Looking After our Community

DOCUMENT ON EXHIBITION

Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy

Exhibition Period: 28 Days
21 February – 21 March 2025

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TOWARDS 2030

Mid-Western Regional Council

Mid-Western Region
Housing Strategy

February 2025

Funded by:

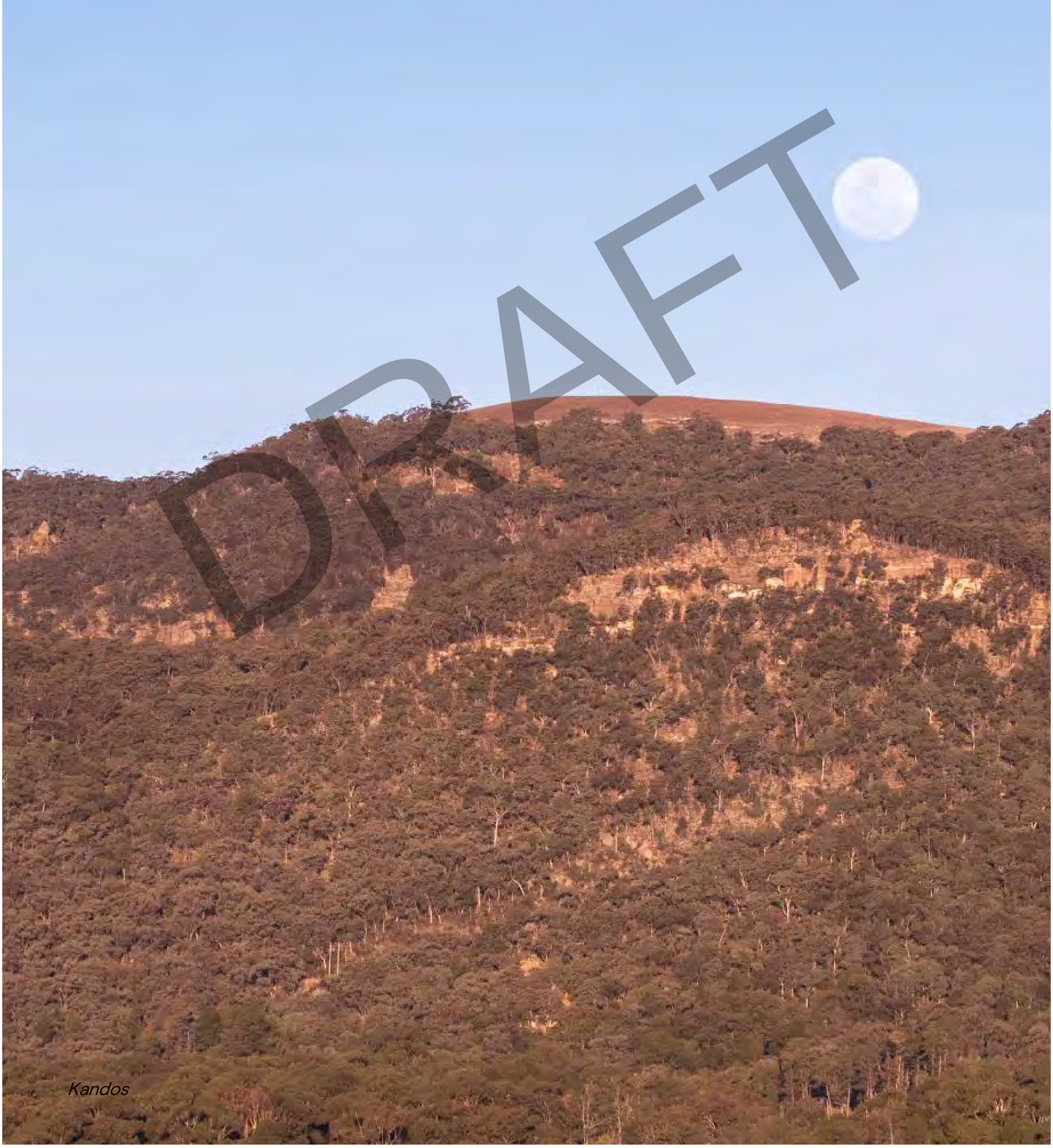
NSW GOVERNMENT

The Mid-Western Housing Strategy is an initiative funded by the NSW Government through the NSW Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people, the traditional custodians of the Wiradjuri Nation.

We acknowledge their Elders past, present and future. We also acknowledge people from other nations and language groups who have now made the Mid-Western Region their home, along with the descendants of the Wiradjuri Nation.



Kandos

Authorship

This document has been prepared by Mid-Western Regional Council and Gyde Consulting.

Mudgee

Contents

Executive Summary

The Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy will guide the quantity, location and type of residential development within the Mid-Western LGA.

The Strategy recognises and responds to the significant challenge of providing enough housing to meet the needs of the population, within both the short and long term future.

The Strategy plans for the **very high housing demand** anticipated within a **very short timeframe** due to the vast number of major projects occurring throughout the region, which is further exacerbated when considering the expected natural population growth.

The Strategy outlines actions that will prioritise the delivery of **short-term housing supply** to alleviate housing pressures and support opportunity for investment.

The Housing Strategy sets out a clear path for how Council will deliver housing to **meet the needs of the growing population** of the Mid-Western LGA to 2041.

The Strategy provides an overview of housing across the Mid-Western LGA, including dwelling numbers, dwelling typologies, and tenure types whilst also considering the population's housing experiences regarding key issues such as **affordability and availability of housing.**

In response to community consultation, the Strategy focuses on the delivery of a **diverse mix of dwelling types** and lot sizes, including smaller options, to provide greater **housing choice, enhance affordability and enable flexibility** to suit the varied needs of the community.

The Strategy will deliver residential land **in an orderly manner consistent with planned infrastructure development,** accommodating future growth within the existing zoned and identified opportunities areas.

The Housing Strategy prioritises the design and delivery of **high-quality housing** outcomes to create **liveable and sustainable homes** that preserve the Mid-Western LGA's unique character, rich heritage and great places.

1 Introduction

The Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy is Council's vision for the future of housing for the Mid-Western community to 2041 and beyond.

The Mid-Western LGA is projected to grow by between 5,000-7,000 people, from a population of 25,700 in 2021 to up to 33,000 in 2041.

1.1 Background

This Strategy sets out how Council will provide for the increased housing needs associated with this growing population, addressing key considerations of supply, accessibility, affordability and liveability.

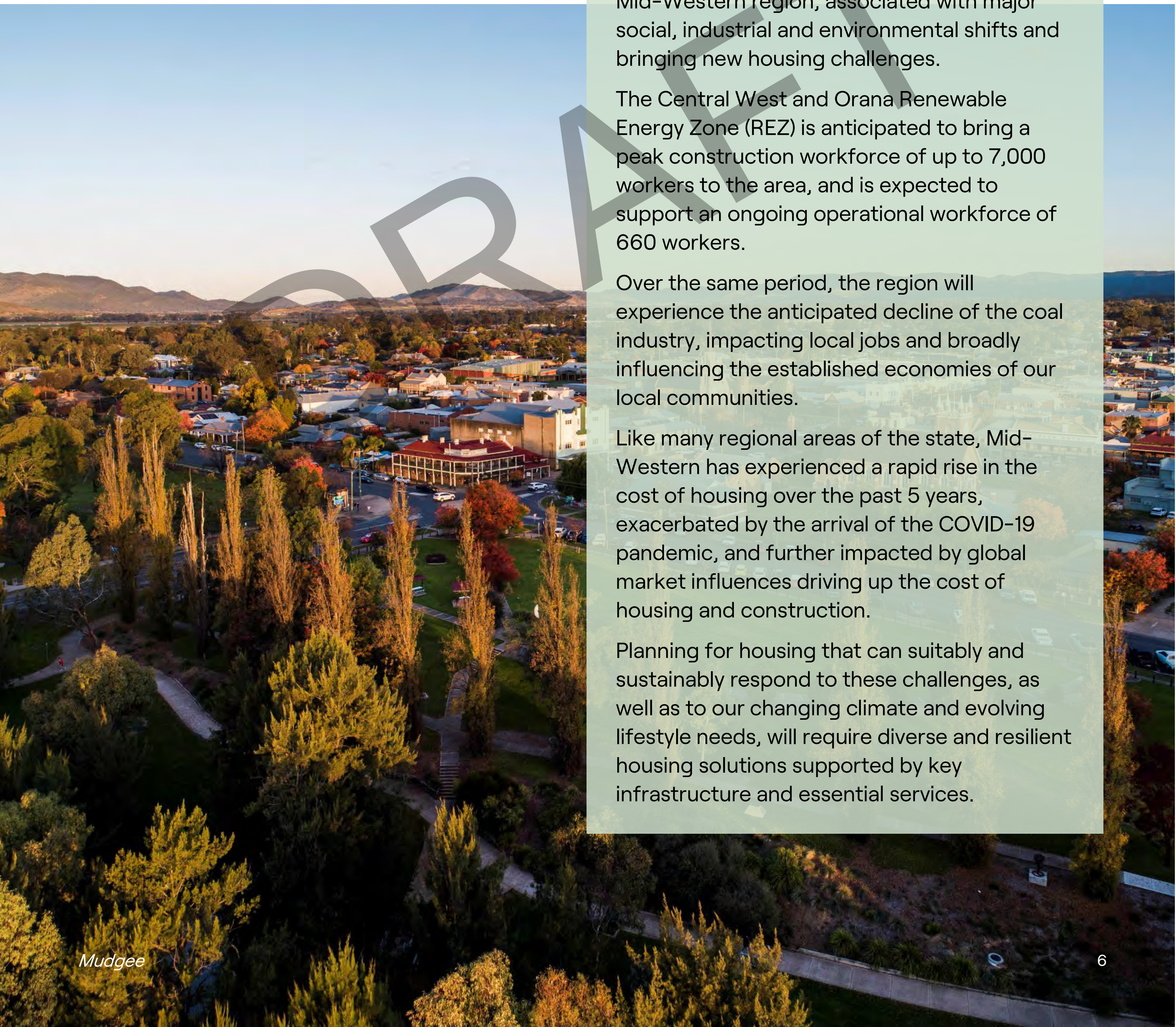
The duration of this Strategy will relate to a period of rapid growth and change for the Mid-Western region, associated with major social, industrial and environmental shifts and bringing new housing challenges.

The Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) is anticipated to bring a peak construction workforce of up to 7,000 workers to the area, and is expected to support an ongoing operational workforce of 660 workers.

Over the same period, the region will experience the anticipated decline of the coal industry, impacting local jobs and broadly influencing the established economies of our local communities.

Like many regional areas of the state, Mid-Western has experienced a rapid rise in the cost of housing over the past 5 years, exacerbated by the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, and further impacted by global market influences driving up the cost of housing and construction.

Planning for housing that can suitably and sustainably respond to these challenges, as well as to our changing climate and evolving lifestyle needs, will require diverse and resilient housing solutions supported by key infrastructure and essential services.



Mudgee

1.2 What is a Housing Strategy?

The Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy will guide decision making around housing in the Mid-Western Local Government Area (LGA).

The Strategy provides a framework to ensure that Council has identified a supply of suitable and sustainable housing that responds to the diverse needs of the Mid-Western community now and into the future.

The Strategy sets out current and projected housing needs based on a range of factors including demographic trends, housing supply and demand, and local land use opportunities and constraints, all informed by input from engagement undertaken with our community.

1.3 Why prepare a Housing Strategy?

This Housing Strategy is an important decision-making tool for Council.

The region continues to experience significant demand on housing from the development of the Central West and Orana REZ, mining operations and people wanting to move into the region.

This increasing and changing demand impacts on the availability and affordability of housing, which in turn affects the ability for people within our community to easily rent or purchase a home, or to attract essential workers (such as teachers, health care workers or service industry workers) who support our local economy and community.

This Strategy will give effect to Council's wider strategic planning framework, including *Our Place 2040: Mid-Western Regional Council Local Strategic Planning Statement*, which sets out key relevant priorities to:

- Make available diverse, sustainable, adaptable and affordable housing options through effective land use planning
- Provide infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community

This Housing Strategy provides guidance for future updates to Council's Community Strategic Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement, as well as the local environmental plan and development control plan; setting out a clear direction for the future of housing in the region.

2 Vision

Our housing will enable **sustainable** growth throughout the Mid-Western region, with **high quality housing choices** in the right locations to provide for the changing needs of our community.

We will strive to deliver a diverse range of well-designed housing options to support our community's needs for affordable, accessible and liveable housing.

We will create attractive, connected and inclusive towns and villages with a strong sense of place, respecting the region's valuable heritage, rich environments, local landscapes and rural character; preserving the unique qualities that make the Mid-Western region a great place to live.

Mudgee

3 Context

3.1 Mid-Western Local Government Area

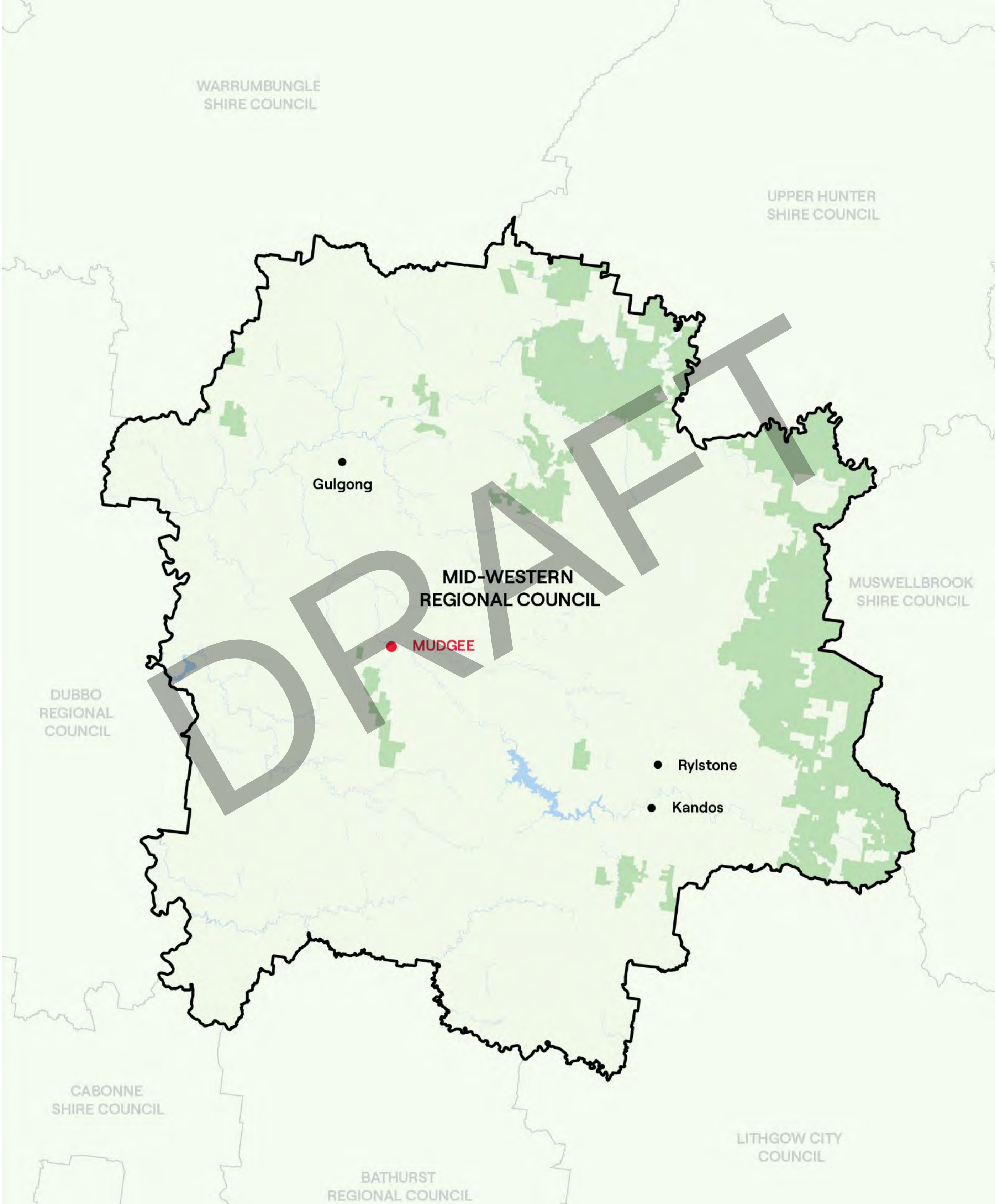


Figure 1: The Mid-Western LGA is located in the central tablelands of NSW and covers an area of approximately 8,740km. In 2021, the LGA was home to 25,700 people.

3.2 Settlement Hierarchy

The administrative centre and largest town in the LGA is Mudgee, located on the Cudgegong River and home to approximately 12,000 people in 2021.

Key centres also include the towns of Gulgong; approximately 25km north of Mudgee, Rylstone; located approximately 45km south-east of Mudgee, and Kandos; approximately 8km from Rylstone.

Figure 2 sets out the settlement hierarchy for the region, identifying the role of each type of centre and the level of services to be expected.

Mudgee has been identified as a District Centre, followed by Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos, which are classified as Towns. The remaining rural settlements are classified as Villages, Rural Centres and Localities. Dubbo and Bathurst were identified as Regional Centres, which provide higher order services and facilities that are not available within the LGA.

The purpose of the hierarchy is to acknowledge that some settlements are not able to expand, due to a lack of basic services and facilities, such as weekly shopping and schooling.

There are a number of Villages in the LGA, all with varying proximity to Towns. Most of the Villages and Rural Centres have little potential and capacity to grow, as they are constrained by a lack of services and facilities.

Regional Centre	**(Dubbo, Orange, Bathurst)** Provides a full range of business, government, retail, cultural, entertainment and recreation activities being the focal point of a region for access to employment, shopping, health, education, recreation and other services.
District Centre	**(Mudgee)** Provides a range of business, employment, retail, entertainment and recreation services. Provides a mix of retail, office and services with large supermarket catering for convenience and weekly shopping needs.
Town	**(Gulgong, Kandos, Rylstone)** Provides a range of local services for convenience but relies on the District Centre for higher order facilities.
Village/Rural Centre	**(Bylong, Birriwa, Charbon, Clandulla, Goolma, Wollar, Ulan, Lue, Hargraves, Hill End, Ilford, Pyramul, Sofala, Turill, Ulan, Windeyer)** Provides for convenience needs only in an established setting and may include a general store, pub and dwellings.
Rural Locality	**(Apple Tree Flat, Bocoble, Botobolar, Buckaroo, Budgee Budgee, Brogans Creek, Cooks Gap, Cooyal, Crudine, Cudgegong, Eurunderee, Grattai, Hillgrove, Home Rule, Mount Frome, Mount Knowles, Mullamuddy, Olinda, Running Stream, Tallawang, Waterloo, Warrangunia, Yarrabin)** Focal point for surrounding community. Usually has a community hall, bushfire facilities with generally no shopping or services – may be remnant of former village.

Figure 2: Settlement hierarchy.

Mid-Western Local Government Area At A Glance

POPULATION

TOTAL POPULATION

25,700 IN 2021

APPROX. **32,000** BY 2041

MEDIAN AGE

42 IN 2021

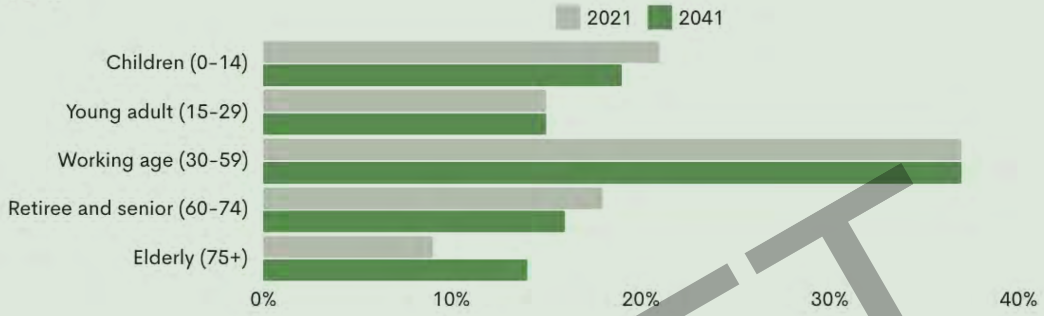
43 BY 2041

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

2.4 IN 2021

2.3 BY 2041

AGE STRUCTURE



DWELLINGS

DWELLING STRUCTURE IN 2021

90% SEPARATE HOUSE

3% SEMI-DETACHED TOWNHOUSE

4% APARTMENT

ANNUAL APPROVAL RATE 2016 - 2021

+ 47 Separate houses
+16 Others

RENTAL VACANCY RATE

< 2% since 2021

ECONOMY

WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

$1,486 MWR (2021)

$1,829 NSW (2021)

TOP INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS

691,000 visitors per year

2.4 days average domestic stay

4 Community Engagement

4.1 Consultation

In preparing this Housing Strategy, Mid-Western Regional Council consulted with the community to capture feedback and insights that have informed the key themes, findings and recommendations of the Strategy.

The intent of the engagement program was to inform the community about the Strategy and ensure they had opportunities to help shape its development.

Over 600 people engaged with Council about the Strategy.

An overview of the engagement activities undertaken for the Strategy is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Activities.

Activity	Stakeholders	Date
Economic Think Tank 2024	Invited businesses and industry representatives - presentation to participants	23 May 2024
Online Survey	Whole of community	22 August 2024 to 27 September 2024
Stakeholder Discussions	Representatives from local service providers, education, Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council, industry representatives (energy and mining) and property/land development sector representation	Conducted throughout September & October 2024
Industry and Sector Workshops	Representatives from community housing providers, service providers and major employers/industries	27-30 August 2024
Community Workshops	Representatives from business groups, real estate agencies, land developers and building companies, community groups and organisations. A specific session for people under 30 years was also held.	27-30 August 2024
Drop In Sessions	Whole of community.	17-19 October 2024

4.2 What We Heard

Key themes and common messages identified during the community consultation included:

- Housing affordability is a significant issue for the Mid-Western LGA and is already contributing to negative social and economic impacts for the community and area.
- Increased diversity of housing typologies would contribute to the availability of more affordable housing options.

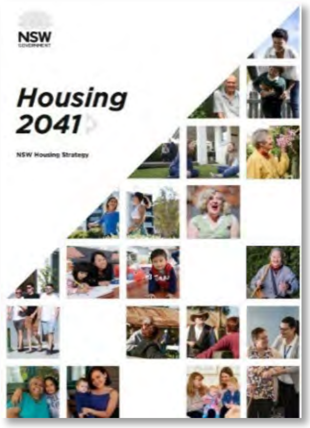
  Despite this, the preference is still for single dwellings on standard lots and larger lot rural residential housing typologies.
- Young people and people on low to medium incomes are disproportionally impacted because of increasing housing cost, a limited private rental market and limited availability of social and affordable housing options.
- Recognition that terraces, townhouses, shop-top housing and low scale unit/apartments are needed and could be appropriate in specific locations.
- Increased number and/or density of housing should not impact on the rural and heritage character of the Mid-Western LGA or the viability of existing towns and village centres.
- The development of more dense housing typologies requires communal green and social spaces and being located close to existing social infrastructure to be appropriate to the character of the area and accepted by the community.

Rylstone

5 Planning & Policy Context

This Housing Strategy has been prepared to provide alignment with the vision and objectives of the wider strategic planning framework relevant to housing in the Mid-Western LGA.

State Planning Context



Housing 2041 – NSW Housing Strategy

Housing 2041 is a 20-year vision of the NSW Government, published in 2021, aiming to deliver better housing outcomes across the state.

It prioritises housing security, affordability, and choice, focusing on good design, strategic location, and environmental sustainability.

Key goals include:

- Strengthening partnerships and reducing planning barriers.
- Supporting vulnerable groups through social and affordable housing growth.
- Promoting adaptable, carbon-neutral housing designs.
- Aligning housing with infrastructure and community needs.
- Supporting first homebuyers and renters, including innovative housing options like build-to-rent.

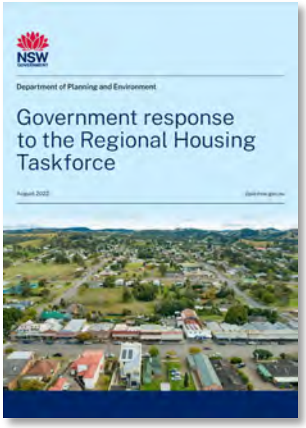
NSW Government commitment to the National Housing Accord

The NSW Government has signed the National Housing Accord, requiring delivery of 377,000 new homes by mid 2029. This target includes 55,000 new homes identified for regional NSW.

At the time of writing this Housing Strategy, there are no specific targets for regional councils. However, the NSW Government will be looking for all councils to identify a strong supply of new housing opportunities.

The associated Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) will provide a sustainable stream of funds to support the delivery of social and affordable housing.

The HAFF presents an important opportunity to encourage the private sector to partner with local government and the community housing sector to deliver social and affordable housing.



NSW Regional Housing Taskforce and Government Response

In June 2021, the NSW Government established the Regional Housing Taskforce to address housing supply and affordability pressures in regional NSW.

Its goals were to remove planning barriers, accelerate housing delivery, and promote development on appropriately zoned land.

Key recommendations adopted in August 2022 include:

- Ensuring a supply of "development-ready" land.
- Boosting affordable and diverse housing.
- Providing clarity on housing locations and timelines.
- Using planning levers for short-term housing needs.
- Enhancing monitoring of housing data and outcomes.

Actions under the NSW Government's $2.8 billion Housing Package aim to deliver 127,000 new homes in the next decade.

Initiatives include a Regional Urban Development Program, housing supply benchmarks, a Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund, and policy reforms to support affordable housing in both established and greenfield areas.

NSW Net Zero

In December 2023, the NSW Government passed the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023.

The Act enshrines in law NSW's emission reduction targets including:

- 50% reduction on 2005 emissions by 2030
- 70% reduction on 2005 emissions by 2035
- Net zero emissions by 2050.

Renewable Energy Zones and the Electricity Energy Roadmap

The NSW Government has established five Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) with the aim of clustering new wind and solar power generation into locations where it can be efficiently stored and transmitted across NSW.

The Mid-Western LGA is located within the Central-West Orana REZ which is expected to bring up to $20bn in private investment across the region.

The Mid-Western LGA is also close to the western edge of the Hunter New England REZ, so will likely feel the impact from renewable energy projects located to the northwest.

State Environmental Planning Policies

State environmental planning policies (SEPPs) are environmental planning instruments prepared by the NSW Government.

The following SEPPs are of relevance to this Housing Strategy:

State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

SEPP (Housing) 2021 aims to facilitate development of affordable and diverse housing in strategic locations.

The SEPP includes provisions for a range of housing types such as social, affordable and seniors housing, as well as design standards for the construction of residential apartments.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008

SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 aims to provide streamlined assessment processes for minor or straightforward development.

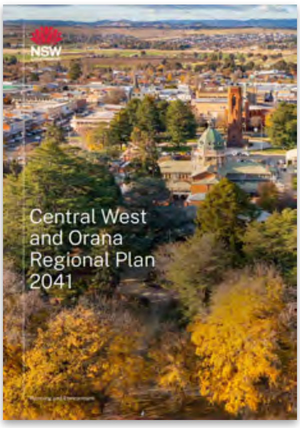
This SEPP includes provisions for certain types of residential development that meet certain standards, such as low-rise housing, dual occupancies, manor houses and attached housing.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022

SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 aims to encourage the design and delivery of sustainable buildings across NSW.

The policy includes standards for residential housing, including strategies to minimise water and energy consumption and improve thermal performance.

Regional Planning Context



Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041, published in December 2022, outlines a 20-year framework for sustainable regional growth. It emphasises:

- Local housing strategies that meet diverse needs, support medium-density housing near urban centres, and integrate infrastructure.
- Reflecting local character and heritage in housing developments.

Mudgee is identified as a strategic centre with significant commercial services, projected population growth, and housing demand.

For the Mid-Western LGA, priorities include:

- Delivering diverse, affordable, and adaptable housing.
- Preserving the historic character of towns and villages.
- Enhancing infrastructure and community services.
- Supporting business and industry diversity.
- Managing opportunities and impacts of major developments, including renewable energy and mining projects.
- Leveraging regional growth linked to the Central-West Orana REZ and nearby economic hubs like Dubbo and the Hunter Valley.

Local Planning Context

Towards 2040: Mid-Western Region Community Plan

Mid-Western Regional Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) sets out the community's vision for the future.

The CSP sets out five key themes to support the delivery of the vision of 'a prosperous and progressive community we proudly call home':

- Looking After Our Community
- Protecting Our Natural Environment
- Building a Strong Local Economy
- Connecting Our Region
- Good Government.

The plan identifies that housing is an important priority for the community, and notes goals to make available diverse, sustainable, adaptable and affordable housing options through effective land use planning.

It is recognised that Council is currently engaging with the community in relation to the preparation of the future Community Strategic Plan. It is anticipated that housing will remain an important priority for the community.

Our Place 2040: Mid-Western Regional Council Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Mid-Western Regional Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), published in May 2020, outlines a 20-year vision for sustainable land use planning in the region, balancing growth with heritage, environment, and rural character.

The following Planning Priorities are of particular relevance to this Housing Strategy:

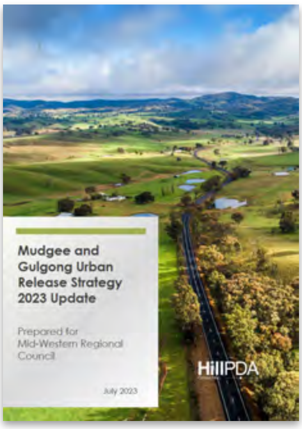
Planning Priority 2: Diverse and Affordable Housing

- Expand medium-density residential zones and monitor housing supply.
- Consider liveable housing design guidelines in future planning.
- Identify large-lot residential opportunities.
- Promote affordable housing and monitor land release.

Planning Priority 4: Infrastructure and Services

- Update infrastructure and servicing provisions in planning controls.
- Align development contributions with community infrastructure needs.
- Assess and enhance water, sewer, and stormwater systems to support growth.

The LSPS commits to reviewing asset management plans and financial strategies to ensure infrastructure and assets meet current and future demands.



Mid-Western Regional Comprehensive Land Use Strategy

The Mid-Western Regional Comprehensive Land Use Strategy (CLUS), updated in February 2017, provides a framework for urban and rural growth in the Mid-Western LGA to 2031. It identifies environmental, social, and economic opportunities and constraints while addressing land demand and supply pressures.

Key elements include:

- Detailed structure plans for Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone, and Kandos, outlining land use strategies, future growth areas, and infrastructure needs.
- Planning considerations for rural areas, emphasising character, lifestyle, and minimising land use conflicts.

It is intended that this Housing Strategy will repeal the residential section of the CLUS, integrating its findings and strategies while updating them to address future housing needs.

Mudgee and Gulgong Urban Release Strategy 2023 Update

The Mudgee and Gulgong Urban Release Strategy 2023 Update (URS) updates the 2014 strategy to determine housing supply and demand from 2021 to 2041. It provides updated analysis, assesses residential land availability, and guides strategic planning and land release to balance supply and demand.

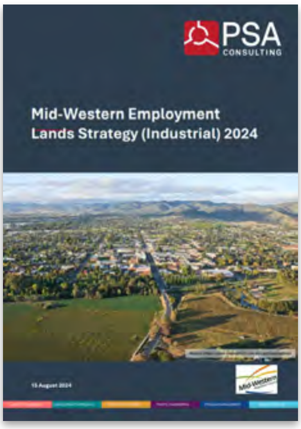
Key findings:

- Population growth of 4,400–8,200 (32.1%) is expected by 2041, with an annual need for 166 new dwellings.
- Tight rental markets, low vacancy rates, and rising dwelling prices highlight affordability challenges, particularly in Mudgee.

Land supply status:

- General residential (400–1,999sqm): Mudgee faces shortages; Gulgong's supply is sufficient if rezoned and serviced.
- Low-density residential (2,000sqm–1.9ha): Adequate in both towns long-term but dependent on servicing and rezoning.
- Large-lot residential (2+ ha): Adequate in both towns but requires early rezoning in Gulgong.

The findings of the URS form a foundation for this Housing Strategy, which addresses the land supply shortages and considerations identified by the URS and sets out a plan to respond to the diverse housing needs of the growing population.



Mid-Western Employment Lands Strategy (Industrial) 2024

The Draft Mid-Western Regional Employment Lands Strategy (Industrial) 2024 addresses the need for appropriately zoned industrial land to support demand and new opportunities, focusing on Mudgee and Gulgong.

Key points:

- Identifies 141 hectares of additional industrial land for development across short (1–5 years), medium (5–10 years), and long-term (10+ years) time frames.
- Projects employment growth from 11,068 workers in 2021 to 19,480 by 2026, followed by a decline post-construction of State Significant Development (SSD) projects.

This Housing Strategy aligns with the Employment Lands Strategy by addressing the housing needs of the growing and transitioning workforce, emphasising diverse, adaptable, and affordable housing options.

Mid-Western Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012

The Mid-Western Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP) provides the statutory framework for planning, development and building within the Mid-Western LGA.

It manages land use through zoning development standards, planning controls and other planning provisions.

Of particular relevance to this Housing Strategy are the land use zones which permit the development of residential accommodation in the Mid-Western LGA, outlined in Table 2.

There are four residential land use zones within the Mid-Western LGA. They range from general residential; which provides for a wide variety of different housing types and densities, to low density, medium density and large lot residential zones.

Residential accommodation may also be developed in rural village zones, and certain employment zones; commercial centre, productivity support and mixed use areas.

The Mid-Western LGA also permits residential accommodation in the SP3 Tourist land use zone, which aims to provide for specific tourist and visitor related uses.

Mid-Western Regional Development Control Plan 2013

The Mid-Western Regional DCP 2013 (DCP) contains detailed requirements to guide development in the Mid-Western LGA. The DCP complements and must be considered in conjunction with the legislative provisions of the LEP.

The DCP outlines controls pertaining to specific types of development, such as residential, subdivision, commercial or industrial uses, as well as providing controls for development in particular locations, such as rural areas. The DCP also outlines site specific controls for the areas of Gulgong, West Mudgee and Caerleon.

Table 2: Mid-Western Regional Local Environmental Plan 2012, Residential Land Use Zones.

R1 General Residential	**Objectives:** • To provide for the housing needs of the community. • To provide for a variety of housing types and densities. • To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
R2 Low Density Residential	**Objectives:** • To provide for the housing needs of the community within a low density residential environment. • To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
R3 Medium Density Residential	**Objectives:** • To provide for the housing needs of the community within a medium density residential environment. • To provide a variety of housing types within a medium density residential environment. • To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents. • To encourage higher-density residential development that is sympathetic to and compatible with the existing character of the Mudgee Heritage Conservation Area.
R5 Large Lot Residential	**Objectives:** • To provide residential housing in a rural setting while preserving, and minimising impacts on, environmentally sensitive locations and scenic quality. • To ensure that large residential lots do not hinder the proper and orderly development of urban areas in the future. • To ensure that development in the area does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
RU5 Village	**Objectives:** • To provide for a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village. • To promote development that is sustainable in terms of the capacity of infrastructure within villages.
E2 Commercial Centre	**Objectives:** • To strengthen the role of the commercial centre as the centre of business, retail, community and cultural activity. • To encourage investment in commercial development that generates employment opportunities and economic growth.

	• To encourage development that has a high level of accessibility and amenity, particularly for pedestrians. • To enable residential development only if it is consistent with the Council's strategic planning for residential development in the area. • To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces. • To promote the central business district of Mudgee as the major focus for retail and commercial activity in Mid-Western Regional. • To ensure development is compatible with the historic architectural character and streetscapes of the Mudgee commercial core area.
E3 Productivity Support	**Objectives:** • To provide a range of facilities and services, light industries, warehouses and offices. • To provide for land uses that are compatible with, but do not compete with, land uses in surrounding local and commercial centres. • To maintain the economic viability of local and commercial centres by limiting certain retail and commercial activity. • To provide for land uses that meet the needs of the community, businesses and industries but that are not suited to locations in other employment zones. • To provide opportunities for new and emerging light industries. • To enable other land uses that provide facilities and services to meet the day to day needs of workers, to sell goods of a large size, weight or quantity or to sell goods manufactured on-site. • To promote a visually attractive entry point into Mudgee from the south east. • To enable development that does not undermine the primary retail role of the Mudgee commercial core area.
MU1 Mixed Use	**Objectives:** • To encourage a diversity of business, retail, office and light industrial land uses that generate employment opportunities. • To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones. • To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings. • To ensure development is consistent with the character of adjoining residential neighbourhoods.
SP3 Tourist	**Objectives:** • To provide for a variety of tourist-oriented development and related uses.

6 Mid-Western Region Snapshot

Ilford Road, Kandos

OUR POPULATION

6.1 Population Change

In 2021, the Mid-Western LGA was home to

25,713 people.

This number represents an increase of 4,614 people, or 21.8% over the past 20 years; from 21,086 people in 2006.

With a population of 12,256 people in 2021, almost half of the Mid-Western LGA lives in Mudgee.

In 2021,

42 YEARS OLD was the median age of our population

6.8% of our population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

6% of our population required assistance with core activities

Table 3: Population growth in the Mid-Western LGA, 2006-2021.

	2006	2011	2016	2021
Mid-Western LGA	21,086	22,318	24,076	25,713
Mudgee	8,249	10,323	11,535	12,256
Gulgong	1,907	1,866	1,956	2,057
Rylstone	615	624	644	624
Kandos	1,306	1,284	1,261	1,208

6.2 Age Structure

In 2021, the median age of residents in the Mid-Western LGA was 42 years; higher than the median age of the state (39).

While the number of people in the Mid-Western LGA is anticipated to increase across all age groups over to 2041, the elderly age group (aged 75 and over) is likely to see the greatest growth, rising from 9.3% to 13.6% of the population.

Figure 3: Age projections in the Mid-Western LGA, 2021-2041.

OUR HOUSING

6.3 Household Composition

31% COUPLE ONLY HOUSEHOLDS

38% HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

28% LONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS

3% GROUP HOUSEHOLDS

Due in part to an ageing population,

lone person households are expected to increase by

↑ 45% by 2041.

All other household types will increase by less than 30%.

6.4 Dwelling Structure

In 2021, the Mid-Western LGA contained 9,614 occupied dwellings.

90%
of all dwellings were
DETACHED HOUSES

In 2021, 79% of all occupied dwellings were 3 or more bedrooms.

Only 15% of occupied dwellings had 2 bedrooms.

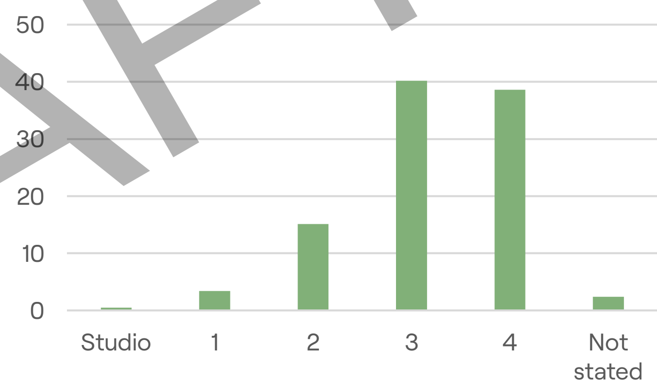


Figure 4: Number of bedrooms in private dwellings in the Mid-Western LGA, 2021 (%).

Table 4: Dwelling structure in the Mid-Western LGA, 2021.

	Number of Dwellings	Percentage of Total
Separate / detached house	8,811	91.4
Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc.	609	6.3
Flat, unit or apartment	84	0.9
Other	110	1.1

6.5 Housing Tenure

Of occupied dwellings in the Mid-Western LGA,

69%

ARE OWNED OUTRIGHT OR WITH A MORTGAGE

24%

ARE RENTED

Over the last 15 years, the proportion of dwellings owned outright has decreased, while dwellings owned with a mortgage and those living in rental properties has increased.

Table 5: Housing tenure in the Mid-Western LGA, 2021.

	2006	2021
Owned outright	39.7%	37.6%
Owned with mortgage	25.6%	30.8%
Rented	21.9%	23.8%
Other	2.8%	2.2%
Not stated/Not applicable	10.0%	5.6%

6.6 Property Sale Prices

From 2018 to 2022, house prices showed significant annual increases in the Central Tablelands, rising at an average annual rate of 9.6%. Unit prices rose at an average annual rate of 10.5%.

Notably, between 2021 and 2022, house prices in the Central Tablelands surged by

50%.

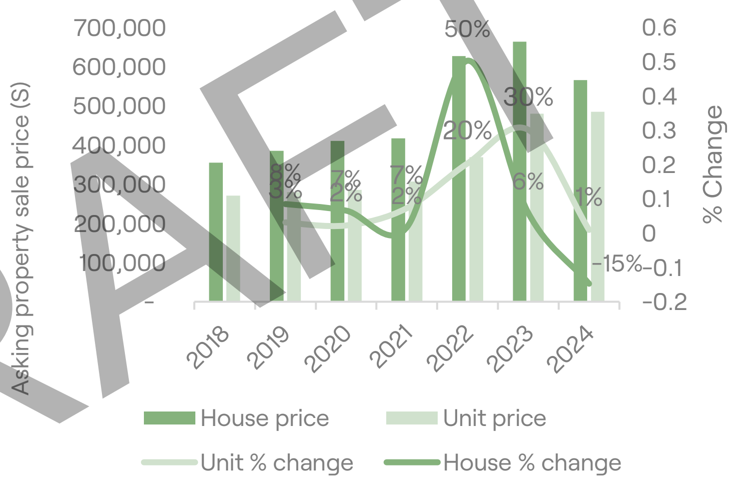


Figure 5: Asking property sale price in the Central Tablelands, June 2018 – June 2024.

6.7 Rental Prices

Rental prices for both houses and units showed steady increases annually from 2018 to 2024.

Rent for houses experienced significant increases in 2021 and 2022 (13% and 25% respectively).

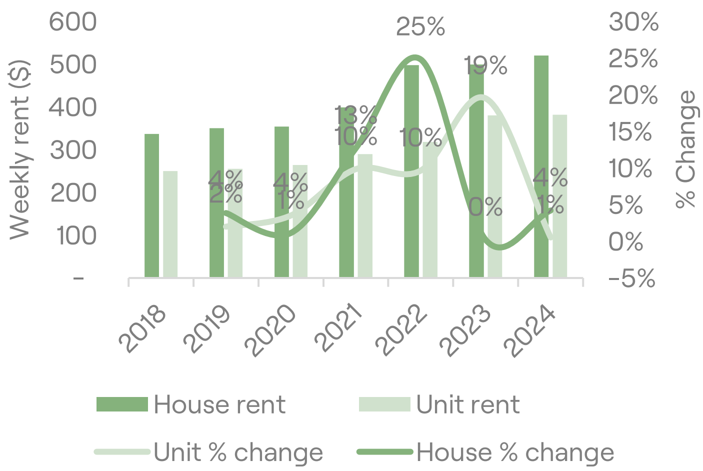


Figure 6: Asking property rent in the Central Tablelands, June 2018 – June 2024.

7 Key Drivers of Change

The Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy has been prepared within a rapidly moving policy context, with the future of Australia's housing supply, affordability and liveability dominating public discourse in recent years.

Key drivers of change impacting both demand for and supply of land for residential purposes include:

The national housing supply and affordability crisis influencing federal, state and local government housing policy.

- Stronger NSW Government policy position to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 which is directly influencing regional energy and resource industries and associated worker accommodation needs, including the identification of parts of the Mid-Western LGA within the Central West Orana REZ and within close proximity to the Hunter Central Coast REZ.
- Continued evolving demand for housing in regional areas prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, regional migration and changes in patterns of work.
- Increased occurrence of natural events such as flood and bushfire impacting the suitability of lands for future development in a changing climate.
- Balancing demand for short term rental accommodation to support our visitor economy whilst ensuring sufficient stock is available within the private rental market to house our community.
- Changing community perspectives in housing choice, diversity, sustainability and lifestyle.

Rylstone

The Mid-Western LGA faces challenges and opportunities as it seeks to balance growth, accommodate housing needs, and preserve community character.

The Mid-Western LGA's growth strategy will rely on a connected approach that enhances housing density, diversifies housing types, preserves heritage, and leverages economic opportunity.

This multi-layered approach will enable the region to grow sustainably, meet community needs, and maintain its unique identity and resilience.

Kandos

Housing Choice and Diversity

Providing accessible and affordable housing is essential to meeting the needs of the community, particularly those most vulnerable to housing insecurity.

A diverse mix of housing options on a variety of lot sizes will be essential to meet the region's varied housing needs and alleviate cost-of-living pressures, particularly by providing smaller, more appropriate and more affordable options for smaller households, ageing residents, and those facing housing insecurity.

Key to achieving this mix will be a multi-faceted approach involving collaboration between public and private sectors, and stakeholder and community education.

By increasing the supply of diverse housing options and residential lot sizes, such as townhouses, apartments or secondary dwellings, the region can offer housing choices that may better suit the practical needs of the community while potentially increasing supply of more affordable housing types.

Housing Infill

Increasing the supply of housing in existing areas of targeted locations is crucial to achieving sustainable growth.

Infill development leverages existing infrastructure and services, alleviates conflict with surrounding lands, such as those with high environmental or agricultural value, and stimulates economic activity in established commercial centres.

Low impact housing typologies such as duplexes, townhouses, secondary dwellings ('granny flats') and low-rise apartment buildings can enhance residential density while offering more options for residents at different life stages and income levels.

Local Character and Regional Lifestyle

Strategic planning for increased housing density must consider the unique character of the Mid-Western LGA's towns.

Place-based planning and local character statements can ensure that new developments complement local heritage and architectural styles, enhancing rather than detracting from the region's identity.

This balanced approach to growth can foster attractive and resilient places, allowing for both new development and the preservation of valued historical and cultural sites.

Furthermore, the Mid-Western Housing Strategy must manage market demand for lower density and rural lifestyle housing. Parts of the Mid-Western LGA contain lots for rural residential development with a two hectare minimum lot size. These lots are primarily located adjacent to main towns and benefit from reasonable access to services and facilities.

While presenting lifestyle attractions for residents, it is understood that such housing has the potential to undermine strategic land use planning and can result in the inefficient development of land and the disinclination of developers to fully realise potential lot yield.

Dwellings in Rural Zones

Rural zones in the Mid-Western LGA support industry and employment as well as a diversity of lifestyle and residential opportunities.

Housing in rural zones can, however, increase the potential for land use conflict and may undermine Council's objectives for rural lands such as those with agricultural, biodiversity or scenic values.

Council must continue to balance the delivery of housing in rural areas with careful consideration for orderly residential development, the logical provision of services throughout the LGA, and the impacts of such development on long-term planning outcomes in rural lands.

As set out in DPHI's guide *Planning for Agriculture in Rural Land Use Strategies*, a strategic approach to limiting housing in rural areas will give certainty to landowners and the community, and enable the protection of productive agricultural land.

Future rural dwellings should be provided only for the purpose of supporting commercial agricultural production.

Council will look to address the development of dwellings in rural land use zones in the vicinity of the Mid-Western LGA's towns and villages within the Mid-Western Regional Rural Lands Strategy.

Tourist and Visitor Accommodation

The Mid-Western LGA is an attractive destination for tourists and visitors, and the industry plays an important role in the economy of the LGA.

Short-term rental accommodation (STRA) supports the tourist and visitor economy, but can have significant impacts on housing availability and affordability.

The introduction of state regulations in 2021 aimed to manage these impacts, but ongoing reviews are necessary to ensure STRA aligns with broader housing needs, maintaining both liveability for residents and the viability of the region's tourist economy.

To support the region's tourism potential while safeguarding housing affordability, regular reviews of the impact of STRAs on the local housing market should be undertaken.

These reviews will help assess STRA supply and ensure they are complementary to the broader housing needs of the community. By factoring in a reasonable quantum of STRA, the Mid-Western LGA can continue to provide attractive visitor experiences while maintaining liveability for residents.

State Significant Developments

A number of state significant developments (SSD) are currently planned within and around the Mid-Western LGA.

An influx of workers associated with these projects has the potential to impose broader pressures upon demand for housing, services and utilities in the Mid-Western LGA.

Mining

The Mid-Western region is resource-rich, and mining, energy and industrial sectors will remain an essential part of the future of the region's economy.

The permanent and temporary accommodation needs of the mining industry will continue to place demand upon the LGA's housing market, particularly as major projects come online at the Moolarben and Ulan coal mines, and at the proposed Bowdens Silver Mine.

Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone

Covering a substantial portion of the Mid-Western LGA, including Mudgee and Gulgong, the Central-West Orana REZ is expected to generate large construction workforces and significant long-term employment in renewable energy projects such as solar farms, wind farms, and energy storage facilities. This underscores the importance of addressing temporary worker housing needs to prevent strain on local housing and rental markets.

The NSW Government estimates that the REZ will initially unlock at least 4.5 gigawatts of new network capacity by the end of the decade, with new transmission infrastructure enabling generators, such as solar and wind farms, to export electricity to the rest of the network.

With such associated growth and investment, addressing both construction and operational worker housing needs will be essential to manage housing market strain, ensuring that housing solutions are brought online in a logical sequence and can transition once projects are completed.

Temporary Workers Accommodation

The Mid-Western LGA is expecting significant demand for workers accommodation due to major projects in the region, including mining and renewable energy projects, and seasonal worker demands associated with the regional agricultural industry.

To ensure that the Mid-Western LGA's housing market provides for the needs of the underlying permanent population, much of the anticipated temporary population will need to be accommodated within purpose-built facilities for the construction period of a project.

However, this Housing Strategy has derived a dwelling demand of approximately 1,500 dwellings from those workers who will need to be housed within the Mid-Western LGA's housing market specifically. This demand includes some allowance for workers who may bring partners or families.

In December 2024, the NSW Government announced a new planning pathway to fast-track housing for construction workers on major infrastructure projects in renewable energy zones. Under reforms to the Housing SEPP, construction worker accommodation has been clearly defined and is permitted in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, such as rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

Council will continue to collaborate with key agencies including DPHI and EnergyCo to identify local solutions for temporary workers in suitable locations and manage demand across the Mid-Western LGA.

8 Population Projections

8.1 Population Growth

In 2024, DPHI projected that the Mid-Western LGA would grow by around 3,590 people by 2041 to a population of approximately 29,300 people, though with an identified potential high growth scenario of over 33,000 people.

This Strategy has drawn upon DPHI's projections, and has further revised for significant unaccounted for factors, key drivers of change as outlined in Section 7, that will influence growth in the LGA. In particular, the rise in the number of major projects occurring in the LGA as a result of the Central-West Orana REZ, and an anticipated decline in the mining industry as the nation transitions to renewable energy production.

Table 6 provides a breakdown of the revised projected population growth in the LGA per year until 2041.

The revised projections forecast that the Mid-Western LGA could instead increase by **5,000-7,000** people by 2041.

These estimates would bring the total population of the LGA to **30,000-33,000** people by 2041.

Table 6: Projected population growth to 2041 (mid-range scenario).

	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Mudgee	12,040	16,700	14,250	15,800	16,300
Gulgong	2,680	8,500	3,000	3,370	3,400
Rylstone	628	800	650	680	700
Kandos	1,216	1,400	1,200	1,250	1,300
Rest of the LGA	9,149	9,600	9,900	10,150	10,300
Total	25,713	37,000	29,000	31,250	32,000

Bombira

8.2 Population Peak

However, due to the anticipated influx of workers associated with major projects occurring throughout the region, the revised population projections suggest that the Mid-Western LGA could reach a peak of up to 37,000 people within a short timeframe (potentially within five years).

The exact timing and scale of this peak remains uncertain and would be subject to the approval and timing of major projects and their varied workforce needs.

Table 7 sets out the potential peak population for each of the Mid-Western LGA's four main towns.

Figure 7 and Figure 8 chart the projected population growth to 2041 (mid-range scenario), illustrating the potential short-term population peak within approximately five years.

Table 7: Potential short-term population peak.

	Potential Short-Term Population Peak
Mid-Western LGA	37,000
Mudgee	16,700
Gulgong	8,500
Rylstone	800
Kandos	1,400

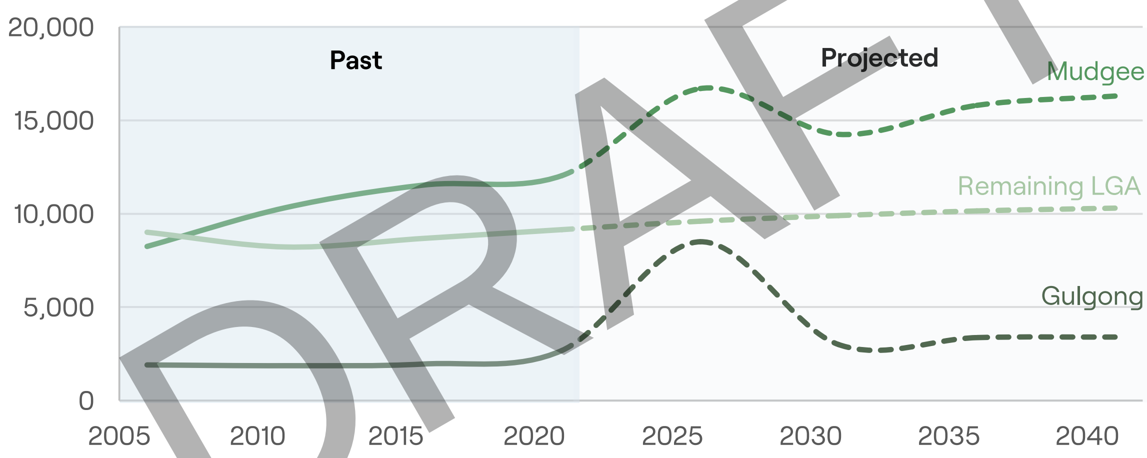


Figure 7: Projected population growth to 2041 (mid-range scenario); Mudgee, Gulgong and the remaining population of the LGA (outside the four main towns).

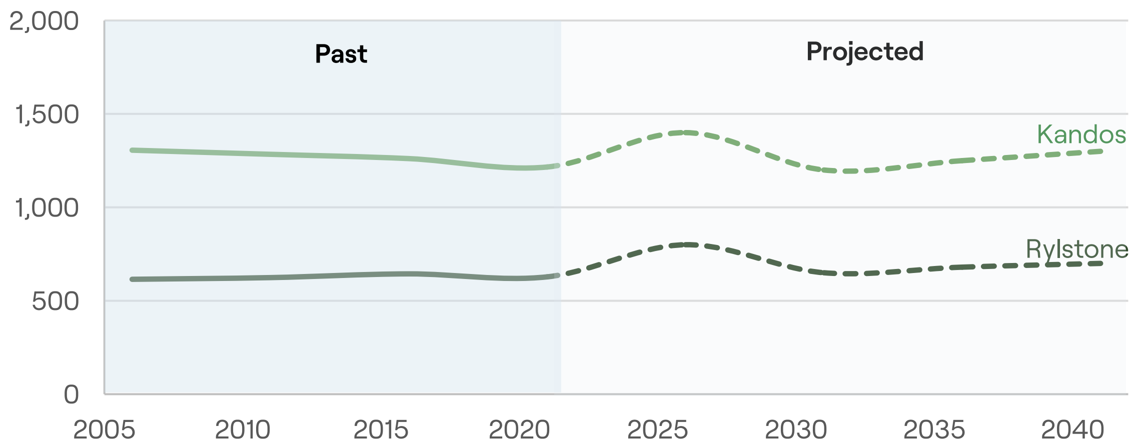


Figure 8: Projected population growth to 2041 (mid-range scenario); Rylstone and Kandos.

9 Housing Demand

The projected change in population must be reflected in changes to the Mid-Western LGA's future housing supply, including how the market operates.

To meet the basic needs of the projected population growth, an increased volume of supply must be simultaneously supported by structural changes that diversify the types and tenure of new homes available.

This Housing Strategy must also mitigate future risks to housing supply arising from, for example, landowner choice or the conversion of existing stock to short term rental accommodation catering to visitors.

A 20% contingency has been added to demand estimates to account for such forces. This contingency has been adopted to balance the need to prepare for uncertainties in dwelling demand and account for market factors while avoiding over-provision.

Regular reviews will be conducted to monitor demand trends, external pressures, and market conditions, ensuring the Strategy continues to address community requirements effectively.

The implied dwelling demand for the Mid-Western LGA to 2041 is estimated at an additional **3,300** dwellings.

These projections suggest demand for a total number of **14,250** dwellings by 2041.

Table 8 has combined the peak implied dwelling demand for each of the main towns to identify the total overall implied dwelling needs for the Mid-Western LGA to 2041.

Table 9 identifies the implied dwelling demand during the short-term anticipated peak year of population. This table combines natural growth with the peak dwelling demand associated with major projects in the region.

Due to the anticipated **peak population** associated with major projects,

MORE THAN

60%

of implied dwelling demand could be required within a short (potentially five-year) timeframe.

Due to the location of many of the major projects, these estimates suggest that Gulgong in particular could experience significant growth within a very short timeframe.

It is important to note that while much of the workforce for these projects will likely be accommodated in temporary worker accommodation, this Housing Strategy has derived a dwelling demand of approximately 1,500 dwellings from only those workers who will need to be housed within the Mid-Western LGA's housing market, and includes allowance for workers who may bring partners or families.

Figure 9 and Figure 10 illustrate both the short term and 2041 implied dwelling demand for each of the Mid-Western LGA's main towns.

For Mudgee and the rest of the Mid-Western LGA, maximum dwelling demand occurs in line with natural growth, in 2041. For Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos, major projects account for the maximum additional dwelling demand, occurring within the short term.

Table 8: Implied dwelling demand to 2041. Includes natural growth and demand associated with major projects.

	2021	2041 Additional Implied Demand	2041 Total Implied Demand
Mudgee	5,595	+ 1,855	**7,450**
Gulgong	950	+ 800	**1,750**
Rylstone	335	+ 45	**380**
Kandos	730	+ 35	**765**
Rest of the LGA	3,350	+ 565	**3,915**
Total	**10,950**	**+ 3,300**	**14,250**

Table 9: Short-term implied dwelling demand; year of peak population (potentially five-year timeframe). Includes natural growth and demand associated with major projects.

	2021	Short-Term Additional Implied Demand (Natural Growth Only)	Short-Term Additional Implied Demand (Major Projects Only)	Short-Term Total Additional Implied Demand
Mudgee	5,595	+ 330	+ 665	**+ 995**
Gulgong	950	+ 45	+ 755	**+ 800**
Rylstone	335	+ 0	+ 45	**+ 45**
Kandos	730	+ 0	+ 35	**+ 35**
Rest of the LGA	3,350	+ 170	+ 15	**+ 185**
Total	**10,950**	**+ 545**	**+ 1,515**	**+ 2,060**

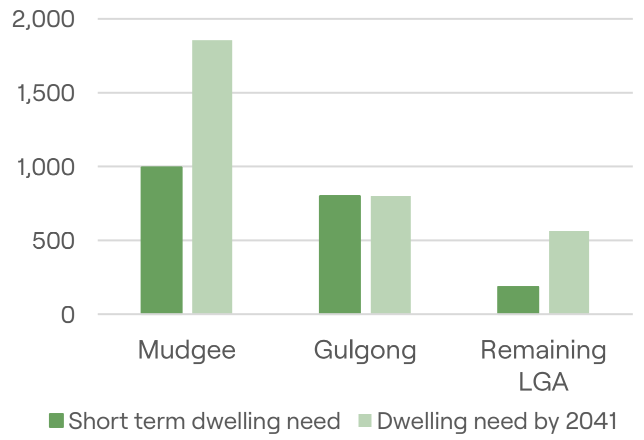


Figure 9: Short term and 2041 implied dwelling demand; Mudgee, Gulgong and the remaining population of the LGA (outside the four main towns).

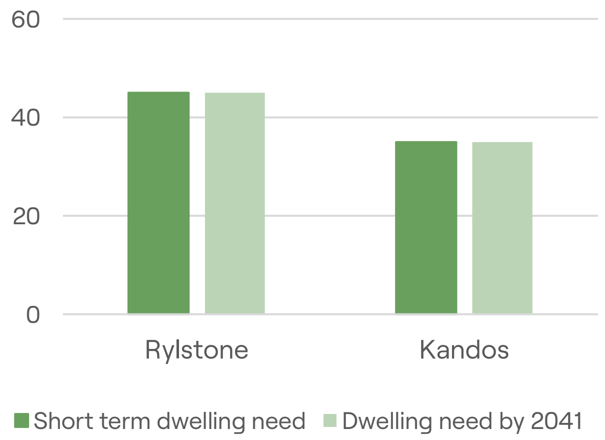


Figure 10: Short term and 2041 implied dwelling demand; Rylstone and Kandos.

9.1 Demand by Dwelling / Lot Type

As discussed in Section 6 of this Housing Strategy, the predominant type of dwelling in the Mid-Western LGA were separate houses, which made up 90% of all dwellings.

Semi-detached, row or terrace houses and townhouses comprised 7% of total dwellings, while flats, units or apartments accounted for just 1% of the total number of dwellings.

The density of housing in the Mid-Western LGA is variable, with a range of lot sizes continuing to be delivered in different contexts across the region.

This Strategy identifies actions to enhance the Mid-Western LGA's mix of dwelling types and lot sizes, diversifying housing choice by reducing the proportion of stock that consist of separate houses.

This Strategy encourages a broader range of smaller housing options than has been previously delivered in the Mid-Western LGA, which is reflected in the anticipated proportion of future demand set out in Table 10.

It is anticipated that demand for higher density dwellings such as attached houses or units will continue to rise, particularly in Mudgee. This trend has been emphasised by the community feedback received in the preparation of this Strategy.

The following densities and lot size categories have been identified to determine future demand for different housing types in the Mid-Western LGA.

Table 10: Dwelling type / lot typology and anticipated proportion of future demand.

Dwelling / lot type	Density	Lot Sizes	Anticipated Proportion of Future Demand	
			Mudgee	Gulgong, Rylstone, Kandos
Townhouse/villa/ unit	General residential	300sqm+	10%	-
Detached house / dual occupancy on small-to-standard lot	General residential	400sqm-999sqm	40%	35%
Detached house on standard-to-generous lot	General residential	1,000sqm-1,999sqm	25%	35%
Low density residential (standard)	Low density residential	2,000sqm-3,999sqm	20%	25%
Low density residential (large)	Low density residential	4,000sqm-1.9ha	4%	4%
Large lot residential	Large lot residential	2ha+	1%	1%

9.2 Mudgee Implied Dwelling Demand

Mudgee's population is projected to grow to approximately 16,300 people by 2041, but with a short-term peak of up to 16,700 people.

This population peak is associated with a rapid rise in the number of major projects occurring throughout the Mid-Western LGA.

While approximately 70% of the workforce for these projects will likely be accommodated in temporary worker accommodation, some will need to be housed within Mudgee's housing market, and some may bring partners or families, generating additional demand.

The projected population growth for Mudgee suggests an implied dwelling demand of:

- 995 additional dwellings within a short (potentially five-year) time frame.
- 1,855 additional dwellings by 2041 (2,200 inclusive of a 20% contingency buffer).

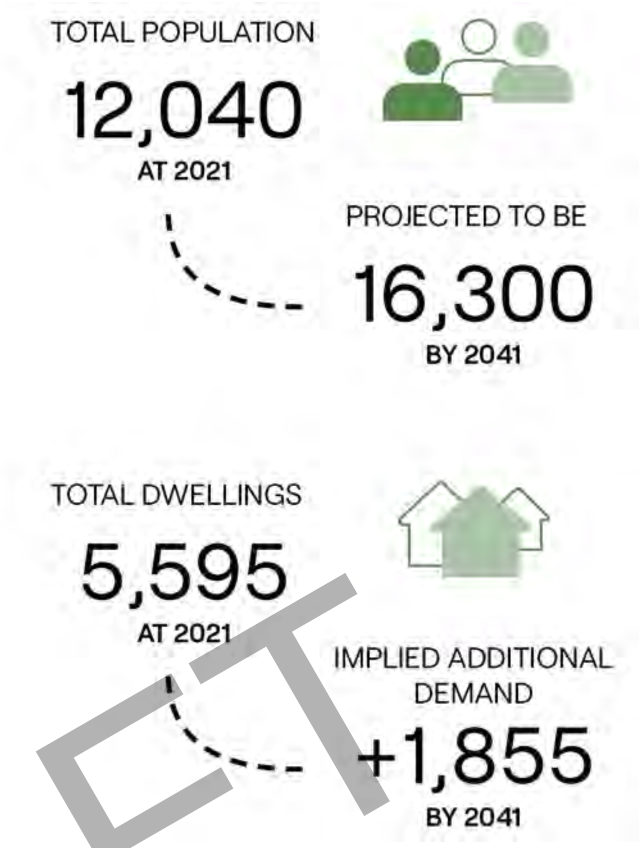


Table 11: Implied dwelling demand by dwelling / lot type, Mudgee.

Dwelling / Lot Type	Proportion of Demand	Implied Dwelling Demand	
		Short-Term Peak Population	2041
Townhouse/villa/unit	10%	99	185
General residential	65%	647	1,206
Low density residential	24%	239	445
Large lot residential (2ha)	1%	10	19
	Total	**995**	**1,855**
	Total + 20%	**1,200**	**2,200**

9.3 Gulgong Implied Dwelling Demand

Gulgong's population is projected to grow to approximately 3,400 people by 2041, but with a significant peak of 8,500 people in a short (potentially five-year) timeframe.

This population peak can be attributed to the rapid rise in the number of major projects occurring throughout the region, and particularly the quantity that occur within close proximity to Gulgong.

While much of the workforce for these projects will likely be accommodated in temporary worker accommodation, some will need to be housed within Gulgong's housing market, and some may bring partners or families, generating additional demand.

These population projections for Gulgong suggest an implied dwelling demand of:

- 800 additional dwellings within a short (potentially five-year) time frame.
- 960 additional dwellings inclusive of a 20% contingency buffer.

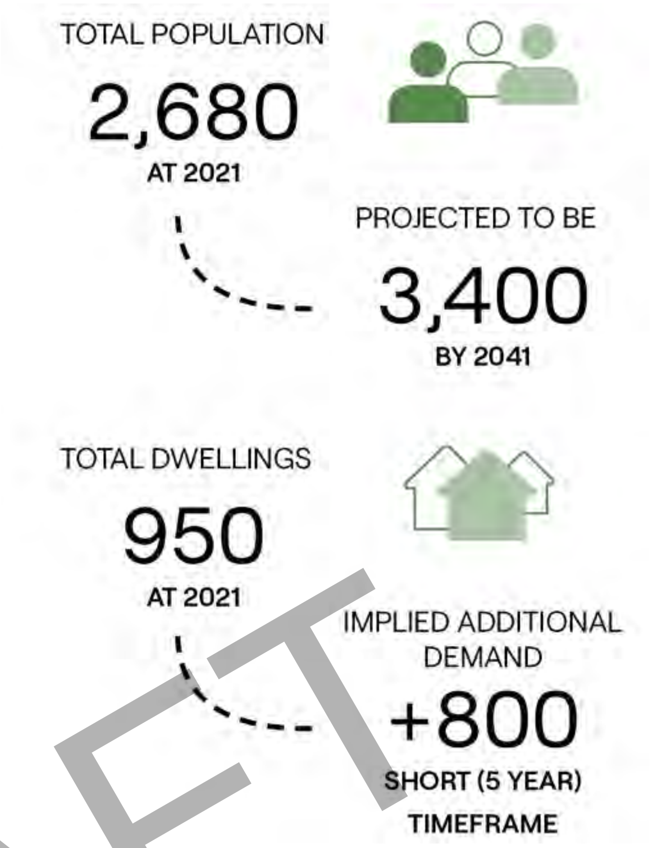
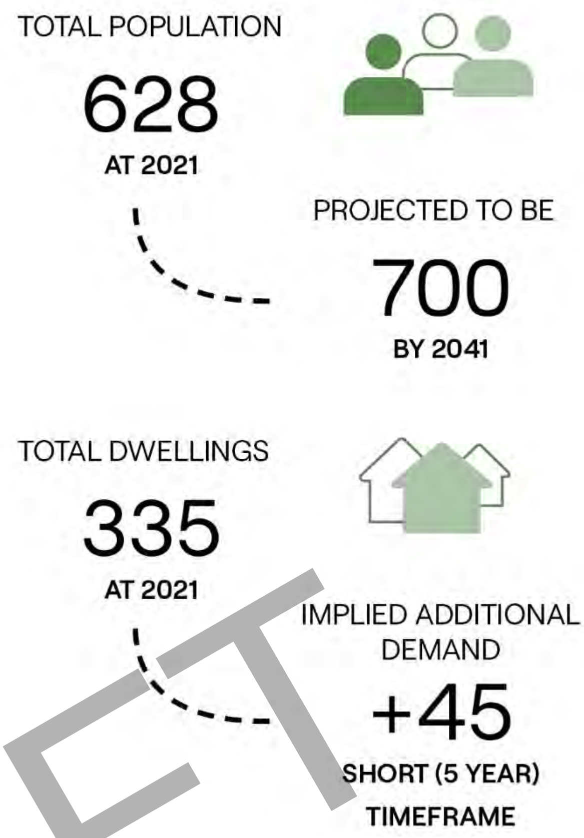


Table 12: Implied dwelling demand by dwelling / lot type, Gulgong.

Dwelling / Lot Type	Proportion of Demand	Implied Dwelling Demand	
		Short-Term Peak Population	2041
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	70%	560	560
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	29%	232	232
Large lot residential (2ha)	1%	8	8
	Total	**800**	**800**
	Total + 20%	**960**	**960**

9.4 Rylstone Implied Dwelling Demand

Rylstone's population is projected to grow to approximately 700 people by 2041, but with a peak of 800 people in a short (potentially five-year) time frame.



This population peak is likely to occur as workers associated with major projects move into the region. These projects will include renewable energy projects and may include the potential Bowdens Silver Mine project, proposed near to Rylstone.

These population projections suggest an implied peak dwelling demand of:

- 45 additional dwellings within a short (potentially five-year) time frame.
- 54 additional dwellings inclusive of a 20% contingency buffer.

However, future demand for housing in Rylstone is uncertain, and likely to be influenced by a range of changeable factors including the yet unknown impact of major projects upon towns like Rylstone and Kandos, and the broader impacts of extremely constrained housing markets in nearby Mudgee and Gulgong. Such factors have the potential to significantly increase dwelling demand during the years of peak population, with 45 dwellings potentially increasing to demand for up to 100 additional dwellings.

Table 13: Implied dwelling demand by dwelling / lot type, Rylstone.

Dwelling / Lot Type	Proportion of Demand	Implied Dwelling Demand	
		Short-Term Peak Population	2041
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	70%	31	31
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	29%	13	13
Large lot residential (2ha)	1%	1	1
	Total	**45**	**45**
	Total + 20%	**54**	**54**

9.5 Kandos Implied Dwelling Demand

Kandos' population is projected to grow to approximately 1,300 people by 2041, but with a peak of 1,400 people in a short (potentially five-year) timeframe.

Such growth is anticipated in Kandos as it is similarly likely to experience increased demand as a result of the pipeline of major projects and associated workforce.

These population projections suggest an implied peak dwelling demand of:

- 35 additional dwellings additional
- 42 inclusive of a 20% contingency buffer.

However, future demand for housing in Kandos is uncertain, and likely to be influenced by a range of changeable factors including the yet unknown impact of major projects upon towns like Rylstone and Kandos, and the broader impacts of extremely constrained housing markets in nearby Mudgee and Gulgong.

Such factors have the potential to significantly increase dwelling demand during the years of peak population, with 35 dwellings potentially increasing to demand for up to 100 additional dwellings.

Table 14: Implied dwelling demand by dwelling / lot type, Kandos.

Dwelling / Lot Type	Proportion of Demand	Implied Dwelling Demand	
		Short-Term Peak Population	2041
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	70%	25	25
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	29%	9	9
Large lot residential (2ha)	1%	1	1
	Total	**35**	**35**
	Total + 20%	**42**	**42**

10 Housing Supply

An analysis of the supply of residential lands in the Mid-Western LGA has been undertaken to demonstrate that there will be sufficient land available to respond to forecast dwelling demand to 2041 and beyond.

This analysis includes a review of existing residential growth areas against environmental constraints, infrastructure servicing requirements and strategic amenity.

10.1 Housing Choice and Affordability

As the Mid-Western LGA grows to 2041, Council will need to ensure that a diversity of dwelling types and living options are made available to suit the varying needs of our community.

Under this Housing Strategy, Council intends to encourage the delivery of a diverse range of housing options and lot sizes.

This will include low-medium density housing, affordable housing, and seniors living.

Council also wants to improve the function and quality of housing delivered, to ensure the housing needs of the community are better met into the future.

10.2 Residential Infill

Council will look to strike a balance between providing new housing as greenfield development and as development on vacant or underutilised land in existing areas of the Mid-Western LGA's four main towns.

Infill development offers significant benefits to support the growth of the community, including:

- Maximising the utility of existing infrastructure and services
- Delivering dwellings in proximity to existing employment and service centres
- Revitalising urban areas and local economies through new development and new residents
- Reducing the impact of urban sprawl by consolidating growth.

Existing planning controls may restrict the delivery of infill development, instead providing for lower density typologies or lacking specific controls to ensure the delivery of high quality, denser typologies.

Council must also manage potential community resistance to denser forms of development by ensuring that planned infill areas are clearly identified and communicated.

10.3 Residential Growth Areas

Ensuring sufficient supply of residential lands in the Mid-Western LGA will involve the coordinated delivery of undeveloped or 'greenfield' land; residential supply outside an existing town footprint.

Coordinating the delivery of such growth requires careful planning to ensure efficient and sustainable uses of resources, reduce land use conflicts and avoid environmental and other constraints.

Our analysis has involved the assessment of the Mid-Western LGA's residential growth areas; those areas zoned or identified as potential locations for growth.

While some areas have been identified for their strategic merit, feasibility and land use compatibility, others have been noted as more significantly constrained or complex, potentially hindering the viability of their development within the next 20 years.

10.4 Villages and Rural Centres

As discussed in Section 3.2, there are a number of small villages and rural centres in the Mid-Western LGA. Council are working to prepare a Rural Lands Strategy which will respond to specific housing needs of these areas.

10.5 Land Use Constraints and Opportunities

The Mid-Western region's diverse landscape and wide range of existing land uses will shape where new housing can be located.

Constraints such as topography, flood and bushfire risk, biodiversity and agricultural land influence the extent to which land in the Mid-Western LGA may be developed.

A review of high-level constraints has been undertaken for each of the LGA's four main towns to identify factors that may influence future residential development and urban expansion. These include consideration for constraints such as:

- Topography
- Flood Hazard
- Groundwater Vulnerability
- Heritage
- Biodiversity Value
- Agricultural Lands
- Bushfire Hazard
- Visually Sensitive Lands.

These constraints can impact the development potential of land zoned or identified for future residential development, and therefore have a significant effect upon the Mid-Western LGA's supply of residential land.

10.6 Infrastructure and Servicing Constraints

The development of land for residential purposes in urban areas requires connection to key infrastructure and services to support the community, including supply of potable water, sewerage connections, stormwater infrastructure, roads, footpaths and parks, and waste management services.

Delivery of these services is essential to unlocking growth areas, but generally costly to deliver. Other environmental constraints, such as topography, existing roads and easements, or biodiversity, can further limit service delivery or substantially increase servicing costs.

Future development of any of the identified residential growth areas will require consideration as to their capacity to be serviced and timeframe for delivery.

It is essential that housing growth in the region is matched with delivery of infrastructure, including water and sewer. This strategy identifies residential growth areas across all four towns including zoned (but not yet developed) land and areas identified for future growth (land not yet zoned). Some of these areas are not yet serviced by water and sewer infrastructure.

Council has committed to progressing water and sewer servicing strategies to align with the residential growth areas identified within this Strategy. This commitment from Council ensures a land supply (and a 20% buffer) can meet demand to 2041.

A Development Servicing Plan (DSP) details the water and sewer developer charges payable when development results in additional demand on water supply and sewerage systems. This is to recover part of the infrastructure costs incurred in servicing developments. Without recovering DSP charges from the developer, costs would have to be borne by the ratepayer base. Therefore, a DSP ensures that development is financially sustainable and that infrastructure costs are fairly funded. Identifying the required land supply, as has occurred in this Strategy, is fundamental to developing DSP's.

10.7 Mudgee Supply Gap Analysis

Table 15 summarises Mudgee's estimated housing demand and supply for each of the identified lot/dwelling types, and Figure 11 illustrates the town's identified residential growth areas.

This Housing Strategy considers more up to date and accurate data relating to the timing and location of major projects and development proposals within the Mid-Western LGA than that of the Urban Release Strategy, which has resulted in some difference in implied dwelling demand and theoretical lot yield.

While supply in Mudgee may appear to be sufficient to 2041, a wide range of factors are likely to influence dwelling demand and delivery which may result in increased pressure on Mudgee's housing market.

The majority of Mudgee's short term greenfield land supply is located at Spring Flat and Caerleon. Significant supply is available in other areas; however these lands would require planning and/or servicing updates to enable delivery.

It is also noted that a particularly constrained housing market is projected in nearby Gulgong, due to Gulgong's proximity to a substantial number of major projects. Mudgee may be required to accommodate workers unable to find housing in Gulgong, which could impose significant additional pressure on Mudgee's already constrained housing market. This further emphasises the need to prioritise the delivery of Mudgee's housing supply within the short-term.

Medium Density Housing Capacity

Demand for higher density housing such as attached dwellings or units is anticipated, specifically in the town centre of Mudgee. This will be delivered through infill development and includes typologies such as dual occupancies and secondary dwellings, attached and multi dwelling housing and some residential flat buildings.

Capacity for medium density development exists primarily within the R3 Medium Density Residential zone of Mudgee on underutilised sites and through urban renewal. Other forms of denser residential development may also be appropriate in town centre areas zoned E2 Commercial Centre and MU1 Mixed Use.

Delivering medium density infill development that is compatible with the character and heritage of the Mudgee town centre will provide more housing options for residents with good access to services and amenities.

Council will look to undertake masterplanning for the Mudgee town centre and surrounds, unlocking untapped supply, identifying key opportunities for infill development and urban renewal, and ensuring planning controls encourage the delivery of compatible medium density development.

Table 15: Existing lot supply capacity and projected future demand to 2041, Mudgee.

Lot/dwelling type	Estimated lot yield remaining	Estimated demand for residential lots	Difference
Townhouse / villa / unit	n/a	185	n/a
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	1,820	1,206	614
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	920	445	475
Large lot residential (2ha+)	70	19	51
Total	**2,810**	**1,855**	**955**
Total +20%	**2,810**	**2,200**	**584**

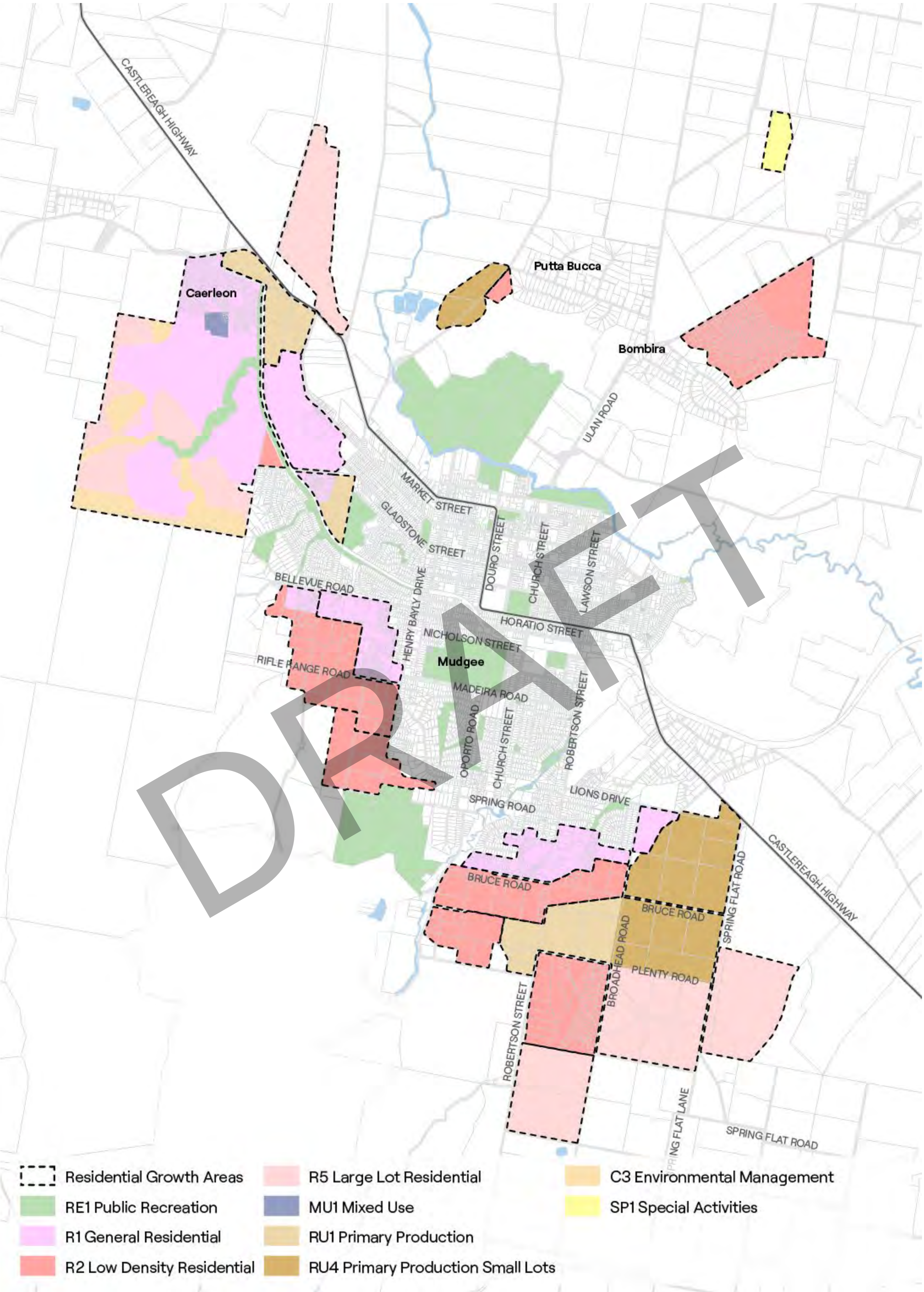


Figure 11: Mudgee Residential Growth Areas.

10.8 Gulgong Supply Gap Analysis

Table 16 summarises Gulgong's estimated housing demand and supply for each of the identified lot/dwelling types, and Figure 12 illustrates the town's identified residential growth areas.

This analysis concludes that housing supply in Gulgong is particularly constrained, with the peak demand required within a short timeframe (less than 5 years).

This demand can be attributed to the significant population growth associated with an influx of major projects occurring in proximity to Gulgong.

While it is understood that a large majority, approximately 70%, of the workforce for these projects will be able to be housed in temporary worker accommodation, dwelling demand has been derived from the proportion of workers who will need to be accommodated within the region's housing market, and includes those workers bringing partners and/or families.

It is further noted that much of the identified growth areas of Gulgong will require rezoning and servicing upgrades to reach potential.

Table 16: Lot supply capacity and projected future demand to 2041, Gulgong

Lot/dwelling type	Estimated lot yield remaining	Estimated demand for residential lots	Difference
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	584	560	25
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	341	232	108
Large lot residential (2ha+)	50	8	42
Total	**976**	**800**	**175**
Total +20%	**976**	**960**	**15**

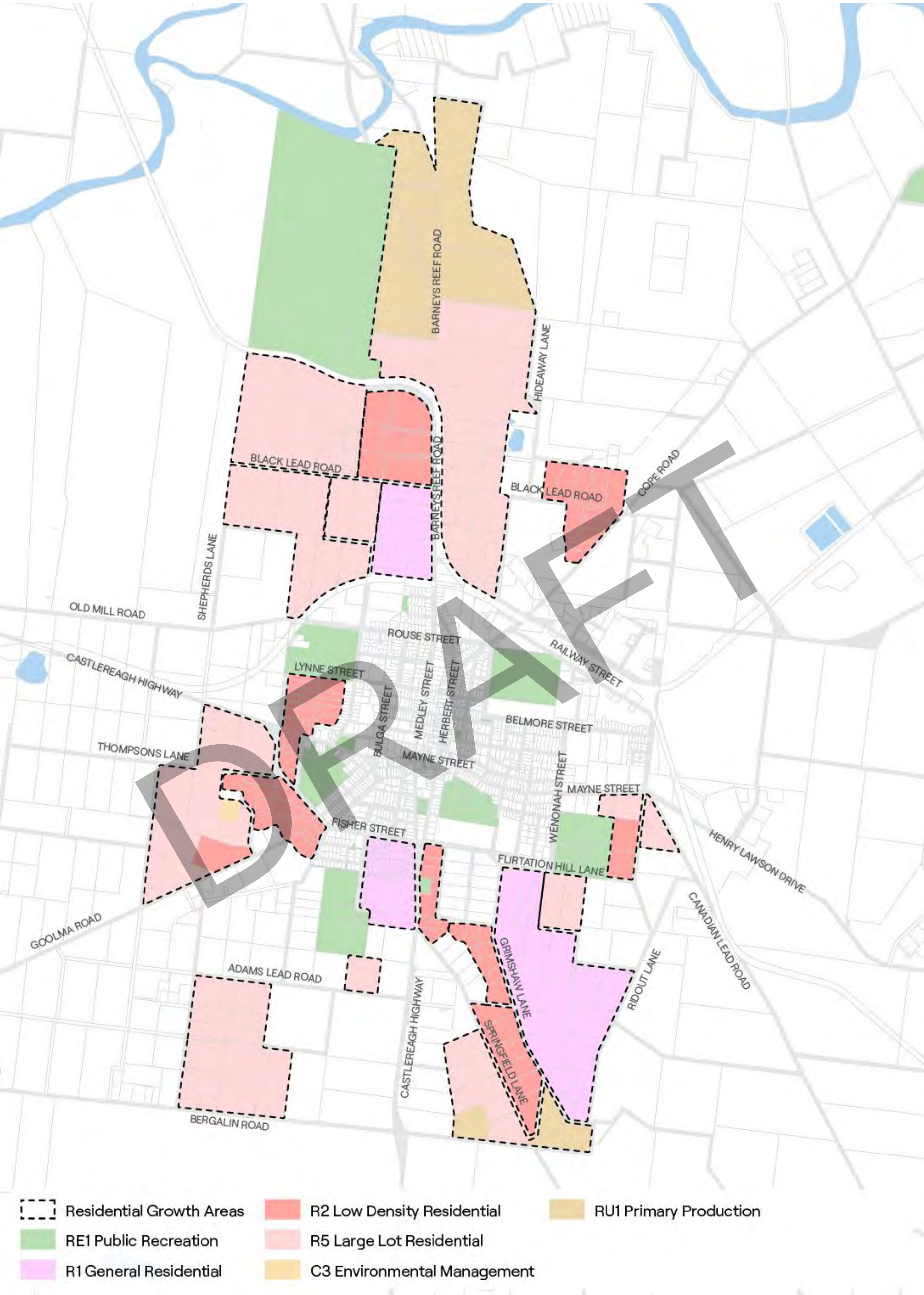


Figure 12: Gulgong Residential Growth Areas.

10.9 Rylstone Supply Gap Analysis

Table 17 summarises Rylstone's estimated housing demand and supply for each of the identified lot/dwelling types, and Figure 13 illustrates the town's identified residential growth areas.

The Rylstone investigation areas are largely unconstrained, however it is noted that significant further detailed environmental assessment is required to enable site-specific yield analysis.

High level analysis concludes that there is a significant supply of land zoned or identified for residential purposes in Rylstone. However, the majority of this land would require a significant amount of work in planning and servicing to be delivered.

Furthermore, while this dwelling demand includes anticipated population growth associated with the workforce of major projects in the region, including the potential Bowdens Silver Mine proposed in close proximity to Rylstone, it is noted that dwelling supply is constrained in the nearby major towns of Mudgee and Gulgong.

A constrained housing market in these towns may result in significant demand increases in nearby towns, such as Rylstone and Kandos.

Table 17: Lot supply capacity and projected future demand to 2041, Rylstone

Lot/dwelling type	Estimated lot yield remaining	Estimated demand for residential lots	Difference
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	15	31	-16
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	1,015	13	1,002
Large lot residential (2ha+)	60	1	59
Total	**1,090**	**45**	**1,045**
Total +20%	**1,090**	**54**	**1,036**

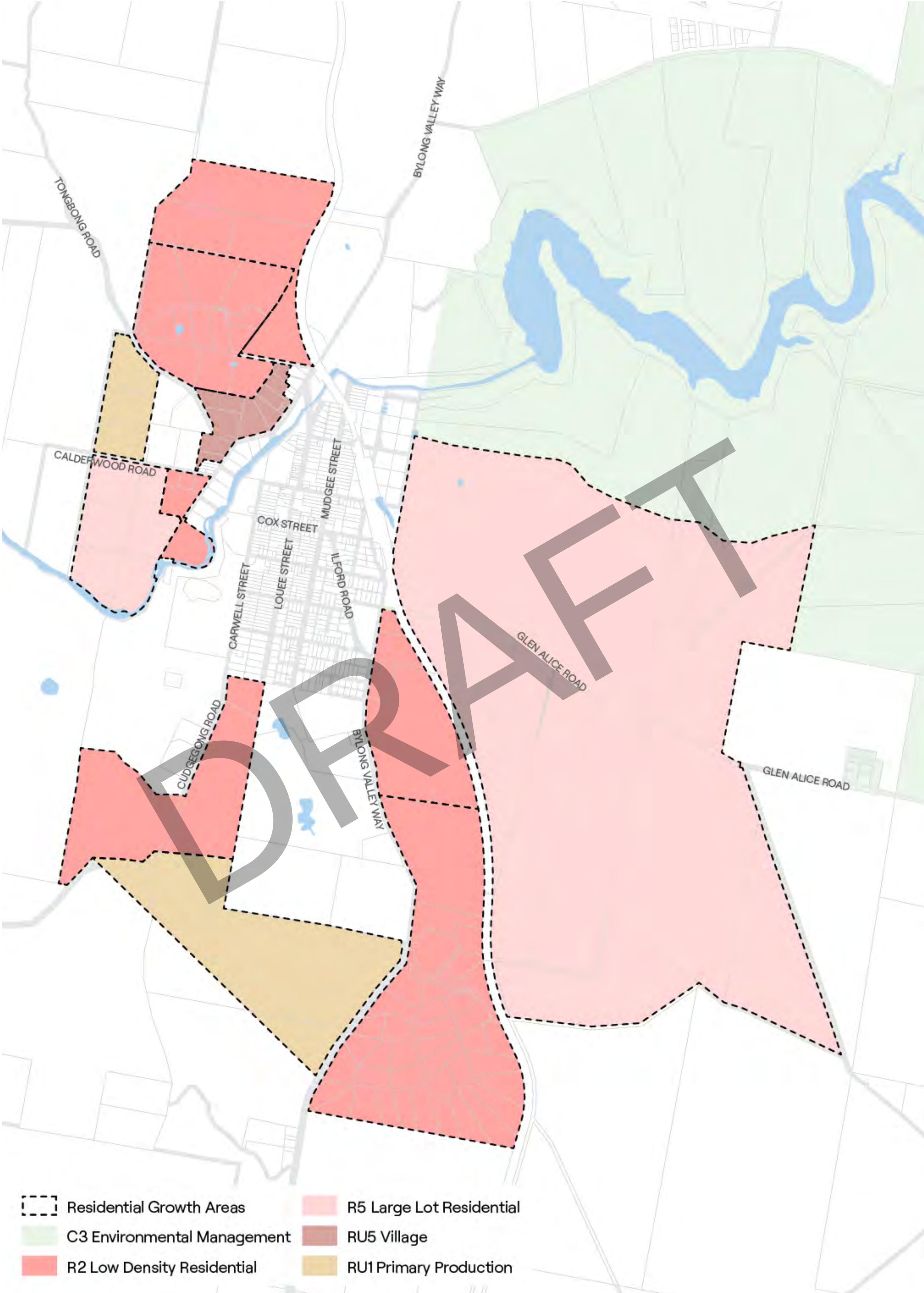


Figure 13: Rylstone Residential Growth Areas.

10.10 Kandos Supply Gap Analysis

Table 18 summarises the estimated housing demand and supply gaps for each of the identified lot/dwelling types in Kandos.

Similarly to Rylstone, the Kandos investigation areas are largely unconstrained, though significant further detailed environmental assessment is required to enable site-specific yield analysis.

While there is significantly less land zoned or identified for residential purposes in Kandos than Rylstone, this land is mostly already zoned, though not yet serviced.

Furthermore, all of the land zoned for residential purposes are for general residential lots, and therefore theoretical supply of low density and large lot residential lots is constrained.

Kandos may also experience significant demand increases due to the effects of a constrained housing market in the nearby major towns of Mudgee and Gulgong.

Table 18: Lot supply capacity and projected future demand to 2041, Kandos

Lot/dwelling type	Estimated lot yield remaining	Estimated demand for residential lots	Difference
General residential (400sqm-1,999sqm)	215	25	195
Low density residential (2,000sqm-1.9ha)	0	9	-9
Large lot residential (2ha+)	0	1	-1
Total	**215**	**35**	**180**
Total +20%	**215**	**42**	**173**

Kandos

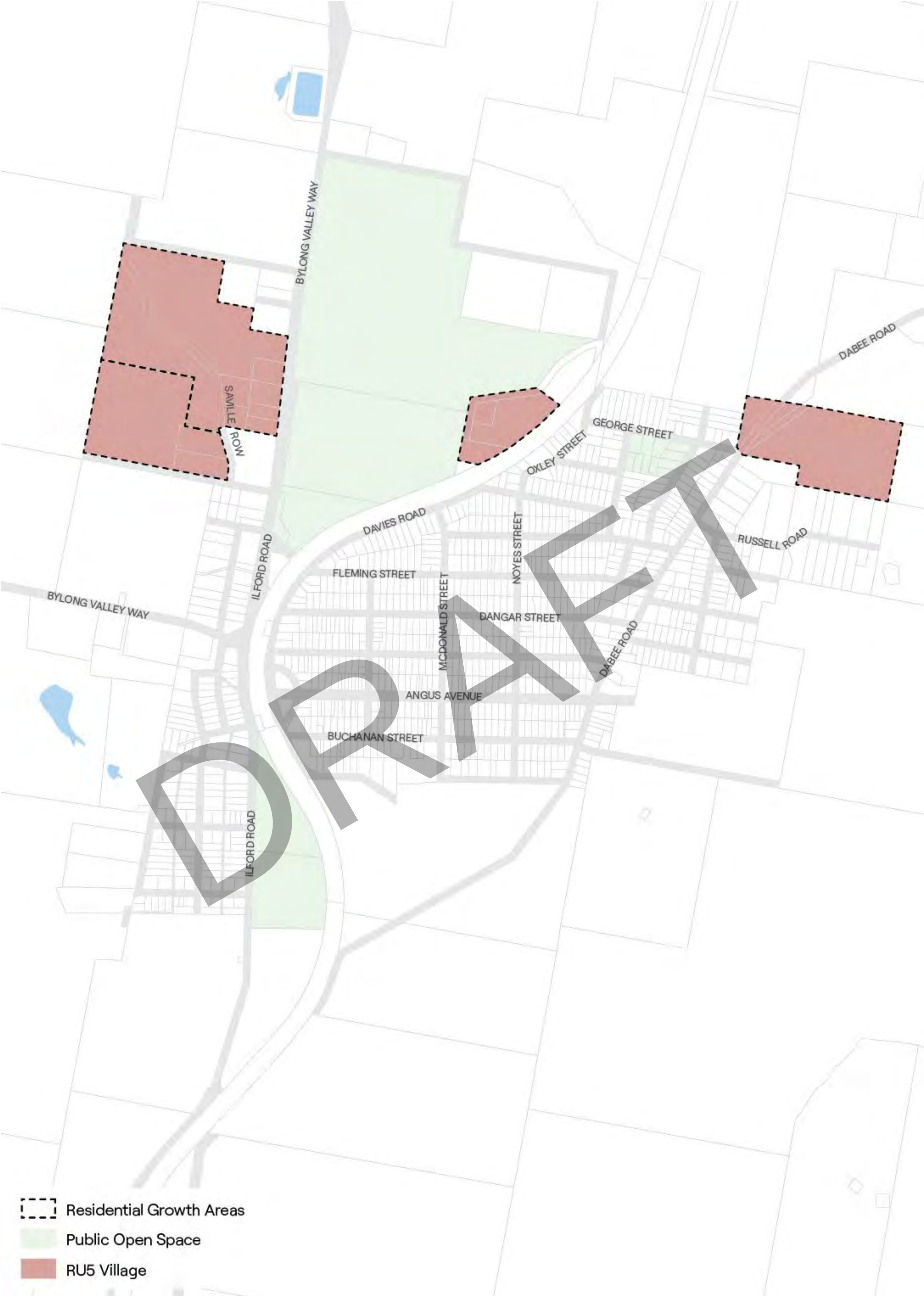


Figure 14: Kandos Residential Growth Areas.

11 Housing Objectives

The following key objectives will underpin Council's delivery of housing for the Mid-Western LGA, supported by a series of actions that will ensure these objectives may be achieved, and the identification of options for additional housing supply to meet the needs of the community.

Kandos

OBJECTIVE 1

Ensure delivery of sufficient housing supply for our growing population

The Mid-Western LGA is projected to grow by between 30,000-33,000 people to 2041.

Due to the high number of new resources and energy projects expected to commence across the region in the near future, much of this growth may also be required within a relatively short timeframe (potentially within the next five years), and is it possible that the Mid-Western LGA may not be able to meet this high short-term demand.

Endeavouring to deliver a timely and sufficient supply of land for residential purposes is made available to suit the needs of the community is thus essential to enable the sustainable growth of the Mid-Western LGA.

Council will continue to focus the delivery of land zoned for residential purposes within and around the main towns of Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos. In proximity to these established centres, new development can benefit from access to existing services and infrastructure, as well as greater connectivity and established community.

Council will aim to support the delivery of the LGA's short-term supply of housing, encouraging infill and renewal opportunities, incentivising market-ready housing and continuing to focus the sequencing of key infrastructure to unlock growth in strategically planned locations.

Council will continue to engage with landowners and key stakeholders to provide clarity around those lands prioritised for residential growth.

Action 1.1: Support the rezoning of an appropriate amount of residential land, as identified in this Strategy, to provide for the projected housing needs of our population, prioritising short term supply.

Action 1.2: Focus housing delivery within and around Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos; locations where there is existing amenity, infrastructure and capacity to support sustainable growth and development.

Action 1.3: Continue to focus sequencing out of infrastructure committed to by Council.

Action 1.4: Identify opportunities for Council to support the unlocking of residential land supply such as:

- Supporting the preparation of masterplans in conjunction with landowners of undeveloped zoned residential lands.
- Explore site identification and incentives to encourage infill opportunities in our existing urban areas.
- Investigate LEP amendments to deliver lot size diversity.
- Consider updates to Council's DCP to provide controls that ensure future growth is of a high quality.

Action 1.5: Consider mechanisms to incentivise the delivery of short term housing and provide more certainty to landowners, such as through potential discounts to application fees or staged infrastructure plans.

Action 1.6: Improve Council's Housing Monitor to better understand dwelling production and take-up rates.

OBJECTIVE 2

Investigate appropriate forms of housing density in suitable locations

The Mid-Western region has experienced significant housing pressure in recent years, with drivers such as rising regional migration, changing live-work patterns and a national affordability crisis exacerbating demand in an already constrained market.

Such pressures are only expected to increase as workforce accommodation needs rise with the anticipated pipeline of major projects in the region. At the same time, delivering houses through continual urban expansion can contribute to detrimental sprawl, conflicting with other important land uses such as existing agricultural land or areas of high environmental value.

Other hazards such as flooding, bushfire or topographic constraints can also limit capacity for growth.

It is essential that Council focus on delivering more homes within our existing town footprints, increasing density in urban areas with a focus on infill development and urban renewal opportunities. Such development can more easily access established infrastructure, and residents benefit from proximity to the established key services and amenities of our towns.

Council will promote opportunities for infill development, encouraging some medium density and town centre housing in appropriate urban locations. Council will look to develop strong planning and design controls to ensure that housing density suits our local character and is delivered to a very high-quality.

Action 2.1:	Promote opportunities and educate residents around infill development and urban renewal within the footprint of existing urban areas.
Action 2.2:	Continue to encourage the delivery of infill housing such as secondary dwellings in and around the strategic centres of Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos.
Action 2.3:	Investigate financial incentives to encourage the delivery of secondary dwellings and shop top housing.
Action 2.4:	Identify secondary dwellings as development permitted with consent in R1 General Residential, R3 Medium Density Residential and Rylstone and Kandos to encourage infill development and support a diversity of dwelling types in urban areas.
Action 2.5:	Identify residential flat buildings as development permitted with consent in R3 Medium Density Residential zones to signal Council's support for higher density development in appropriate locations.
Action 2.6:	Permit shop top housing in appropriate locations of Rylstone and Kandos, such as within the retail core, to increase density modestly, deliver diverse and affordable housing options and encourage activation of town centres.
Action 2.7:	Continue to prepare a masterplan for Mudgee town centre and surrounds, identifying opportunities where height of building controls might be reviewed, where suitable and appropriate.
Action 2.8:	Consider updates to the DCP to set out strong planning and design outcomes for medium density and town centre housing typologies.

OBJECTIVE 3

Provide a diverse range of housing options to cater to our community's needs

As the population of the Mid-Western LGA continues to grow, a diverse range of homes that can suit the varied needs of our community will need to be planned and delivered.

Council will work to provide a broad mix of dwelling types, lot sizes and different housing densities to meet various household types and adapt to ever-changing needs.

New low and medium density housing, including more affordable choices and housing better suited for particular needs such as seniors, young people or lone person households will be a focus for delivery.

Council will aim to ensure that growth areas are designed to:

- Protect and enhance environmental features, topography and surrounding setting.
- Ensure new built form complements context and minimises environmental impact.
- Provide a range of lot sizes and dwelling types to cater to the diverse needs of our community.
- Create walkable communities, with well-connected pedestrian and cyclist links.
- Incorporate sustainable development practices that enable resilient buildings and environmentally sensitive spaces.
- Be supported by the necessary infrastructure and services to provide for our population now and into the future.

Action 3.1:	Continue to promote, through education pieces, industry events and the like, the importance and wide-ranging benefits of diverse housing choice for both stakeholders and the community. This work recognises the role of diversity in delivering housing that is more flexible, affordable and a more efficient use of land.
Action 3.2:	Require that the masterplanning of growth areas incorporates an appropriate mix of dwelling types and lot sizes to cater to a range of housing needs, including small lot sizes of 400-450sqm lots. Assuming that just 30% of unconstrained land zoned R1 General Residential in growth areas is developed to a minimum lot size of 450sqm, this action has the potential to deliver approximately 150 additional general residential lots in Mudgee, and over 250 additional lots in Gulgong.
Action 3.3:	Ensure that a diversity of residential lot sizes is delivered as intended. This may occur through mechanisms such as the introduction of maximum lot sizes in the masterplanning of greenfield developments, or by establishing average dwelling density requirements.
Action 3.4:	Adopt a maximum minimum lot size of 2,000sqm for new R2 Low Density Residential development. Adjusting the lot size accordingly will better balance lifestyle outcomes with the efficient and sustainable development of land in an already constrained housing market. This action has the potential to deliver approximately 250 additional low density residential lots in Mudgee, and over 150 additional lots in Gulgong.
Action 3.5:	Investigate rezoning land along Rifle Range Road and Albens Lane, west of Henry Bayly Drive, to R1 General Residential. This land is relatively unconstrained, would contribute significant supply, and benefits from strategic proximity to the services and amenity of the Mudgee town centre.

OBJECTIVE 4

Deliver housing that is accessible and affordable

Council aims to ensure that the Mid-Western LGA is an affordable place for working families, a welcoming place to support our growth and prosperity, and an inclusive place for everyone to enjoy.

Enhancing the function, adaptability and quality of housing delivered in the Mid-Western LGA will ensure that the housing needs of the community can be better met into the future.

It is important to recognise the influence of providing housing diversity and choice (as set out in Objective 3) upon the overall affordability of our homes.

A range of dwelling and lot sizes, including diverse or smaller housing choices, can support affordability while enhancing liveability.

Council will continue to engage with the community to promote and deliver more social and affordable housing in the LGA, collaborating with key stakeholders and investigating potential partnerships to deliver the right homes in the right locations.

Adaptable housing is housing that is designed with accessible features that can easily altered to meet an individual's needs and capabilities over time.

Action 4.1:	Educate and consult with the community around the importance and provision of social and affordable housing in the LGA, recognising the influence of housing diversity and choice upon affordability.
Action 4.2:	Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders, including Homes NSW and local community housing providers, to understand operational needs and consider opportunities for partnerships with Council to deliver affordable rental housing.
Action 4.3:	Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Housing Providers to ensure that the housing needs of the Aboriginal community are achieved.
Action 4.4:	Establish DCP controls to ensure that new housing is designed to adaptable or universal housing standards.

OBJECTIVE 5

Support the wellbeing of our community by ensuring the provision of secure and inclusive housing for key workers

A key worker is an employee who provides a vital service in society, and in the Mid-Western LGA is more than just the emergency services, health and education sectors.

In 2021, Health Care and Social Assistance, at over 11%, was the second largest employer in the Mid-Western LGA.

Representing a significant portion of the population, it is essential that Council make provisions to increase key worker housing stock to accommodate growing demand.

Council will aim to ensure that affordable homes are available in the right locations to house our key workers, supporting the long-term function and sustainability of the Mid-Western LGA.

Opportunities to deliver key worker housing in proximity to major places of employment will be a key focus, and Council will endeavour to respond to emerging opportunities or partnerships that would enable short-term supply of housing for key workers.

Delivering high-quality, well-designed, connected and affordable housing options to support the housing needs of key workers will contribute significantly to the LGA's ability to attract and retain this essential workforce.

Action 5.1:	Promote and encourage private sector investment in housing for key workers.
Action 5.2:	Respond to emerging opportunities or partnerships that would enable short-term supply of housing for key workers.
Action 5.3:	Prepare a Social Infrastructure Strategy for the Mid-Western LGA to support long-term liveability outcomes, responding to the needs of the growing population.
Action 5.4:	Look to invest in a centralised property listing and enquiry service to help key workers to access information about affordable housing options near to major places of employment for key workers.
Action 5.5:	Investigate LEP and DCP amendments that could enable greater supply of housing for key workers, such as increased housing densities in proximity to major places of employment for key workers.

OBJECTIVE 6

Design and deliver sustainable and efficient housing and places

Supporting the Mid-Western LGA to sustainably develop and diversify our housing stock will strengthen our ability to respond to changing global influences, natural hazards, development pressures and population growth.

Opportunities to encourage sustainable building practices and innovation throughout the region should continue to be supported.

New avenues, such as partnerships, funding arrangements or community-led programs, should be explored to support sustainability in our neighbourhoods, creating liveable and connected communities that prioritise active movement for residents.

Future plans will investigate opportunities for sustainable growth and urban renewal, and Council will look to implement development controls that incorporate more environmentally sensitive building practices that encourage liveable homes and sustainable streets.

Enhancing the sustainability of our homes and great places will improve the Mid-Western region's ability to respond resiliently to a changing climate.

Action 6.1:	Continue to educate the community and promote sustainable building practices throughout the Mid-Western LGA.
Action 6.2:	Investigate DCP controls to support environmentally sustainable building practices, such as passive thermal performance, energy efficient solutions, low emission building materials, or on-site water capture and reuse.
Action 6.3:	Require that the masterplanning of growth areas incorporate urban design practices that mitigate the urban heat island effect, integrating practices such as street trees and increased vegetation, and light coloured roofs and pavements.
Action 6.4:	Require that the masterplanning of growth areas delivers sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods that prioritise active transport facilities for residents, such as well-connected pedestrian footpaths, shared paths and cycleways.

OBJECTIVE 7

Build on the strengths and unique lifestyle qualities of the Mid-Western LGA's lively small towns and villages

The Mid-Western LGA is home to many towns and villages with unique local character, rich histories and environments, and a strong sense of place.

Council will continue to work towards creating attractive and connected towns and villages with high amenity, thriving economies and strong local communities.

The identification and preservation of the unique values that contribute to our towns and villages can strengthen growth in other aspects of development, including community pride, place-making, tourism and investment.

Council will endeavour to ensure that housing in the LGA's small towns and villages is appropriate, attractive and complementary to their surrounding rural context.

Council will investigate future planning efforts, such as more detailed structure and place plans, that will aim to deliver an appropriate scale of residential growth in our small towns and villages, supported by the necessary infrastructure and services.

Action 7.1:	Investigate place-making opportunities to enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages, such as storytelling, public art, social engagement.
Action 7.2:	Undertake a structure planning process in Rylstone and Kandos, with consideration for the adoption of residential and commercial (main street) land use zones.
Action 7.3:	Prepare a Place Plan for the town centres of Rylstone and Kandos, establishing urban design controls that will foster lively communities, such as street greening, shared spaces, public art, and safe and sustainable design principles.

OBJECTIVE 8

Protect and preserve the Mid-Western LGA's rich heritage values

The Mid-Western LGA is home to rich heritage, character and cultural values; providing for their ongoing protection and celebration is an essential part of the development of our communities.

Proposed housing infill development will need to be delivered in a manner that complements the character and unique context in which it is built.

In areas of identified heritage significance, new buildings must be of an appropriate built form and materiality so as to be sympathetic to existing heritage fabric.

Preserving our rich heritage values and historic streetscapes can have significant benefits to the economies of our towns and can contribute to the liveability of our places, supporting place-making efforts, enhancing tourism offerings, and creating distinct local character and community pride.

Action 8.1:	Local character and the unique heritage values of the area are to be recognised and conserved, with new housing development required to complement historic fabric when adjacent to heritage items or within conservation areas, contributing high quality design outcomes to areas of heritage significance.
Action 8.2:	Identify and support opportunities for the adaptive reuse of our heritage buildings for residential purposes, where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE 9

Continue to support attractive tourist and visitor offerings

The Mid-Western region is an attractive tourist destination, with vibrant towns and villages, stunning natural landscapes, rich local produce and a range of annual events.

The tourism industry plays an important role in the economy of the Mid-Western LGA, and is supported by short-term rental accommodation (STRA) to provide for visitor accommodation needs.

While essential to the tourist economy, STRA can impact the availability and affordability of housing for long-term residents and must be managed appropriately.

Council will endeavour to establish priorities to manage demand for housing that can remain affordable and accessible for residents, along with the provision of STRA.

Council will collaborate with the State Government to monitor and manage STRA throughout the LGA and implement improved controls were necessary.

Action 9.1:	Collaborate with key stakeholders of the local tourism industry to understand visitor accommodation needs and related operational demands.
Action 9.2:	Monitor short-term rental accommodation to support our tourist and visitor economy, while ensuring sufficient additional market housing is delivered to meet the needs of our community.
Action 9.3:	Monitor the implementation of DPHI's short term rental accommodation framework and continue advocating for improved controls where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE 10

Facilitate effective housing solutions to support essential industry needs

The workforce accommodation needs of major projects occurring throughout the region are expected to account for a substantial portion of the housing demand anticipated for the Mid-Western LGA to 2041.

Council will have to balance market housing with the accommodation demands of mining and renewable energy projects, as well as seasonal workers associated with the regional agricultural industry.

Much of the short-term major project workforce will need to be accommodated in temporary purpose-built facilities located near to project sites.

As discussed in Section 7, the NSW Government has announced reforms to fast-track housing for construction workers in renewable energy zones. The reforms permit construction worker accommodation in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, including rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

Clause 6.11 of Council's LEP sets out specific provisions to guide the development of temporary workers' accommodation in the Mid-Western LGA.

These include that there must be a need for the accommodation due to the large-scale or remote location of a project, and that the accommodation must be developed within five kilometres of the relevant project.

Water reticulation and sewerage systems must be delivered, and the development site must be able to be restored to its original condition.

Council will collaborate with DPHI and other key stakeholders to ensure appropriate temporary accommodation can be delivered in the right locations and can be suitably transitioned or re-purposed at the end of a project.

Action 10.1:	Continue to collaborate with DPHI, EnergyCo and other key stakeholders to deliver housing for workers of the renewable energy zone in suitable locations in accordance with best-practice principles.
Action 10.2:	Collaborate with key stakeholders of local primary industries to understand temporary and/or seasonal worker accommodation needs and related operational demands.
Action 10.3:	Where possible, direct development of residential accommodation for permanent workers of the renewable energy zone towards identified long term growth areas of Gulgong, capitalising on short distances to project sites and maximising infrastructure investment outlay.
Action 10.4:	If Council were to consider construction accommodation within a residential zone, consideration should only be given to land that has been identified for long term supply to ensure that the short and medium term supply is maintained for natural growth and permanent workers, subject to satisfactory water and sewer infrastructure provision.

12 Implementation and Delivery Plan

The Mid-Western Region Housing Strategy's actions have been categorised based on their delivery timeframe; short-term, medium-term, long-term, or ongoing.

Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
0-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	Ongoing

Progress on these actions will be reported to Council annually. Some actions may reflect procedural changes and any adjustments will be included in annual reports and reflected in updates to the Housing Strategy as necessary.

The actions will also be reviewed and revised to address emerging data or updates to State plans and policies.

For instance, changes may be required in response to new census information, housing preferences, employment projections, or updates to strategic plans.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
OBJECTIVE 1 **Ensure delivery of sufficient housing supply for our growing population**	
1.1 Support the rezoning of an appropriate amount of residential land, as identified in this Strategy, to provide for the projected housing needs of our population, prioritising short term supply.	Short
1.2 Focus housing delivery within and around Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos; locations where there is existing amenity, infrastructure and capacity to support sustainable growth and development.	Medium
1.3 Continue to focus sequencing out of infrastructure committed to by Council.	Short/Ongoing
1.4 Identify opportunities for Council to support the unlocking of residential land supply such as: • Supporting the preparation of masterplans in conjunction with landowners of undeveloped zoned residential lands. • Explore site identification and incentives to encourage infill opportunities in our existing urban areas. • Investigate LEP amendments to deliver lot size diversity. • Consider updates to Council's DCP to provide controls that ensure future growth is of a high quality.	Short for identifying opportunities; medium for masterplanning and policy updates
1.5 Consider mechanisms to incentivise the delivery of short term housing and provide more certainty to landowners, such as through potential discounts to application fees or staged infrastructure plans.	Short
1.6 Improve Council's Housing Monitor to better understand dwelling production and take-up rates.	Short
OBJECTIVE 2 **Investigate appropriate forms of housing infill in suitable locations**	
2.1 Promote opportunities and educate residents around infill development and urban renewal within the footprint of existing urban areas.	Short

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
2.2 Continue to encourage the delivery of infill housing such as secondary dwellings in and around the strategic centres of Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos.	Short
2.3 Investigate financial incentives to encourage the delivery of secondary dwellings and shop top housing.	Medium
2.4 Identify secondary dwellings as development permitted with consent in R1 General Residential, R3 Medium Density Residential and Rylstone and Kandos to encourage infill development and support a diversity of dwelling types in urban areas.	Short
2.5 Identify residential flat buildings as development permitted with consent in R3 Medium Density Residential zones to signal Council's support for higher density development in appropriate locations.	Short
2.6 Permit shop top housing in appropriate locations of Rylstone and Kandos, such as within the retail core, to increase density modestly, deliver diverse and affordable housing options, and encourage activation of town centres.	Short
2.7 Continue to prepare a masterplan for Mudgee town centre and surrounds, identifying opportunities where height of building controls might be reviewed, where suitable and appropriate.	Short
2.8 Consider updates to the DCP to set out strong planning and design outcomes for medium density and town centre housing typologies.	Short
OBJECTIVE 3 **Provide a diverse range of housing options to cater to our community's needs**	
3.1 Continue to promote, through education pieces, industry events and the like, the importance and wide-ranging benefits of diverse housing choice for both stakeholders and the community.	Short
3.2 Require that the masterplanning of growth areas incorporates an appropriate mix of dwelling types and lot sizes to cater to a range of housing needs, including small lot sizes of 400-450sqm lots.	Ongoing
3.3 Ensure that a diversity of residential lot sizes is delivered as intended. This may occur through mechanisms such as the introduction of maximum lot sizes in the masterplanning of greenfield developments, or by establishing average dwelling density requirements.	Ongoing
3.4 Adopt a maximum minimum lot size of 2,000sqm for new R2 Low Density Residential development; balancing lifestyle outcomes with the efficient and sustainable development of land.	Short
3.5 Investigate rezoning land along Rifle Range Road and Albens Lane, west of Henry Bayly Drive, to R1 General Residential. This land is relatively unconstrained, would contribute significant supply, and benefits from strategic proximity to the services and amenity of the Mudgee town centre.	Medium
OBJECTIVE 4 **Deliver housing that is accessible and affordable**	
4.1 Educate and consult with the community around the importance and provision of social and affordable housing in the LGA, recognising the influence of housing diversity and choice upon affordability.	Short
4.2 Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders, including Homes NSW and local community housing providers, to understand operational needs and	Ongoing

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
consider opportunities for partnerships with Council to deliver affordable rental housing.	
4.3 Collaborate with Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Housing Providers to ensure that the housing needs of the Aboriginal community are achieved.	Ongoing
4.4 Establish DCP controls to ensure that new housing is designed to adaptable or universal housing standards.	Short
OBJECTIVE 5 **Support the wellbeing of our community by ensuring the provision of secure and inclusive housing for key workers**	
5.1 Promote and encourage private sector investment in housing for key workers.	Short
5.2 Respond to emerging opportunities or partnerships that would enable short-term supply of housing for key workers.	Short
5.3 Prepare a Social Infrastructure Strategy for the Mid-Western LGA to support long-term liveability outcomes, responding to the needs of the growing population.	Short
5.4 Look to invest in a centralised property listing and enquiry service to help key workers to access information about affordable housing options near to major places of employment for key workers.	Short
5.5 Investigate LEP and DCP amendments that could enable greater supply of housing for key workers, such as increased housing densities in proximity to major places of employment for key workers.	Short
OBJECTIVE 6 **Design and deliver sustainable and efficient housing and places**	
6.1 Continue to educate the community and promote sustainable building practices throughout the Mid-Western LGA.	Ongoing
6.2 Investigate DCP controls to support environmentally sustainable building practices, such as passive thermal performance, energy efficient solutions, low emission building materials, or on-site water capture and reuse.	Short
6.3 Require that the masterplanning of growth areas incorporate urban design practices that mitigate the urban heat island effect, integrating practices such as street trees and increased vegetation, and light coloured roofs and pavements.	Ongoing
6.4 Require that the masterplanning of growth areas delivers sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods that prioritise active transport facilities for residents, such as well-connected pedestrian footpaths, shared paths and cycleways.	Ongoing
OBJECTIVE 7 **Build on the strengths and unique lifestyle qualities of the Mid-Western LGA's lively small towns and villages**	
7.1 Investigate place-making opportunities to enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages, such as storytelling, public art, social engagement.	Medium
7.2 Undertake a structure planning process in Rylstone and Kandos, with consideration for the adoption of residential and commercial (main street) land use zones.	Medium

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
7.3 Prepare a Place Plan for the town centres of Rylstone and Kandos, establishing urban design controls that will foster lively communities, such as street greening, shared spaces, public art, and safe and sustainable design principles.	Medium
OBJECTIVE 8 **Protect and preserve the Mid-Western LGA's rich heritage values**	
8.1 Local character and the unique heritage values of the area are to be recognised and conserved, with new housing development required to complement historic fabric when adjacent to heritage items or within conservation areas, contributing high quality design outcomes to areas of heritage significance.	Ongoing
8.2 Identify and support opportunities for the adaptive reuse of our heritage buildings for residential purposes, where appropriate.	Medium
OBJECTIVE 9 **Continue to support attractive tourist and visitor offerings**	
9.1 Collaborate with key stakeholders of the local tourism industry to understand visitor accommodation needs and related operational demands.	Short; ongoing
9.2 Monitor short-term rental accommodation to support our tourist and visitor economy, while ensuring sufficient additional market housing is delivered to meet the needs of our community.	Short
9.3 Monitor the implementation of DPHI's short term rental accommodation framework and continue advocating for improved controls where appropriate.	Short; ongoing
OBJECTIVE 10 **Facilitate effective housing solutions to support essential industry needs**	
10.1 Continue to collaborate with DPHI, EnergyCo and other key stakeholders to deliver housing for workers of the renewable energy zone in suitable locations in accordance with best-practice principles.	Ongoing
10.2 Collaborate with key stakeholders of local primary industries to understand temporary and/or seasonal worker accommodation needs and related operational demands.	Short; ongoing
10.3 Where possible, direct development of residential accommodation for permanent workers of the renewable energy zone towards identified long term growth areas of Gulgong, capitalising on short distances to project sites and maximising infrastructure investment outlay.	Ongoing
10.4 If Council were to consider construction accommodation within a residential zone, consideration should only be given to land that has been identified for long term supply to ensure that the short and medium term supply is maintained for natural growth and permanent workers, subject to satisfactory water and sewer infrastructure provision.	Ongoing

Appendix A: Engagement Summary Report

Kandos

Mid-Western Regional Council

Engagement Summary Report

19 November 2024
[FINAL V2]

Prepared by:

The Planning Studio

in partnership with:

HADRON GROUP

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia.

We acknowledge and respect the continued custodianship and connection of the **Wiradjuri people** to the land that the Mid-Western Regional Council, its towns and villages is situated and **pay our respects to Elders, past and present**.

We acknowledge and celebrate the culture, knowledge and heritage of the Wiradjuri people - **part of the oldest living culture -** and the foundation it provides for us to foster a community where the voices of all people are elevated, feel welcomed, valued and included.

Through the stories of place and culture shared generously with us, The Planning Studio are committed to listen, learn and walk alongside as we plan with communities for equitable, sustainable, and connected places and communities.

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Front Cover Photo: Mudgee Town Centre (Photo: Mid-Western Council)

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the feedback and insights provided by the Mid-Western Regional Council community to inform the Mid-Western Council Local Housing Strategy.

In partnership with Hadron Group, The Planning Studio designed and delivered an engagement program that has provided input into the preparation of the Mid Western Regional Housing Strategy ('the Strategy').

Feedback captured throughout the various engagement activities has informed the key themes, findings and recommendations are provided for Council's consideration as they seek to implement the Strategy.

Engagement Approach

Engagement is more than just a 'tick in the box' exercise but instead is a fundamental part of the primary research in the development of local strategies. An overview of the engagement activities undertaken for this project is provided below.

600+
people engaged with us about the Mid-Western Housing Strategy.

- **Presentation to Economic Think Tank 2024 Event** *(approx. 40 invited participants)*
- **Online Housing Survey** *(413 responses)*
- **8x 1hr Online Stakeholder Interviews** *(9 participants)*
- **2x Sector/Industry Workshops** *(6 participants)*
- **1x Community Workshop** *(7 participants)*
- **1x Under 30s Community Workshop** *(7 participants)*
- **5x 3hr Community 'Drop-In' sessions**
  - Kandos *(34 participants)*
  - Rylstone *(17 participants)*
  - Gulgong *(37 participants)*
  - Mudgee town centre *(23 participants)*
  - Mudgee markets *(27 participants)*
- **Council's engagement website** *(959 views)*

Key Themes and Findings
'What we heard'

Theme	What we heard through engagement discussions...
Priority planning directions to guide the delivery of housing in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.	Overall the community's priorities for housing are to **'ensure delivery of sufficient housing supply', 'deliver accessible and affordable housing', 'providing diverse housing options to cater to our community's needs'** and '**continuing to support attractive tourist and visitor offerings'.** For Gulgong and Kandos, **'protecting and preserving the LGA's rich heritage values'** was identified as a priority for housing. Other location specific planning priorities for housing were **'supporting the wellbeing of our community by ensuring the provision of secure and inclusive housing for key workers'** [Mudgee], '**design and deliver sustainable and efficient housing and places'** [Rylstone] and '**build on the strengths & unique lifestyle qualities of the lively small towns & villages'** [Kandos]. This enables the Strategy to consider how it can respond to the priorities that the local community have expressed for there town/village.
Housing affordability is a significant issue and currently housing in the area is considered unaffordable for most people.	**81%** of survey respondents [413] and **90%** of survey respondents **under 35yrs** [148] think that housing (to buy & rent) in the LGA is **unaffordable.** Stakeholders and workshop participants predominantly described the current housing situation as being **'unaffordable', 'expensive', 'limited', 'challenging' or 'difficult'.** Although some community members expressed a view that housing is still affordable in the area, but acknowledged that for some people, particularly young people and people on low incomes, being able to find a home to rent or buy could be challenging. **66%** of community 'drop in' participants rated the availability of affordable rental options as being either **'Not affordable and not many options'** or that the **'majority of properties are out of my and/or most people's price range'.** **89%** of community 'drop in' participants, in considering both the affordability and availability of housing, rated the ease of being able to buy a home as being either **'Hard'** or **'out of reach for most people'.** More social and affordable housing (provided by registered community housing providers) was needed, as well as temporary/crisis accommodation to respond to the issues of homelessness and family breakdown.
Availability and limited housing diversity is exacerbating the affordability issues	Stakeholders commonly described the existing housing supply within the LGA as being largely 3+ bedroom houses with most smaller types of housing (ie. townhouse/villas) being of poor quality and ageing. **25%** of survey respondents [413] identified one of the most common challenges to being able to live in their ideal home is the '**availability of homes in a price range I can afford'.** A further 13.5% of respondents identified the **'availability of homes in the location or area I want'** and 9.5% identified the '**availability of the type of house I want to live in'** as other challenges specific to availability. **Availability of a diversity of housing types and sizes** was the top planning priority for future housing identified by survey respondents. Stakeholders agreed that an increased supply of smaller dwellings and housing typologies will likely contribute to increased affordability and provide for smaller families, first home buyers and single person households. The community's housing typology preference for all locations remains **single detached house on standard lot, dual occupancies/duplex** and **large lot/rural residential properties**. There was some support for 2-3 storey unit/apartments in Mudgee and Gulgong. However, the community stated a very clear and consistent position that 4+ storey unit/apartment style housing was not appropriate or needed in any location across the LGA. While there was cautious agreement that more dense forms of housing (ie, townhouses) was needed, it should be located in appropriate locations and designed to maintain the heritage and rural characteristics that are important to the identity of the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Theme	What we heard through engagement discussions...
Short term demand from multiple sectors/industries is impacting housing availability and affordability	Impact (both positive and negative) of the energy and mining industry on the local economy and the temporary workers on rental cost and availability was a common point of discussion. A common factor identified as influencing the high cost/unaffordability of rental housing in the LGA is the high proportion of properties being furnished, usually which are properties previously leased by employers for their temporary staff. Consistently, concerns were expressed by stakeholders and the community about the amount of short term rental accommodation in the LGA, the perceived increase of this type of tourist accommodation and its impact on housing availability. Of particular concern, was that without the significantly high economic return that short term rental accommodation provides, these properties would likely be available as long term rentals availability for local residents. However, it was also acknowledge that the tourism sector and visitor economy was significantly important to the Mid-Western economy, with tourist accommodation needed to support this. It was noted that some industry contractors can book out entire motels / hotels for staff which has created challenges for tourism. Community members shared first hand and reported experiences about bias and the difficulty for some people in accessing long term rental accommodation. Property industry representatives also stated that "owners have the luxury of choice (prospective tenants) which can result in bias against certain groups of people".
Affordability and limited availability has economic and social impacts for the LGA.	Consistent agreement that the lack of housing availability and affordability is already impacting on the ability to attract essential and key workers to the area - such as teachers, doctors etc - which has broader social and economic impacts for the area. Several small to medium scale employers raised concerns about the availability of affordable housing for their employees, especially those in the service industry and on apprenticeships. Numerous stakeholders commented that word-of-mouth referrals were needed to get into the housing market with formal channels particularly difficult for younger, single and/or lower income people. Strong concerns were raised about low income people receiving fair and equitable treatment through real estate and other property services. Many young people and people on low incomes are feeling insecure in their housing and find the lack of security tenure stressful. The key demographic not getting much needed access to housing are women / children escaping violence and young people who are unable to afford private market housing but earn enough to not receive government assistance.

Photo Source: Mid-Western Regional Council

Photo: Mudgee Drop-In Session

Introduction

Mid-Western Regional Council is preparing a Housing Strategy that aims to guide future housing directions across the Local Government Area (LGA). The Planning Studio were engaged to undertake engagement and Gyde Consulting were engaged separately to prepare the Housing Strategy.

This report documents and summarises the feedback gathered during the community engagement activities delivered to support the development of the Strategy.

Mid-Western Regional Council Councillors initially were informed of the grant funding at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 15 November 2023. Councillors were briefed with a project update on the 9 October.

Each Councillor was also invited to participate in a one-on-one meeting on 30 October 2024, to provide their personal comments on the Housing Strategy. The meetings were attended by Alina Azar (Director, Development), Sarah Armstrong (Strategic Planning Manager) and representatives from Gyde Consulting.

Engagement Purpose

The intent of this engagement program was to inform the community about the Strategy and ensure they had opportunities to help shape its development

Overall the purpose of the engagement was to:

- Collect qualitative data to inform the development of the Strategy;
- Gain a detailed understanding of the “on the ground” experience from a range of key stakeholders (local service providers, industry, business, and local community organisations) and the general community;
- Enable the development of localised solutions that will guide the future housing delivery, design, affordability and availability within the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA;
- Ensure that strategic directions and strategy recommendations are developed through multiple lenses and that considers the range of influences and impacts, challenges and opportunities.

Engagement Approach

The engagement program was designed and delivered in two stages:

Stage 1 Engagement: aimed to understand the housing challenges and opportunities specific to the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

By understanding specific experiences and insights from diverse community voices as well as the needs of local industries, business and their employees the engagement was able to gain information about the local housing driving housing affordability, availability and delivery context and issues.

By focusing on conversations with key stakeholders and asking the right questions, the engagement was also able to confirm the local housing trends and influences, thereby provides important context to the research and data analysis undertaken as part of the Strategy development.

Stage 2 Engagement: was focused more on the broader communities and in particular those living in the four main centres of Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone, and Kandos.

This stage structured conversations by testing the draft objectives/strategic directions that were informed by the stage 1 engagement.

Through these conversations, various options and ideas about how Council can contribute to the future availability, affordability and delivery of housing which also responds to the local context of each centres and their surrounding areas was also explored.

Table 1 (opposite page) details the range of engagement activities undertaken for this project.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Activities

Activity	Stakeholders	Date	Participation
Economic Think Tank 2024	Invited businesses and industry representatives - presentation to participants	23 May 2024	Approx. 40 people
Online Survey	Whole of community	22 August 2024 to 27 September 2024	413 responses
Stakeholder Discussions	Representatives from local service providers, education, Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council, industry representatives (energy and mining) and property/land development sector representation	Conducted throughout September & October 2024	8 organisations responded [10 contacted]
Industry and Sector Workshops	Representatives from community housing providers, service providers and major employers/industries	27-30 August 2024	5 organisations represented / 6 participants
Community Workshops	Representatives from business groups, real estate agencies, land developers and building companies, community groups and organisations. A specific session for people under 30 years was also held.	27-30 August 2024	14 participants
Drop In Sessions	Whole of community. 1x session held in Rylstone, Kandos and Gulgong and 2x sessions in Mudgee. ***10 October 2024:*** Media Release published on Council website ***16 October 2024:*** ABC Central West interview about Drop Ins [Alina Azar Director]	17-19 October 2024	138 people 'dropped in'

Engagement Outcomes Summary

The survey findings, along with the other engagement activities have informed the analysis of the key themes that emerged from the combination of engagement activities and discussions.

Online Survey

An online survey was open to the wider community from 22 August 2024 to 27 September 2024. **During this time, the survey received 413 responses.** The list of survey questions asked is provided in Appendix 1.

The following section provides an analysis of responses received for each survey question. While a total of 413 people completed a survey, some questions allowed for the selection of multiple answers. Therefore, the number of responses received for each question varies and has been noted for each question for clarity.

Q. What best describes your residence?

[Choose all answers that apply from options provided]

Total responses = 442

Survey respondents were predominantly owner occupiers and just over one-quarter are renters. (See Figure 1). The total number of respondents who identified as being an 'Investor' [26], 87% (or 22 respondents) are also existing owner occupiers. Therefore, indicating that investment in local housing is from people already living in the LGA.

For those that selected 'Other' the description of their current living arrangements included, 'living with parents or family due to affordability issues', "living with a home owner', 'renting in caravan park', 'looking to buy and build in the region' and 'living in employer provided accommodation'.

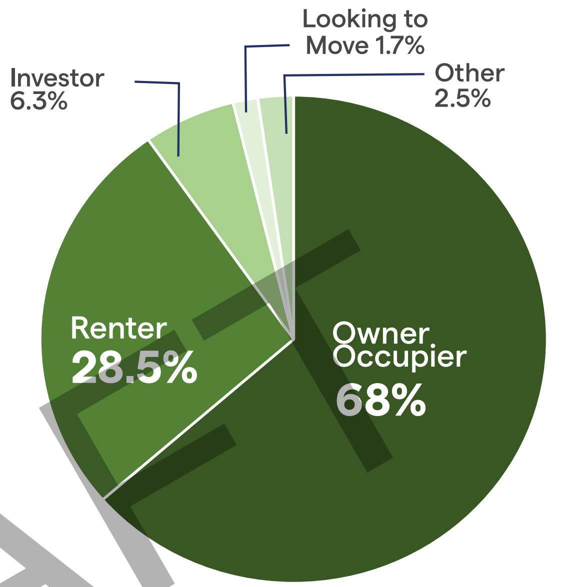


Figure 1: Existing residence of survey respondents [n= 442]

Q. In which area do you currently live?

[Choose 1 of the options provided]

Total responses = 413

Figure 2 (right) geographically illustrates the towns and villages that respondents currently live with the LGA. The locations that respondents selected 'Other', included, Caerleon, Lue, Green Gully, Frog Rock, Bocoble, St Fillaans, Clandulla, and Grattai.

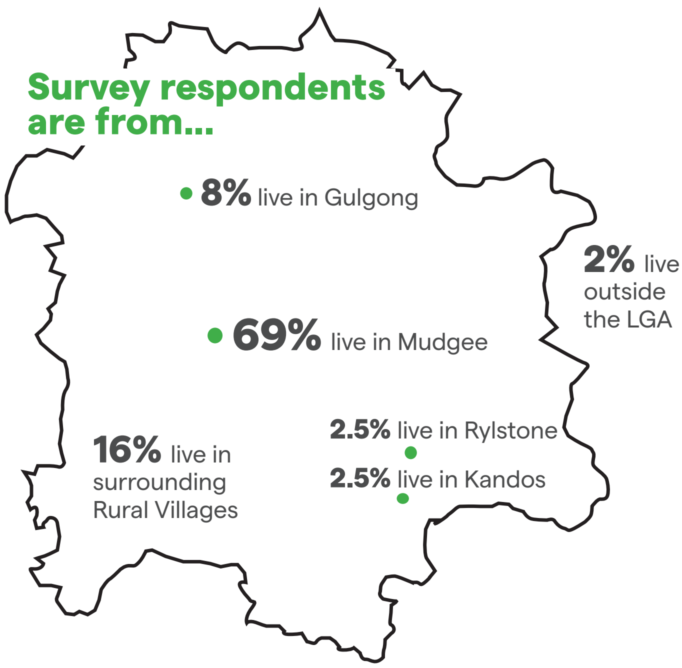


Figure 2: Residential location of survey respondents [n= 413]

Q. What is your age group?
[Choose 1 of the options provided]

Total responses = 413

As illustrated in Figure 3 (below), the spread and age diversity of survey respondents was relatively even with 22% of respondents aged 35-44 years, 21% aged 45-54 years, and 19% for both those respondents aged 25-34 years and 55-64 years.

Only 5% of respondents were under the age of 25 and no responses from young people under the age of 18 years.

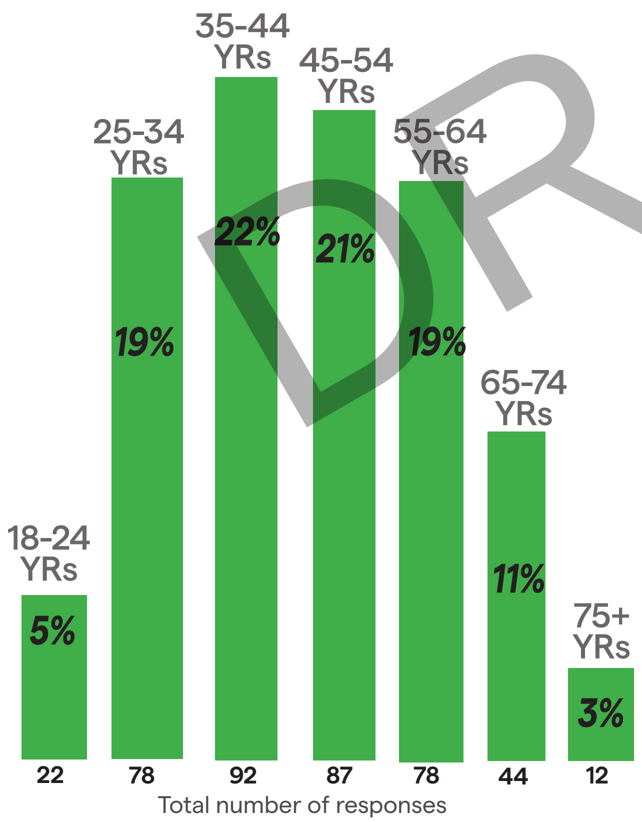


Figure 3: Age of survey respondents [n=413]

Q3. What type of dwelling/house do you currently live in? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 413

A significant majority of respondents (82%) currently live in a single detached house on a block of land. Figure 4 (below) provides the proportion of respondents and the type of dwelling they currently live in across the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Only 6% of respondents currently live in an attached duplex or dual occupancy and 3.2% of respondents currently live in a unit or apartment. The proportion of respondents currently living in the other dwelling or housing types provided in the drop down list received a total response of 1.5% or less.

For those who selected 'Other' (5.9%) they described their current housing types as being a 'farm/acreage' or 'off-grid/rural property'.

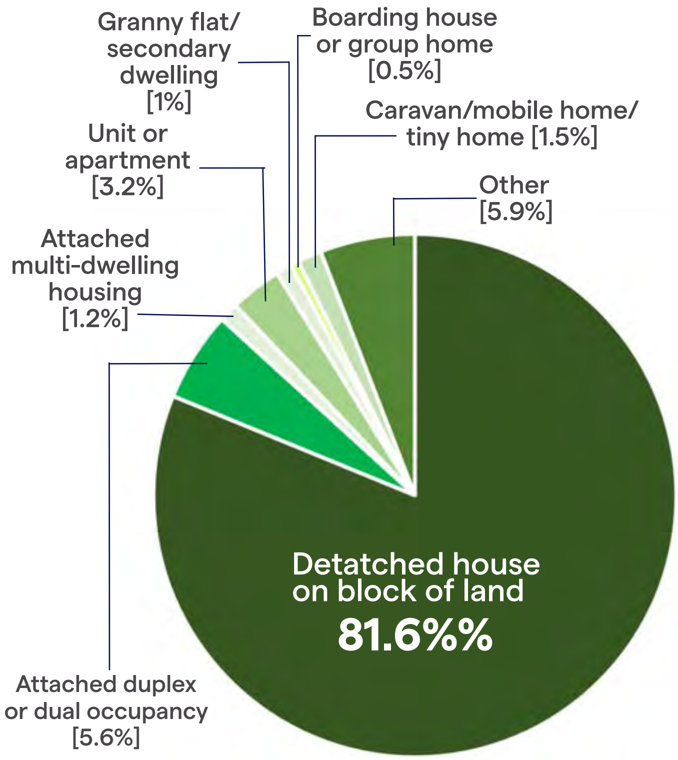


Figure 4: Type of dwelling respondents live in [n=413]

Survey respondents who selected *'Single detached dwelling'* (335 of 413 responses) as the housing type they current live in, were also asked to choose from eight different land/block sizes provided. (See Figure 5 below).

Of these respondents, almost half have their dwelling on a standard lot size (600-1,999m²). The second most common lot size was 10ha+, (11.3%) followed by respondents living on 451-599m² lots (10.5%).

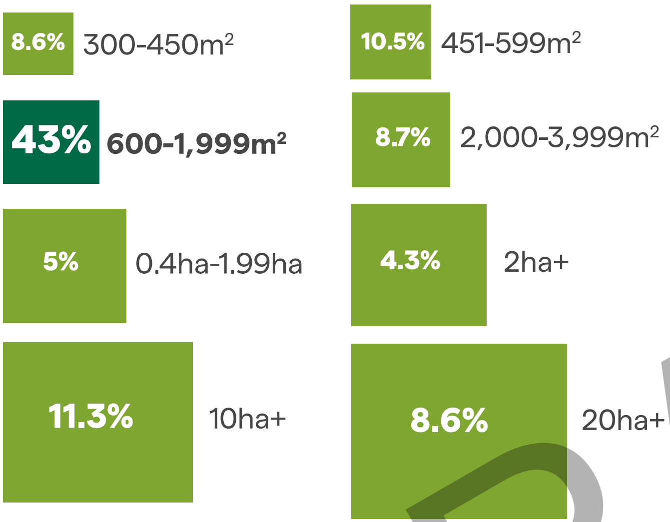


Figure 5: Block size of land with single detached dwelling [n=335]

Q: Length of residence in current home?

[Choose 1 of the options provided]

Total responses = 413

Just under one-third (30%) of survey respondents have bought or rented their home in the past 1 to 3 years. This group constituted the highest proportion of responses to this question. Similarly, at the other end of the scale, one-quarter of respondents have lived in their current home for more than 10 years.

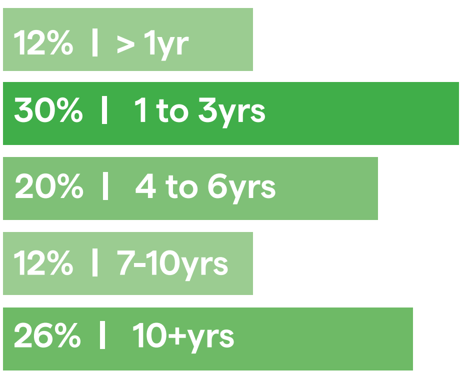


Figure 6: Length in current residence [n=413]

Q. Which of the following best describes your current household? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 413

Understanding household structure is important to also understanding the demand for housing types and sizes and the availability of these dwellings to meet community needs.

Just over one-third of survey respondents (35%) are living in households described as couples with children. Couples without children was the second most common household of survey respondents (31.5%).

Other common household types included single persons, with no children (12.6%) and single persons with children (8.5%). Only 2.7% of respondents live in shared or group household and 6.8% living in a blended or extended family household.

Q: What is the current tenure arrangement of the home you are currently living in?

[Choose 1 of the options provided]

Total responses = 413

Figure 7 (below) illustrated that almost three-quarters of survey respondents either own their current home outright (28%) or are paying a mortgage (41%). One-quarter of respondents are renters (26%), though this is significantly less than those that have purchased or inherited their current home.

The proportion of survey respondents living in social or community housing provider properties is only 1.5% and 1% (or total of 4 respondents) said that they have no permanent accommodation.

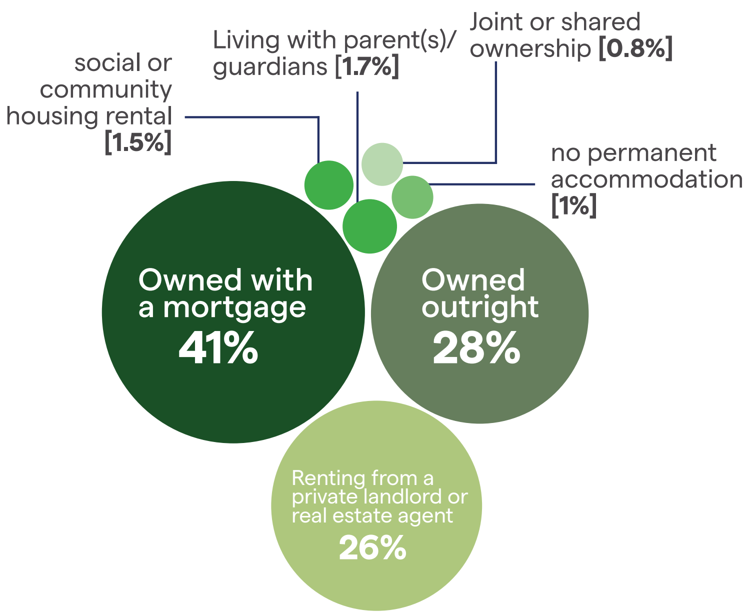


Figure 7: Tenure arrangement of home [n=413]

Q. Top 3 challenges to living in your ideal home.
[Choose up to 3 options provided]

Total responses = 982

The most common challenges identified by survey responses relate to the issues of housing affordability and availability. One quarter (25%) of survey respondents selected 'availability of home in a price range I can afford' one of their top 3 challenges and this was the most commonly selected response.

An additional 15.5% identified the 'cost of building' and 11.5% the 'lack of savings' as their top challenges to living in their ideal home.

Top 3 challenges for residents being able to live in ideal home

25%	**Availability of homes in a price range I can afford**
15.5%	**Cost of building**
13.5%	**Availability of homes in the location or area I want**
11.5%	**Lack of savings**
9.5%	Availability of desired land size
9.5%	Availability of the type of house I want to live in
7%	Difficulties with health / need for help / am a carer
5%	Other reasons (various)
5%	Insecurity in work / employment makes it difficult to plan

Figure 8: Top 3 challenges identified by respondents [n=982]

Of those respondents that selected 'other', some of the reasons and/or challenges identified included:

- Desire to downsize, but cost of doing so outweighs benefits
- General costs relating to home ownership (ie. Council rates, mortgage costs and interest rates, water and utilities etc)
- Limitations of planning controls and length of time to process DAs
- Escalating building costs and lack of tradespersons
- Increasing cost of living / basic expenses
- Limited availability in the area of affordable housing for key workers, social housing and housing provided by community housing providers.
- Availability and affordability of housing for their children.
- Lack of supporting services and infrastructure to support existing and additional residents.
- Housing (in particular rental accommodation) that is perceived as being "overpriced".

Approximately 20% of respondents that selected 'other' said that they had no challenges or are already living in their ideal home. Though a number of these respondents also noted the difficulties for their children and/or other people in the Mid-Western community.

One respondent commented that while they ***"do not face any challenges, [they are] also aware of may others who cannot find affordable housing and there is a rising number of homeless people in the LGA"***

Q Do you think housing (for rent or to buy) affordable across the Mid-Western Regional Council area? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 413

81% of all survey respondents think housing (for rent or to buy) is **unaffordable** in the LGA.

90% of respondents aged **under 35yrs** said they think housing (for rent or to buy) is **unaffordable** in the LGA.

For those who answered *'No'* to whether they thought housing was affordable (335 of 413 respondents), were also asked to share why.

Almost half (44% or 182 comments) of the total comments/experiences shared by respondents related to the cost of housing being too high for buyers, renters and investors in the LGA.

The second most common theme (11%) related to the current gap between housing costs and income and the third most common themes were the increasing prices or being too expensive to buy (10.5%) and the impact of mining and energy industries on housing (9.5%), which are interrelated issues.

All comments provided by respondents about why they feel that housing in unaffordable in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA have been analysed and collated into relevant themes.

The themes that emerged and the number of comments received are listed in Figure 10 (right).

Figure 10: Themed responses as to why people feel that housing is unaffordable in the Mid-Western Regional LGA [n=335]

Number of responses	
182	**Housing costs are too high (rental, land, purchasing)**
47	**Income gap vs housing/cost of living**
35	**Increasing prices and/or expensive to buy**
32	**Demand from industries (ie. mining & energy projects)**
30	**Lack of availability**
25	**Increasing and/or expensive rent**
22	**Increasing Airbnbs/ tourism/ short stays**
16	Increasing social impact of housing issues
6	High interest rates
5	Lack of infrastructure to support the cost of housing
4	Lack of crisis accommodation
4	Cost of building
3	Lack of small rural blocks
2	Planning controls and regulations
1	Impact of increasing temporary workers

Q: How easy do you think it is currently to find a property in the Mid-Western Region that meets your needs? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 413

Respondents were provide a scale of **Very Easy** to **Feels Impossible** and **Unsure**, to rate the ease at which they think it is to currently find a property that meets their needs within the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Figure 11 (right) illustrates the spread of responses. Noticeably, approximately half of respondents (48%) feel that the possibility of finding a property that meets their needs is either **Very Difficult or Feels Impossible.**

A further 28.5% feel it is **somewhat difficult** and less than 7% of respondents felt that it is **Somewhat Easy or Very Easy**.

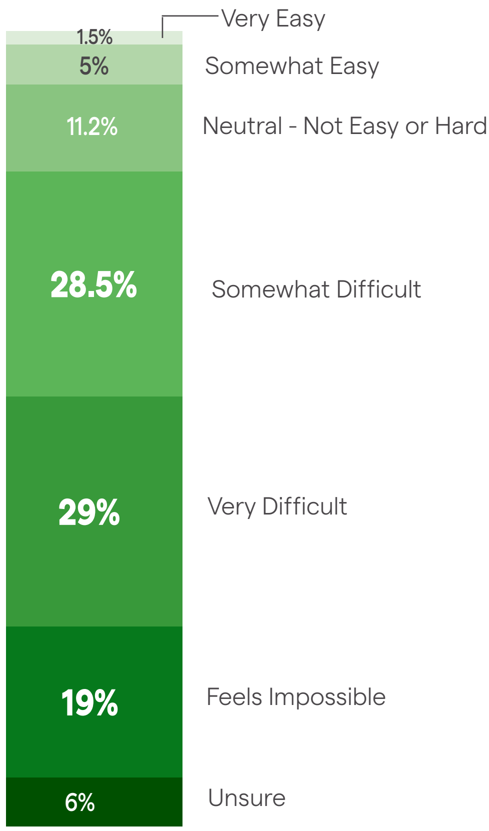


Figure 11: Ease of finding a property that meets needs in MWRC LGA. [n=413]

Future housing aspirations

Q. Looking ahead 5-10 years, what kind of ideal home you would like to live in? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 413

While 81.6% of survey respondents currently live in a 'detached house on a block of land', an equal proportion of respondents (81.6%) would like to live in this same type of housing.

Less people indicated that they would like an **attached duplex or dual occupancy** (1.8%) than those currently living in this type of housing (5.6% of survey respondents).

However, 4% of respondents to this question identified a unit or apartment as their future ideal home and 2.8% of respondents identified a **Lifestyle / retirement village or aged care home**. This is likely related to the age profile of the Mid-Western Regional Council resident population.

Respondents who selected '**detached house on block of land**', (335 of 413 responses) were again asked to choose from the eight block size ranges. One-third of respondents indicated they wanted to live in a detached dwelling on a standard block size of 600-1999m^2.

Respondents that said that their ideal future home is a detached dwelling on 2ha+ of land (9%) was double to respondents that indicated they currently live in this housing and land type (4.3% in Q3). Figure 12 illustrates the proportion of responses

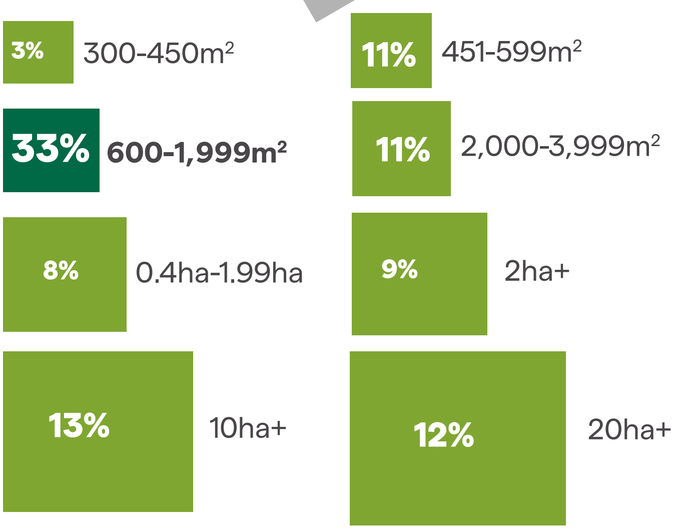


Figure 12: Future aspiration - Block size of land with single detached dwelling [n=335]

Respondents that selected 'other' identified the following desired future housing types:

- Hobby farm / small plot of land
- Rural / off-grid
- Eco-friendly home for self sufficient living
- House with land for orchid and gardens for alternative income

Q. Would like to stay where they currently live in the next 5-10 years. *[Choose 1 option]*

Total responses = 413

64% of all survey respondents said they would like to **stay** where they currently live.

36% of respondents aged said they would rather **move** to another area.

Q. In which area would you like to live in the future? *[Choose 1 of the options provided]*

Total responses = 410

When compared to the current place of residence of survey respondents (Q1), there was a slight increase in the proportion of people wanting to live in Mudgee (1%).

Interestingly, there was a minor decrease when comparing respondents that live in Gulgong now (8%) and those that would like to live there (7%). This was also the same for Kandos with a decrease of 0.5%.

The responses also showed a significant increase (+14.5%) in the number of respondents that current live outside of the LGA (2%) to those that **indicated that they would rather live outside the LGA in the future (16.6%)**. There was also a slight increase (+2%) of those respondents preferring to live in Rylstone in the future.

Q. If you were looking for a new home, what would be the main reasons that you would be looking? *[Choose up to 3 options provided]*

Total responses = 695

Survey respondents were provided with a list of possible reasons why they might look or be currently looking for a new home. The list below shows the total number of responses and proportion (%) for each of the options provided.

The main reasons that respondents selected that they would look or are looking for a new home is to upsize, have less maintenance or move from the rental market into their own home.

Having a home close to work, located near shops and services and in walking distance to parks and schools were also common reasons respondents selected as a reason to look for a new home.

Respondents who selected 'Other', identified the following reasons:

- Closer to town so less reliance on car
- Better access to services.
- A remote property with more land with less neighbours.
- Build or buy and investment property / home for children to live
- Larger blocks of land for farming and lifestyle.
- Family breakdowns.
- Outside of Mudgee (or LGA) to a less crowded town - *"Mudgee no longer has the calm country feel it had 15 years ago".*

Number of responses	
102	**Upsize from current property (14.6%)**
93	**Not looking (13.4%)**
82	**Property with less maintenance (11.8%)**
79	**Currently rent and would like to buy my own home (11.4%)**
58	**Would like to buy my first home (8.3%)**
49	**Property located in one of the town and village centres**
46	**Somewhere close to work (that I can walk, ride or catch a bus)**
45	**Somewhere in walking distance to parks and schools**
45	**Downsizing (ie. move from a single house to a unit or dual occupancy)**
44	**Other**
23	Rental property with a more secure lease
22	Rental property that is a more appropriate size for my family/living circumstances
6	Just moved into the area and renting, while I look for a property to buy
1	Just moved into the area and looking for a property to rent

Figure 13: Main reasons that respondents would look or are looking for a new home [n=695]

"I've lived and raised my family here, but feel I can't afford to live here anymore.Due to family breakdown and age I can't buy another home.i was a home owner. Now I'm a renter simply wanting secure long term affordable housing that allows a pet as this is the only companion I have. Mudgee has become unaffordable"

- Survey respondent

Q. Features important to have to when looking for a future home. *[Choose up to 3 options provided]*

Total responses = 958

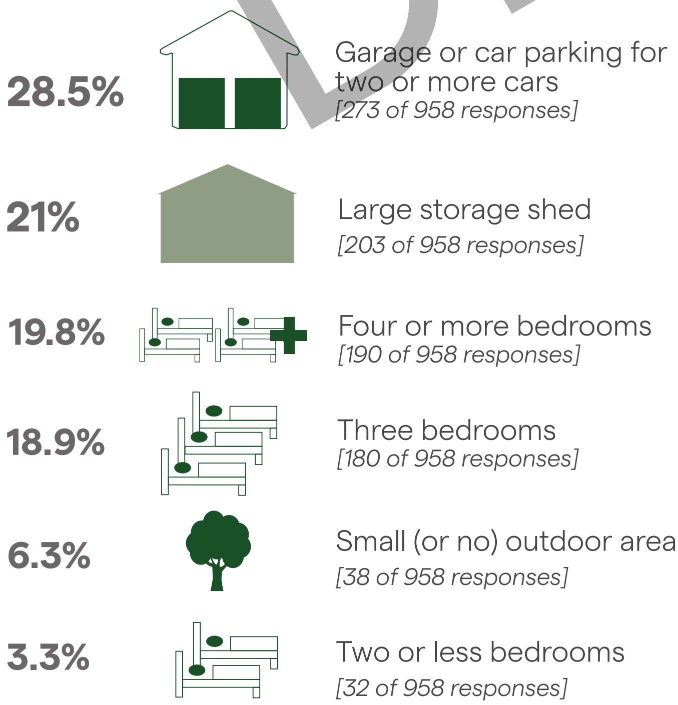
Survey respondents were provided with a list of features that are commonly valued by people when looking for a new home. Figure 14 below shows the proportion of each option based on the total number of responses for this question.

Garages and large storage sheds for large items, sporting and outdoors gear were the most common features that respondents considered important. When analysed based on the number survey respondents (413), 66% of survey respondents chose garages for 2+ cars and 49% chose large storage as one of the important features they look for.

The survey also indicates that more people are seeking properties with a greater number of bedrooms, with approximately one-fifth of responses selecting 4+ bedrooms as an important feature and a further 18.9% selecting 3 bedrooms.

Only 9.6% of responses felt that properties with two or less bedrooms or small outdoor areas were important features, despite the proportion of respondents that selected 'property with less maintenance' as one of the top 3 reasons that they may or are looking for a new home (see previous question).

Figure 14: Important features in housing choice [n=958]



Other *[62 of 958 responses]*

Q. In the next 5-10 years, what would be your ideal home ownership or rental arrangement?

[Choose 1 of the options provided]

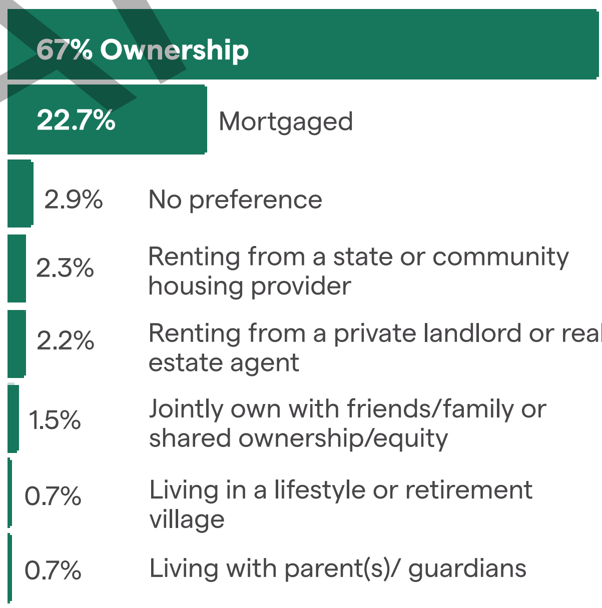
Total responses = 413

Unsurprisingly, a high proportion of respondents (67%) would ideally like to own their home in the future with a further 22.7% are considering owning with a mortgage.

Figure 15 (below) illustrates the proportion of all responses, noting that while 'living in a share house' was provided as an option, no respondents select this as their ideal future home ownership or rental arrangement.

Of all respondents, 13.9% indicated that their current tenure arrangement was renting from a private landlord or real estate agent. In terms of future ideal tenure arrangement, there was a significant decrease (-11.7%) of respondents wanting this type of tenure.

Figure 15: Future ideal tenure arrangement [n=413]



> *"It's very difficult for younger residents to find and keep affordable accommodation. Increase in purchase price puts others off buying or they struggle with their payments. My son is going to be rent increased out of his current premises and won't be able to afford anything else but to come back home. It shouldn't be this hard."*
>
> ***- Survey respondent***

Q. Which of the following considerations do you think should be a priority when it comes to the planning of future housing for the Mid-Western LGA? *[Choose up to 3 options provided]*

Total responses = 1103

Providing diversity housing, both in terms of type and size was the most common planing priority/ consideration selected (177 responses), with almost half of survey respondents (43%) selecting this as one of their three planning priorities.

Supporting greater affordability (154 responses) was the second most common option selected, with just over one-third (37%) of survey respondents identifying this as one of their three planning priorities for housing.

Figure 16 (right) illustrates the proportion of total responses (1103) for each of the planning priority options. This provides a greater understanding as to what the community consider important when planning for housing in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

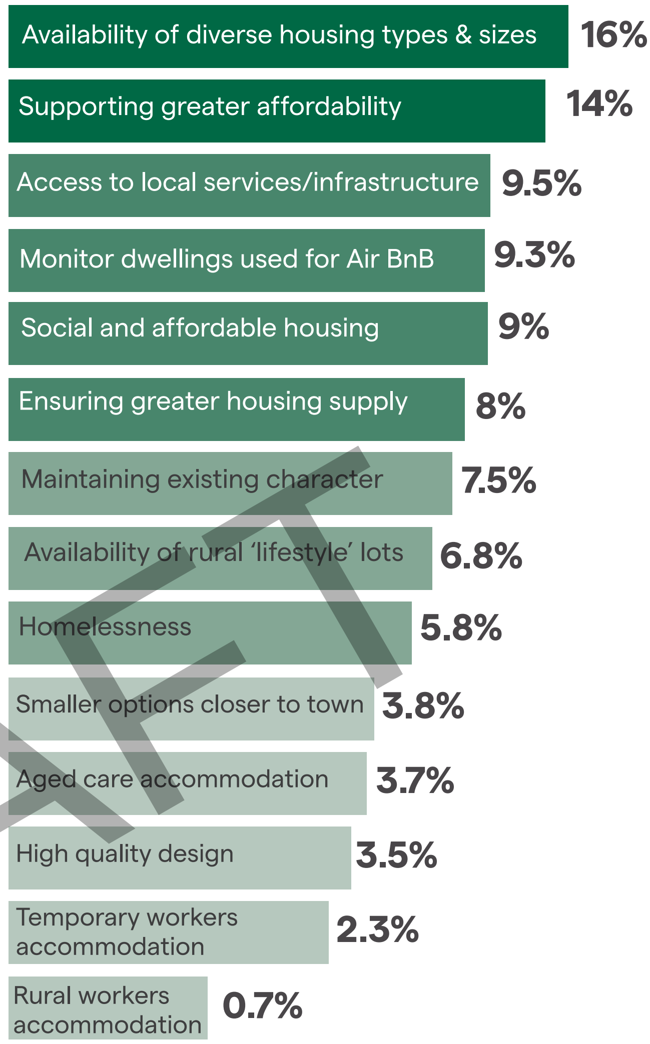


Figure 16: Planning priorities for future housing [n=1103]

"We need to look at higher density housing so all the lovely land around Mudgee doesn't become an ugly sprawl. People should have the option of small houses. Duplexes semis, units. Too much emphasis on large freestanding houses. It's not sustainable. Reduce size of dwellings. Increase density close to town. Make smaller dwellings that are more affordable."

- Survey respondent

"In the teacher shortage crisis we are in it is difficult to get teachers to come to Mudgee because of the cost and availability of houses in mudgee."

- Survey respondent

"Protection of agricultural lands needs to occur when considering housing strategy options, along with infrastructure and asset supply. Higher density living within the main town and villages is important in protecting the vibrancy of the towns without impacting on the commercial land supply."

- Survey respondent

Q. Additional comments

Survey participants were provided the opportunity to provide additional comments, ideas and insights to inform the preparation of the draft Strategy. Not all survey respondents offered additional feedback, however the common themes aligned to those that emerging in previous questions such as:

- General cost of living concerns
- **The high cost/unaffordability of rental housing in the LGA, particularly with a high proportion of properties priced higher due to being furnished.**
- **Desire for larger blocks of land for small farming activities and lifestyle.**
- Rural character of the LGA is important to maintain/protection of agricultural productive land.
- Consideration for higher density development around town to protect natural and agricultural lands from sprawl.
- **Council facilitating affordable housing development on unused sites.**
- More social and affordable housing as well as temporary accommodation for people experiencing homelessness and family breakdown.
- Concerns with the amount and anecdotal increase of short term rental accommodation in the LGA.
- Concerns with the increased pressure on existing services and infrastructure with additional residents
- Need for more essential/keys workers (ie. doctors, teachers etc) and housing to attract and support them to come to the LGA.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of approval processes to support future housing development
- Impact (both positive and negative) of the energy and mining industry on local economy and the temporary workers on rental cost and availability.

Photo Source: Mid-Western Regional Council

"Need more hobby sized blocks on nice land ie not rocky outcrops or dense bush. Need larger blocks around gulgong and Mudgee turned into 25 acre sized blocks where we can actually run a few animals and horses"

- Survey respondent

"Most houses in the current rental market are being rented fully furnished, a family can not afford to pay $1200 plus on a week's rent and live, these houses are currently being marketed at the solar farm workers, this is pricing the locals out of the rental market, what happens when these workers pack up and move onto the next job ."

- Survey respondent

Workshops & Stakeholder Discussions

A total of 8x 1hr semi-structured interviews were undertaken with key stakeholders representing a range of local service providers, organisations, including the Mudgee Local Aboriginal Land Council, development sector, energy and mining industries and key workers.

These discussions helped provide a greater understanding of key issues and opportunities from the perspective of targeted sectors in the housing industry, social service providers, mining and energy sector and local key workers.

The interviews aimed to:

- Gain specific understanding and insights that could guide the project team on focus areas for the preparation of the draft Housing Strategy in relation to the various key sectors and community cohorts with the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.
- Ensure that specific housing needs, experiences and outcomes required to support particular sectors or groups within the community would be discussed as part of this work.
- Communicate and encourage input and involvement in the engagement activities.

Between 27 and 30 August 2024, 4x 2hr in person workshops were held. A total of 20 local people participated in the workshops, representing the community housing and social services sector, development industry and local business representatives, industry representatives and local community groups.

A specific workshop was also held for local residents under the age of 30 years of age to ensure that the voice of young people within the LGA was part of this engagement and to better understand their concerns and needs for housing in the future.

Across the workshop and interview discussions, consistent themes/issues emerged. The table below provides a summary of the issues raised and any feedback, ideas and/or insights also provided through discussions.

Key issue/Themes	Stakeholder Inputs and Insights
Current housing situation in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA is considered expensive and unaffordable for many people	• Numerous stakeholders commented that the high price of housing unfairly punishes those who are younger or less wealthy. • Some expressed the viewpoint that a lot of the demand for rentals is driven by significant development projects (mines and renewable projects) in the region which is competing directly with other housing demands (tourism, rental market etc) and increases the cost of housing. • One suggestion was to explore the potential for large scale employers / projects in the region to provide housing, which could have a significantly positive impact. However concerns were expressed around the quality of this housing and where it would be fit for purpose or create unintended social Issues. • All discussed raised the possibility of local organisations, service providers and industry collaborating each other and with Council and the NSW Government to deliver housing / address housing shortages. • Many suggested that increased supply of smaller 1 to 2 bedroom dwellings which would cater to small families and single person households as well as likely be a more affordable housing type. • Young people described the current housing situation as being 'unaffordable', 'expensive', 'limited', 'challenging' or 'difficult'. This experience was also shared by community service providers, however the broader community and business representatives felt that it was 'affordable', though noted that this may not be the case for many others. • Young people also noted that living independent is very difficult and people often have to share housing, sometimes bedrooms because of the cost and difficulty of securing housing.

Lack of housing diversity - both type and cost - within the LGA.	• Existing housing stock is not suitable for the broad spectrum of clients according to community service providers. • Most stakeholders described the existing housing supply largely consisting of 3+ bedroom houses. There was also a consistent view that the smaller types of housing that are available are old and poor quality. • Industry representatives noted that there isn't a significant amount of diversity in the range of housing available in the region with the majority of housing consisting of detached homes that in many cases for their employees get occupied by multiple single people. • Industry representatives were open to work with Council to consider opportunities for housing delivery and working with Council to consider sites within the LGA but most noted that this is often challenging due to planning requirements and approach/ definition of temporary workers accommodation. • For young people, the acceptance of more dense typologies, requires communal green and social spaces and being located close to existing social infrastructure such as parks. • Suggested that Council's planning controls should be reviewed and updated to be more innovative and to encourage more affordable typologies such as townhouses. It was suggested by multiple stakeholders that the current controls make it hard for more dense forms of residential development to be achieved and there needs to be more flexibility for multi unit dwellings (ie. Minimum street frontage, private open space and lot size requirements). • Also suggested that the planning pathways for secondary dwellings or alternative affordable housing options is quite rigid and revisiting the current LEP and DCP controls could yield some positive changes to housing in the future. • Suggested that higher density accommodation could be located in town and within walking distance to key services/amenities, but that this shouldn't compromise the viability of the centre itself.
Finding rental accommodation is primary through word of mouth and success depends on who you know in the area	• Numerous stakeholders commented that word-of-mouth referrals were needed to get into the housing market with formal channels particularly difficult for younger, single and/or lower income people. • Property industry representatives also agreed that "owners have the luxury of choice which can result in bias against certain groups of people". One of these groups included temporary workers, particular those working on the local solar projects. • The local community housing provider has recently taken on a direct 'tenant management' type of role with local property owners to minimise the risk of their clients being evicted or not being offered longer term rental tenures. • Strong concerns were raised about low income people receiving fair and equitable treatment through real estate and other property services.
Limited housing availability and high housing costs impacts on attracting employees, especially essential workers such as teachers.	• Several small to medium scale employers raised concerns about the availability of affordable housing for their employees. • Local community housing providers expressed a willingness to work with large employers or others to look at multi-faceted delivery of housing for workers and people on lower incomes. • It was shared by 3 different stakeholders that there continue to be situations where teachers had turned down a job at Mudgee High School as they couldn't find reasonable accommodation. It was reported that recently one prospective teacher decided to not commence employment as "the cost of renting in Sydney (Hunters Hill) was cheaper than what was available in Mudgee". • A lack of affordable housing options not only impacts attracting teaching staff but also in being able to get support staff. • A successful program identified was a campaign by energy projects called 'room to share' to encourage people to refurbish or rent out farm buildings or similar spaces that were unutilised in response to concerns about adequate supply of accommodation for workers.

While tourist accommodation is considered important for the local area, the impacts of short term rentals are concerning.	• The perception of most stakeholders is that there has been a significant growth in number of Short Term Rental Accommodation such as AirBnB to the point where people simply can't get into the market or that long term rental accommodation doesn't offer the same economic benefits. • One suggestion was that there should not be a limit on short term accommodation as it is critical for the delivery of mines and renewable projects but this shouldn't be at the expense of access to rentals for community / other industries. • It was noted that some industry contractors have booked out entire motels / hotels for staff which has created challenges for tourism.
The negative social and economic impacts relating to housing are increasing.	• New housing must be supported by adequate infrastructure was a consistent comment across the discussions. • Limited access to housing also contributes to other social/mental health issues. • Housing Is a critical service that when not accessed drives extremely poor outcomes for people. • Service providers identified that there has been a large growth in demand for homeless services. This is potentially due to cost of living crisis combined with a significant growth in number of tourists / AirBnBs which removes rental houses from the market. • There is limited access to services within the broader region, with only one provider for crisis housing for domestic violence. • There are no Aboriginal Housing Office properties within the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA. It was reported by stakeholders that Mid-Western Regional Council LGA, that they are aware of, is not considered a priority area by NSW Government for Aboriginal housing in comparison to nearby places like Dubbo and Orange. • A group identified as not currently getting the needed access to housing are women / children escaping violence and young people who are unable to afford private market housing but earn enough to not receive government assistance (1st /2nd year apprentices). • Community housing providers and community service providers identified the shortage of social housing / affordable housing and note that there is no broader government funding that they are aware of which would be able to deliver new low-cost housing in the area. • A representative from the tourism industry noted that the shortage of affordable housing is limiting the potential growth of tourism in the broader region. More specifically access to affordable housing for employees of tourism related service Industries. • It was discussed that many young people and people on low incomes feel insecure in their housing and find the lack of security tenure stressful. • Suggestion for the provision of emergency accommodation within Mudgee - currently the only accommodation is in Kandos which has limited accessibility to the broader community and is too far from those who would need to access. This distance issue also then separates them from potential support networks.

Economic Think Tank

The Planning Studio attended the Mid-Western Regional Council's annual Economic Think Tank on Monday 23 May 2024.

This annual event of invited business and community leaders, business owners and industry representatives provided the opportunity to inform them about the planned engagement program to support the preparation of the Strategy and gain early insights into the local challenges and opportunities to be explored through the various engagement conversations.

Questions asked of participants included:

- What are the drivers (social, cultural, economic and environmental) influencing housing in and outside of the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA?
- What are the challenges/issues specific to our organisation in regards to **housing availability**?
- What are the challenges/issues specific to our organisation in regards to **housing affordability**?
- What are the challenges/issues specific to our organisation in regards to **housing delivery**?
- What are the opportunities, issues and influences that you think need to be explored/considered in the preparation of the Mid-Western Regional Housing Strategy?

The table below provides a summary of responses to the specific questions posed as well as the general comments made during the discussion at the Think Tank about housing in the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

DRAFT

Question Posed	Participant Responses
Drivers influencing housing in and outside of the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.	• Major projects such as solar and wind projects. • Renewable energy development, mining development • Tourism - Gulgong is really popular to tourists • Having economic ability to purchase or rent property • Employment and housing affordability are the biggest issues for Rylstone.
Housing availability challenges and issues.	• Lack of available houses for sale and rent • Availability and cost of housing for potential employees • Lack of size (ie. 1-2 bedrooms) • Location and available land to subdivide • High rents affect chose of people that businesses can employ. • Housing availability effects business viability • Attracting employees to the region • The fluctuating demand for rental accommodation with the scale and volume of projects in the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) area and how to effectively plan and provide for this. • Impacting on the delivery of social services in the area, such as health and education, when can't attract new staff and existing professional staff greater demand with ageing population. • Some employers are own residential accommodation specific for their employees, especially those industries that have a temporary and transient workforce. • Challenge is to attract the people to the region - especially for any specialised roles such as environmental scientists and mining engineers.

Question Posed	Participant Responses
Housing affordability challenges and issues.	• Providing affordable houses • Tenants are forced out of the area • No different to the rest of the country • We don't have the capacity to do much about affordability. Private developers need to get involved and help. • Other mining regions are more affordable which make those areas (and jobs) more attractive. • Can attract new GPs to the clinic but housing is the issue • People in hospitality on minimum wage who have been priced out.
Housing delivery challenges and issues.	• Keeping vendors/landlords happy with yields/returns • Keeping tenants in the area • Average price doesn't reflect state wide awards (wages) for workers. • Availability of building materials, builders, tradespeople • Challenge is the availability of the trades which will only get more challenging • State and local government planning rules and processes. • Want to see more collaboration from council - *"taking up to 6 months to turn around simple DA consents"*. • Shortage of accommodation, both rent and purchase. • Land owners not wanting to subdivide. • Land around Rylstone is land locked resulting in the restriction of growth • Availability of childcare. • Feasibility for developers is challenging - but this is also Australia wide. • To attract teachers to the area-families typology significant sized house to accommodate.
Opportunities, issues and influences to explore/consider in the preparation of the Strategy.	• Renewable energy offers opportunities. • Social issues/health and education in Gulgong district always needs attention. • Steady release of available residential land rather than the lack of steady flow. • Look at other areas, not just west. • More land releases - both commercial and residential • Abandoned vineyards cant afford or waiting for subdivision opportunity. Map and identify where they are. • One of the mines is going to be building 56 homes locally [company not disclosed] • SSDs should have to have a certain % that they spend locally. • Industry purchasing motels - for example 4 motels in Dubbo have gone to industry to cater for their key workers. • Strength of the tourist market here. Increase in the STRA by 20% of accommodation to $120 more than Orange per night. Reflecting that consumer behavior changes and therefore the fabric has change.

Drop In Feedback Sessions

A total of 5x 2-3hr Drop-In Sessions were held from Thursday 17 October to Saturday 19 October 2024. The Drop-In Sessions were held in the four main towns and village centres of the LGA - Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos.

Across the five sessions, a total of 138 people 'dropped in' and provided their feedback and insights to inform the finalisation of the draft Mid-Western Regional Housing Strategy.

The purpose of the drop in sessions was to test the draft objectives/strategic directions that had been informed by the stage 1 engagement as well as continuing key points of discussion about housing typology and housing affordability.

Through these conversations, various options and ideas about how Council can contribute to the future availability, affordability and delivery of housing which also responds to the local context of each centres and their surrounding areas were also explored.

Conservations at the drop in sessions were structured around the design of three engagement boards (see Appendix 2). The responses to the questions posed on the boards and analysis of findings across all sessions is summarised on the following pages.

Photo Source: Mid-Western Regional Council

Overall, the Mid-Western community's priorities for the delivery of future housing include:

- Ensuring sufficient housing supply.
- Provide a diverse range of housing options.
- Delivering accessible and affordable housing.
- Protecting local heritage values.
- Supporting tourism and visitor offer.

The community priorities identified in the list above were consistent across the four centres. However, participants at the Mudgee, Rylstone and Kandos drop-in sessions, identified a priority that was unique to this location and not prioritised at the other locations.

Below is the top 2-3 priorities by drop-in location, with is also illustrated in the graphic over the page. (Page 26)

For **Mudgee** the strategic priorities were for:

- Sufficient housing supply.
- Accessible and affordable housing.
- Providing diverse housing options.
- Providing secure and inclusive housing for key workers.

For **Gulgong** the strategic priorities were for:

- Accessible and affordable housing,
- Protecting local heritage values.

For **Rylstone** the strategic priorities were for:

- Accessible and affordable housing.
- Providing diverse housing options.
- Design and delivery of sustainable and efficient housing and places.

For **Kandos** the strategic priorities were for:

- Supporting tourism and visitor offerings.
- Protecting local heritage values.
- Build on the strengths and unique lifestyle qualities of the lively small towns and villages.

	GULGONG	KANDOS	RYLSTONE	MUDGEE
Objective 1: Ensure delivery of sufficient housing supply for our growing population.	11%	11%	11%	20%
Objective 2: Investigate appropriate forms of housing infill in suitable locations.	6%	5%	4%	5%
Objective 3: Provide a diverse range of housing options to cater to our community's needs.	11%	5%	18%	13%
Objective 4: Deliver accessible and affordable housing.	14%	8%	18%	19%
Objective 5: Support the wellbeing of our community by ensuring the provision of secure and inclusive housing for key workers.	11%	5%	4%	13%
Objective 6: Design and deliver sustainable and efficient housing and places.	9%	8%	14%	6%
Objective 7: Build on the strengths & unique lifestyle qualities of the lively small towns & villages.	3%	16%	7%	5%
Objective 8: Protect and preserve the LGA's rich heritage values.	14%	18%	7%	9%
Objective 9: Continue to support attractive tourist and visitor offerings.	11%	21%	11%	5%
Objective 10: Facilitate effective housing solutions to support essential industry needs.	9%	3%	7%	6%
	35 Responses	38 Responses	28 Responses	80 Responses

Preferred housing typologies for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Based on the previous engagement discussions, a range of different housing typologies were presented to the community.

For the four individual locations, the community were asked to identify the two housing types that were appropriate and responded to community needs.

The following provides an analysis of the results by location.

For **Mudgee** the preferred housing types considered appropriate by most participants and that respond to community needs were:

- Single house [Standard 600m²-200m²]
- Dual Occupancy
- Large lot / rural residential [2ha+]

Unlike the other locations, there was support for the majority of the more dense forms of residential development, including 2-3 storey units.

For **Gulgong** the preferred housing types considered appropriate by most participants and that respond to community needs were:

- Single house [Standard 600m²-200m²]
- Dual Occupancy

Similar to participants in Mudgee, there was support for large lot/rural residential in Gulgong alongside the majority of the more dense forms of residential development, including 2-3 storey units.

For **Rylstone** the preferred housing types considered appropriate by most participants and that respond to community needs were:

- Single house [Standard 600m²-200m²]
- Large lot / rural residential [2ha+]

In terms of more dense housing typologies, there was support or shop top housing in Rylstone, but none for townhouses and terraces or units/apartments style of housing.

Single house [small lot]

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	3	0
Kandos	5	0
Rylstone	7	0
Mudgee	10	1

Single house [standard lot]

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	11	0
Kandos	10	0
Rylstone	11	1
Mudgee	20	1

Dual occupancy or Duplex

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	11	0
Kandos	6	0
Rylstone	3	0
Mudgee	14	0

Large lot / Rural Residential

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	5	2
Kandos	0	0
Rylstone	7	0
Mudgee	14	2

Terrace housing

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	3	0
Kandos	2	1
Rylstone	0	0
Mudgee	6	2

For **Kandos** the preferred housing types considered appropriate by most participants and respond to community needs were:

- Single house [Standard 600m2-200m2]
- Dual Occupancy

Unlike the other locations, no participant chose large lot/rural residential as an appropriate or needed form of residential development in the area.

Shop-top housing was also not chosen by any participants as well as either unit/apartment type of housing. Townhouse and terrace typologies were identified by some participants for this location.

Unit/apartment housing typologies were considered not appropriate for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Across all community drop in locations, 4+storey unit typology was strongly rejected as being appropriate and needed form of housing. Participants in all locations, overwhelmingly did not support this type of housing for their location.

In contrast to the other locations, participants at the Rylstone drop in session indicated that they don't support the 2-3 storey unit/apartment housing typology in this location. Whereas, there was some support for this more dense housing typology in Mudgee and Gulgong.

Townhouses

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	3	0
Kandos	2	1
Rylstone	0	0
Mudgee	8	2

Shop-top housing

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	2	0
Kandos	0	1
Rylstone	4	1
Mudgee	8	1

2-3 storey units

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	3	1
Kandos	0	1
Rylstone	0	4
Mudgee	6	1

4+ storey units

	Support	Don't Support
Gulgong	1	10
Kandos	0	10
Rylstone	0	7
Mudgee	2	29

Drop In findings support other engagement findings that people feel the Mid-Western Regional LGA is unaffordable.

Community drop-in participants were asked to rate their perspectives about the availability of affordable rental accommodation and the ease they feel it is for most people to buy a house.

Figure 17 (below) reconfirms the findings of the online survey and the discussions with local stakeholders that there are not many affordable options available to rent and for most people, it is hard or out of reach to buy a house in the LGA.

Practical approaches and design attributes offered that would contribute to improving housing availability and affordability in the LGA.

Community drop-in participants were asked to provide their ideas and insights as to the approaches that Council could take to increase availability and affordability in the LGA. The question also asked about the design attributes, or 'trade offs' that would also contribute to achieving this community expectation.

The table on page 30 provides a summary of the ideas shared at the community drop in sessions.

Figure 17: Perceptions of availability and affordability

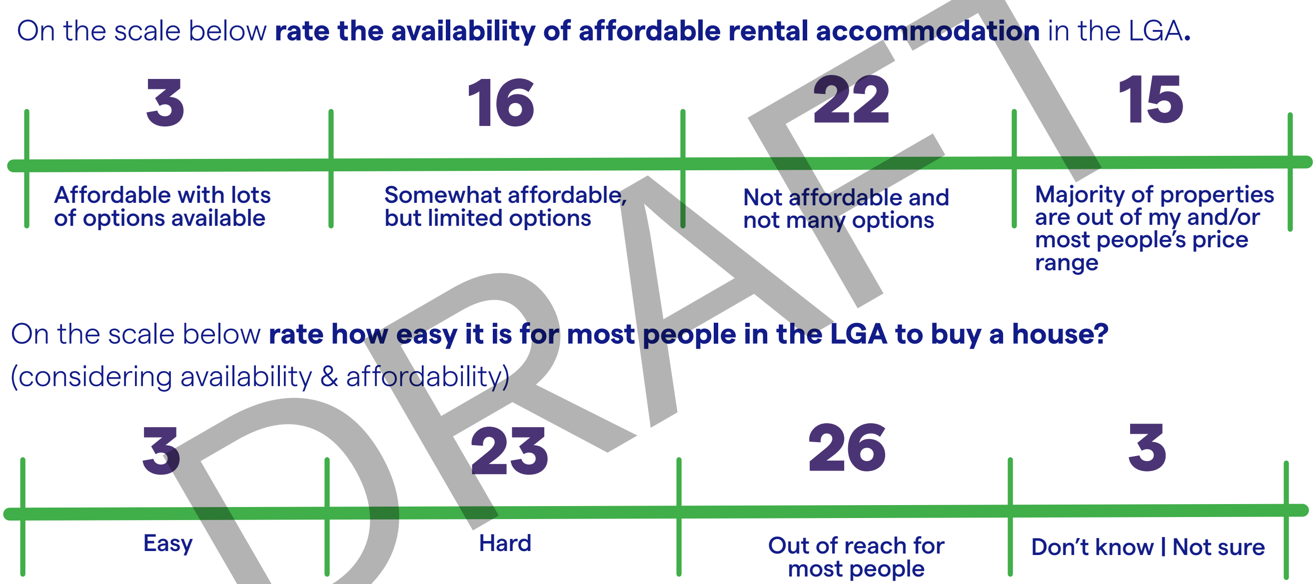


Photo Source: Mid-Western Regional Council

Key issue/Themes	Community inputs and Insights
More housing must be supported by adequate infrastructure	• More housing resulting in a greater population requires additional facilities ie. medical and dental services • Use workers accommodation to leverage development of infrastructure • Existing infrastructure (transport, schools) is not sufficient • Public schools can't find teachers due to housing • Improved infrastructure before planning more housing
Housing for key/essential workers	• Department of Education and Department of Health should incentivise housing in the region • More doctors accommodation needs to be subsidised
Impacts of short term accommodation	• "Seems many houses are being used for short term accommodation which creates a shortage of rentals. I feel many houses in Kandos are sitting empty which could be used for rentals" • Suggest monitoring AirBnB to ensure rentals are available for locals
Need for and impacts of temporary workers housing	• Village Green Ulan good example of workers accommodation • Employers are finding temporary accommodation for their staff due to tight market.
Alternative housing opportunities	• Many houses are empty in Kandos as are shops - if occupied perhaps no more housing would be required. • Temporary housing in vacant commercial properties
Important to retain specific design and character attributes	• [The] Idea of terraces are good but the design is really important • Vegetation in new growth areas • Room to grow vegetables is important • Repurposing of heritage buildings into liveable apartments that don't damage the heritage streetscape • Compact versatile housing, small garden and functional or share a common park/garden area • Small lot as long as there is area for deep soil planting. Footprint needs to accommodate space for shade • Limiting development on higher elevations, visually sensitive land protected • Housing that doesn't impact on the agricultural or 'food-table' lands.

Conclusion

Engagement activities undertaken to inform the preparation of the Mid-Western Regional Housing Strategy were successful in gaining the perspectives, insights and experiences of a cross section of the Mid-Western Regional community.

Discussions explored the issues and opportunities associated with housing availability, affordability and delivery. Perspectives were gained from a range of different stakeholders including from development industry experts, local business and community service providers, young people, local Aboriginal peoples and the residents of the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

Using a range of engagement methods, various opportunities were provided for people to respond to issues identified through the background work to inform the development of the draft Strategy.

What has resulted from the engagement is substantial qualitative and quantitative evidence (as outlined throughout this report) that confirms the strategic objectives developed for the Strategy.

The engagement importantly gave voice to a broader range of people and created a space for participants to share their experience and expectations.

Photo Source: Mid-Western Regional Council

As outlined in this report, the key themes/ expectations of the community include:

- Housing affordability is a significant issue for the Mid-Western Regional Council area and is already contributing to negative social and economic impacts for the community and area.
- Increased diversity of housing typologies would contribute to the availability of more affordable housing options. Despite this, the preference is still for single dwellings on standard lots and larger lot rural residential housing typologies.
- Young people and people on low to medium incomes are disproportionally impacted because of increasing housing cost, a limited private rental market and limited availability of social and affordable housing options.
- Recognition that terraces, townhouses, shop-top housing and low scale unit/apartments could be appropriate and needed but only in specific locations, such as Mudgee and Gulgong.
- Increased number and/or density of housing should not impact on the rural and heritage character of the LGA or the viability of existing towns and village centres.
- The development of more dense housing typologies requires communal green and social spaces and being located close to existing social infrastructure to be appropriate to the character of the area and accepted by the community.

The development of the draft Housing Strategy is able to consider the many issues raised as well as the possible solutions suggested throughout engagement and provide advice on recommended policy interventions that acknowledge and respond appropriately to these concerns.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Online Survey Questions

Appendix 2: Community Drop In Activity Boards

Appendix 3: Community Drop In Information Sheet and Feedback Form

Appendix 4: Engagement Communications Collateral

Appendix 1
Online Survey Questions

1. **Tell us about yourself. I am:**
   (Select all that apply)
   a. A renter in the Mid-Western LGA
   b. I am an owner occupier in the Mid-Western LGA
   c. I am a property investor in the Mid-Western LGA
   d. I am looking to move to the Mid-Western LGA
   e. Other (please describe) ...

2. **In which area do you currently live?**
   (Select 1 option)
   a. List of Mid-Western main towns and villages provided
   b. Rural
   c. Outside LGA
   d. Other

3. **What is your age group** *(Select 1 option)*
   a. Under 18
   b. 18-24
   c. 25-34
   d. 35-44
   e. 45-54
   f. 55-64
   g. 65-74
   h. 75+

4. **What type of dwelling/house do you currently live in?** *(Select 1 option)*
   a. A detached house on a block of land
      - *Block of land measuring 300m²-450m²*
      - *Block of land measuring 451m²-599m²*
      - *Block of land measuring 600m²-1999m²*
      - *Block of land measuring 2000m²-3999m²*
      - *Block of land measuring 4000m²-1.99ha*
      - *Block of land measuring 2ha+*
      - *Block of land measuring 10ha+*
      - *Block of land measuring 20ha+*

   b. Attached duplex or dual occupancy (two dwellings with common wall)
   c. Attached multi-dwelling housing (four or more dwellings with a common walls)
   d. A unit or apartment
   e. A granny flat/secondary dwelling
   f. A boarding house or group home
   g. A lifestyle/retirement village or aged care home
   h. Caravan/mobile home/tiny home
   i. Other (please describe)

5. **Length of residence in current home**
   (Select 1 option)
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1-3 years
   c. 4-6 years
   d. 7-10 years
   e. More than 10 years
   f. Not currently a resident

6. **Which of the following best describes your current household?** *(Select 1 option)*
   a. Single person, no children
   b. Single person living with children
   c. Couple living together without children
   d. Couple living together with children
   e. Blended family / extended family (living with persons such as grandparents, your sibling or adult children)
   f. Shared or group household (living with unrelated persons such as friends)
   g. Prefer not to answer
   h. Other (please describe)

7. **What is the current tenure arrangement of the home you are currently living in?**
   a. Owned with a mortgage
   b. Owned Outright
   c. Renting from a private landlord or real estate agent
   d. Renting from a state or community housing provider
   e. Living with parent(s)/ guardians
   f. Living in a lifestyle or retirement village
   g. Jointly own with friends/family or shared ownership
   h. I have no permanent accommodation
   i. Other (please describe)

8. **Given your current household situation, what are the top three challenges you face in living in your ideal home?** *(Select up to 3 options)*
   a. Availability of homes in the location or area I want
   b. Availability of homes in a price range I can afford
   c. Availability of the block of land size I want
   d. Availability of the type of house I want to live in
   e. Difficulties with health / need for help / am a carer
   f. Lack of savings
   g. Cost of building
   h. Insecurity in work / employment makes it difficult to plan
   i. Other

9. **Do you think housing (for rent or to buy) is affordable across the Mid-Western Regional Council area?**
   a. Yes
   b. No - If you answered no, what is your experience and/or reason for your answer? (open comment)

10. **How easy do you think it is currently to find a property in the Mid-Western Region that meets your needs?** *(Select 1 option)*
   a. Very easy
   b. Somewhat easy
   c. Neutral-not easy or hard
   d. Somewhat difficult
   e. Very difficult
   f. Feels impossible
   g. Unsure

11. **Thinking about 5-10 years from now, what would be the ideal type of home you would like to live in?** *(Select 1 option)*
   a. A detached house on a block of land
      - *Block of land measuring 300m^2-450m^2*
      - *Block of land measuring 451m^2-599m^2*
      - *Block of land measuring 600m^2-1999m^2*
      - *Block of land measuring 2000m^2-3999m^2*
      - *Block of land measuring 4000m^2-1.99ha*
      - *Block of land measuring 2ha+*
      - *Block of land measuring 10ha+*
      - *Block of land measuring 20ha+*
   b. Attached duplex or dual occupancy (two dwellings with common wall)
   c. Attached multi-dwelling housing (four or more dwellings with a common walls)
   d. A unit or apartment
   e. A granny flat/secondary dwelling
   f. A boarding house or group home
   g. A lifestyle/retirement village or aged care home
   h. Caravan/mobile home/tiny home
   i. Other (please describe)

12. **In the next 5-10 years, would you like to stay where you currently live?**
   a. Yes, I am happy living in my current area
   b. No - I would rather move to another area

If No, which area would you like to live in the future. [Same options from Q2 provided]

13. **If you were looking for a new home, what would be the main reasons that you would be looking?** *(Select up to 3 options)*
   a. Would like to buy my first home
   b. I currently rent and would like to buy my own home
   c. I've just moved into the area and looking for a property to rent
   d. I've just moved into the area and renting, while I look for a property to buy
   e. A property located in one of the town and village centres
   f. Somewhere close to work (that I can walk, ride or catch a bus)

g. Somewhere in walking distance to parks and schools
h. To upsize from my current property
i. A property that is smaller (ie. move from a single house to a unit or dual occupancy)
j. A property with less maintenance (ie. smaller lot size)
k. A rental property that is better maintained
l. A rental property that is a more appropriate size for my family/living circumstances
m. A rental property that is more affordable
n. A rental property with a more secure lease
o. Not looking
p. Other (please describe)

14. What top 3 features would be most important for your home to have? *(Select up to 3 options)*

a. Four or more bedrooms
b. Three bedrooms
c. Two or less bedrooms
d. Small (or no) outdoor area
e. Large outdoor yard
f. Garage or other car parking cover for two or more cars
g. Large storage shed for items like boat, sport or camping equipment, household items
h. Other (please describe)

15. In the next 5-10 years, what would be the ideal tenure arrangement of your home? *(Select 1 option)*

a. Mortgaged
b. Ownership
c. Renting from a private landlord or real estate agent
d. Renting from a state or community housing provider
e. Share housing
f. Living with parent(s)/ guardians
g. Living in a lifestyle or retirement village
h. Jointly own with friends/family or shared ownership/equity
i. No preference/Other (please describe) ...

16. Which of the following considerations do you think should be a priority when it comes to the planning of future housing for the Mid-Western LGA? *(Select up to 3 options)*

a. Availability of a range of housing size and types
b. Maintaining the existing character of the area/neighbourhood.
c. Providing smaller housing options/lots closer to town
d. High quality design
e. Access to local services and infrastructure (ie. buses, shops, libraries etc)
f. Supporting greater affordability
g. Homelessness
h. Social and affordable housing
i. Monitor the use of dwellings as Airbnb (including dual occupancy/duplex and multi-dwelling housing)
j. Availability of temporary worker's accommodation
k. Rural worker's dwellings
l. Availability of larger rural 'lifestyle' lots
m. Availability of aged care accommodation
n. Ensuring greater supply of housing
o. Other (please describe)

17. Please provide any further comments you might have to inform the preparation of the Strategy. *[Open question]*

Appendix 2

Community 'Drop-In' Activity Boards

Help write the

Housing Strategy

for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA

What do you think are the top 3 priorities to deliver housing for our communities?

pop your ●●● against the **objectives** you think are the **most important.**

Objective 1:
Ensure delivery of sufficient housing supply for our growing population.

Objective 2:
Investigate appropriate forms of housing infill in suitable locations.

Objective 3:
Provide a diverse range of housing options to cater to our community's needs.

Objective 4:
Deliver accessible and affordable housing.

Objective 5:
Support the wellbeing of our community by ensuring the provision of secure and inclusive housing for key workers.

Objective 6:
Design and deliver sustainable and efficient housing and places.

Objective 7:
Build on the strengths and unique lifestyle qualities of the LGA's lively small towns and villages.

Objective 8:
Protect and preserve the LGA's rich heritage values.

Objective 9:
Continue to support attractive tourist and visitor offerings.

Objective 10:
Facilitate effective housing solutions to support essential industry needs.

Mid-Western Regional Council

If you would like to know more about the project, go to Council's webpage at www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Help write the Housing Strategy

for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA

Select which of the following housing options are <u>needed and appropriate</u> for your town/village centre?

place your 🟢🟢 against **2 housing options below** that you think are **<u>most needed and appropriate</u>** to support your town/village.

place your 🔴 against **the 1 housing option below** that you think is **<u>not appropriate</u>** for your town/village centre.

Mid-Western Regional Council

If you would like to know more about the project, go to Council's webpage at www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Help write the
Housing Strategy
for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA

Current experience of housing affordability & availability and how to improve this in the LGA.

For the following two questions, place your sticky dots along the scale that reflects your perspectives. (1 dot per question)

1. On the scale below **rate the availability of affordable rental accommodation** in the LGA.

Affordable with lots of options available	Somewhat affordable, but limited options	Not affordable and not many options	Majority of properties are out of my and/or most people's price range

2. On the scale below, **rate how easy it is for most people in the LGA to buy a house?** *(considering availability & affordablity)*

Easy	Hard	Out of Reach for most people	I don't know/ Unsure

What practical approaches and design attributes do you think would contribute to improving housing availability and affordability in the LGA?

pop a post-it with your ideas here

For example:
Homes with a smaller garden or outdoor space

If you would like to know more about the project, go to Council's webpage at
www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 3

Community 'Drop-In' Information Sheet and Feedback Form

Mid-Western Regional Council
Housing Strategy
Information Sheet

What is the Mid-Western Housing Strategy?

Council is drafting the Mid-Western Housing Strategy to manage the supply of suitable and sustainable housing over the next 20 years. The Strategy will establish an evidence based framework for the supply of housing, that responds to the diverse needs of the Mid-Western community. It will identify current and future housing needs based on a range of factors including demographic trends, housing supply and demand, local land use opportunities and constraints and input from the engagement with our communities.

Why is a Housing Strategy needed?

This Strategy is an important decision making tool for Council. The region continues to experience significant demand on housing from the development of the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone, mining operations and people wanting to move into the region. This increasing and changing demand impacts on the availability and affordability of housing which in turn affects the ability of people within our community to easily rent or purchase a home or to attract needed workers (such as teachers, service industry workers) to support our local economy and community.

Key drivers influencing the population change in our LGA.

- Housing supply and affordability are issues facing all levels of government and local communities.
- How we plan for, design and deliver housing is impacted by the increasing occurrence of natural events such as flood and bushfire impacts.
- Stronger NSW Government policy positioning to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050 directly influences regional energy and resource industries. Subsequently there are changing housing needs associated with these industries. As the Mid-Western LGA is included within the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone, many of these energy and resource industries are located or looking to locate within our LGA.
- Continued evolving demand for housing in regional areas prompted by the COVID pandemic and changes in patterns of work.
- Changing community perspectives in housing choice, sustainability and lifestyle.

A potential snapshot of the Mid-Western population and housing.

25,713
IN 2021

Expected to grow by an additional **5,000 - 7,000** people by 2041

Between now and 2041 we need to build around **2,500** new homes

By 2041, Mid-Western will see...

40%	Increase in people living alone
29%	Increase in couples living in a single home
28%	Increase in families with children

Our future housing needs to suit our future population. We currently have...

90%	Separate house (85% are 3 or more bedrooms)
3%	Semi-Detached Townhouse
4%	Apartment

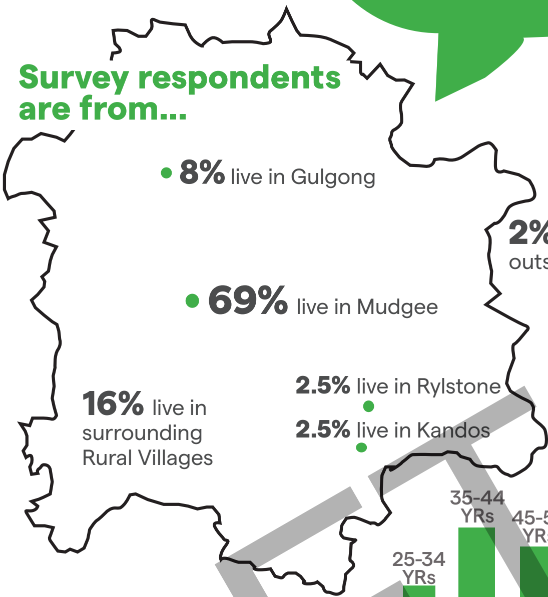
Mid-Western Regional Council

If you would like to know more about the project, go to Council's webpage at www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

What you have already told us..

440+
people have informed the Mid-Western Housing Strategy ... so far

Survey respondents are from...



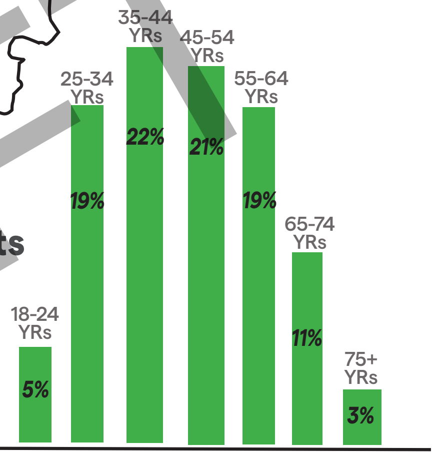
Engagement activities completed:

- Online Survey *(413 responses)*
- 8x Stakeholder Interviews
- 2x Industry Workshops
- 1x Community Workshop
- 1x Under 30s Community Workshop

81% of all survey respondents think housing (for rent or to buy) is **unaffordable** in the LGA.

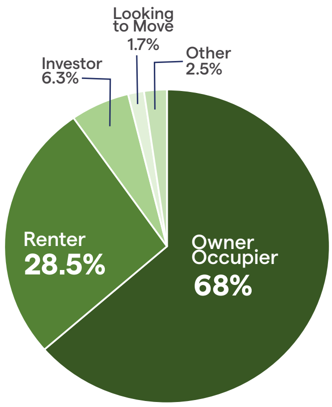
88% of respondents aged **under 35yrs** said they think housing (for rent or to buy) is **unaffordable** in the LGA.

Age of Survey Respondents



Top 3 challenges for people being able to live in an ideal home

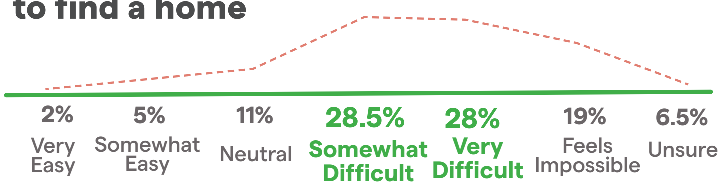
25%	**Availability of homes in a price range I can afford**
15.5%	**Cost of building**
13.5%	**Availability of homes in the location or area I want**
11.5%	**Lack of savings**
9.5%	Availability of desired land size
9.5%	Availability of the type of house I want to live in
7%	Difficulties with health / need for help / am a carer
5%	Other reasons (various)
5%	Insecurity in work / employment makes it difficult to plan



Length of Residence

- 12% | > 1yr
- 30% | 1 to 3yrs
- 20% | 4 to 6yrs
- 12% | 7-10yrs
- 26% | 10+yrs

How easy it feels for most people to find a home



Mid-Western Regional Council

Help write the
Housing Strategy
for the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA

Please provide any further insights and comments that you would like us to consider.

(Optional) To be kept up to date on the project, please provide your details below.

Name: ____________________

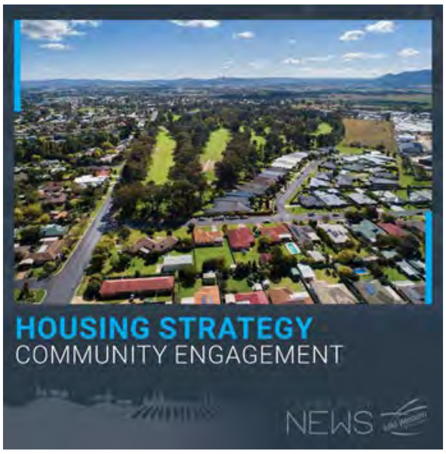
Email address or phone number: ____________________

Mid-Western Regional Council

If you would like to know more about the project, go to Council's webpage at www.midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 4
Engagement Communications Collateral

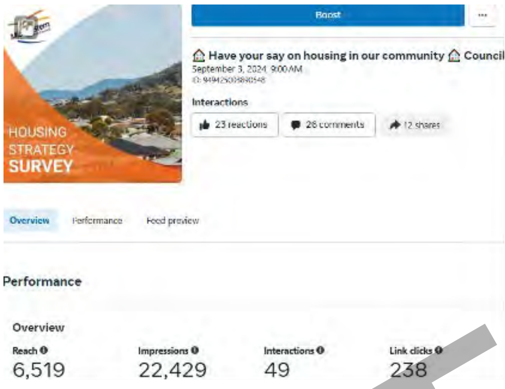
Social media tiles for survey and drop in sessions



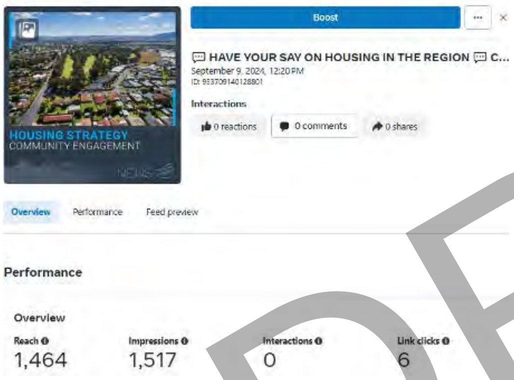
Engagement: Facebook Posts

Thursday, 22 August 2024: Survey

Thursday, 3 September 2024: Survey



Monday 9 September 2024: General

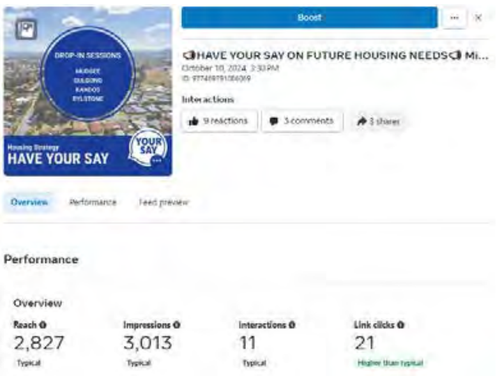


Monday 23 September 2024: Survey Reminder

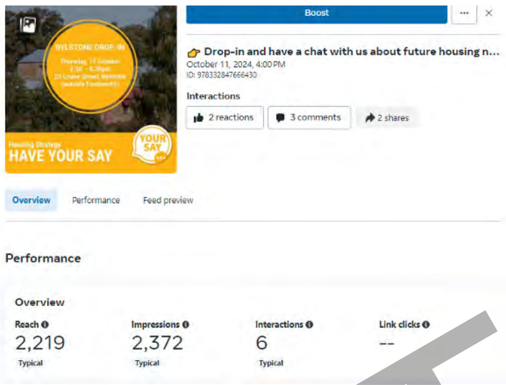
Thursday 19 September 2024: Survey

Engagement: Facebook Posts *cont.*

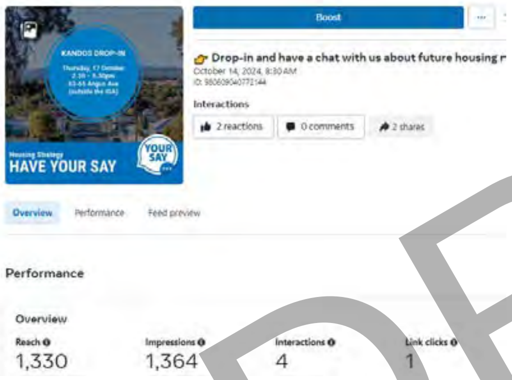
Thursday 10 October 2024: Drop Ins



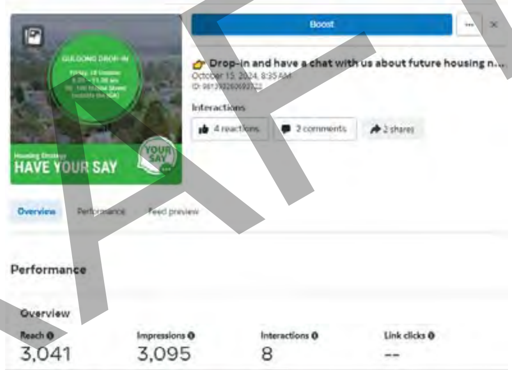
Friday 11 October 2024: Drop Ins



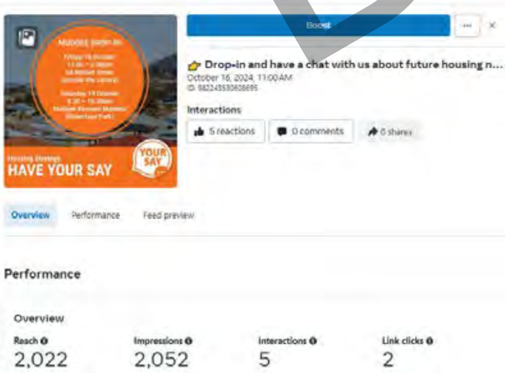
Monday 14 October 2024: Drop Ins



Tuesday 15 October 2024: Drop Ins



Wednesday 16 October 2024: Drop Ins



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