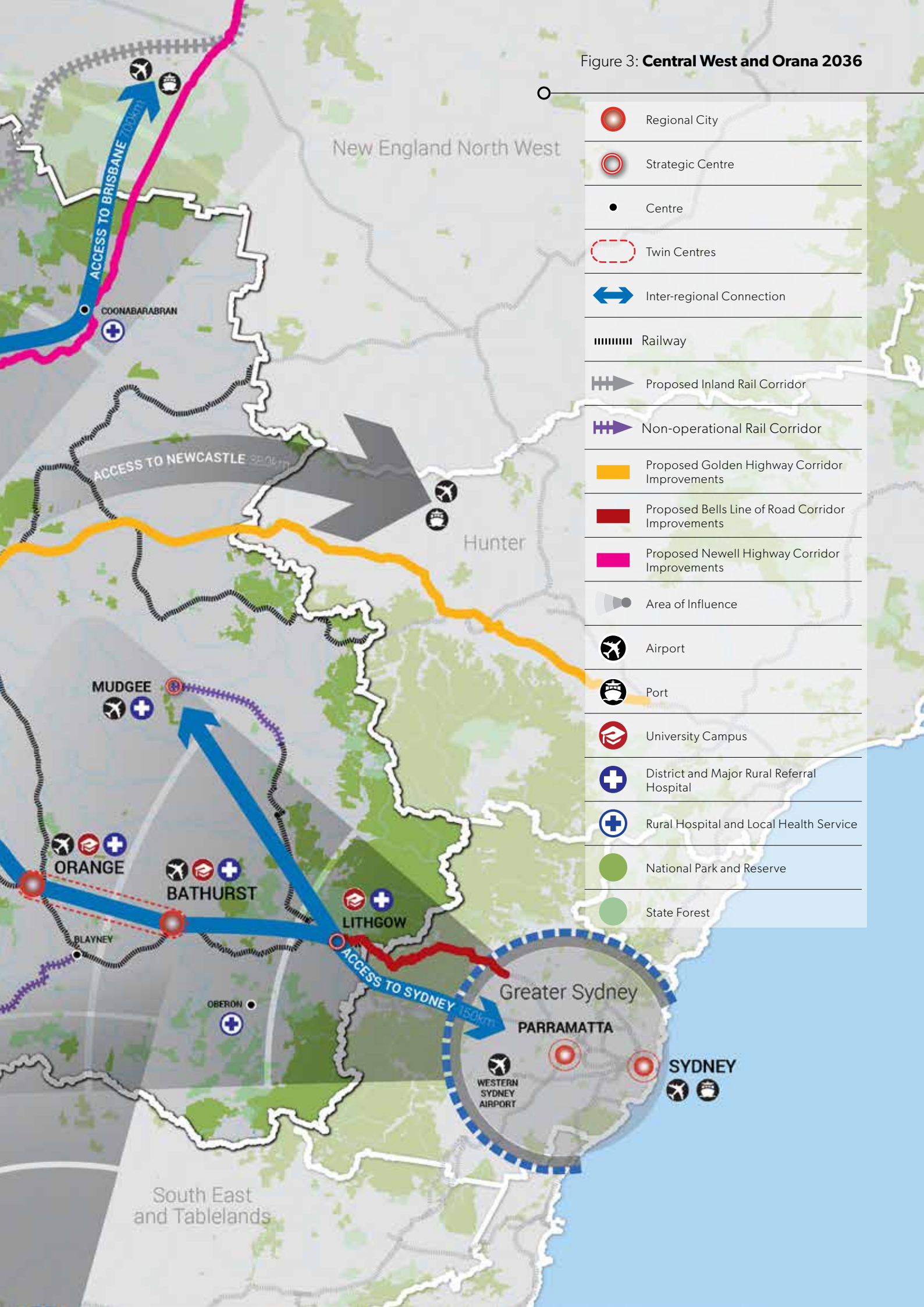


Figure 3: **Central West and Orana 2036**



Leveraging a region of two distinct parts

A key component in the Central West and Orana's success

The Central West and Orana includes the distinctive agricultural hinterland of the Central West and the vast slopes and plains of the Orana. These two parts function in different ways, but when brought together they create a dynamic and resilient region that is stronger than the individual parts.

Historically, the Central West was considered part of Sydney's hinterland. It has grown to create a successful broad economic base, with a network of centres developed to service rural communities as growth expanded over the Blue Mountains. This close pattern of settlement is reflected in the numerous villages and centres clustered along key corridors and the development of the twin centres of Forbes and Parkes, and Bathurst and Orange. The twin centres utilise their proximity to leverage the strengths of each individual centre.

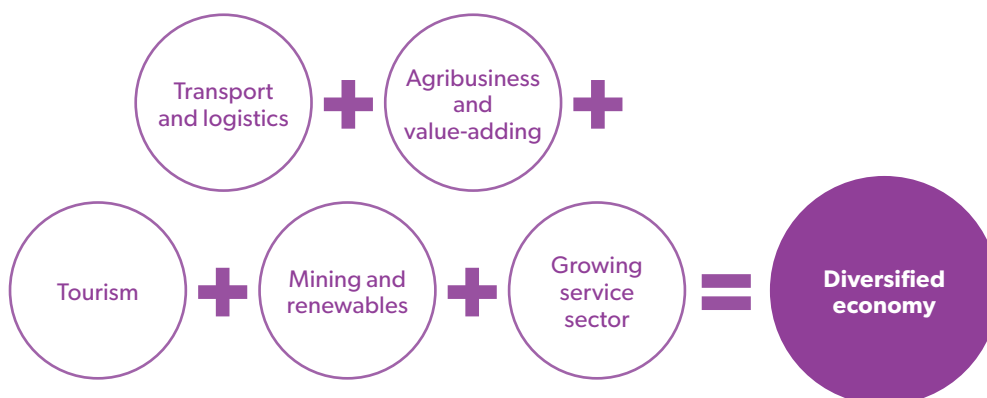
The Central West will continue to benefit from its connections to Sydney, including the new Western Sydney Airport, and from Canberra's increasing global connectivity.

The Orana includes some of the State's most productive agricultural areas. Infrastructure improvements will strengthen the Orana's supply chain with markets across Australia and the world.

The city of Dubbo has grown at the geographical centre of the region to become the inter- and intra-regional functional and economic centre. Dubbo serves as the central hub for connections to a large number of dispersed rural communities. These self-reliant communities provide services to their immediate and wider catchment communities.

Planning for the region's prosperity recognises these differences and leverages competitive advantages and opportunities. This includes growing demand from Asia for agricultural produce, increasing tourism opportunities, and an expanding service economy in health, aged care and education services.

To capitalise on these advantages and unlock economic potential, existing infrastructure will be improved and better used to ensure there is efficient supply chains and accessibility through the Blue Mountains to Sydney, along the Golden Highway to Newcastle and to the emerging market opportunities associated with Canberra.





The two parts of **Central West and Orana**

Transport and logistics

The Central West and Orana shares borders and connections with six of NSW's 10 regions. It connects along interstate transport links between Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane, and has the only double-stacked containerised freight connection with Western Australia. The region will capitalise on these locational strengths to harness economic growth.

Many of NSW's freight connections converge in Parkes and Dubbo. These major freight hubs act as an aggregation point for selling, processing, manufacturing and transporting livestock and agricultural produce to markets and ports across Australia.

The links through the Blue Mountains to Sydney will be important for the region's prosperity, capitalising on Western Sydney's rapid growth and the opportunities from the planned Western Sydney Airport.

More than half of the road freight transport between the Central West and Sydney uses the Great Western Highway, which has been upgraded to four lanes between Emu Plains and Katoomba. Better connections are also available through road safety improvements and traffic efficiencies on Bells Line of Road.

Connections east to Newcastle and south-east to Canberra and Port Kembla provide additional direct access to markets and export gateways.

An upgraded Newell Highway and Golden Highway, and the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, could boost the region's reputation as a freight hub and increase opportunities for freight and logistics facilities and intermodals close to road and rail corridors.































Agribusiness and value-added opportunities


























The region has a strong agricultural history. The Central West's scenic tablelands support cool climate viticulture, forestry and grazing. The slopes and plains of the Orana support diverse agribusiness enterprises, and broadscale and irrigated agriculture. These diverse agricultural industries provide employment for people living in areas such as Narromine and Coonamble, both directly in production and indirectly in supporting agribusiness.

The diversity and quality of agricultural commodities provide enormous potential for value-added opportunities. The region's two parts interact to benefit the entire region and maximise value-added opportunities. Processing facilities in the Central West rely partly on agricultural produce from the Orana and vice versa. The established processing and manufacturing industries in Dubbo, Blayney, Manildra and Bathurst will encourage related industry development and attract investment.

The synergies between the two parts of the region will maximise future innovation opportunities and increase productivity.

Top Three Economic Opportunities Per Local Government Area

 CENTRAL WEST	Agribusiness	Transport and logistics	Tourism	Manufacturing	Mining	Aged care	Health	Aviation	Technology and education
Bathurst Regional									
Blayney									
Cabonne									
Cowra									
Forbes									
Lachlan									
Lithgow									
Oberon									
Orange									
Parkes									
Weddin									

 ORANA	Agribusiness	Transport and logistics	Tourism	Manufacturing	Mining	Aged care	Health	Aviation	Technology and education
Bogan									
Coonamble									
Dubbo Regional									
Gilgandra									
Narromine									
Mid-Western Regional									
Warren									
Warrumbungle									

Tourism

The region's diverse landscapes and communities, location, history and transport connections make tourism an important industry. Parts of the region are less than three hours from Sydney and Canberra, and the region sits halfway between Victoria and Queensland.

Tourist attractions include the natural assets of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and the internationally recognised Macquarie Marshes; national attractions of Siding Spring Observatory and Taronga Western Plains Zoo; and attractive historical towns and villages, such as Gulgong and Millthorpe.

Opportunities around the arts, events, festivals, sports and conference tourism include motor racing at Mount Panorama in Bathurst, F.O.O.D Week in Orange, Canowindra International Balloon Challenge and the Parkes Elvis Festival.

The region will draw more weekend visitors from Sydney and Canberra, and increasingly from overseas, including emerging opportunities from the growing Asian middle class.

The stronger the connections across the region, with centres in adjoining regions and with Sydney and Canberra, the greater will be the region's ability to capitalise on tourism opportunities.

Mining and renewables

The region's mining sector includes coal mining concentrated around Lithgow and Mudgee; gold, silver and copper mining; and emerging opportunities for rare earth mining in other parts of the region, including Dubbo.

Renewable energy generation will also create a more sustainable energy future for the region.

Growth in wind energy, solar energy and bioenergy generation will promote local jobs in smaller communities and development opportunities for associated industries. Wind generation opportunities are focused around the tablelands and slopes of the Central West, while the large open plains of the Orana provide the best access for solar energy generation.

A growing service sector

The hinterland, tablelands, slopes and plains across a network of centres support a diversity of industries. These industries form economic building blocks for growing the regional cities and centres. This growth will drive demand for high quality health, education and recreation choices.

Regional cities and strategic centres provide higher-order services to extensive networks of surrounding settlements, including essential regional services at major hospitals and university campuses.

The regional cities and strategic centres have the opportunity to cluster economic activity around local industries, be a source of economic diversity and provide more skilled job opportunities. For example, activities associated with Dubbo Hospital and Charles Sturt University will foster regional economic vibrancy and resilience.

Specific industry development like manufacturing and value-adding of local produce in Blayney, Manildra and Cowra will help sustain these important economies into the future.

The health care and education sectors will deliver important services, particularly around existing health facilities in Dubbo, Orange, Bathurst, Mudgee and Parkes. With an ageing population, demand for health services will increase in both cities and local centres, as will demand and opportunities for skilled workers to provide these services.

Growing the cities, strategic centres and local centres as the principle places for jobs, commerce, retail and social activity will help promote a sense of place. It will also service the growing populations and maintain the vitality of business precincts.

Expanding tertiary education services and online access to education, particularly in smaller and isolated communities, will increase access to services and sustain community wellbeing.



GOAL 1

The most diverse regional economy in NSW

The Central West and Orana's broad range of industries, its location and connections to Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle provide a foundation for a diverse regional economy.

While traditionally anchored in agriculture, manufacturing and mining, the region's health, education and tourism sectors present new opportunities for economic growth. Opportunities are also emerging in food production and packaging, aged care and related services, renewable energy and niche tourism. Growth across this range of sectors will be carefully managed and planned to provide greater land use compatibility.

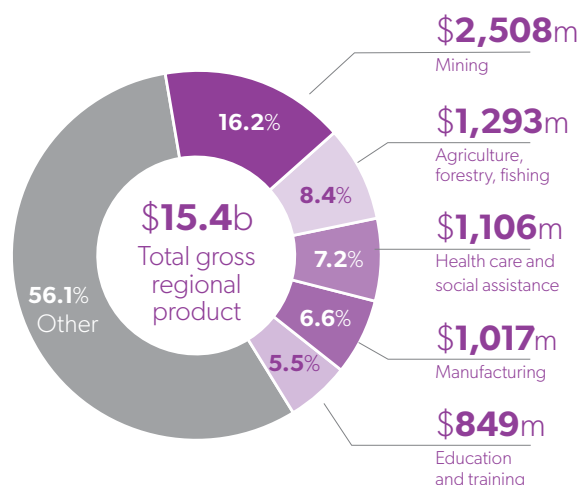
Proximity to Sydney, Newcastle, Port Kembla and Canberra and their respective international gateways, along with the north-south access to Brisbane and Melbourne on the Newell Highway, will stimulate growth through servicing national and international markets. The ability to export produce through Canberra Airport, along with opportunities associated with the new Western Sydney Airport, will be a game changer for agricultural exports from the Central West and Orana.¹

Increasing connectivity will enable the region to meet growing demand from Asia for exports of agriculture, minerals and tourism. This will coincide with demand from a growing Greater Sydney, despite the access constraints of the Blue Mountains.

New technologies in health, agriculture and online education, and improvements in telecommunications, will benefit the agribusiness, education and health sectors. These shifts require coordinated, long-term planning and investment to maximise regional productivity.

A stronger, more diverse economy will facilitate the planning and commitment to care for the environment and improve sustainability.

Top Five Industries
by Economic Contribution
2011



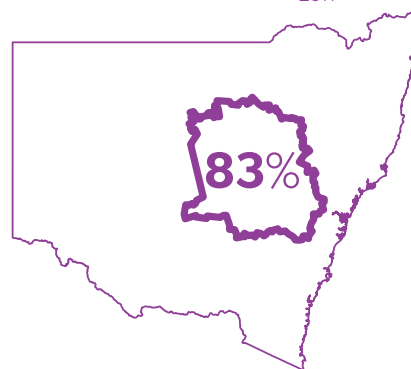
Agricultural Production Value

2011



Nectarine Production

2011



of State production

Direction 1: Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land

Agricultural production occurs from the vast plains of the Orana in the north and west to the sub-alpine areas of the Central West in the east. Ranging from intensive and irrigated crops – including vegetables, fodder, stone fruits, grapes and cotton – to extensive broadacre cropping, meat and wool production, and forestry.

Highly productive agriculture requires ready access to water, high quality soils and suitable climates. While the total area of land available for agriculture is large, comparatively few locations have access to all these characteristics.

Important agricultural land needs to be identified and protected and a critical mass of agricultural industries maintained to capitalise on demand, increase productivity and employment, and ensure fresh food is available locally.

The NSW Government's 2014 Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land mapping identifies agricultural land in the region that is significant to the State (see Figure 4). There is an opportunity to complement this mapping with regional-scale mapping that reflects regional climatic and geological conditions, as well as regional industry needs.

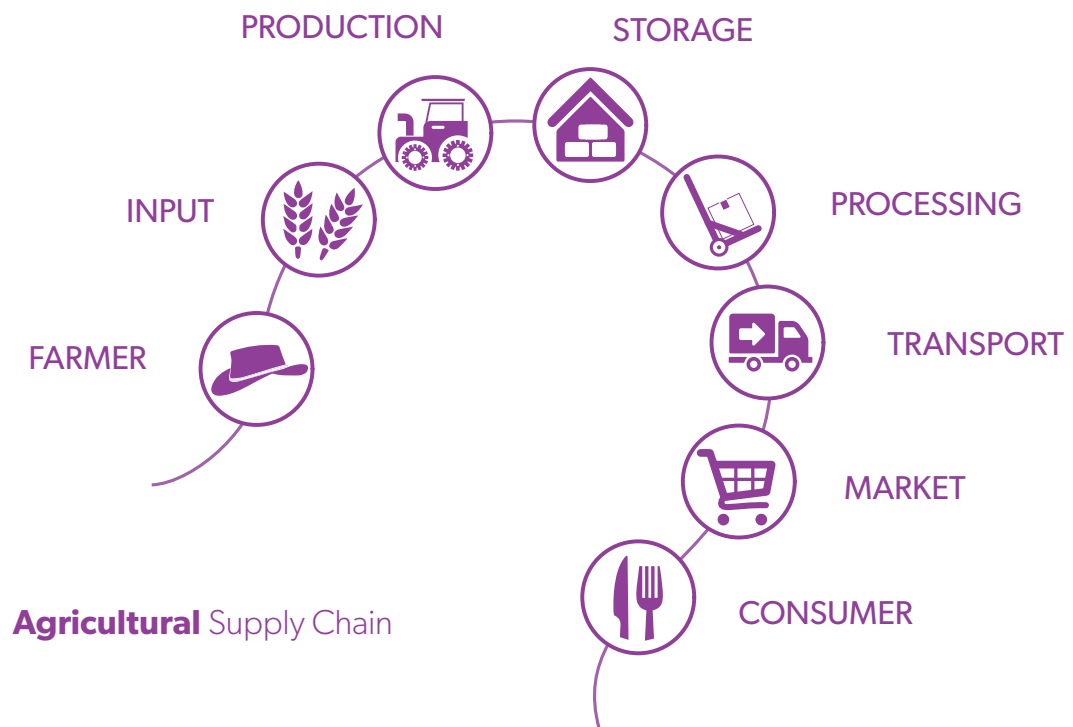
A regional agricultural development strategy will identify and map the region's important agricultural land. It will identify emerging opportunities for agriculture, and guide and direct local planning for the region and NSW. Mapping will incorporate biophysical, infrastructure and socio-economic factors.

Co-location of incompatible land uses with important agricultural land should be minimised. These can inhibit agricultural production, affect productivity or fragment agricultural land. They also put pressure on agriculture producers who are trying to achieve the economies of scale that will minimise costs across their supply chains.

Biosecurity will remain an important consideration for agricultural areas, as it contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of the region and, more broadly, the nation. The NSW Government's *NSW Biosecurity Strategy 2013-2021* highlights measures to avoid the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds. It will inform ongoing risk assessments – which will consider biosecurity plans – and lead to the application of appropriate buffer areas.

Actions

- 1.1 Release a regional agricultural development strategy that:
 - maps important agricultural land;
 - identifies emerging opportunities for agriculture; and
 - sets the direction for local planning of agricultural development.
- 1.2 Protect important agricultural land from land use conflict and fragmentation, and manage the interface between important agricultural lands and other land uses.
- 1.3 Implement the NSW Government's *Agriculture Industry Action Plan – Primed for growth: Investing locally, connecting globally*.
- 1.4 Undertake biosecurity risk assessments, taking into account biosecurity plans and the need for appropriate buffer areas.



Direction 2: Grow the agribusiness sector and supply chains

Agribusiness sustains the local economies of many communities. The Central West and Orana earns around \$1.3 billion from quality wine, beef, wool, vegetables, cotton, wheat, fruit and timber. This represents 18% of all agricultural production in NSW annually.²

Diversification has helped to expand agricultural activities, businesses and industries, making agribusiness one of the most important economic sectors. The agribusiness sector will grow with better recognition, protection and expansion of the agricultural supply chain. For example, industries such as the timber industry in Oberon have diversified into value add of forestry products.

Supply chains begin on farms and can extend beyond regional and State borders to national and global export markets. They include key transport infrastructure and facilities, such as silos, abattoirs and saleyards; supporting secondary processing facilities; and transport and logistics industries. For example, the Central Tablelands, Central West and Dubbo Regional livestock exchanges are critical to elements of the livestock industry supply chain.

Future planning to enable industry growth must respond to emerging opportunities. To do this, the planning system must formally recognise the importance of agricultural land, provide direction on land management, consider the effects of climate change, and guide councils when they

are preparing local land use strategies.

Reliable telecommunications are critical to encouraging innovative farming that can increase productivity and tap into new markets. Digital technology allows consumers to trace food from farm to market and also facilitates more effective biosecurity measures.³

Bogan, Narromine and Warren local government areas, and the towns in the irrigation areas of Lachlan, Forbes, Weddin and Cowra local government areas, receive an influx of seasonal workers at harvest time for the cotton, wine, orchard fruit, nuts (hazelnuts, chestnuts, walnuts) and cherry industries. Goal 4 (Direction 27) addresses accommodation options for these workers.

Actions

- 2.1 Encourage agribusiness diversification and value-adding opportunities by reviewing local plans to ensure land use zoning and definitions reflect industry requirements.
- 2.2 Guide local and strategic planning to protect agricultural land, and manage the interface with other land uses.
- 2.3 Facilitate investment in the agricultural supply chain by protecting assets such as freight and logistics facilities from land use conflict and the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

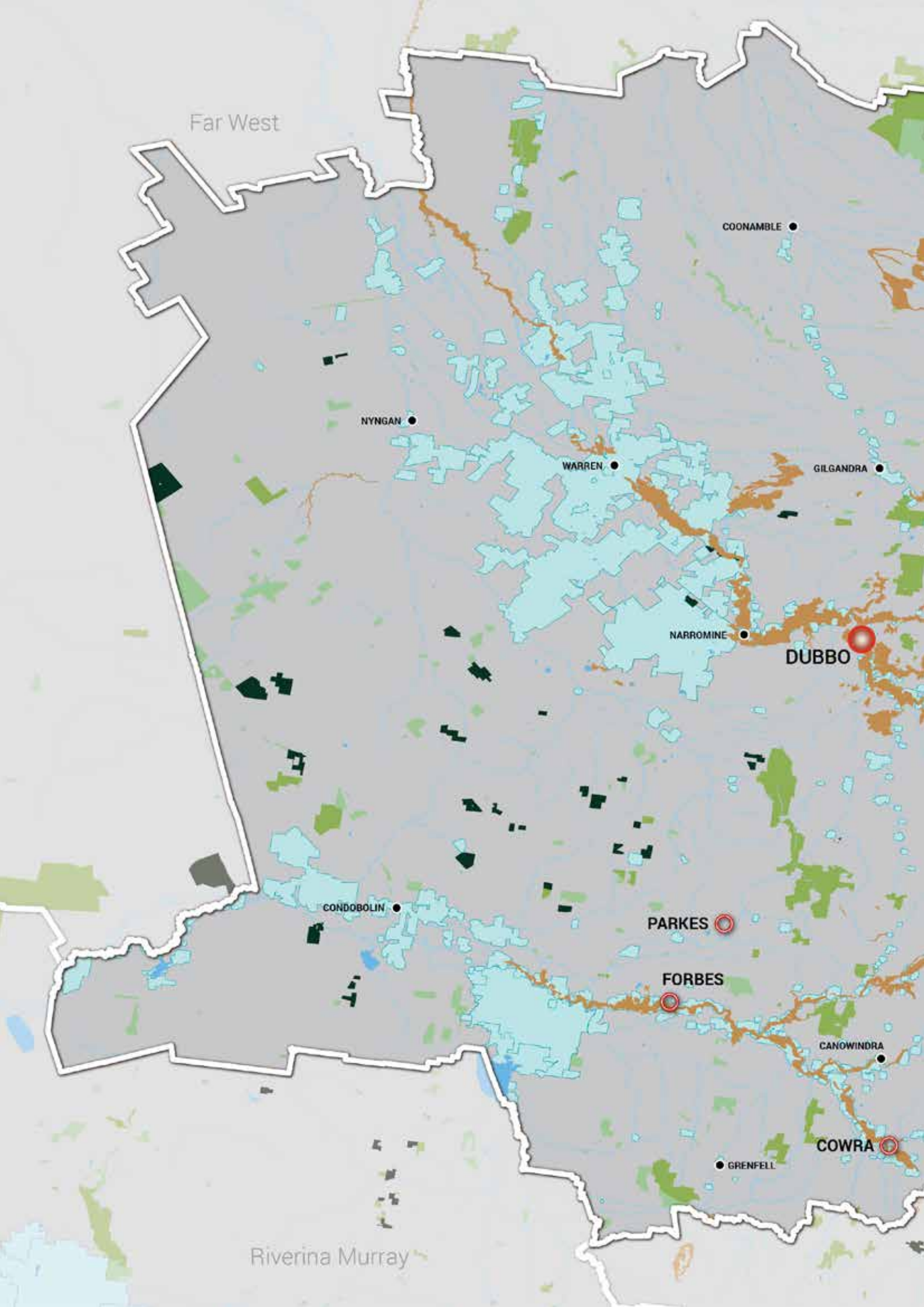


Figure 4: **Agriculture and State Forest**

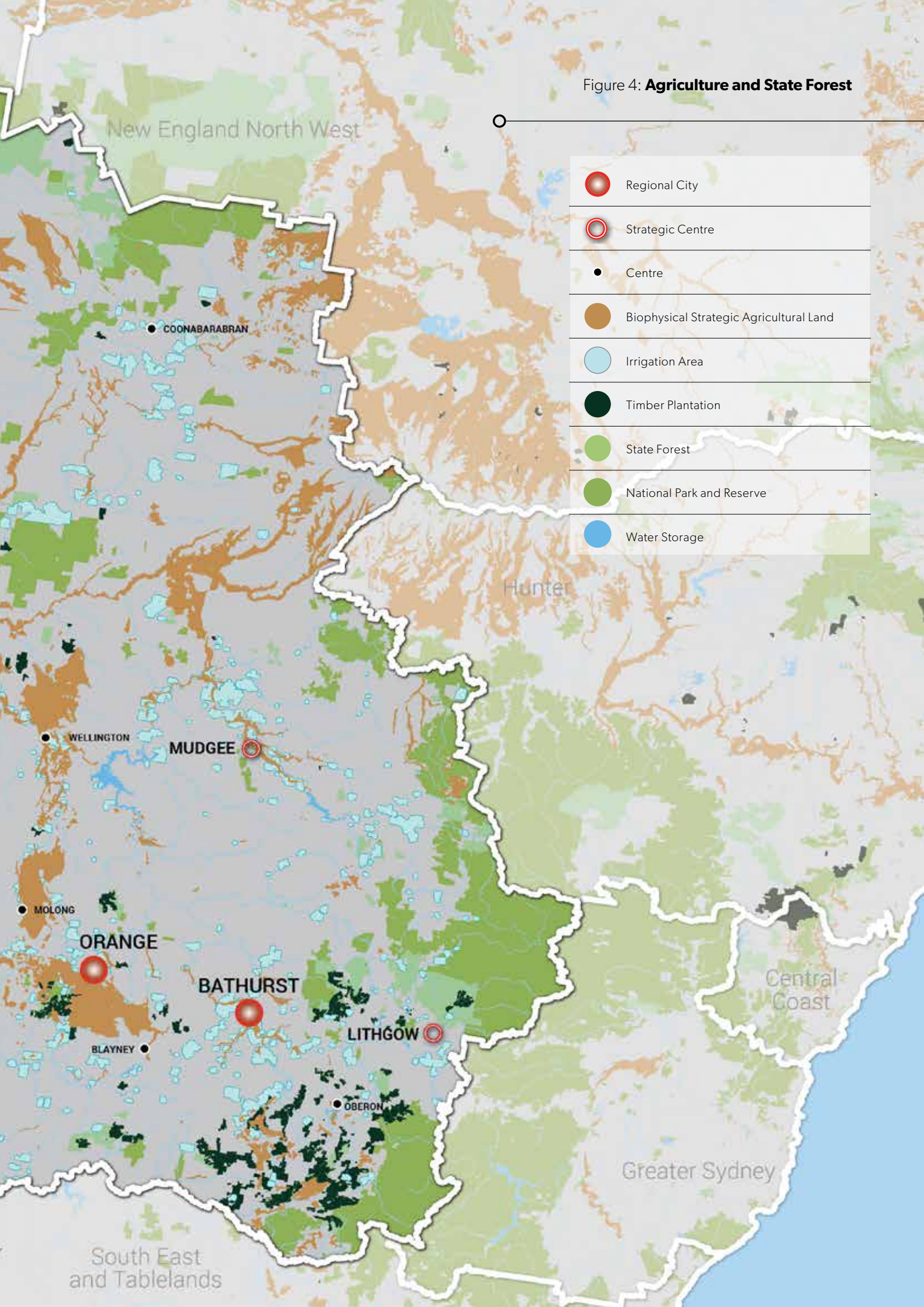
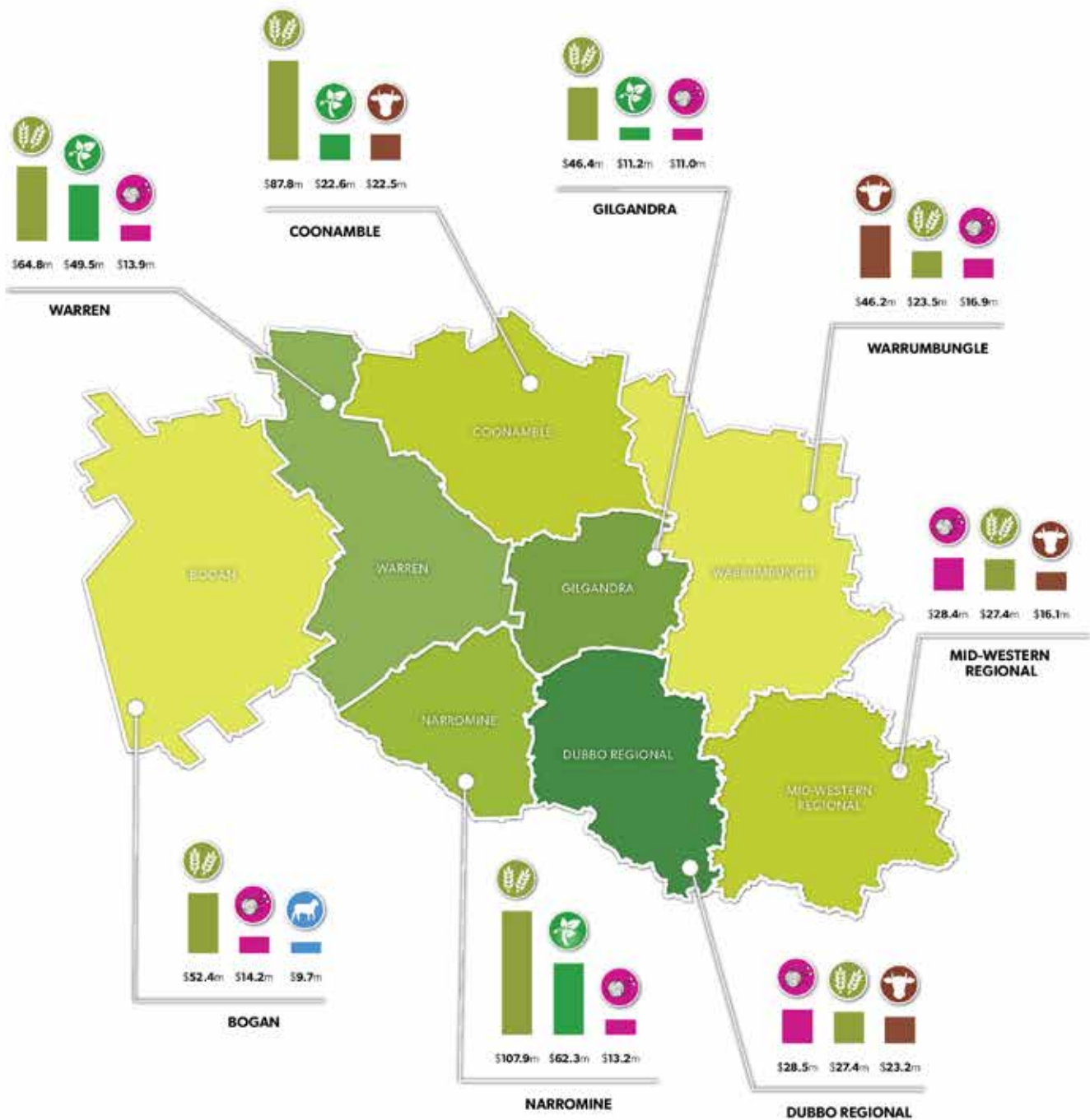


Figure 5: **Top Three Contributors to Agricultural Production in the Central West and Orana, 2011**



Orana



Cereal Crops



Cattle and Calves



Vegetables



Sheep and Lambs



Crops for Hay



Apples



Other Broadacre Crops



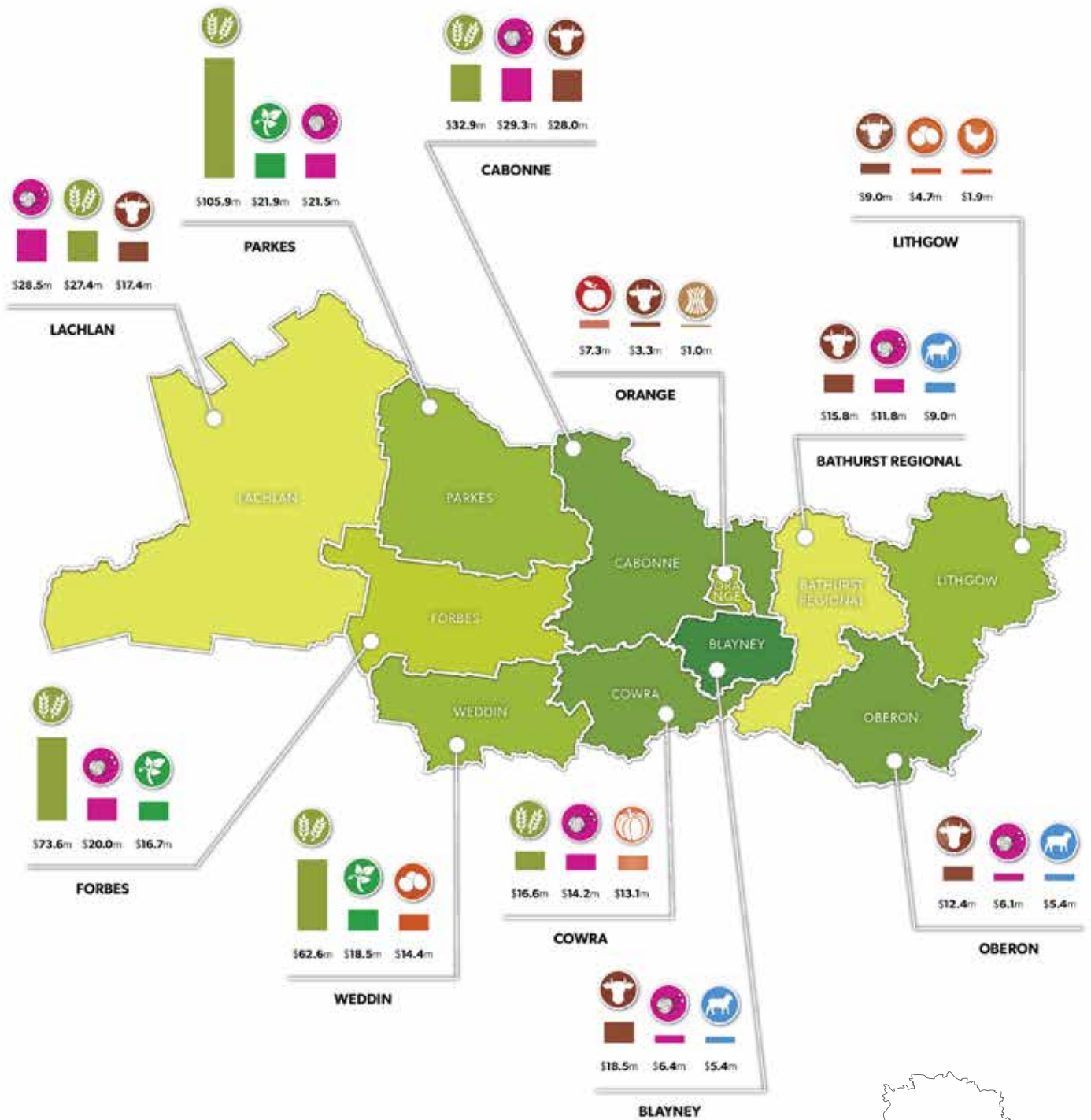
Eggs



Wool



Poultry



Central West

Direction 3: Develop advanced manufacturing and food processing sectors

The Central West and Orana is moving to higher value-added manufacturing and food processing. These industries include organic and free-range production; grain milling; animal product and fibre processing; pet food manufacturing; packaging of raw fruits, vegetables and meats; and the processing of foods such as dairy products.

The region can further capitalise on value-added opportunities in agriculture through biotechnology, digital technology, processing and packaging, branding, and cooperatives.

With the number of manufacturing jobs expected to fall in Australia, the region can compete in specific niche areas where competitive advantages exist. For example, Thales at Lithgow is a specialty manufacturer of defence, aerospace, space, security and transport products for markets in Australia and overseas.⁴

Value-added manufacturing facilities require significant investment. Councils should minimise land use conflict and enable value-added manufacturing industries to locate where they can access the regional freight network, utility infrastructure, skilled labour and export markets.

The co-location of related industries will maximise efficiency and infrastructure use, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract further investment.

Actions

- 3.1 Promote investment in advanced and value-added manufacturing in employment lands through suitable land use zonings and land use definitions in local environmental plans.
- 3.2 Locate advanced and value-added manufacturing industries and associated infrastructure to minimise potential land use conflict.
- 3.3 Encourage co-location of related advanced and value-added manufacturing industries to maximise efficiency and infrastructure use, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract further investment.
- 3.4 Develop a food and fibre strategy for the Central West, reflecting the opportunities identified in Regional Development Australia Central West's *Value Adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW* study.

Value-added manufacturing

Meat, mining and agriculture exports, Dubbo

Fletcher International Exports employs around 650 people in Dubbo and exports at least 90 per cent of its lamb and sheep meat products to more than 90 countries in Europe, America, the Middle East and Asia.

Its supply chain includes an abattoir, grain receival facilities and an intermodal rail terminal that service the containerised transport of agricultural commodities, mining commodities and sheep meat products from Dubbo to Port Botany.

Oilseed processing, Manildra

Agricultural sectors are moving away from commodity-based marketing and into value-based marketing to ensure long-term profitability and sustainability. MSM Milling is a commodity-based business that is growing its value-added offering by diversifying into research and development, packaging and processing, vegetable oils and stock feed.⁵

Advanced manufacturing

Biosciences, Dubbo

Maverick Biosciences in Dubbo processes animal-derived biological materials. It supplies these to manufacturers of human and veterinary pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, nutraceuticals, medical products and cosmetics. Products are exported to more than 15 countries via air freight.⁶

Tyre recycling, Warren

Employing a world-first technology known as destructive distillation, a processing plant in Warren recycles car and truck tyres into oil, carbon and steel. The plant processes 19,000 tonnes per year, around three per cent of the end-of-life tyres generated annually in Australia.⁷





Direction 4: Promote and diversify regional tourism markets

The region will market its urban, rural and natural areas to international tourists, particularly from Asia, and domestic visitors from Newcastle, Canberra and Sydney.

Significant environmental tourism assets include the Blue Mountains, the Warrumbungle National Park (Australia's only Dark Sky Park), Jenolan Caves in Oberon, Wellington Caves and the Macquarie Marshes. These must be protected, enhanced and promoted to sustainably increase visitor numbers.

Promoting eco-tourism, conference and sports tourism, agritourism, events and festivals, recreation (including recreational fishing) and Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage will benefit local towns, villages and existing food growers. Particularly as part of attracting off-peak seasonal visitors. Coordinated regional approaches to agritourism and food and wine tourism are already improving the resilience of individual businesses and rural communities.⁸

Access to international airports in Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and Melbourne will underpin efforts to grow tourist numbers. The *Central West Regional Transport Plan* (2013) includes actions to improve tourism-related transport services.

The Country and Outback NSW Destination Network will develop and implement a new Destination Management Plan to support emerging tourism opportunities and develop visitor experiences and tourism products.

Actions

- 4.1 Align land use and tourism strategies with a Destination Management Plan for the Country and Outback NSW Destination Network.
- 4.2 Work with councils to improve tourism-related transport services.

- 4.3 Develop the region's capacity to grow food and wine tourism.
- 4.4 Enable opportunities appropriate for tourism development and associated land uses in local environmental plans.
- 4.5 Target experiential tourism opportunities and develop tourism management frameworks to promote a variety of accommodation options.
- 4.6 Encourage tourism development in natural areas that support conservation outcomes.

Direction 5: Improve access to health and aged care services

The ageing population will increase demand for higher-order and specialist medical services and tailored community-based healthcare facilities such as Multi-Purpose Services and e-health initiatives.

There are significant opportunities to develop complementary health services around health facilities in Dubbo, Orange, Bathurst, Mudgee and Parkes. These will broaden the services available, enable business synergies and improve community access to health services.

This is particularly important for hospitals that serve wider communities, such as Dubbo Base Hospital, which is also the primary hospital for the Far West. It provides essential obstetrics services to the Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar and Walgett communities. Short-term accommodation options will allow Far West patients and their families to better access these services.

Similar smaller-scale clustering opportunities can be provided through complementary, flexible and adaptable health services in local service centres that respond to the needs of their local community.



Technology improvements will increase medical connectivity, giving smaller communities more equitable access to services. It will help retain and potentially grow their population and allow older people to stay in their local area.

Sufficient space for cemeteries and crematoria also needs to be provided for communities through future land use planning.

Actions

- 5.1 Establish health precincts around hospitals in regional cities and strategic centres.
- 5.2 Promote mixed-use facilities and research and accommodation precincts for the health and aged care service sectors.
- 5.3 Facilitate the development of multipurpose, flexible and adaptable health and education infrastructure.
- 5.4 Minimise the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses near existing and proposed health facilities.

Health Care and Social Assistance 2011



13,660 jobs



contributing
\$1.1b

to the gross regional product of NSW

Direction 6: Expand education and training opportunities

As the Central West and Orana's economy diversifies and its population changes, there will be demand for skilled labour in resources, energy, health and agribusiness.⁹ Tertiary education and training, including vocational training, will be crucial to overcome the shortage of skilled workers and meet future workforce demands.

Education and training providers will need to partner with government and the private sector to address regional skills shortages and provide tailored regional training programs. For example, skills shortages in the health sector may be resolved through medical training in established university rural health schools, or through the co-location of health services and teaching and training facilities like the Charles Sturt University dentistry and nursing schools in Dubbo.¹⁰

The Orana and Central West Regional Development Australia Committee's role as a certifying body for the Regional Skilled Migration Scheme will continue to allow employers in regional areas and those operating from centres with low population growth to recruit workers from overseas, or workers currently in Australia on temporary visas.¹¹

Expanding tertiary education services and online access to education will increase access to services and sustain community wellbeing, particularly in smaller and isolated communities. The NSW Government is committed to delivering better community access to quality vocational education and training through technology improvements to support global competitiveness and innovation.

The Department of Education is reviewing its approach to long-term asset and network planning, including opportunities for partnerships between schools and councils to pool resources and share costs and make the best use of community assets.

Actions

- 6.1 Work with stakeholders and the region's education providers to identify opportunities to address skills shortages through tailored regional training programs.
- 6.2 Promote the development of education precincts around universities and other educational facilities to allow people to specialise in rural studies and to cater for international students.
- 6.3 Facilitate joint-venture opportunities for shared community and school facilities on school sites, including sporting fields, amenities, parking, community halls, child care, arts and library facilities.

Direction 7: Enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities

OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment) is the NSW Government's plan for Aboriginal affairs. It focuses on:

- revitalising and promoting Aboriginal languages and culture;
- creating opportunities;
- increasing the Aboriginal community's capacity;
- providing choice; and
- empowering Aboriginal people to exercise that choice, as well as giving them the tools to take responsibility for their own future.

There is an opportunity to review the landholdings of Local Aboriginal Land Councils to see how they can best be planned, managed and developed for the benefit of Aboriginal communities. This will allow Aboriginal people to gain economic benefit from their land and provide greater opportunities for economic independence.

Aboriginal Affairs NSW, the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Planning and Environment will work with the land councils to identify their landholdings and map the level of constraint at a strategic scale for each site.

This information can be used to develop practical solutions for the potential commercial use of the land – for example, for Aboriginal housing and employment opportunities. It has potential to provide economic returns to the Local Aboriginal Land Councils that can be invested in assistance programs in the region.

Actions

- 7.1 Work with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils on strategic assessments of their landholdings to identify priority sites with economic development potential.
- 7.2 Identify priority sites that can create a pipeline of potential projects for the Local Aboriginal Land Councils to consider.





Direction 8: Sustainably manage mineral resources

The mineral resources sector underpins many local economies and will continue to drive growth. 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 long-term 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 introduced a Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum (including coal seam gas). This reviews and defines which lands may constitute new exploration release areas. New exploration licences will only be issued after an assessment of resource potential; economic, environmental, social factors; and community issues. The Framework is a transparent and informed approach, consistent with the NSW Government's broader land use resources strategy.

Population and economic fluctuations can occur as mineral and energy resource projects develop or scale down. Some regional communities will need support to diversify and transition their economy as mineral extraction diminishes.

Developing regional-scale scenario plans can enable a better understanding of the benefits that will be distributed across affected communities. For example, scenario planning can prepare communities and service providers for the impact of mining and reduce the risk of one community being overly disadvantaged compared to another that receives full economic benefits.

Actions

- 8.1 Consult with the Division of Resources and Geosciences when assessing applications for land use changes (strategic land use planning, rezoning and planning proposals) and new development or expansions.
- 8.2 Protect areas with potential mineral and energy resources extraction through local land use strategies and local environmental plans.
- 8.3 Protect infrastructure that facilitates mining from development that could affect current or future extraction.
- 8.4 Support communities that transition out of mining to manage change in population and demand for services, and explore new economic opportunities.
- 8.5 Work with councils to scope the application and implementation of a scenario planning or impact modelling tool to be applied at a regional level to help communities plan for the impacts of mining.



Mining in the Central West and Orana

Regional mining operations include established coalfields around Lithgow and Mudgee; major gold and copper mines at Cadia near Orange; Northparkes Mines and Tomingley near Parkes; Tritton in Nyngan; and Mineral Hill in Condobolin.

The potential for coal seam gas extraction is concentrated mainly in the Orana around the Pilliga in the Warrumbungle Shire, and in the Gilgandra and Coonamble local government areas. Opportunities for mining rare earths and metals have emerged, mainly in the Dubbo Regional Local Government Area.

Renewable energy projects

Nyngan Solar Plant, Bogan LGA

The 250-hectare Nyngan Solar Plant is the largest solar farm in the Southern Hemisphere. It produces 102 megawatts of electricity from approximately 1.36 million solar photovoltaic modules.

Liverpool Range Wind Farm, Warrumbungle LGA

The proposed Liverpool Range Wind Farm will sit across four council areas, with 223 turbines in the Warrumbungle Local Government Area. These turbines will produce enough renewable energy to power over 340,000 homes, create over 800 jobs directly and inject \$3.9 million into the economy through flow-on effects and multipliers.¹²

Orana BioHub project, Dubbo LGA

The proposed Orana BioHub in Dubbo will take crop residues, animal waste and potentially organic waste from surrounding council areas and transform them into fertilisers, biochar, specialist manufacturing products, and heat, steam or syngas energy. The \$38 million project is expected to generate 30 to 40 skilled jobs.¹³

Direction 9: Increase renewable energy generation

The region has significant potential for renewable energy industries with vast open spaces and higher-altitude tablelands with potential for wind power generation, large-scale solar energy and bioenergy generation.

Areas in the Central West, including Blayney, Oberon and Wellington, are suitable for wind energy generation, while areas in the Orana, such as Warren, Coonamble and Bogan, are suitable for large-scale solar power and geothermal energy generation.

TransGrid's NSW Connection Opportunities identifies Parkes and Wellington as having capacity for renewable energy generation. An interactive map of renewable energy potential is available at www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au.

Biomass (including agricultural, forestry and municipal waste), carbon sequestration and methane from coal mines are emerging energy sources. Waste management facilities could add power generators and harness sewage and landfill gases. Early and effective community engagement will be promoted on these projects.

New renewable energy projects require a strategic approach and should, where possible, incorporate small-scale co-generation measures into their design.

Actions

- 9.1 Identify locations with renewable energy generation potential and access to the electricity network.
- 9.2 Facilitate small-scale renewable energy projects using bioenergy, solar, wind, small-scale hydro, geothermal or other innovative storage technologies through local environment plans.
- 9.3 Promote best practice community engagement and maximise community benefits from all utility-scale renewable energy projects.

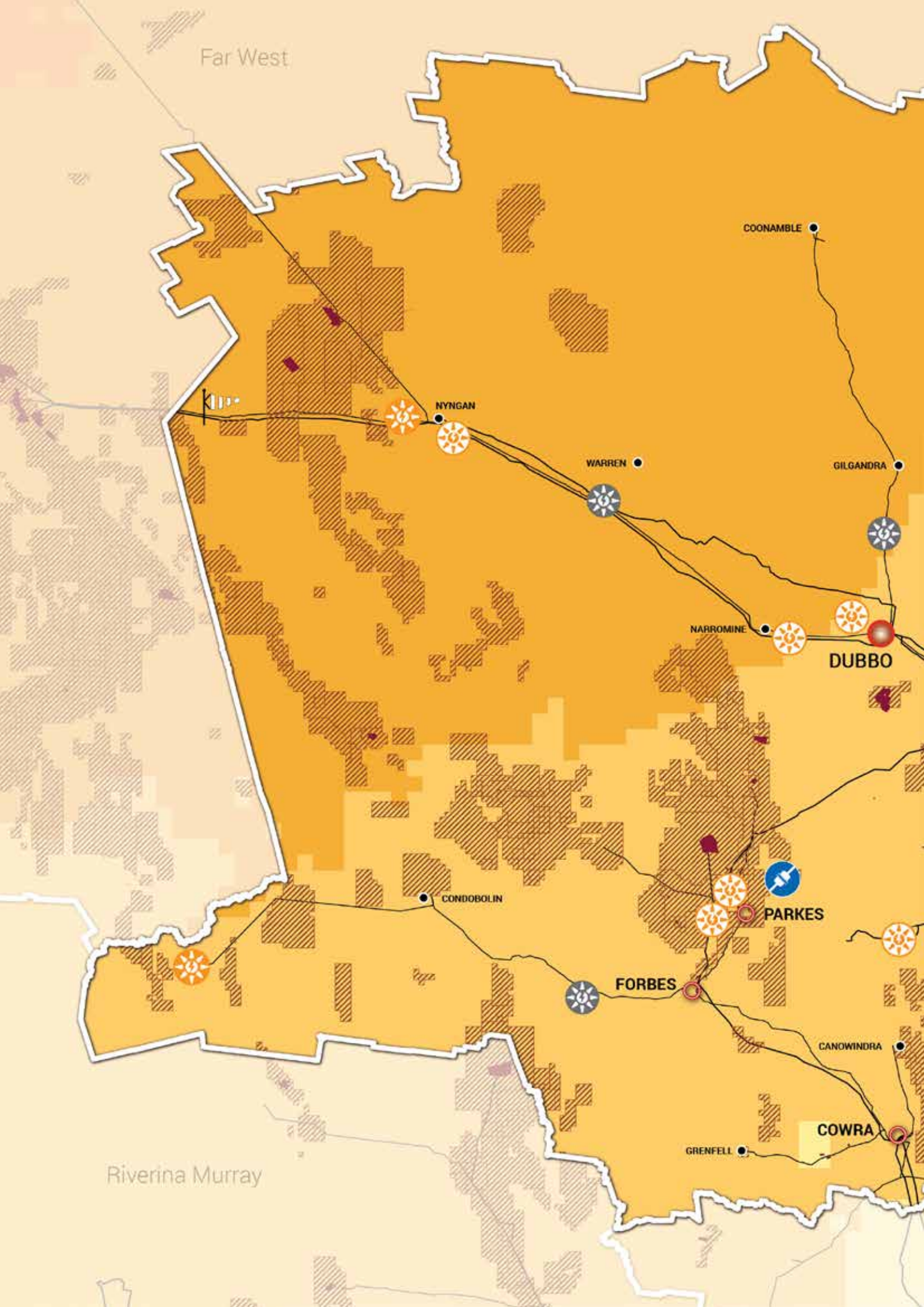
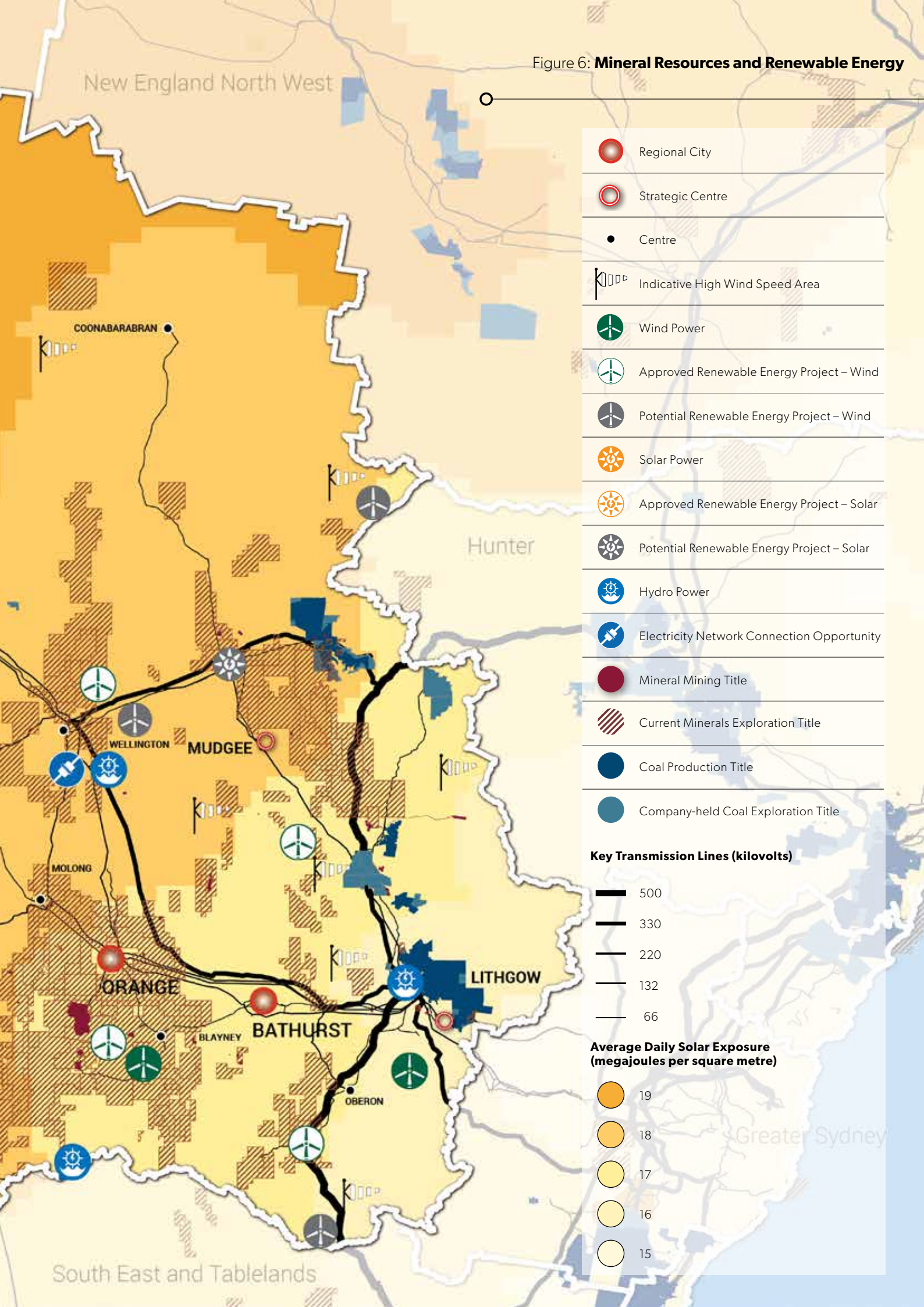


Figure 6: Mineral Resources and Renewable Energy





Direction 10: Promote business and industrial activities in employment lands

Demand for well-located and serviced employment land will be driven by proximity to Sydney and Newcastle, along with the opportunities from freight and logistics activities in Dubbo and Parkes. The diversification of agribusiness and value-added manufacturing will require processing and manufacturing facilities in dedicated industrial estates.

As communities grow and require supporting infrastructure, industrial land must be protected from the encroachment of incompatible activities. Monitoring the supply and take-up of industrial land will inform infrastructure planning for water, wastewater, electricity, gas and telecommunications.

Regional cities and strategic centres will experience the highest take-up of employment land and will provide higher-order retail and business services for their surrounding areas. Blayney and Manildra are also likely to experience take-up of industrial land to support the specialised industry clusters linked to manufacturing and value-adding of local produce.

In addition to employment land, efforts to revitalise centres will include the promotion of main street and CBD areas as retail and small business hubs. New retail activity and small business growth should be located in or adjacent to main streets and existing commercial centres to capitalise on existing transport and community infrastructure, enhance public spaces and strengthen the role and function of the area. Any development proposed for land outside existing commercial centres will need to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of such a location.

Actions

- 10.1 Encourage the sustainable development of industrial and employment land to maximise infrastructure and connect to the existing freight network.
- 10.2 Use local environmental plans to promote the development of specialised industry clusters and the co-location of related industries.
- 10.3 Encourage the consolidation of isolated, unused or underused pockets of industrial land to create long-term development opportunities.
- 10.4 Identify industrial and employment land opportunities and reduce land use conflicts through local land use strategies.
- 10.5 Monitor the supply and demand of industrial land in strategic centres to inform the planning and coordination of utility infrastructure to support new development.
- 10.6 Accommodate future commercial and retail activity in existing commercial centres, unless there is a demonstrated need or social and economic benefits to locating this activity elsewhere.
- 10.7 Require proposals for new retail development to demonstrate how they:
 - respond to retail demand;
 - respond to innovations in the retail sector;
 - maximise public transport and community infrastructure commensurate with the scale of the proposal; and
 - enhance the quality of public areas.



Direction 11: Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities

A sustainable and equitable supply of water is needed to meet the increasing demand from urban, environment and industry uses, and to respond to pressures from a changing climate.

Land use planning can help secure water supplies by appropriately locating, monitoring and managing development. This is especially relevant in the Namoi, Macquarie and Lachlan irrigation areas where significant investments have been made in irrigation networks and water storage.

The Australian Government's *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* (2012) sets out regional water use at environmentally sustainable levels by determining long-term 'average sustainable diversion limits'. These are implemented through water resource plans and long-term watering plans.

Coordinating and managing water requirements across business, industry, communities and the environment requires a better understanding of local water allocations and more resourceful water use. Water allocation is complex due to seasonal fluctuations, and is an ongoing concern for some agricultural producers. More efficient irrigation technologies and non-traditional agricultural pursuits can address water scarcity and climate change.¹⁴

Actions

- 11.1 Implement the *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* to ensure a balance of social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- 11.2 Finalise water resource plans and long-term watering plans for surface water and groundwater systems in accordance with the *Murray–Darling Basin Plan*.
- 11.3 Plan for high-water use industries in locations with water access and security.
- 11.4 Enhance the productive capacity of land in the Namoi, Macquarie and Lachlan irrigation areas by limiting encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses.
- 11.5 Provide guidance for development in areas of groundwater vulnerability.

Direction 12: Plan for greater land use compatibility

Investment in rural and resource industries will underpin the Central West and Orana's sustainable growth, productivity and prosperity. As this occurs, land use compatibility issues could arise.

The potential for land use conflict increases if new housing encroaches on rural land and resource areas. This can increase management costs and limit the growth of rural and resource industries, especially in closely settled areas around Bathurst and Orange. The expansion of rural and resource industries can also affect established urban activities if not managed appropriately.

Land use planning can provide greater certainty for investment in rural and resources industries by establishing clear parameters and transparent processes to support new development. A consistent planning approach can avoid fragmentation of productive agricultural land and identify suitable locations for new rural residential development. This approach will also limit potential impacts on areas of high environmental value, cultural and heritage assets and areas with rural landscape value. The planned separation of sensitive uses will allow diverse land uses to develop and support each other.

Actions

- 12.1 Conduct a pilot study with Central NSW Councils (CENTROC) to investigate practical on-ground mechanisms to help avoid land use conflict between intensive agricultural uses and other sensitive uses.
- 12.2 Identify and protect important agricultural land in local plans.
- 12.3 Create local strategies to limit urban and rural housing development in agricultural and extractive resource areas, industrial areas and transport corridors.
- 12.4 Amend planning controls to deliver greater certainty of land use.
- 12.5 Provide non-statutory guidance on appropriate and sympathetic land use in areas where land use conflicts occur.





GOAL 2

A stronger, healthier environment and diverse heritage

The Central West and Orana's distinctive natural environment includes some of Australia's most unique ecological systems. The region is home to the Ramsar-listed Macquarie Marshes, covering over 200,000 hectares; the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, which is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve;¹⁵ and more than 149,000 hectares of national parks, including Australia's only Dark Sky Park, the Warrumbungle National Park.

The region's waterways and water resources, including the Macquarie and Lachlan rivers, underpin the health of the natural environment. They also provide essential water to the community and support water-based recreational activities.

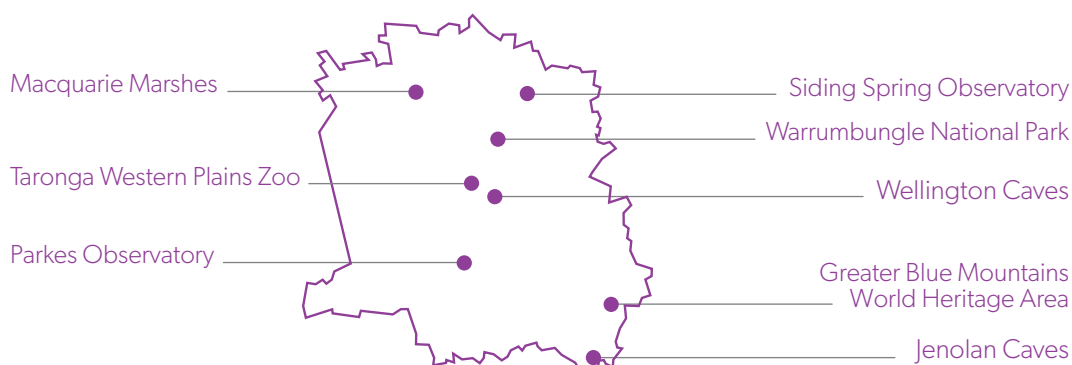
The natural environment enhances the lifestyle of residents; provides clean air and water along with attracting investment and tourism.

The Central West and Orana can leverage its natural assets and proximity to Sydney and Canberra to generate more jobs and economic activity from tourism. Good planning and design will protect biodiversity and environmental values.

Achieving environmentally sustainable development will balance rural and urban compatibility issues that arise with reduced water allocations and climate change.

The Central West and Orana's ecosystems and communities are subject to natural hazards that will be exacerbated by climate change. Innovative ways to manage water, harness renewable energy and prepare for natural hazards will build regional resilience and improve adaptation. Land use and infrastructure planning must respond to these risks.

Environmental Tourism Assets





Potential high environmental values criteria

Areas identified as having high environmental value have known natural features that are protected under legislation, regulation, policy or intergovernmental agreement. A range of criteria were used to map high environmental value areas. These areas include:

- existing conservation areas, including national parks and reserves, declared wilderness areas, Crown reserves dedicated for environmental protection and conservation, and flora reserves;
- areas with 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
- sites of geological significance.

Areas not identified on the Environmental Assets map, including terrestrial and aquatic environments, will still require environmental assessment.

The data used to identify high environmental value provides a regional-level overview for the purposes of strategic planning. This data will continue to be updated as information becomes available.

The Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services and the Department of Primary Industries, can provide current data and further support.

Direction 13: Protect and manage environmental assets

The region supports environmental assets and native vegetation communities, many of which are protected through existing legislation. Protecting these values is important for communities and the economic and environmental wellbeing of the region.

Using improved data to inform land use planning will allow early consideration of the potential impacts of new development on areas of potential high environmental value at the strategic planning stage, rather than later at the development assessment stage.

The Office of Environment and Heritage has mapped potential high environmental value areas, including groundwater-dependent ecosystems. The Department of Primary Industries maps aquatic fish habitats.

Travelling Stock Reserves primarily move livestock and provide supplementary grazing areas in times of drought, bushfire or flood. These can have regionally significant biodiversity value, as well as Aboriginal cultural heritage value. Strategic planning can help to carefully manage this land.

Actions

- 13.1 Protect high environmental value assets through local environmental plans.
- 13.2 Minimise potential impacts arising from development in areas of high environmental value, and consider offsets or other mitigation mechanisms for unavoidable impacts.
- 13.3 Improve the quality of, and access to, information relating to high environmental value.
- 13.4 Develop a Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy to identify priority investment areas and principles for investment.
- 13.5 Recognise, plan for and consider the production, cultural heritage, recreation and ecological conservation values of Travelling Stock Reserves in local land use strategies.



Direction 14: Manage and conserve water resources for the environment

Protecting water catchments and sustaining high quality and dependable water supplies is essential for the wellbeing of both the community and the environment. This has to be managed so water is available for agriculture and aquaculture, and to meet the increasing demands of communities and industry.

Water has been conserved through the environmental rules set out in water sharing plans and through significant water recovery programs, such as NSW RiverBank.

Specific planning and development controls in Lithgow and Oberon local government areas, which are within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, require developments to have a 'neutral or beneficial' impact on water quality. They must not reduce the quantity of water reaching reservoirs.

The NSW Government's *Water Quality and River Flow Objectives* represent the agreed environmental values and long-term goals for the State's waterways.

Surface water in some areas may not be suitable for potable use, placing pressure on groundwater supplies. All water sources, including groundwater, need to be carefully managed to meet the competing needs of communities, the environment and industry.

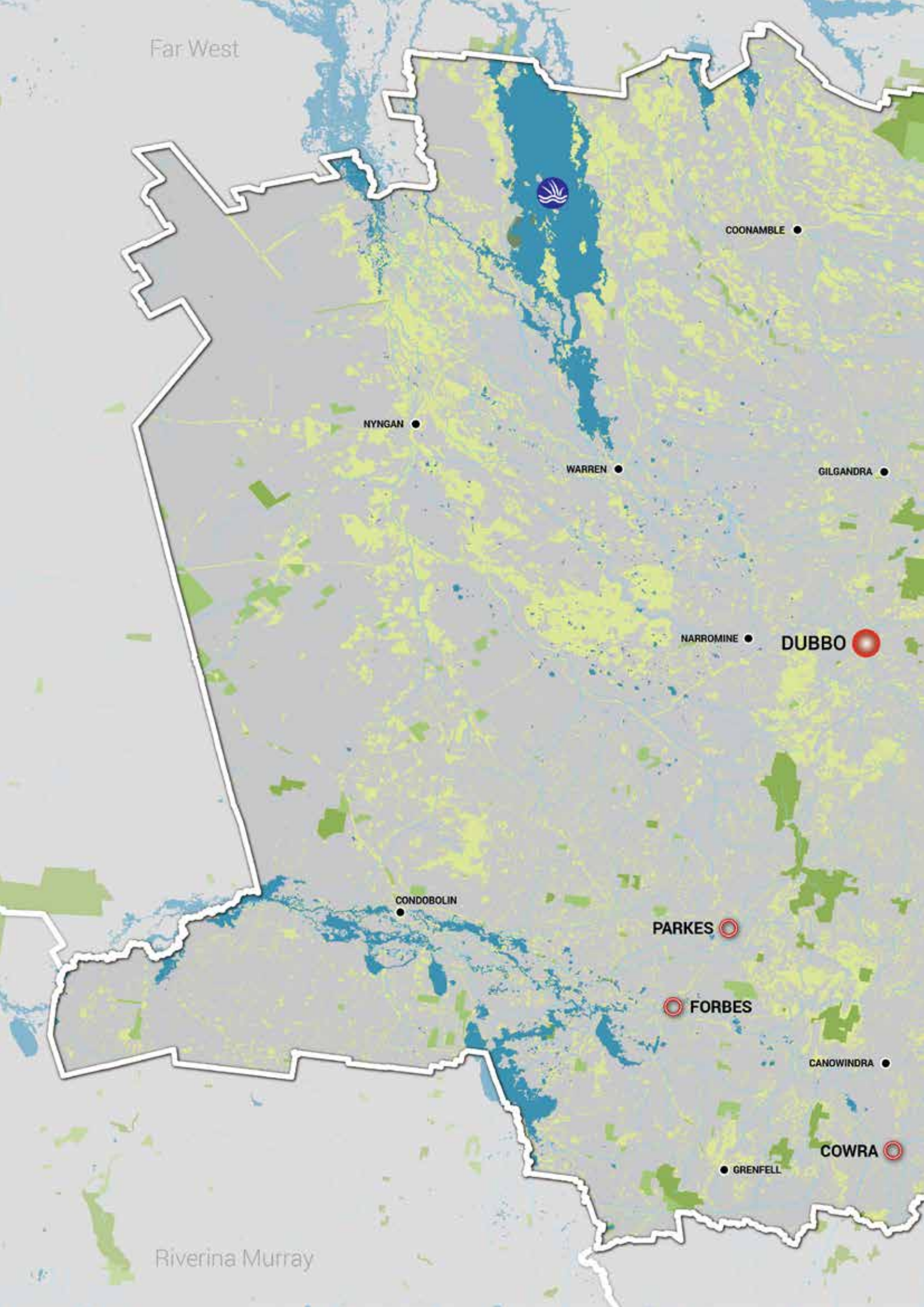
The fragility of the Central West and Orana's landscape and climate variability mean that water resources are vulnerable to individual and cumulative impacts. The location of development should mitigate risks to the environment and minimise negative effects on catchments, aquatic habitats such as waterways and wetlands, and areas downstream.

Actions

- 14.1 Adopt an integrated approach to water cycle management across the region that considers climate change, water security, sustainable demand and growth, and the natural environment.
- 14.2 Locate, design, construct and manage new development to minimise impacts on water catchments, including downstream areas and groundwater sources.
- 14.3 Minimise the impacts of development on fish habitat, aquaculture, commercialised and recreational fishing, and waterways (including watercourses, wetlands and riparian lands) and meet the *Water Quality and River Flow Objectives*.
- 14.4 Collaborate with industry and other catchment stakeholders to clarify changes to the supply and management of water for users and the environment.
- 14.5 Plan for the effects of a changing climate on water availability and use for the environment, settlements, communities and industry.

Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) weather radar

In contrast to other regions in Australia with similar demographics, industry, geography and weather patterns, the area covered by the OROC is poorly served by current Bureau of Meteorology weather radar.¹⁶ A new weather radar system in the OROC region would improve access to real-time weather information, creating economic, social and environmental gains for industry and the community.¹⁷



Far West

COONAMBLE ●

NYNGAN ●

WARREN ●

GILGANDRA ●

NARROMINE ●

DUBBO ●

CONDOBOLIN ●

PARKES ○

FORBES ○

CANOWINDRA ●

GRENFELL ●

COWRA ○

Riverina Murray

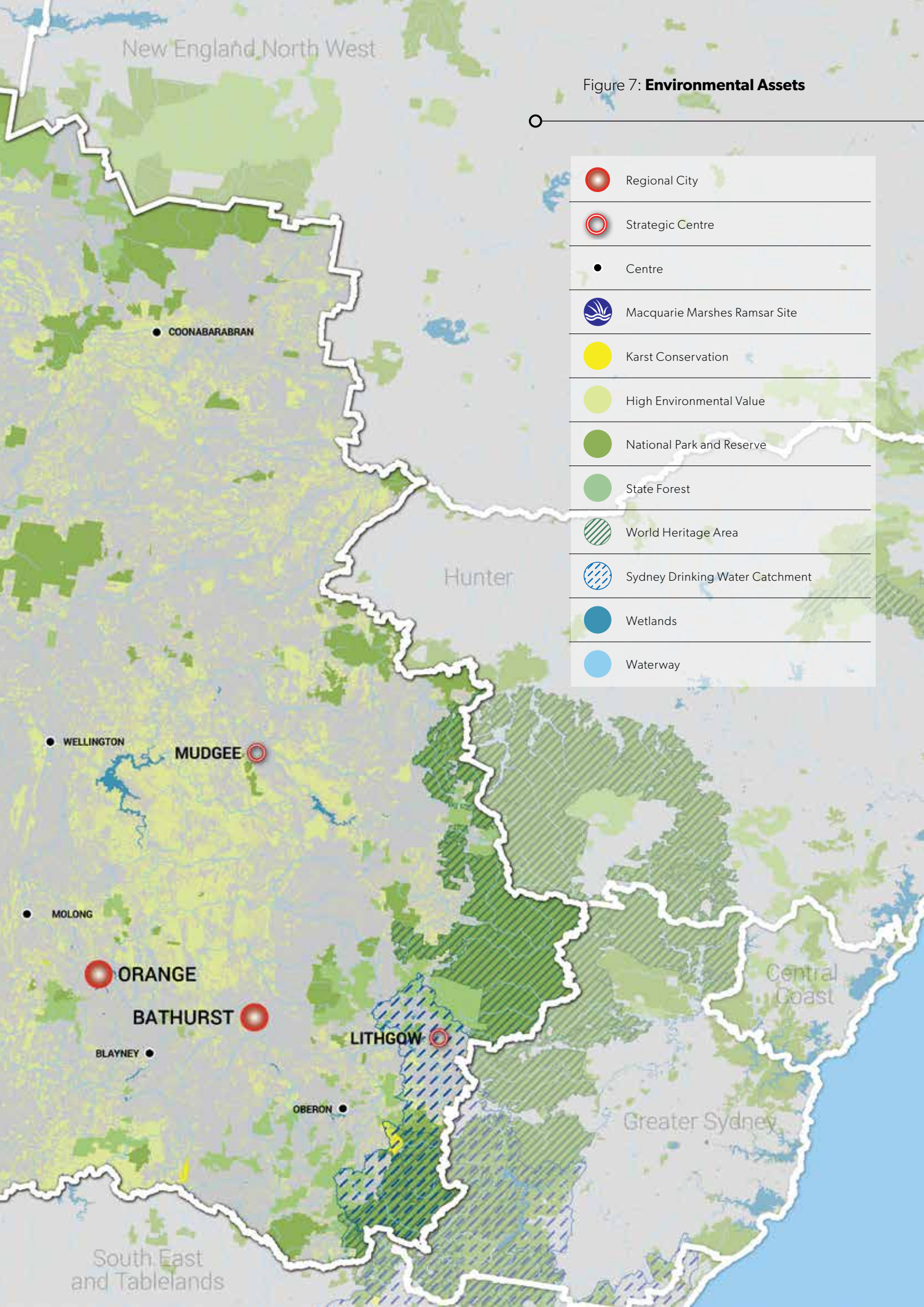














Figure 7: **Environmental Assets**

	Regional City
	Strategic Centre
	Centre
	Macquarie Marshes Ramsar Site
	Karst Conservation
	High Environmental Value
	National Park and Reserve
	State Forest
	World Heritage Area
	Sydney Drinking Water Catchment
	Wetlands
	Waterway



Potential climate change effects on the Central West and Orana

- A drier and warmer climate, resulting in increased evaporation, more heat waves, extreme winds and fire risk.
- Potential increases in seasonal extreme rainfall events leading to changes in flood behaviour.
- An overall change in rainfall, with varying rainfall patterns across the region, and a generally drier spring and wetter autumn.
- A substantial reduction in stream flow, including an 11–30 per cent decrease in flows upstream in the Macquarie River by 2030.
- Impacts on natural systems, species and ecosystems, with those unable to adapt likely to decline, contract or become extinct.
- Days on average 0.4–1°C hotter across all seasons by 2030 and 1.8–2.7°C hotter by 2070.
- Minimum temperatures to increase 0.5–0.9°C by 2030 and 1.5–2.6°C by 2070.
- Increased frequency of very high or extreme fire-risk days and greater fire intensity from temperature increases.
- An increase in average fire weather and severe fire weather days in summer, spring and winter.
- A substantial reduction in the magnitude, frequency and duration of broad-scale floods.
- More short and intense rainfall events and more localised flooding events from smaller urban streams and urban drainage systems.

Direction 15: Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change

Many people in the Central West and Orana live near areas such as bushland and rivers that are subject to natural hazards. The appeal of these places is obvious; however, they may also come with risks, such as flooding and bushfires.

Climate change is likely to result in lower rainfall, higher temperatures and prolonged dry periods. This may cause more frequent and more intense weather events, which will impact ecosystems, agricultural productivity and the health and wellbeing of rural communities.¹⁸ The NSW Climate Change Policy Framework and the draft *Climate Change Fund Strategic Plan* set policy directions and prioritise investment to reduce carbon emissions and adopt and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

A systematic and coordinated approach to managing climate change risk will give communities the skills and knowledge to deal with the changes, and provide a better understanding of the nature and location of hazards.

Most councils include Flood Planning Area mapping in local environmental plans, giving government, developers and landowners a level of clarity about the risks for particular sites. The *NSW Floodplain Development Manual* (2005) and the NSW Flood Prone Land Policy aim to reduce the impact of flooding on individual owners and occupiers of flood-prone property, and private and public losses resulting from floods.

Councils are responsible for managing flood risks in urban areas through floodplain risk management plans. The Office of Environment and Heritage provides financial and technical support to councils to fulfil this responsibility.

Councils map bushfire hazards and risks, and these are certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service. With the extent of bushfire risk possibly increasing as a result of climate change, mapping will be reviewed regularly.



Naturally occurring asbestos that may be affected by ground-disturbing activities is found primarily in the Dubbo Regional, Cabonne, Orange, Cowra, Blayney, Mid-Western Regional and Bathurst Regional local government areas. Geological areas containing natural asbestos include the Ordovician to Early Silurian rocks east of Orange and Ultramafic complexes near Fifield, south-west of Dubbo.¹⁹ Councils will consider these areas when preparing local planning strategies.

Naturally occurring asbestos only poses a health risk when elevated levels of fibres are released into the air, either by human activities or by natural weathering, and the fibres are inhaled. The Office of Local Government's *Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Councils* (November 2015) helps councils to formulate asbestos policies to ensure a consistent approach to managing asbestos.

Actions

- 15.1 Locate developments, including new urban release areas, away from areas of known high biodiversity value; areas with high risk of bushfire or flooding; contaminated land; and designated waterways.
- 15.2 Incorporate the outcomes of the Enabling Regional Adaptation project to ensure future land use and planning decisions reduce regional climate change vulnerabilities.
- 15.3 Adopt a whole-of-government approach to information exchange on climate change adaptation and preparedness.
- 15.4 Respond to climate-related risks by applying and communicating fine-scale climate information to support decision-making.
- 15.5 Implement the requirements of the *NSW Floodplain Development Manual* by updating flood studies and floodplain risk management plans.

- 15.6 Incorporate the best available hazard information in local environmental plans consistent with current flood studies, flood planning levels, modelling and floodplain risk management plans.
- 15.7 Update and share current information on environmental assets and natural hazards with councils to inform planning decisions.
- 15.8 Manage the risks of disturbance in areas affected by naturally occurring asbestos by increasing public awareness and providing mapping to councils.

Central West and Orana Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment

In 2012, the NSW Government, in partnership with the University of Technology Sydney, spoke to communities and other stakeholders to identify and better understand regional vulnerabilities and emerging risks from a changing climate. This work is known as the Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment.

The project for the Central West and Orana will identify adaptation pathways and opportunities to minimise climate change impacts on communities; responses to vulnerabilities; and the region's ability to cope (known as its 'adaptive capacity'). This will inform government service delivery at a regional and subregional scale.

The Office of Environment and Heritage will continue to develop information to help councils protect and manage ecosystems and minimise risks to environmental assets.

UNION BANK BUILDING



Direction 16: Respect and protect Aboriginal heritage assets

The Central West and Orana contains natural features that are important to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal communities because of traditions, observances, lore, customs, beliefs and history. They include pre-contact and habitation and usage sites, burial sites, battle sites, and camping, hunting and fishing sites. Aboriginal cultural heritage also relates to the connection and sense of belonging that people have with the landscape and with each other.

Conserving these assets, and respecting the Aboriginal community's right to determine how these assets are identified and managed, will preserve their significant values.

Engagement and partnerships with Aboriginal communities provide opportunities for information sharing and more effective management of cultural values and cultural heritage. 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

- 16.1 Protect, manage and respect Aboriginal objects and places in accordance with legislative requirements.
- 16.2 Undertake Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments to inform local land use strategies and to identify any appropriate heritage management mechanism.
- 16.3 Consult with Aboriginal people and the broader community during strategic planning to identify and protect heritage values; minimise the impact of urban growth and development; and recognise their contribution to the character and landscape of the region.

Direction 17: Conserve and adaptively re-use heritage assets

Cultural heritage enriches the character of places and can generate economic value, particularly through tourism, which can in turn sustain smaller communities.

Enhancing main streets and town centres through heritage conservation attracts new businesses and residents, and offers tourism potential. Better promotion and targeted community education initiatives can increase community support for managing and protecting heritage assets.

Removing barriers to the adaptive re-use of heritage items will help communities to retain physical connections to their settlement history and promote the benefits of re-use, particularly in smaller communities.

Areas of high growth can have a cumulative impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage values and historic places. Early investment to protect and preserve heritage at the strategic planning stage will provide greater certainty for stakeholders.

Actions

- 17.1 Increase heritage protection and revitalise main streets and town centres through community education and development incentives in local plans.
- 17.2 Prepare, review and update heritage studies in consultation with the wider community to recognise and conserve heritage assets and items, and include appropriate local planning controls.
- 17.3 Work with the Central NSW Councils (CENTROC) to scope barriers to the adaptive re-use of heritage items.





GOAL 3

Quality freight, transport and infrastructure networks

The Central West and Orana's freight and transport connections extend to Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong, Brisbane, Melbourne, Broken Hill and Adelaide. These connections converge at a number of locations – including Dubbo, Parkes and Gilgandra – providing a significant competitive advantage to maximise economic growth and productivity.

The Central West and Orana is a major exporter of beef, lamb, grain, cotton, raw minerals and metals, manufactured foods, beverages and other value-added produce. These sectors rely on efficient freight and transport infrastructure networks to move products to external markets and ports.

Freight volumes across NSW are projected to double by 2030 and triple by 2050,²⁰ and a large portion of this growth will occur in the Central West and Orana. This presents a strong case to substantially enhance the quality, capacity and efficiency of freight, transport and utility infrastructure to facilitate freight movements through the region and to connect local producers and suppliers with better networks.

Maximising productivity and reducing freight and transport costs will spur economic growth across the Central West and Orana. The efficiency of the road network, along with the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, will continue to influence economic potential, requiring a comprehensive whole-of-government response.

Future transport

To help align land use and infrastructure planning Transport for NSW is developing the Future Transport Strategy. Future Transport will be undertaking a comprehensive engagement of the community and industry across NSW.

There is an aim to focus the first stage of this engagement on rural and regional NSW with a combination of activities partnering with local entities and events across a sample of coastal, inland and remote locations covering regional cities, centres and towns. This engagement will take place in the middle of 2017.

Regional Freight Movements

2011

16.8m

tonnes of freight moved to, from and through the region





Direction 18: Improve freight connections to markets and global gateways

Improving the capacity and efficiency of freight connections to ports and metropolitan cities will unlock access to growing consumer markets.

Growth in containerised freight of grain and mining products may trigger new infrastructure investment in the Central West and Orana. Dubbo will remain a major site of activity for outbound containerised freight, followed by the Narromine and Bathurst Regional local government areas. Clustering of inbound containerised freight is also forecast to increase in the Mid-Western Regional and Lithgow local government areas.²¹

The forecast increase in freight volumes could result in opportunities for new intermodal terminals and supporting rail infrastructure.²² Transport for NSW will develop a set of criteria to assess the value creation and network capacity enhancement of regional intermodal and cargo handling facilities.

Connections to the east coast

The Great Western Highway and the Main Western Rail Line over the Blue Mountains provide freight connections to ports in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle, and will provide access to the new Western Sydney Airport and its associated aviation and freight facilities. Potential network improvements along these freight corridors will help improve efficiency and remove heavy vehicle access restrictions, reducing freight costs and freight movement timeframes.

The Bells Line of Road and Golden Highway offer alternative freight connections to ports in Sydney and Newcastle respectively. Upgrades to these corridors could help to improve efficiency and access over the Blue Mountains.

Transport for NSW is committed to delivering additional rail network capacity west of Lithgow through new and longer crossing loops and new signalling. The NSW Government has commenced work on Main Western Rail Line capacity enhancements.

Where sustainable freight demand exists, non-operational railway lines, such as the line between Blayney and Demondrille, could also be brought back into operation to improve rail connections.

North and south connections

An upgraded Newell Highway and the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail could reshape freight movements to ports in Brisbane and Melbourne.

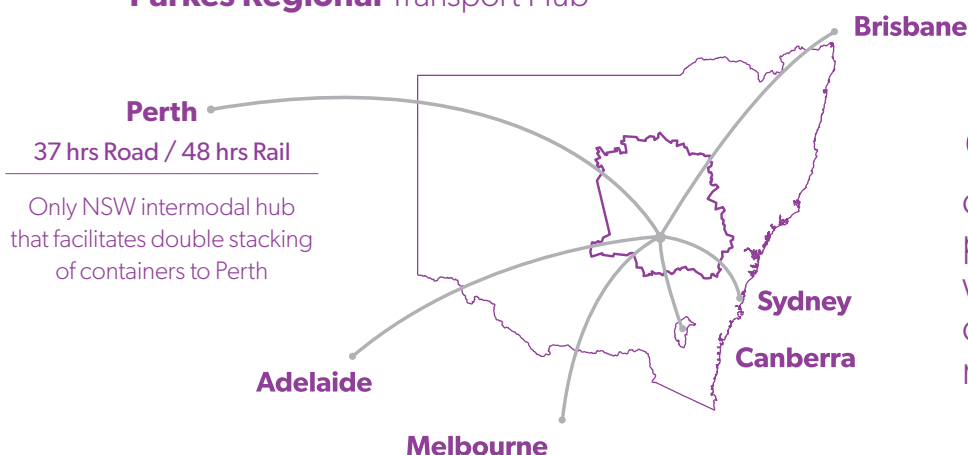
The 2010 *Melbourne–Brisbane Inland Rail Alignment Study*, prepared by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), identified the preferred corridor for inland rail would pass through Parkes and Narromine.²³ The fine-scale alignment of the corridor is yet to be settled, and planning, engineering design 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.

The opening of new international flights from Canberra Airport to Singapore has also created new opportunities to export products into Asia.

To leverage these opportunities, new freight and logistics hubs and intermodals must be close to road and rail corridors. Private sector investment in intermodal terminals is already moving freight more efficiently and competitively. Ensuring a supply of industrial land, particularly in regional cities and strategic centres, will support these new freight and logistics hubs.



Parkes Regional Transport Hub



80%
of Australia's population is within 12 hours of Parkes by road or rail

Actions

- 18.1 Enhance the operation of freight and logistics facilities by limiting the encroachment of incompatible and sensitive land uses in local environmental plans.
- 18.2 Strengthen and leverage inter-regional connections to support economic growth.
- 18.3 Enhance the efficiency of national transport corridors and protect them from inappropriate surrounding land uses.
- 18.4 Facilitate the ongoing performance of existing freight and logistics facilities, particularly those in regional cities and strategic centres.
- 18.5 Locate freight and logistics facilities to capitalise on connections to external markets, maximise the use of existing infrastructure and support future industrial development.
- 18.6 Work with stakeholders to upgrade transport network capacity as demand changes.
- 18.7 Work with the Australian Government and local councils as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail progresses.

National Logistics Hub, Parkes

The National Logistics Hub at Parkes sits at the intersection of the Sydney–Adelaide rail line between Broken Hill and the Newell Highway, which connects to Melbourne and Brisbane. It is located to take advantage of the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. It is the only intermodal hub in NSW that facilitates double stacking of containers to Perth.

Fletcher International Exports intermodal terminal, Dubbo

The Fletcher Grain and Intermodal Freight Terminal services the movement of containerised agricultural commodities, mining commodities and sheep meat products from Dubbo to Port Botany. The terminal represents a significant private investment for regional producers, alleviating freight access and interface issues with the former intermodal terminal in Dubbo.

Left: Rail train,
courtesy of Lachlan Shire Council

Above: Truckstop, Gilgandra
courtesy of SixtybyTwenty

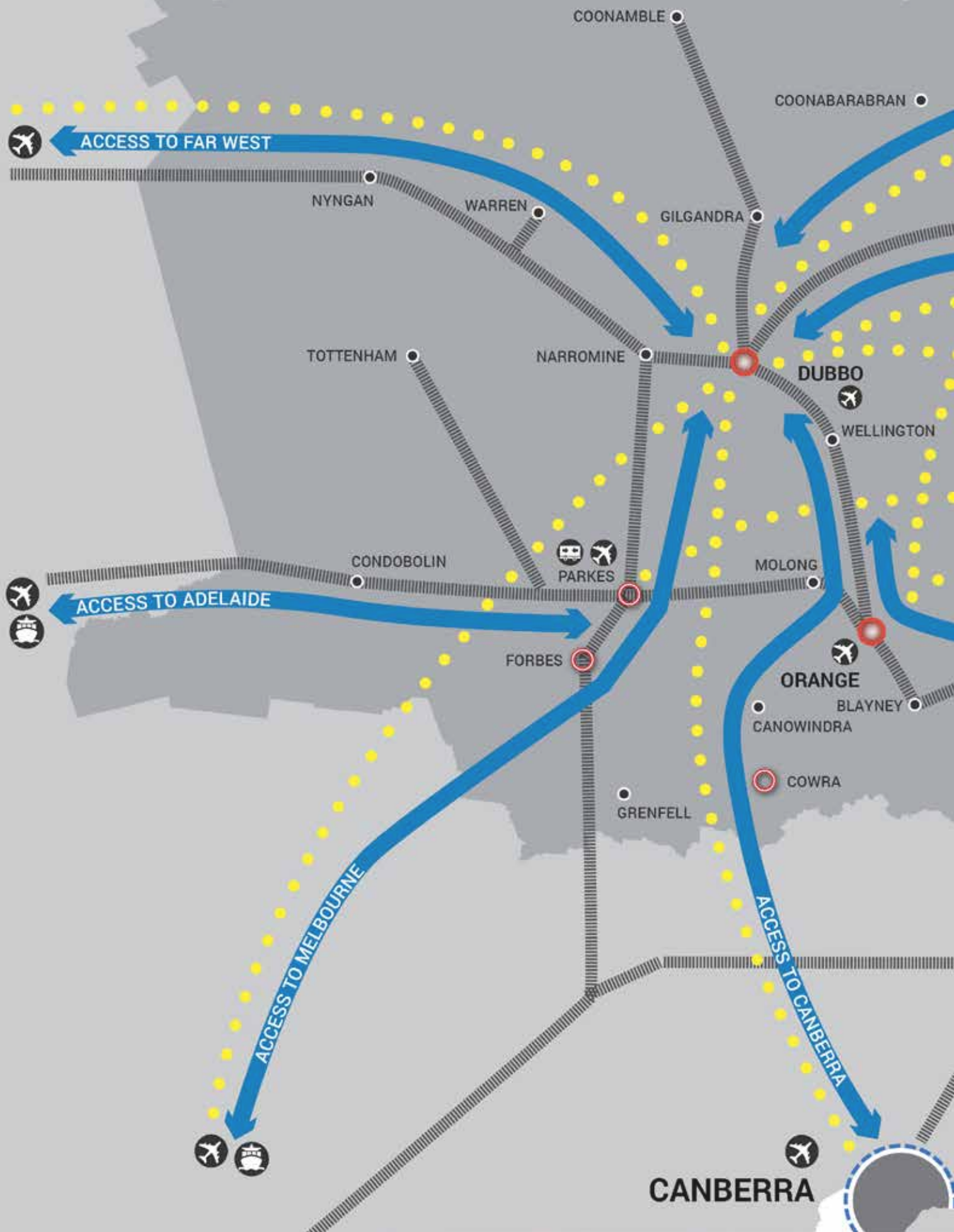
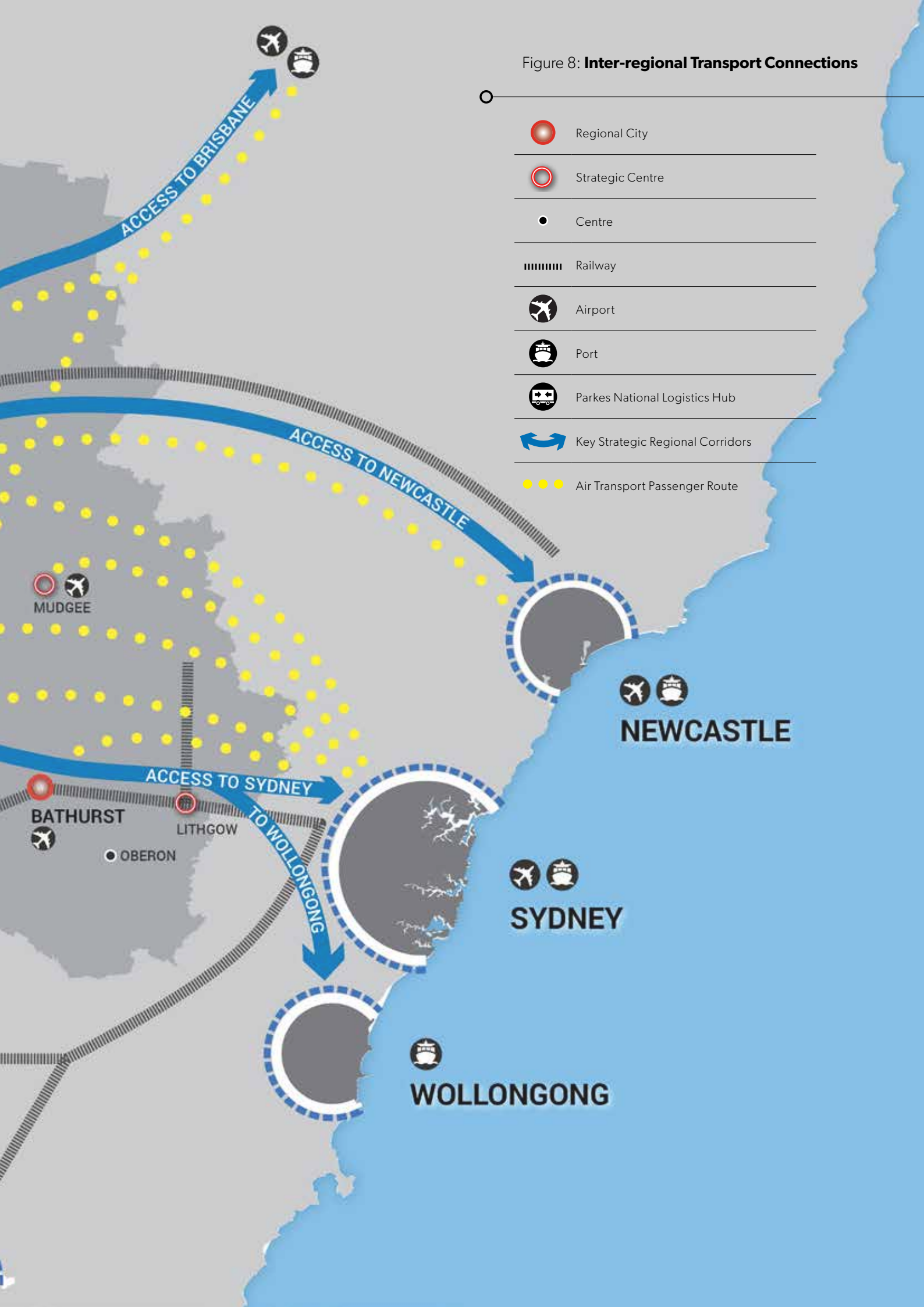


Figure 8: **Inter-regional Transport Connections**





Direction 19: Enhance road and rail freight links

More than 16.8 million tonnes of freight is moved through the Central West and Orana to and from ports each year by road or rail.²⁴ Much of this freight travels on local and regional roads, some of which are failing under the pressure of freight movements, or limit the ability to move freight due to their condition or alignment.

Transport for NSW administers two coordinated programs directly addressing this issue:

- *Fixing Country Rail* removes productivity and efficiency constraints on the regional rail network; and
- *Fixing Country Roads* targets funding to local councils for road projects that will eliminate connectivity constraints on local roads in NSW.

The Central NSW Councils (CENTROC) and Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC) have identified local and regional road pressure points. Transport for NSW will use this information to work with councils to define a freight network that includes key national, State, regional and local roads and the rail network in the Central West and Orana. This will prioritise freight network improvement projects to provide the greatest benefit, and improve coordination between all levels of government and stakeholders.

Heavy vehicle access, bridge crossings and traffic access during flood events in towns and city centres is a widespread issue, particularly in Forbes, Parkes, Dubbo, Bathurst and Coonabarabran. Councils and agencies will consider the viability of bypasses to improve freight efficiency, reduce travel times and costs, improve safety for road users and improve the attractiveness of towns and cities. Potential bypass corridors will be safeguarded in local planning.

Actions

- 19.1 Build on existing work to identify the regional freight network, including key national, State, regional and local roads and the rail network.

- 19.2 Prioritise projects that address impediments to the regional freight network.
- 19.3 Identify, coordinate and prioritise local and regional road projects that will strengthen the regional freight network.
- 19.4 Assess the viability of bypasses and identify and safeguard future bypass corridors in local land use strategies.
- 19.5 Identify existing and proposed freight and transport corridors in local land use strategies to minimise the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Direction 20: Enhance access to air travel and public transport

The ongoing operation and expansion of air travel and related facilities is essential to regional economic growth.²⁵ Maintaining 20 per cent of flight slots at Sydney Airport for regional NSW services is critical in supporting business and providing access for regional communities and fly-in fly-out workers.

Large commuter airports at Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo, Mudgee and Parkes also cater for chartered flights for fly-in fly-out workers.²⁶ Other airport and aerodrome facilities provide aviation bases for agricultural services, private operators and recreational gliding. Airport and aerodrome facilities also support the Royal Flying Doctor Service medivac and NSW Rural Fire Service operations based in Dubbo.

Airport operations should not be impeded by the encroachment of incompatible development. Potential airport expansions will be considered in local land use strategies.

Public and community transport services connect people to jobs, housing, health care and education within the region, and to metropolitan cities. Transport for NSW will work with bus operators to develop routes and timetables to improve bus services to, from and within the cities and centres. Transport for NSW will also develop programs that serve the unique needs of each town through other transport initiatives.

Above: Dubbo Airport

Right: Electricity Technicians, Warren Shire, courtesy of SixtybyTwenty



Actions

- 20.1 Identify development opportunities for appropriate and complementary land uses and limit the encroachment of incompatible development around Bathurst, Orange, Dubbo, Mudgee and Parkes airports.
- 20.2 Support the continued allocation of 20 per cent of flight slots at Sydney Airport to regional NSW services and seek a greater allocation in peak periods.
- 20.3 Work with local transport operators and community transport providers to investigate delivery models for flexible transport and determine what works best for different areas.
- 20.4 Investigate opportunities and prepare strategies to improve transport links between the region's towns and villages, and its regional cities and strategic centres.

Direction 21: Coordinate utility infrastructure investment

New development should be located to take advantage of existing or planned water, wastewater, sewer and stormwater infrastructure. The design of infrastructure should accommodate, whenever possible, the capacity for cost-effective expansion to maximise the efficient use of land, reduce costs and limit environmental impacts.

Detailed infrastructure service planning should be undertaken for new major urban releases to establish whether land can be feasibly and cost-effectively serviced.

Current funding and servicing models for utility infrastructure do not provide the flexibility or support for 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.

Water supply deficiencies of more than 50 per cent by 2036 are forecast in Mid-Western Regional, Dubbo Regional, Parkes, Bogan and Warren local government areas.²⁷ New water security projects and water management initiatives, such as stormwater harvesting and innovative water management approaches, are currently being employed to improve water security.

The challenge of providing cost-effective extensions and upgrades of utilities to some remote areas creates opportunities for stand-alone alternative energy generation such as renewable wind and solar energy generation.

While there is sufficient landfill capacity to manage forecast waste, higher demand for waste and resource recovery management facilities may require improvements in regional waste management practices.

Improved communications infrastructure will grow the economy, increase job opportunities, deliver online health and education programs, and satisfy resident's daily communication needs. Some areas experience unreliable telecommunications including mobile phone black spots and delays in the rollout of the National Broadband Network (NBN). To support this, a fibre-ready, pit and pipe network that allows for the installation of Fibre to the Home (FTTH) broadband services will be considered in local infrastructure planning. Areas not identified in the NBN rollout will need alternative access arrangements.

Actions

- 21.1 Work with Mid-Western Regional, Dubbo Regional, Parkes, Bogan and Warren councils to address water supply deficiencies and secure future town water supplies.
- 21.2 Work with stakeholders and infrastructure providers to investigate new funding models for utility infrastructure.
- 21.3 Monitor development and ensure that infrastructure is responsive to investment opportunities.

1

Cowra bypass

Cowra Shire Council has proposed a heavy vehicle bypass to reduce the number of heavy vehicles passing through the CBD, improve local amenity and increase pedestrian safety. This bypass will support the growing freight task and connections through to Canberra.²⁸

2

Proposed Bells Line of Road upgrade

The Bells Line of Road provides an alternative route to the Great Western Highway across the Blue Mountains to Sydney. This project was identified in the NSW *State Infrastructure Strategy* as a priority for regional freight access to markets, with \$28 million towards the upgrade funded from the Restart NSW Fund.²⁹

3

Blayney–Demondrille Rail Line

Where sustainable freight demand exists, non-operational lines could be brought back into operation to improve rail connections. The feasibility of reopening the Blayney to Demondrille line, along with other lines in the Cowra district, has been investigated by Transport for NSW.

4

Golden Highway

The Golden Highway offers an alternative connection for freight transport to the Port of Newcastle. Various projects to boost productivity and improve highway safety, traffic efficiency and sustainability are identified in the *Golden Highway Corridor Strategy*,³⁰ with \$85 million allocated under the Restart NSW Fund for the proposed improvement works.³¹

5

Bathurst bypass

Bathurst Regional Council has proposed a CBD bypass that would take heavy vehicles out of the city of Bathurst and link them to industrial sites.

6

Dubbo bypass

Roads and Maritime Services is working with Dubbo Regional Council to improve freight efficiency on the Newell Highway, which includes providing an alternative route during flooding events and maintenance work on existing bridges. Funding of \$140 million towards the construction of a third bridge crossing at Dubbo has been committed as part of the Newell Highway Improvement Program.³²

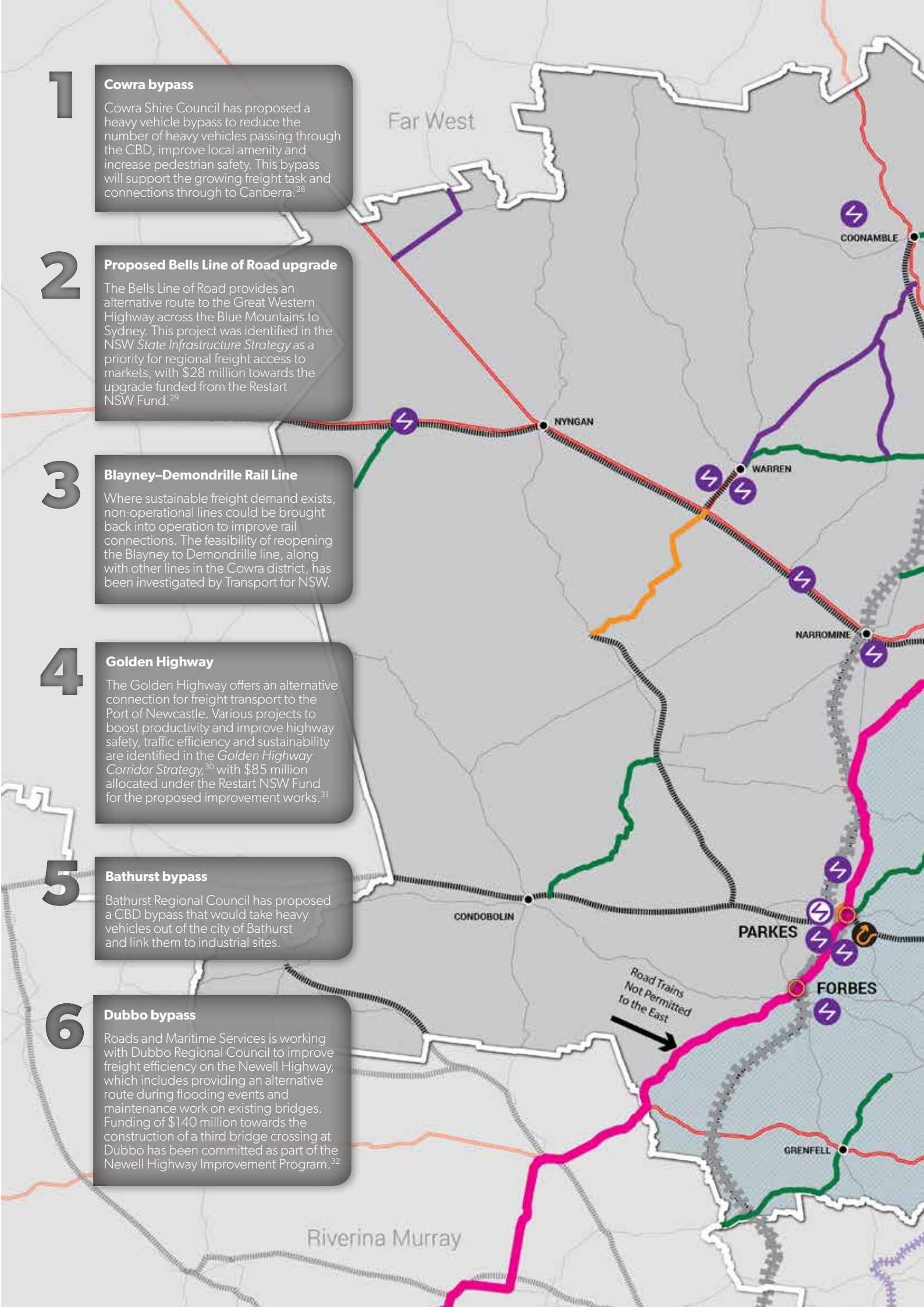
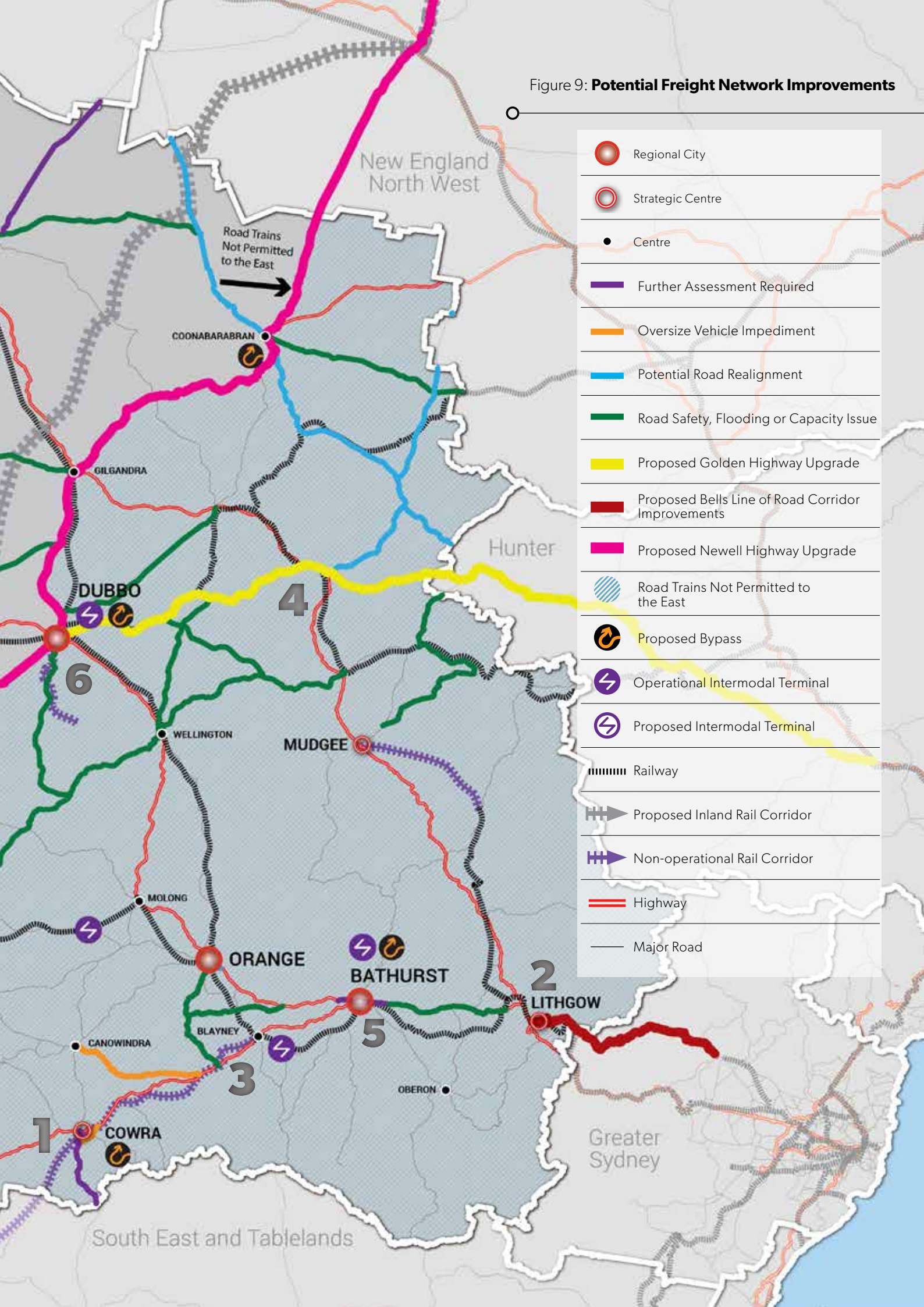


Figure 9: **Potential Freight Network Improvements**







GOAL 4

Dynamic, vibrant and healthy communities

The Central West and Orana is home to some of the most diverse communities in NSW, and their distinctive character is a significant competitive advantage. The diversity of these communities offers a range of attractive lifestyles and opportunities for people relocating from Sydney and other metropolitan cities.

Over the next 20 years the region will experience changes to agricultural productivity; freight and transport connections; water trading and regulation; climate; and economic or market conditions. These changes have the potential to reshape communities and urban centres.

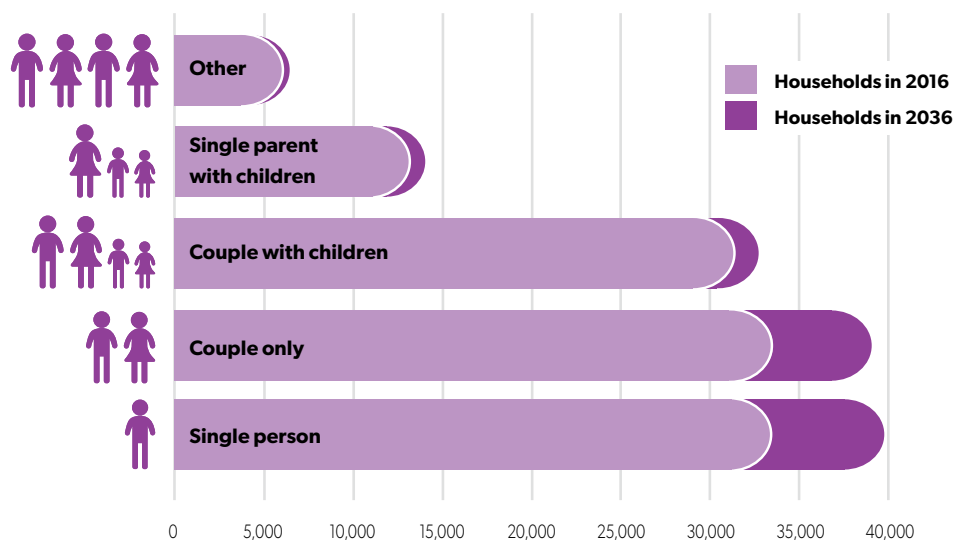
Population growth will not be evenly distributed, with the highest rates of growth projected across larger urban centres in the Central West, including Orange and Bathurst, followed by Mudgee, Parkes and Lithgow. Dubbo will also have some of the highest growth as the major urban centre for Orana. Smaller towns and villages projected to experience population growth include those in the Cabonne and Blayney local government

areas, close to Bathurst and Orange. Investment in health and education services, and commercial, retail and industrial activity will drive and spread the benefits right across the Central West and Orana.

The population of other smaller towns and villages is likely to remain relatively stable or in some cases decline. However, these numbers do not reflect the dynamic nature of many of these communities with high levels of transient workers, tourists and populations that fluctuate at different times of the year. These communities can grow and prosper by leveraging economic opportunities and jobs from an increasing number of value-adding investments, including food processing and manufacturing.

As the population changes, enlivening strategic centres and revitalising local centres will be important in making places appealing to visit, live and do business, while also improving social cohesion and community wellbeing.

Household Composition Forecast 2016-2036





Direction 22: Manage growth and change in regional cities and strategic and local centres

Strengthened relationships across the three regional cities, five strategic centres and the local centres will form the backbone of a diverse, interconnected and interdependent network of centres – a major strength for the region.

The growth of regional cities and strategic centres will encourage future investment, increase housing choices, diversify industry and create new job opportunities – all of which will benefit the immediate and broader regional community. For example, Dubbo acts as the primary service centre for the Far West and has a catchment population that extends well beyond the boundaries of the region, to more than 120,000 people.³³

The regional cities and strategic centres will capitalise on their location along national highways and rail networks. Bathurst and Lithgow can capitalise on their proximity to Sydney, and Dubbo and Mudgee on their proximity to Newcastle.

Over the next 20 years, most new housing is likely to be built in regional cities and strategic centres, and this will need to be supported by infrastructure.

Many councils have planned for aspirational growth, reflecting the desires of local communities, through land use planning decisions (for example, making land or infrastructure available for development). This may influence population growth patterns.

Local centres and rural communities make an important contribution to the region by providing affordable housing, attractive lifestyles and jobs in agribusiness, mining and tourism. These areas need access to regional cities and strategic centres for higher level services. As the population gets older, public transport will also assume greater importance in these centres.

Actions

- 22.1 Coordinate infrastructure delivery across residential and industrial land in regional cities and strategic centres.
- 22.2 Reinforce the role, function and relationship between regional cities and strategic centres in local housing strategies.
- 22.3 Improve transport in regional cities and strategic centres, and their connections with regional communities.

Direction 23: Build the resilience of towns and villages

Strong networks across the region and to Canberra and Sydney will help to build community resilience and capacity. Fostering these networks will be a shared responsibility between communities, organisations, businesses and government.

Parts of the region are located less than three hours from Sydney and Canberra. Access to international airports can attract niche tourism markets, which will help towns and villages to become more robust and dynamic settlements.

Towns and villages may attract people who wish to relocate from Sydney. Stronger connections with Sydney will increase the ability to offer affordable housing choices.

Access to accurate information to build and prepare resilient communities enables communities and government to more accurately understand and plan for current and future services. There is a need to develop a standardised set of baseline data, underpinned by improvements in the collection, interpretation and use of that data.

Tools and resources such as the *NSW Strengthening Rural Communities Resource Kit* (2001) enhance community capabilities and self-sufficiency. This kit will be updated to reflect current challenges facing communities, including an ageing population and a decline in the younger adult population.



Above: Aerial view, Forbes

Right: Aboriginal cultural heritage, courtesy of Dubbo City Council



The NSW Government is working with councils and other stakeholders to build community capacity, promote resource sharing, and pursue common issues and goals. For example, it is helping rural communities vulnerable to climate-related economic downturns to build resilience through the *NSW Drought Strategy* (2015), which provides advice for primary producers for dealing with drought.

Actions

- 23.1 Update the *Strengthening Rural Communities Resource Kit*.
- 23.2 Work with councils to better understand the drivers of population change and implications for local communities.
- 23.3 Work with Central NSW Councils (CENTROC) and other stakeholders to investigate the potential for standardisation of baseline data collection.
- 23.4 Build drought resilience in rural communities by supporting primary producers and communities to improve preparedness and decision-making.

Direction 24: Collaborate and partner with Aboriginal communities

Aboriginal communities connect to their ancestral country by passing down histories and place awareness through generations. Consultation and partnerships with Aboriginal communities on future land use planning must acknowledge, respect and consider the views and interests of Aboriginal people.

Local housing strategies and local environmental plans should be prepared in consultation with Aboriginal communities. Collaborative and inclusive planning builds trust, integrity and empowers Aboriginal communities to identify their own issues, strategic directions and solutions. It requires mechanisms that acknowledge the diversity of communities and the resources needed to participate.

Actions

- 24.1 Develop partnerships and engagement protocols with Aboriginal communities during the planning process.
- 24.2 Engage Aboriginal communities during the preparation of local housing strategies and local environmental plans.

The NSW Community Building Partnerships (CBP) program

The CBP program creates more vibrant and inclusive communities by supporting projects that encourage community participation, inclusion and cohesion, and that deliver positive social, environmental, inclusive or recreational outcomes.

The program offers grants across NSW for the enhancement of community facilities. In the Central West and Orana, funding has been provided for a range of projects, from the upgrade of tennis courts in Gulgong to a climate-sensitive Men's Shed in Blayney.

Three Rivers Regional Assembly (TRRA)

The role and responsibilities of the TRRA is to work towards ensuring Aboriginal communities have a real and genuine voice in negotiations/consultations in determining what services are being developed and implemented. It covers Bathurst Regional, Dubbo Regional, Gilgandra, Mid-Western Regional, Narramine, Bogan, Orange, Parkes and Warren local government areas. It provides the highest standard of regional governance by strengthening the capacity of leaders and community members to negotiate and set regional priorities.

Direction 25: Increase housing diversity and choice

Local housing strategies identify housing needs, plan for a range of housing types and identify the infrastructure needed to support local communities. The strategies need to be flexible and responsive to shifts in local housing demand and supply, and deal with uneven rates of development or unexpected population growth. Infrastructure must be planned and provided to support the construction of new housing.

Areas with stable or declining populations will still face demand for new dwellings and for a variety of housing types. It is important that new dwellings reflect the character and heritage of the area.

More one and two bedroom homes, and smaller homes, such as studio apartments with good access to infrastructure and services, will be needed. Opportunities for medium density development should be encouraged near town centres and villages to take advantage of existing services. Councils should consider these factors when planning for housing in local land use strategies.

Appropriate planning controls and incentives that can deliver more affordable housing include:

- expanding the range of model provisions that promote or require the inclusion of affordable housing in developments. For example, a floor space bonus to deliver a percentage of affordable housing in a development;
- providing development incentives and reduced contributions, or using other mechanisms that may boost construction of secondary dwellings as alternative affordable housing;
- ensuring councils consider planning incentives under the *State Environmental Planning Policy Affordable Rental Housing (2009)*; and
- promoting the establishment of new caravan parks and manufactured home estates on unconstrained land in existing settlements and new land release areas.

Social and affordable housing is available across the region, with the largest amount of social housing in Orange. Dubbo, Bathurst and Lithgow also have significant of social housing stock. The NSW Land and Housing Corporation owns social housing estates at East Dubbo, Kelso in Bathurst, and Bowen and Glenroi in Orange.

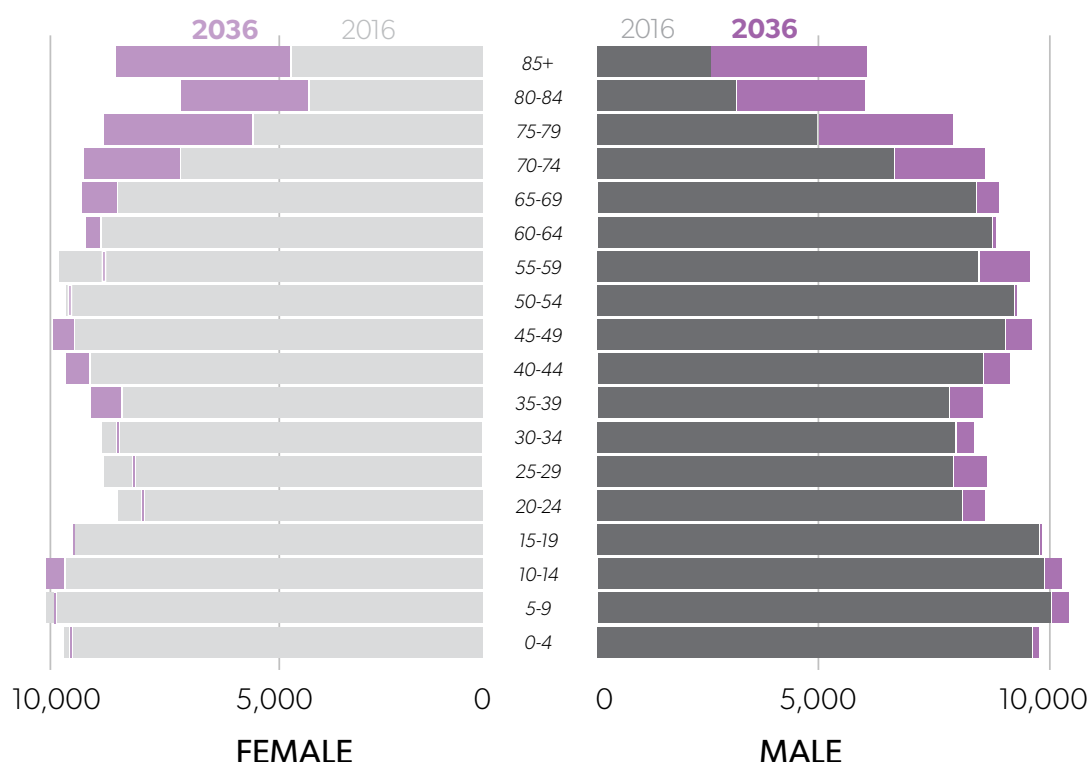
A number of community housing providers also provide affordable housing options. The NSW Land and Housing Corporation is reviewing social housing estates across NSW.

Actions

- 25.1 Prepare local housing strategies that increase housing choice, including affordable housing options.
- 25.2 Increase housing choice in regional cities and strategic centres at locations near or accessible to services and jobs.
- 25.3 Align infrastructure planning with new land release areas to provide adequate and timely infrastructure.
- 25.4 Locate higher density development close to town centres to capitalise on existing infrastructure and increase housing choice.
- 25.5 Promote incentives to encourage greater housing affordability including a greater mix of housing in new release areas.
- 25.6 Prepare guidelines for local housing strategies to address local affordable housing needs.
- 25.7 Work with councils to appropriately plan for future social and affordable housing needs.



Population Pyramid 2016-2036



Direction 26: Increase housing choice for seniors

The increasing demand for appropriate accommodation options for older people has led to an undersupply of appropriate housing. This is particularly the case for Gilgandra, Weddin, Cowra, Oberon and Lithgow local government areas, which are projected to have the largest proportion (greater than 30 per cent) of people aged 65 or over.

Local housing strategies must plan for a range of housing choices for seniors, including retirement villages, nursing homes and opportunities to modify existing dwellings so that people can age in their own homes. Adaptable, liveable homes should be easy to enter and navigate; responsive to the changing needs of occupants; and relatively easy to adapt for injured or elderly residents, or people with a disability.

State planning policies streamline approval processes for senior's housing. The incentives in these policies need to be reviewed to better suit regional circumstances, as benefits are often negated due to higher development costs and lower demand when facilities only cater for small populations in regional areas compared to metropolitan areas.

Actions

- 26.1 Promote ageing-in-place by adopting elements of Livable Housing Australia's *Livable Housing Design Guidelines* in development controls for housing, where possible.
- 26.2 Promote opportunities for retirement villages, nursing homes and other senior's housing in local housing strategies.
- 26.3 Remove planning barriers to provide a range of low-care and independent seniors' accommodation options in appropriate locations.
- 26.4 Review *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* to make it more applicable to private developers in regional areas.
- 26.5 Locate new housing for seniors close to existing services and facilities, and on land free from hazards.
- 26.6 Work with councils to investigate the demand for seniors housing and to identify barriers to providing low-care and independent senior's accommodation options.
- 26.7 Work with Gilgandra Shire Council to produce a case study on Cooee Lodge Retirement Village to guide other councils developing aged care accommodation.

Direction 27: Deliver a range of accommodation options for seasonal, itinerant and mining workforces

The Central West and Orana will continue to experience large influxes of seasonal and itinerant workers for mining and agribusiness, such as in the viticulture, pome fruit, nut, cotton and stone fruit industries, particularly during harvest periods. An adequate range of accommodation options is needed for these workers.

Construction of large-scale infrastructure and mining 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.

Further guidance is required to plan for temporary mining accommodation. The size and scale of these facilities should be decided in partnership with local communities and consider social integration, land use conflicts and impacts on community facilities.

Actions

- 27.1 Produce guidelines to help councils plan for and manage seasonal and itinerant worker accommodation.
- 27.2 Prepare planning guidelines for the short-term accommodation of mining employees to support workforce needs during mining construction, operation or shutdown.

Seasonal and itinerant housing

Temporary housing villages should not duplicate the services and facilities of existing centres. In some circumstances, locating temporary populations on the outskirts of centres may be preferable to enable temporary residents to use and contribute positively to facilities that serve the entire community, and to better integrate into these communities. Decisions must be informed by evidence of the likely changes to economic opportunities for the centre over time.

Direction 28: Manage rural residential development

Rural residential housing is a popular lifestyle housing option driven by the desire for a rural lifestyle, particularly close to regional cities and strategic centres, and in some cases, close to Sydney. In some areas, this type of development has been seen as a way to attract new residents and reverse or stabilise population decline, although economic development is a much stronger driver of population trends.

Rural residential development can conflict with productive agricultural, industrial or resource lands. It may also increase pressure for new services outside existing settlements, with costs borne by councils and the broader community. Managing this development and its cumulative impacts will be essential as the regional economy diversifies and development pressure increases.

A consistent planning approach is required to identify suitable locations for new rural residential development to avoid fragmentation of productive agricultural land, and protect high environmental value assets, cultural and heritage assets or areas with important rural landscape values. This type of development should not increase pressure on infrastructure and services, and should be located on land free from natural hazards.

Actions

- 28.1 Locate new rural residential areas:
 - close to existing urban settlements to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, including roads, water, sewer and waste services, and social and community infrastructure;
 - to avoid and minimise the potential for land use conflicts with productive, zoned agricultural land and natural resources; and
 - to avoid areas of high environmental, cultural or heritage significance, regionally important agricultural land or areas affected by natural hazards.

- 28.2 Enable new rural residential development only where it has been identified in a local housing strategy prepared by Council and approved by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- 28.3 Manage land use conflict that can result from cumulative impacts of successive development decisions.

Direction 29: Deliver healthy built environments and better urban design

Good urban design can add to the community's cultural, economic and physical wellbeing by creating safe, healthy and socially inclusive places that meet the needs of children, young people, families, singles, people with disabilities and seniors.

Planning for redeveloping town centres should consider how pedestrians and cyclists will move about, landscaping and infrastructure for public spaces.

Councils should apply water sensitive urban design to improve water use, supply and security. This includes re-using wastewater on parks, gardens and reserves, or to supplement agricultural uses.

Urban design guidelines are commonly developed with a metropolitan focus and do not necessarily apply to regional and rural environments. Regional urban design guidelines will help councils when preparing environmental planning instruments for new development in existing areas or land release areas, to revitalise town centres and respond to climate and water security challenges.

The design guidelines will promote design excellence particularly in higher density areas such as regional cities and strategic centres.

Actions

- 29.1 Develop regional urban design guidelines for planning, designing and developing healthy built environments.
- 29.2 Enhance the quality of neighbourhoods by integrating recreational walking and cycling networks.
- 29.3 Reflect local built form, heritage and character in new housing developments.
- 29.4 Incorporate water sensitive urban design in new developments.







Local Government Narratives

The NSW Government will work with each council to deliver the directions and actions set out in this Plan. The following priorities build on the directions and actions in this Plan to guide investigations and implementation.

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

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

Network of settlements

The region has a variety of settlement types, ranging from the regional cities of Dubbo, Orange and Bathurst (each with broader catchments), to the strategic centres of Parkes, Forbes, Mudgee, Cowra and Lithgow, and local centres; including smaller towns and villages.

This interdependent network of settlements is a strategic asset for the region. The larger regional cities support a network of smaller settlements in the region and extend into other regions, making services and facilities reasonably accessible to most communities. Many of the settlements have distinct characteristics that make them attractive places to live, work and visit.

Bathurst Regional

Bathurst is Australia's oldest inland settlement. Rich in built and natural history, it sits at the heart of the Bathurst Regional Local Government Area. Its population was estimated at 42,231 in 2015. Bathurst is a progressive regional city with a growing population, attracting families to new residential areas such as Abercrombie, Eglinton, Kelso North and Windradyne.

Bathurst services a catchment of over 146,000 people and the Local Government Area contributed \$1.93 billion to gross regional product (GRP) in 2011. Economic sectors include manufacturing, public administration and safety, education and training, health care and social assistance, services (electricity, water and gas), construction and retail.

Several NSW Government regional and head offices have relocated to Bathurst, while a thriving retail sector contributes to more than 3,200 established businesses. Rural areas support livestock grazing and wool production, as well as a forestry industry.

Tourism is a major economic driver. For example, upwards of 200,000 people visit during iconic race events at the internationally famous Mount Panorama motor racing circuit. The city attracts students to over 60 educational institutions including Charles Sturt University, Western Institute of TAFE and the Western Sydney University's clinical education facility at Bathurst Base Hospital.

Priorities

- Support the delivery of residential release areas and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas.
- Support the development of a nationally recognised automotive industry hub at Mount Panorama including the development of Velocity Park Raceway and associated infrastructure and facilities.
- Promote Bathurst as a centre of excellence for technology and education.
- Recognise and enhance cultural, heritage, rural and environmental values.

Blayney

Blayney Local Government Area directly benefits from its proximity to Orange and Bathurst. Residential land releases at Millthorpe and Blayney will meet the needs of a growing population who want to work locally, or in Bathurst or Orange.

Blayney Local Government Area contributed \$594 million to GRP in 2011, supported by mining, manufacturing and agriculture sectors. It is home to a substantial cold storage facility, a pet food manufacturing industry and one of Australia's largest gold mining operations at Cadia Valley (which is also partly located in Cabonne Local Government Area).

The Central West Livestock Exchange near Blayney is a high quality livestock trading facility. Blayney's recent economic growth is due in part to the recent mine expansion at Cadia Valley, a 15-turbine windfarm (one of the first in the region and NSW) and a productive agricultural sector.

A 61-kilometre potable water supply pipeline from Orange to Carcoar is approaching construction. This will increase water security and support industry development.

Priorities

- Continue to revitalise Blayney's main street and central business district.
- Continue to grow the mining, agribusiness, transport and logistics sectors and associated businesses.
- Investigate the development of a regionally significant intensified agricultural precinct for agribusinesses, leveraging existing strategic advantages and future infrastructure.
- Leverage Blayney's strategic advantages including its proximity to Bathurst, Orange, Cowra, Canberra and Sydney; the existence of major utility services; and access to transport, warehousing and freight facilities.
- Continue to grow the renewable energy industry sector.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's rural character to support diverse industries such as tourism.

Bogan

Bogan Local Government Area is located in the north-west of Orana and borders the Far West region. The main service centre of Nyngan sits at the junction of the Mitchell and Barrier highways on the Bogan River, and supports smaller towns and villages such as Girilambone and Coolabah. Mining and agricultural production, including livestock grazing and large-scale cropping, are primary economic drivers. The Local Government Area contributed \$238 million to GRP in 2011, with mining the largest contributor and agriculture the largest employer.

Value-adding is a key opportunity given the quantity and quality of the agricultural commodities produced. Nyngan has road and rail access to Dubbo via Narromine, which is linked directly to Parkes and the intermodal hub and the proposed inland rail route. Bogan is well placed to capitalise on global demand for protein- and grain-based commodities.

Priorities

- Maintain and further develop Nyngan's main street as an attractive destination for local shopping and services, while enhancing and retaining its character.
- Deliver effective local health services through Council-owned facilities and the Nyngan Multi-Purpose Health Centre.
- Maintain and enhance local and regional road networks to support agriculture, mining and tourism and to give local residents safe and efficient access to services and facilities in Nyngan.
- Ensure water security through infrastructure projects including off-line storage.
- Support and develop the local economy including agriculture and mining, leveraging the Local Government Area's strategic location.
- Promote and support a variety of tourism opportunities particularly for older or retired tourists.

Cabonne

Cabonne Local Government Area is one of the fastest-growing local government areas in the Central West due to its agricultural sector and proximity to Orange. Cabonne is characterised by numerous villages, including the largest centre of Molong, 35 kilometres from Orange; Yeoval, Cumnock, Manildra, Cudal, Cargo, Canowindra and Eugowra; and a significant area of rural land surrounding these towns and villages. Each settlement provides its communities with services and facilities.

The Local Government Area contributed \$1 billion to GRP in 2011, supported by significant mining, agriculture and manufacturing operations, which provide over half the area's jobs. The agricultural sector supports over 50 per cent of all businesses, and several value-adding industries are linked to agriculture, including a flour mill, canola mill and olive processing facilities.

The Local Government Area also has one of Australia's largest gold mining operations, at Cadia Valley (also partly located in Blayney Local Government Area). A potable water pipeline from Orange to Molong Dam, and then from Molong to Cumnock and Yeoval, will improve water security.

Priorities

- Maintain and enhance the economic diversity of Cabonne's towns, villages and commercial centres.
- Support villages to attract appropriate development.
- Support the mining and agribusiness sectors and associated businesses through land use planning policies.
- Protect agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.
- Support the connectivity of the local, regional and state transport network.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's rural character to diversify the economy in areas such as tourism.

Coonamble

Coonamble Local Government Area is in the north of the Orana on the Castlereagh River. Coonamble is the local service centre. It is situated 160 kilometres north of Dubbo and supports villages such as Gulargambone and Quambone. Coonamble has a Multi-Purpose Service, a rural service and retail sector, primary and high schools, and a TAFE.

The Local Government Area contributed \$194 million in GRP in 2011. Agriculture is the main industry, employing over 20 per cent of the workforce, and producing commodities such as

cereals, oil seed and legume crops, and livestock. Opportunities exist in aged care and the development of Coonamble's cultural and historic character.

Priorities

- Support existing settlements.
- Preserve the main street and central business district of Coonamble.
- Support the agribusiness sector, including value-add manufacturing, transport and logistics, and associated businesses.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's rural character to support diverse industries such as tourism.
- Protect and enhance Coonamble's cultural and historic character.
- Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural events and facilities.
- Protect important agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.

Cowra

Cowra Local Government Area is in the south of the region and was home to around 12,476 people in 2015. Cowra is a strong and vibrant community that sits at the junction of the Mid-Western Highway, Olympic Highway and Lachlan Valley Way and enjoys direct connections to Bathurst, Wagga Wagga, Dubbo and Canberra. Cowra provides services to smaller villages of Woodstock, Wattamondara, Wyangala, Noonbinna, Gooloogong and Billimari. Cowra is the region's gateway to Canberra.

Cowra Local Government Area contributed \$447 million to GRP in 2011, with agriculture the largest contributor and supporting industries including dairy, livestock, vegetables, wool, cereal and oil seed production. Viticulture has become a significant industry over the last two decades.

Cowra supports a robust manufacturing sector with value-adding activities in agriculture, engineering and furniture for wholesale trade.

The emerging aviation sector around Cowra Airport includes the expansion of the existing light aircraft manufacturing plant, a future pilot training academy and other aviation-related industries.

Priorities

- Support the growing agricultural sector by promoting innovation and technological advancement.
- Enhance Cowra's existing transport connections, specifically the re-opening of the Blayney–Demondrille rail line, the upgrade of Lachlan Valley Way to support the transport network to Canberra and the east coast via the Hume Highway; and the Cowra town centre.
- Promote and support the sustainable growth of Cowra's health sector.
- Continue the development of Cowra Airport as a centre for aviation-related industry and services.

Dubbo Regional

The Dubbo Regional Local Government Area is at the heart of the region and had an estimated population of 51,007 in 2015. It includes the regional city of Dubbo, the local service centre of Wellington and the towns and villages of Geurie, Wongarbron, Stuart Town, Mumbil and Brocklehurst. Dubbo Regional Local Government Area contributed \$2.48 billion to GRP in 2011, supported by a diversity of economic sectors including health care and social assistance, public administration and safety, construction, manufacturing, retail, agriculture, transport and warehousing, and finance.

Dubbo is one of the largest inland regional cities in NSW and sits at the intersection of major road, rail and air routes. It services a catchment area of over 120,000 people from within the region and in the adjoining Far West region. Dubbo's broad range of industries reinforce its role as a regional city, supported by extensive educational, professional, government and retail services. Taronga Western Plains Zoo is a major tourist attraction, contributing \$194 million.

Wellington sits at the foot of Mount Arthur between the Macquarie and Bell Rivers. It supports surrounding agricultural activities such as cropping, wool, beef and prime lamb farming on rich productive soils. Tourists are attracted to the Wellington Caves complex, Lake Burrendong, the Burrendong Arboretum, Mount Arthur, small wineries and boutique galleries.

Priorities

- Establish the regional city of Dubbo as a centre of excellence for health care, social assistance and community services to support people within and beyond the region.
- Support the growth and development of Dubbo as a mining services centre for the Orana and Western NSW.
- Plan for the infrastructure needs of an expanding population including the Newell, Mitchell and Golden highways and their relationship with continued economic development.
- Continue to grow tertiary education offerings to attract young people, while supporting established sectors in professional, government and retail services.
- Support the growing tourism industry in Dubbo and Wellington to create diverse and sustainable businesses that provide local jobs, and to recognise unique tourist assets.
- Continue to grow and develop agribusiness, transport and logistics and recognise the importance of these sectors to the regional, State and national economy.
- Meet housing needs by ensuring the availability of affordable housing and a variety of housing types and formats, including housing for seniors and people with a disability.
- Maintain the health of the Macquarie and Bell rivers and recognise their importance to the natural environment and tourism.

- Continue to protect agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.
- Support the ongoing growth and development of Dubbo Regional Airport.

Forbes

The Forbes Shire Local Government Area is located in the south of the Central West on the banks of the Lachlan River, with an estimated population of 9,754 in 2015.

Forbes is ideally placed to enhance its diverse agricultural and manufacturing base. The economy is underpinned by irrigated and dryland agriculture, particularly grains and livestock, as well as wholesale trade, health care and manufacturing. The Lachlan Health Service Redevelopment, which includes the refurbishment of Forbes District Hospital, will support the growing and changing community.

The Forbes Central West Livestock Exchange is an undercover cattle, sheep and pig trading centre, and among the biggest livestock trading centres in NSW.

Priorities

- Attract investment in value-adding manufacturing industries.
- Enhance the agriculture sector with improved transport links and value-added production.
- Encourage the development of employment-generating rural and agricultural industries.
- Maintain and grow agricultural, livestock and meat processing industries.
- Promote Forbes District Hospital as a regional medical training facility.
- Protect important agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.
- Attract tourism-related development, capitalising on Forbes's natural and built character.

Gilgandra

Gilgandra Local Government Area sits on the Castlereagh River, 65 kilometres north of Dubbo. The local service centre of Gilgandra is located at the junction of the Newell, Oxley and Castlereagh highways and services other villages including Tooraweenah. Gilgandra has a well-equipped hospital, a strong retail sector, schools and a TAFE.

Gilgandra Local Government Area contributed \$159 million in GRP in 2011, supported primarily by agriculture, including cereal, oil seed and legume crops, and livestock production. Potential economic growth areas include aged care, renewable energy generation and enhancing Gilgandra's cultural and historic character.

Priorities

- Support the existing settlements of Gilgandra and Tooraweenah.
- Grow the agribusiness sector through value-add and diversification opportunities to increase local jobs.
- Leverage opportunities from the area's rural character to support value-adding industries, tourism and energy generation.
- Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural events and facilities.
- Support the development of transport and logistics sectors and associated businesses to maximise Gilgandra's location at the junction of the Newell, Oxley and Castlereagh highways.

Lachlan

Lachlan Shire is located in the south-west of the region and borders the Far West and Riverina Murray regions. The shire had an estimated population of 6,767 in 2015. Condobolin, the local service centre, is the main residential area and provides a hub for agricultural activity, grain storage and transportation links for Lake Cargelligo, Tottenham, Tullibigeal, Burcher, Derriwong, Fifield and Albert. Condobolin is also a centre for sporting and recreational activity. Lake Cargelligo is a popular tourist destination.

It forms part of the largest natural inland lake system in NSW and has been used for centuries by the Wiradjuri people as a source of food and water.

The Local Government Area contributed \$312 million to GRP in 2011 with agriculture the largest industry. This includes irrigation and cropping based on the Lachlan River floodplain involving cotton and grains, and livestock. Mining is a developing sector within and adjoining Lachlan Shire and has the potential to increase population and job numbers.

Priorities

- Support existing settlements as the focus for new development.
- Support the primacy of the main streets of Condobolin and Lake Cargelligo.
- Support the agribusiness and transport and logistics sectors and associated businesses.
- Develop the Lachlan Valley Way and local road links to support regional transport from Griffith and Hillston to Tottenham and Narromine to link with the Newell Highway at Gilgandra.
- Develop a regional road transport support node at Condobolin.
- Identify and develop the Shire's mining potential and protect resources while planning for long-term social and utility growth.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment.
- Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural facilities.
- Protect important agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.

Lithgow

The Lithgow Local Government Area is in the region's east on the edge of the Blue Mountains, about 140 kilometres west of Sydney. It had an estimated population of 21,416 people in 2015, and includes the strategic centre of Lithgow, the towns of Portland and Wallerawang, and numerous villages.

It includes large areas of national parks and state forests, including in the Wollemi and Marrangaroo National Parks, and Newnes State Forest.

The Local Government Area contributed \$1.58 billion to GRP in 2011. Mining was the largest contributor through established coal mines, supported by electricity, gas, water and waste water services. Other economic sectors include health care and social assistance, manufacturing, public administration and safety, and retail.

Lithgow Local Government Area has the potential to grow renewable energy industries such as wind energy, with a private wind farm in operation at Hampton, south-east of Lithgow. It is also well suited to agricultural-based industries to supply the Sydney Basin, and as a commuter suburb of Sydney via the rail network.

Priorities

- Maintain the primacy of Lithgow's main street and central business district.
- Develop transport and freight connections that capitalise on Lithgow's proximity to Sydney.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's location and rural character to support diverse industries such as tourism.

Mid-Western Regional

Mid-Western Regional Council in the Orana had an estimated population of 24,191 in 2015. The strategic centre of Mudgee has grown in recent years due to the mining boom. It services other towns including Rylstone, Kandos, Ilford, Bylong and the historic town of Gulgong.

The Local Government Area is well known for its built heritage, food and wine tourism, and mining. The Castlereagh and Great Western highways connect Mudgee with Sydney, and the Golden Highway connects to Dubbo and Newcastle. These connections provide opportunities to move agricultural and mining products to domestic and export markets.

The Local Government Area contributed \$1.67 billion to GRP in 2011, driven by mining (coal), manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and fishing. Mining accounts for 15 per cent of employment, followed by retail services at 11.9 per cent and agriculture at 10 per cent.

Priorities

- Support appropriately located and serviced land for residential development.
- Support the mining and resources sector and associated businesses.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's location and rural character to support the established food and tourism market.
- Protect agricultural land from encroachment from residential development.
- Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural facilities.

Narromine

Narromine Local Government Area is in the heart of the Macquarie Valley, 37 kilometres west of Dubbo. It had an estimated population of 6,822 in 2015. Narromine is the Shire's main town on the Macquarie River and provides services to the smaller settlements of Trangie and Tomingley. Significant opportunities exist in freight and logistics, with the proposed Inland Rail planned to intersect with existing rail freight infrastructure at Narromine.

Narromine Local Government Area contributed \$261 million to GRP in 2011, with the largest contribution from agriculture, including sheep, cattle and wool production, as well as broadacre cereal crops and citrus fruit. Cotton production has increased in recent years. Narromine's agricultural contribution to GRP relies on water allocations from upstream Burrendong Dam, with groundwater allocations during drier periods softening downturns.

Agriculture, health care, education and retail provide most jobs in the Local Government Area, with Tomingley's significant mining activity adding to the diverse employment opportunities.

Narromine is an aviation hub, with gliding and aviation-related development around Narromine Aerodrome including Skypark, a residential aviation precinct.

Priorities

- Promote Narromine as a recreational aviation and gliding hub, encouraging aviation-related development around Narromine Aerodrome.
- Continue to invest in health care and education to support a steady urban and rural population.
- Identify and protect regionally significant agricultural land, including commercial irrigated crops and horticulture.
- Provide for strategically located employment lands and support the development of value-added agricultural industries.

Oberon

Oberon Local Government Area is in the east of the Central West, adjacent to the Blue Mountains. It had an estimated population of 5,318 in 2015. Tourist attractions include the Jenolan Caves and Mayfield Garden, one of the world's largest privately owned cool climate gardens. The Local Government Area contributed \$301 million to GRP in 2011 through the manufacturing and agriculture, and fishing and forestry sectors. Value-adding related to forestry products is a major economic driver in Oberon, with more than 25 per cent of employment in manufacturing-related industries. Unique agricultural pursuits are a growing and vital industry.

Oberon's climate supports specialised horticulture. Its location close to Sydney and export markets will drive growth in agriculture and associated value-add manufacturing industries.

Priorities

- Support the forestry and agricultural sectors and associated businesses.
- Leverage locational opportunities to support freight and logistics industries.
- Leverage cool climate opportunities to support eco-tourism and food tourism.

Orange

Orange Local Government Area includes the regional city of Orange and part of the highly productive Mount Canobolas horticultural precinct. Orange had an estimated population of 41,809 in 2015.

Orange Local Government Area contributed \$2.49 billion to GRP in 2011, driven by health care and social assistance, mining and mining support, public administration, tourism, viticulture and horticulture. Orange is also home to the Head Office of the NSW Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development.

Orange provides higher-order services to the wider region through the Western NSW Local Health Service Orange Hospital, Charles Sturt University and TAFE, and a regional airport at Spring Hill. The regional city includes new release areas for residential and industrial land uses. Expansive wine and horticultural industries throughout the Local Government Area reinforce the city's agricultural focus and support a significant tourism sector.

Priorities

- Capitalise on Orange's character, lifestyle and heritage to enhance tourism and attract new residents.
- Leverage Orange's rural character to support diverse industries such as value-added manufacturing and food tourism.
- Support the growing healthcare sector and related industries in the health precinct at Bloomfield around Orange Health Service.
- Plan for industrial land and protect industrial areas from incompatible land uses.
- Support the delivery of new homes in residential release areas, including North Orange and Shiralee, and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas.

Parkes

The Parkes Shire Local Government Area boasts a strong, diverse economy, with a GRP of nearly \$1 billion in 2011. The economy is underpinned by agriculture and mining, strengthened by a robust transport and logistics industry, and retail and public sector jobs.

The Shire had an estimated population of 15,337 in 2015 and includes the strategic centre of Parkes and smaller towns of Peak Hill, Alectown, Cookamidgera, Bogan Gate, Trundle and Tullamore.

The mining sector contributes almost a third of the GRP, mainly generated through Northparkes Mines copper mine. Retail, health care and agriculture, which together account for a third of employment.

Parkes sits at the intersection of the Newell Highway in NSW and the rail corridor that links Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth, as well as Adelaide and Darwin.

Parkes will be a critical intermodal node for the proposed Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. It will provide the catalyst for more efficient freight transport and a stronger Parkes National Logistics Hub, a 600-hectare site dedicated to 24/7 multimodal activity. These improvements will be enhanced by the Southern and Western ring roads around Parkes to support heavy vehicle movements.

More than 80 per cent of Australia's population can be reached in less than 12 hours by road from Parkes. This presents opportunities for value-add industries in the agricultural sector including processing facilities and a centralised storage and distribution point for products such as fertiliser, chemicals and fuel.

Tourism experiences and opportunities are diverse, ranging from the Goobang National Park, the CSIRO Parkes observatory that attracts over 120,000 visitors a year, the annual Trundle ABBA Festival, and the Parkes Elvis Festival, which attracts over 22,000 visitors.

Projects to support the Shire's economic growth and social fabric include an innovative multipurpose library facility with meeting rooms and an exhibition area, and a CBD Vibrancy Plan that includes new civic centre infrastructure and cultural spaces.

Priorities

- Develop Parkes as a National Logistics Hub, with supporting infrastructure including roads, rail and air linking Parkes to capital cities and ports.
- Develop Parkes Regional Airport as an air freight hub.
- Work with the Australian Government and local councils as the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail progresses.
- Ensure adequate supply of residential, industrial and commercial land.
- Diversify the local economy by supporting new industry development and opportunities in agriculture, value-added manufacturing and the mining and resources sector.
- Improve telecommunications infrastructure, including high-speed internet connectivity.
- Facilitate the growth of local communities through cultural and socially supportive infrastructure.
- Develop and support the visitor economy and implement the objectives of the Destination Management Plan.

Warren

Warren Shire in the Orana has an area of 10,860 square kilometres, equivalent to around 1.3 per cent of the State's land surface. The Shire had an estimated population of 2,901 people in 2015. Warren is the main township and administrative centre, with smaller villages at Collie and Nevertire.

Warren Shire is a rural area with land used primarily for agriculture, particularly sheep and cattle grazing, wheat, oats and cotton. Warren Local Government Area contributed \$148 million

to GRP in 2011. In addition to those directly employed within the industry, agriculture's economic benefits flow on to other industries. It is the largest employer, followed by health care and social assistance, retail, public administration, and education and training.

The Macquarie Marshes, the most significant wetland complex in Australia, sit 110 kilometres north of Warren, and are listed on the Ramsar Convention as a wetland area of international importance. They support a unique inland wetland community and a number of agricultural enterprises.

Priorities

- Protect and maintain the integrity of agricultural land.
- Encourage economic growth by supporting agriculture and other associated industries.
- Support the primacy of Warren's main street and central business district to retain its role as a functional, attractive town and service centre for other villages.
- Expand value-added manufacturing and encourage businesses to locate in the Local Government Area.
- Leverage opportunities from the Local Government Area's location and rural character to support diverse industries such as ecotourism and facilities for visitors.
- Provide facilities, services and housing options to support diverse community needs, including for seniors.

Warrumbungle

The Warrumbungle Shire Local Government Area is located in the north of the Orana mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne and two hours from Tamworth in the north and Dubbo in the south. The estimated 2015 population was 9,728. The local service centre of Coonabarabran provides essential health, retail and education services to the surrounding towns and villages of Mendooran, Bugaldie, Coolah, Dunedoo, Baradine, Binnaway, Neilrex, Purlewaugh and Merrygoen.

The Local Government Area contributed \$317 million to GRP in 2011, with agriculture providing over 30 per cent of jobs. It is highly regarded for livestock grazing and cropping, and its location on the Newell Highway, with access to railway lines at Binnaway and Mendooran, provides opportunities to expand the freight network.

The Warrumbungle National Park west of Coonabarabran is a popular tourist destination and is home to the internationally significant Siding Spring Observatory. The Observatory has international Dark Sky status and is a critical piece of national infrastructure that provides jobs and attracts tourists.

Priorities

- Encourage economic growth by supporting agriculture and other emerging industries such as value-add manufacturing and freight-related opportunities.
- Support the primacy of the main street and central business district in Coonabarabran and other towns.
- Support the agricultural sector and associated businesses in each locality.
- Continue to support and protect the Siding Spring Observatory from incompatible development.
- Support tourism opportunities, specifically for nature-based tourism, in the Warrumbungle and Coolah Tops national parks.
- Protect agricultural land and rural industries from encroachment from residential development.

Weddin

The Weddin Shire Local Government Area in the region's south is located two hours from Orange, Canberra, Wagga Wagga and Dubbo. The local service centre of Grenfell provides services to the surrounding community. The Local Government Area had an estimated population of 3,701 in 2015 and contributed \$133 million to GRP in 2011.

The Local Government Area contains historic cultural and built environs. Its economy is primarily driven by the agriculture sector, which accounts for two-thirds of local businesses. It supports a variety of agricultural enterprises, including broadacre cropping and grazing, associated agribusinesses, manufacturing, logistics, and retail businesses centred in and around Grenfell.

Priorities

- Support the primacy of the Grenfell main street and central business district.
- Enhance tourism by developing Weddin's built and social heritage environment.
- Continue to deliver a high standard of health and community services, facilities and infrastructure to residents and visitors.
- Support agriculture, including broadacre cropping and grazing, and agribusiness diversification.
- Leverage opportunities to support freight and logistics industries.
- Leverage opportunities from agricultural production through value-added manufacturing and associated industries.
- Protect important agricultural land from encroachment from inappropriate development.





Glossary



Affordable housing

Housing for very low and low income households where rent or mortgage payments are above 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.

Agricultural supply chain

Comprises input supply (seeds, fertiliser, energy), production, storage, processing transport, marketing and distribution of agricultural produce.

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.

Biophysical strategic agricultural lands

Lands with high quality soil and water resources, capable of sustaining high levels of productivity.

Biosecurity

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

Central business district (CBD)

The main cluster of businesses found within a town or city.

Central West and Orana region

The Local Government Areas of Bathurst Regional, Blayney, Bogan, Cabonne, Coonamble, Cowra, Dubbo Regional, Gilgandra, Forbes, Lachlan, Lithgow, Mid-Western Regional, Narromine, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Warrumbungle, Warren and Weddin.

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 average and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.³⁴

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.

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.

Household size

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

Housing affordability

A person's ability to pay for their housing.

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.

Housing density

One of several measures that describe how intensively an urban area is developed. It is normally measured as the number of dwellings in a given area.

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.

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 that 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.

Regional city

Centres with the largest commercial component of any location in the region and that provide a full range of higher-order services, including hospitals and tertiary education services.

Strategic centres

Centres of regional strategic importance, including Cowra, Forbes, Lithgow, Mudgee and Parkes.

Sustainability

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

Endnotes

- 1 Regional Development Australia Central West 2016 Value adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW, RDA Central West, Orange
- 2 NSW Trade and Investment 2015 Economic Profile Central West and Orana, Prepared for the Economic Development Strategy for Regional NSW, NSW Trade and Investment, Sydney, viewed 6 March 2017, https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/67702/2.-Central-West-Orana_Regional-Economic-Profile_Feb2015.pdf
- 3 Regional Development Australia Central West 2016 Value adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW, RDA Central West, Orange
- 4 Invest NSW Central West n.d. Manufacturing, Regional Development Australia Central West, viewed 6 March 2017, www.investnswcentralwest.com.au/industries/manufacturing/.
- 5 Regional Development Australia Central West 2016 Value adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW, RDA Central West, Orange
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