



Planning &  
Environment

2036

**South East  
and  
Tablelands**

**Regional  
Plan**

SOUTH EAST AND TABLELANDS REGIONAL PLAN 2036  
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ISBN 978-1-76039-661-9  
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Cover image: *Bushwalkers at Thredbo, courtesy of Thredbo Alpine Village*



# Foreword



The South East and Tablelands is renowned for its diverse landscapes that include an unspoilt coastline, green hinterlands, the spectacular high country of the Australian Alps, heritage towns and glorious countryside.

With Canberra providing access to world-class hospitality and cultural institutions, the region is an amazing place to live and visit.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* is our blueprint for the next two decades - reflecting community and stakeholder aspirations and opportunities for balanced growth, while protecting the region's amazing natural environment.

The Plan aims to leverage the region's significant infrastructure assets. The Port of Eden, Canberra Airport, strategic transport links, and access to other global gateways such as the ports of Melbourne, Port Kembla and Botany and Western Sydney Airport will drive a prosperous economic future.

The region's landscapes underpin innovative opportunities in tourism, renewable energy, aquaculture and agriculture. International flights into Canberra and cruise ships into Eden will bring more visitors to enjoy authentic natural and cultural experiences and food and wine trails.

Protecting diverse environments including wilderness areas, coastal lakes and estuaries and the Batemans Bay Marine Park is essential to the region's long-term sustainability and prosperity.

A range of housing options, especially in areas that share a border with the ACT, will support the growing population. Local housing strategies and high-quality urban environments will promote healthy communities.

The special connection to the ACT requires a close relationship with the ACT Government to seamlessly manage cross-border servicing, infrastructure provision, transport, freight networks and housing. The ACT and NSW Memorandum of Understanding formalises ongoing collaboration between the two governments to deliver outcomes for the broader Canberra region.

We recognise and acknowledge the traditional custodians across the South East and Tablelands. They are important partners in the economic, social and environmental future of the region and we will work in greater collaboration into the future.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* encompasses the vision, goals and actions that will deliver greater prosperity for those who live, work and visit the region.

I look forward to working with all our stakeholders to support the region's future.

**Anthony Roberts MP**

Minister for Planning  
Minister for Housing  
Special Minister of State



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# Introduction

## **The South East and Tablelands offers snow, surf and rural living with easy connections to Canberra and Sydney**

The population of the region is projected to increase by 45,450 people between 2016 and 2036, mainly in places within commuting distance of Canberra and Sydney, in the strategic centres and along the coast.<sup>1</sup>

The combined population of the local government areas within an hour's commute of the ACT, and the Territory's population itself, will increase to more than 660,000 by 2033 – a larger population than the Gold Coast today.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* represents a collaborative approach that closely integrates and aligns with the strategic planning for Canberra. This collaboration can unlock the enormous potential of a 'borderless region' – a place that will thrive regardless of State and Territory jurisdictions.

The Port of Eden and Canberra Airport will enhance access to national and international markets. More diverse tourism opportunities in the Snowy Mountains will strengthen long-term resilience.

This region faces an exciting future – and the *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* is the blueprint to deliver that future.

The Plan guides the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years. It is not intended to be a step-by-step approach to all land use planning. Rather, it is an overarching framework to guide more detailed land use plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions.

The Implementation Plan that accompanies this Plan includes a series of priority actions, and identifies medium- and longer-term actions to coincide with population and economic change.

The Local Government Narratives set out priorities for councils to guide further investigations and implementation.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* is the product of extensive consultation with councils, stakeholders and the wider community, following the release and exhibition of a draft Plan in 2016. The feedback from this consultation has been integral to this final Plan.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* provides the strategy necessary to deliver the vision for the region.

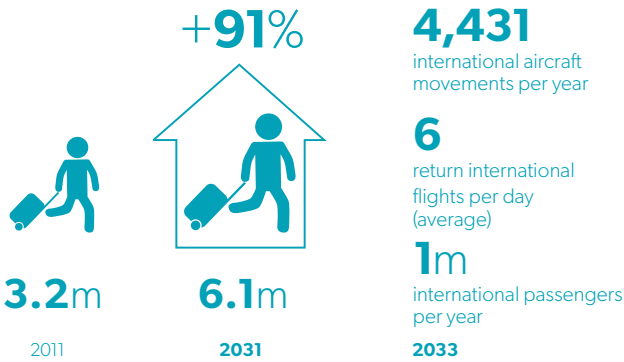
### **South East and Tablelands infrastructure investments**

The NSW Government is supporting the South East and Tablelands economy and communities through the following infrastructure investments:

- \$187 million for the South East Regional Hospital at Bega;
- \$120 million for the Goulburn Hospital redevelopment;
- \$44 million to extend the breakwater wharf at the Port of Eden;
- \$25 million for safety upgrades to the Kings Highway;
- \$50 million for the Queanbeyan bypass and Ellerton Drive extension; and
- \$50 million for the redevelopment of Bowral Hospital.

## Canberra Airport Passenger Movements

2011-2033



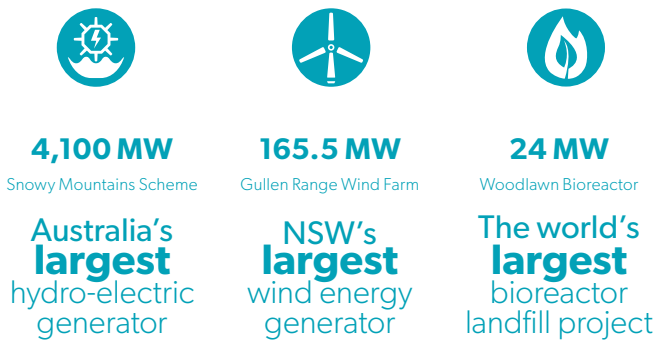
## Snowy Mountains Visitors

2016



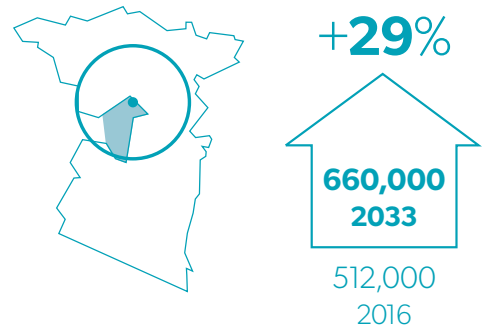
## Renewable Energy Sector

2011



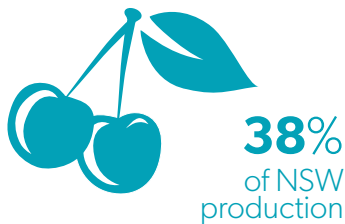
## Population within 1 hr of Canberra

2016-2033



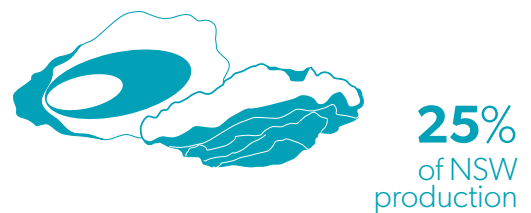
## Cherry Supply

2011



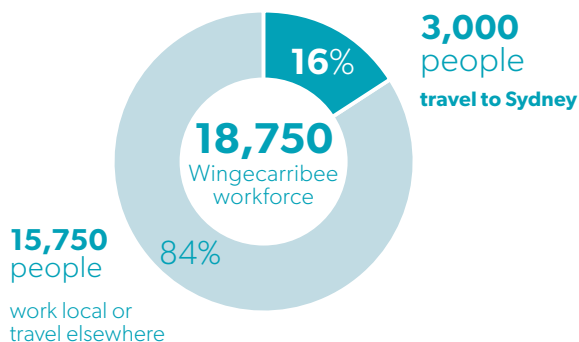
## South Coast Oyster Industry

2011



## Travel to Sydney for Employment

2011



## Travel to Canberra for Employment

2011



# Delivering the Plan

## The NSW Government's commitment



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

### Coordination

The NSW Government has established the South East and Tablelands Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee to deliver, coordinate and be accountable for achieving the vision and goals of the Plan (see Figure 1). This is a dedicated new body comprising representatives from the Canberra Region Joint Organisation and State agencies. It will listen to and work with stakeholders to make sure that growth is aligned with infrastructure and support growth and change in the region.

### Delivery

The Committee will take ownership for implementing this Plan – prioritising the actions needed to seize on immediate and emerging

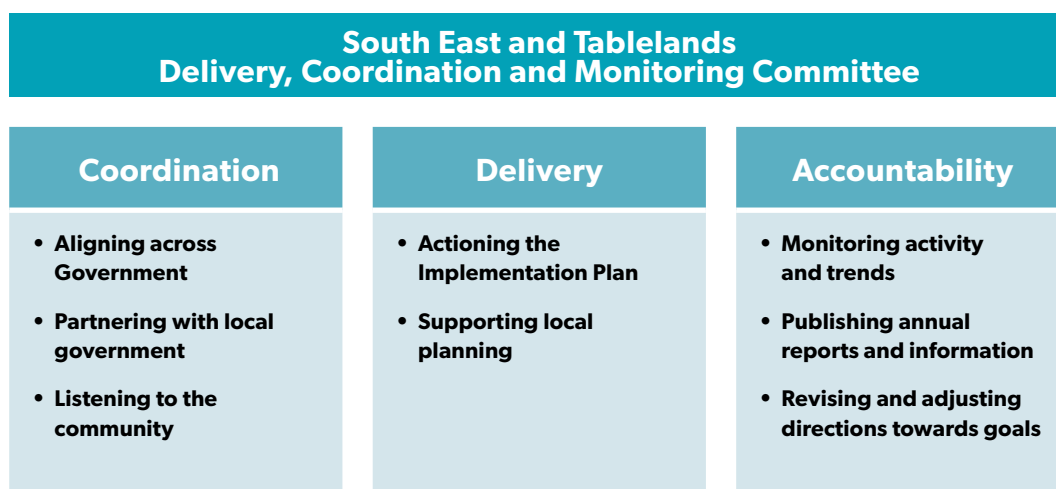
opportunities for the region. In the short term, its focus will be on coordinating infrastructure in a cross-border setting, supporting tourism opportunities and protecting important agricultural and environmental land. Over time, new priorities will be identified to support growth and change in the region.

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

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

An Implementation Plan for 2017-2019 accompanies this Plan.

Figure 1: **South East and Tablelands Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee**





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

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

The Local Government Narratives provide detailed guidance for each council. The Committee will support the preparation of local land use strategies that translate the vision and guiding principles of this Plan into more detailed priorities for growth and change that can be applied at the local level.

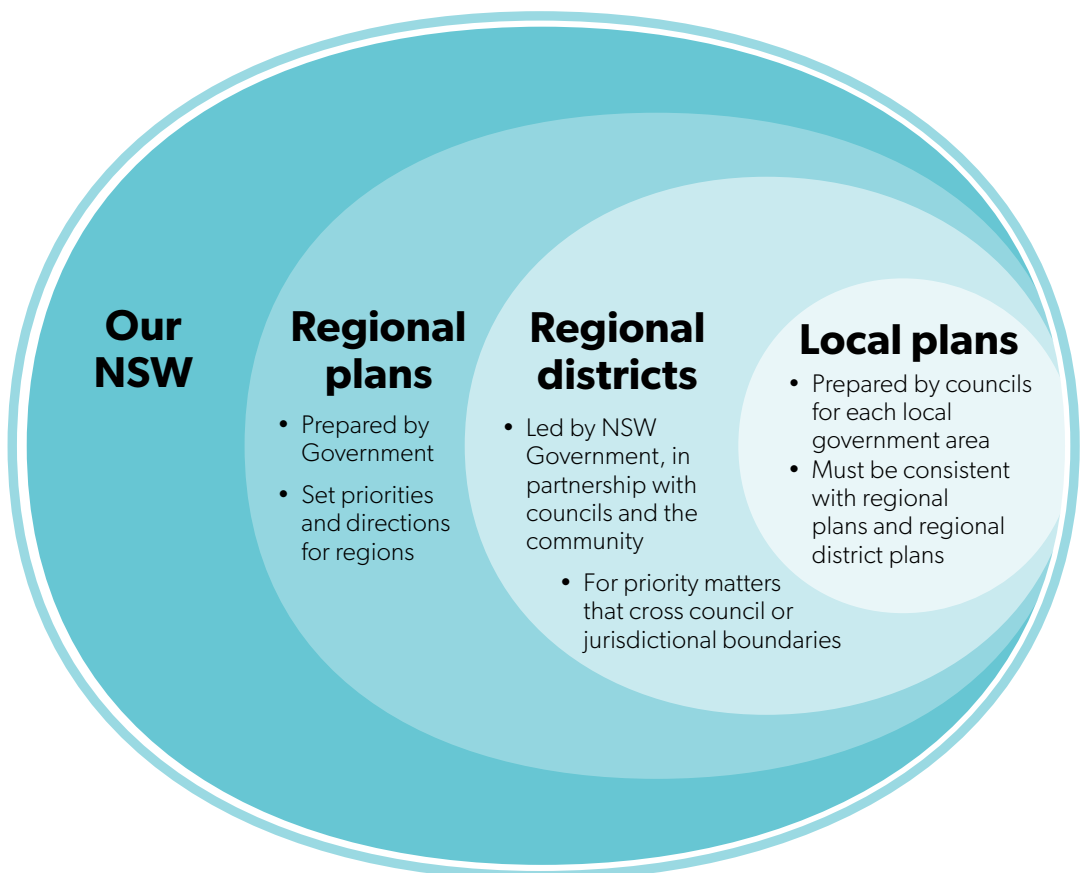
## **Accountability**

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

An annual report will be prepared that considers indicators for housing, employment, communities and the environment, as well as advice to government on the delivery of short-term actions.

Every five years, or as necessary, the Plan will be reviewed and adjusted to make sure the vision for 2036 is realised.

Figure 2: **State planning hierarchy**



# Vision



## ***A borderless region in Australia's most geographically diverse natural environment with the nation's capital at its heart***

In 2036, more than 320,000 people live in the South East and Tablelands, enjoying varied and distinct scenic landscapes from the highlands to the coast. Visitors seek out vibrant arts and cultural experiences, as well as year-round recreation and adventure activities.

The South East and Tablelands is part of a borderless region with Canberra as the Metropolitan City at its heart. Canberra Airport is the catalyst for diverse growth opportunities for farmers and agricultural producers, who supply markets across Asia. People from across the region access the jobs and services in the nation's capital. The integrated relationship between the ACT and the South East and Tablelands as a unified 'Canberra region' offers a stronger, growing economy within Australia's most geographically diverse natural environment.

Queanbeyan, Cooma, Young, Bega, Batemans Bay, Goulburn and Moss Vale leverage advances in information technology, creating smart work opportunities that connect people physically and digitally.

Tourism and agricultural exports are expanding through the region's strategic location and connections to global markets and metropolitan centres in Canberra, Western Sydney and the Illawarra. Canberra Airport is exporting the region's produce to Asia and welcoming international tourists. Innovative and sustainable approaches to agriculture and aquaculture are acknowledged internationally. The region is known for its high quality clean and green products.

The Port of Eden is a global gateway and a hub for cruise ships and marine activity, drawing visitors to indulge in the world renowned cultural, wildlife and food-based experiences.

International and domestic visitors visit the Snowy Mountains and the South Coast throughout the year, staying at one of the many beaches between Batemans Bay and the Victorian border or hiking to the top of Australia's highest peak, Mount Kosciuszko. Internationally recognised food and wine offerings in Young, Murrumbateman and Bowral and eco-based tourism and cultural trails such as the Bundian Way add to the diverse mix of visitor experiences.

The region is a hub for renewable energy excellence with the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, Gullen Range Wind Farm and Woodlawn Bioreactor. It is leading responses to the challenges of climate change, natural hazards and sustainable water supplies for urban use.

Communities enjoy better walking and cycling paths, and public and community transport. People have easy access to a greater range of health and education services. Neighbourhoods are healthy, safe places where people feel welcome. They provide a contemporary mix of cutting-edge water and energy efficiencies, while celebrating their distinctive character and heritage.

New homes are located in places that make the best use of infrastructure and services. The type of new housing is more diverse, and better suited to the growing and ageing population. New housing is also contributing to housing affordability and the demand for visitor accommodation.

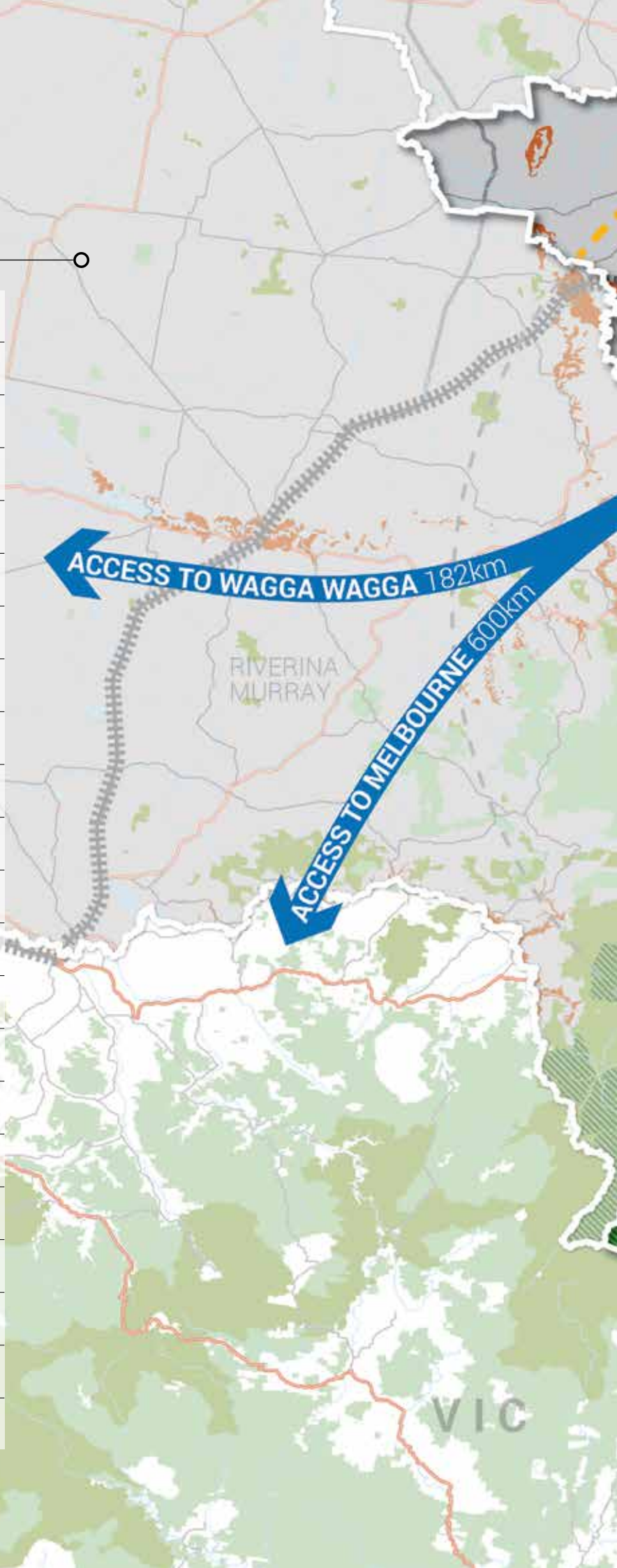
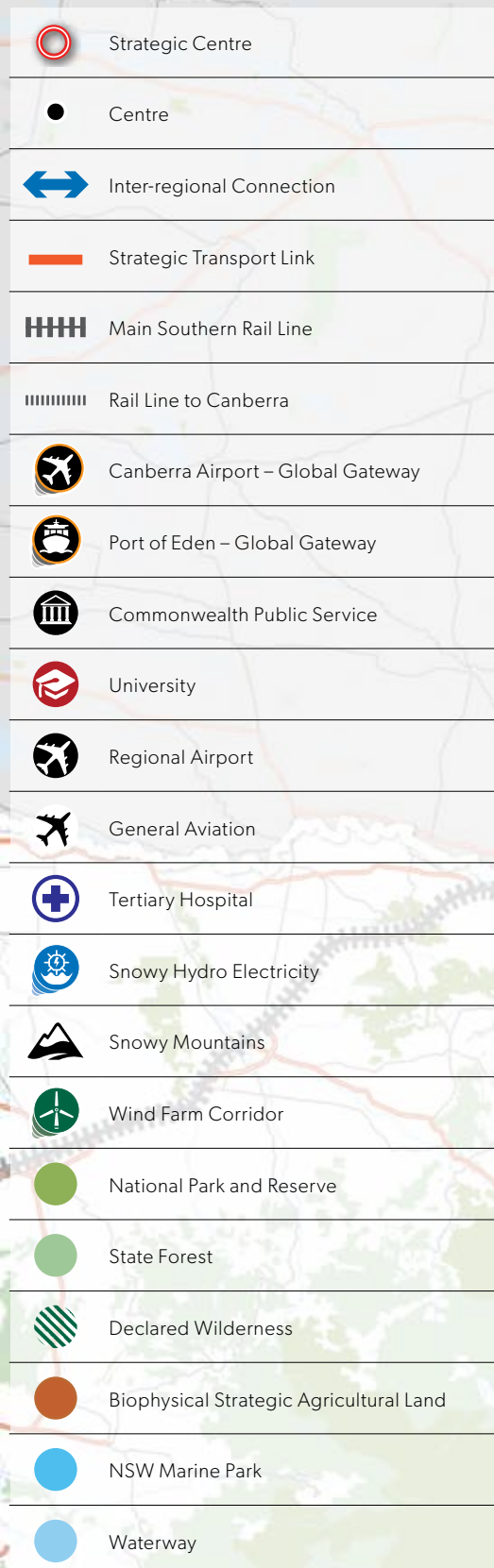
***To achieve this vision,  
the NSW Government has:***

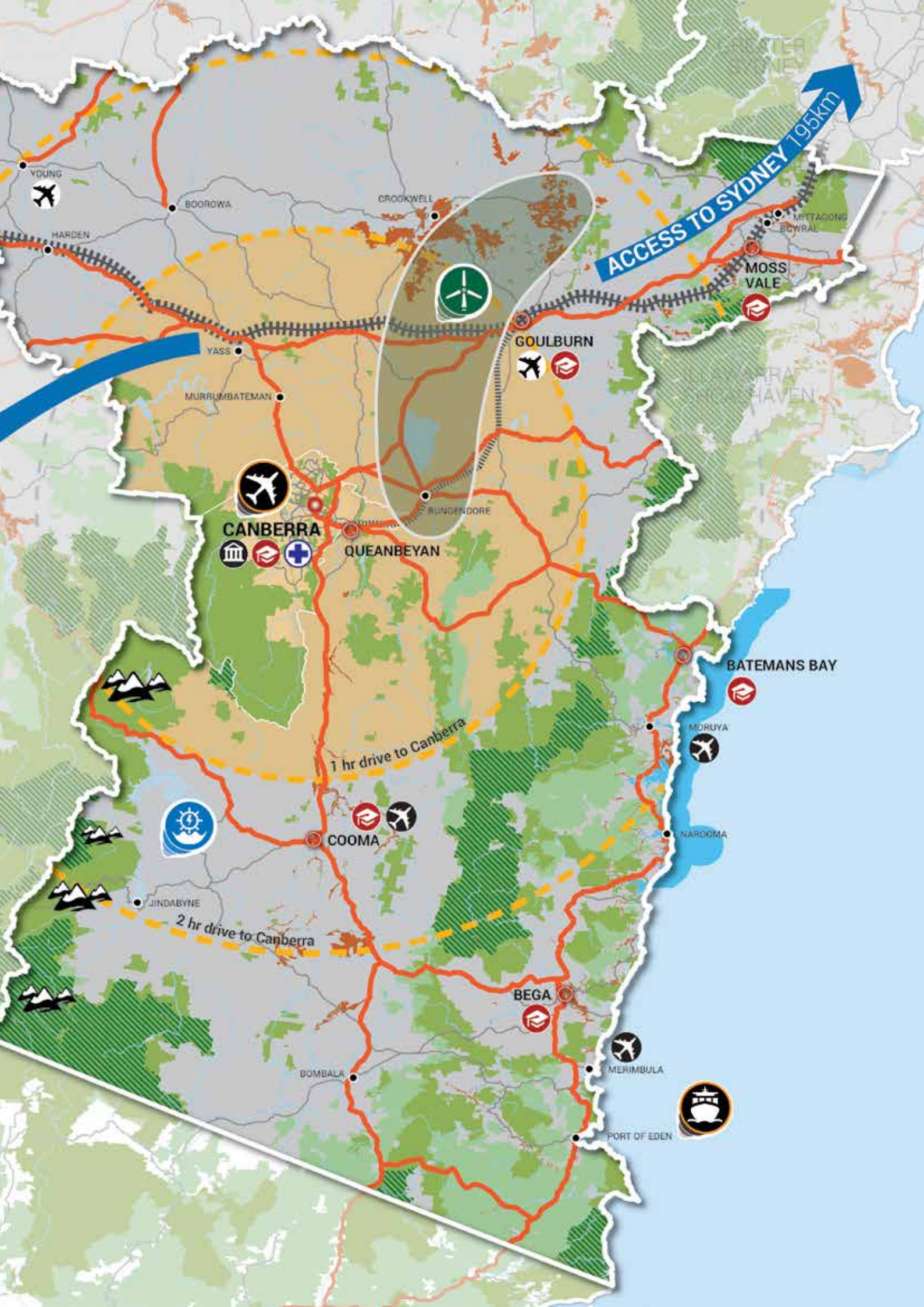
***committed to collaborating with  
the ACT to leverage opportunities  
from the borderless 'Canberra  
region' and ...***

***set the following regional goals:***

- **A connected and prosperous economy**
- **A diverse environment interconnected by biodiversity corridors**
- **Healthy and connected communities**
- **Environmentally sustainable housing choices**

Figure 3: **South East and Tablelands 2036**





ACCESS TO SYDNEY 195km

CANBERRA

QUEANBEYAN

GOULBURN

MOSS VALE

BATEMANS BAY

1 hr drive to Canberra

COOMA

JINDABYNE

2 hr drive to Canberra

BEGA

BOMBALA

MERIMBULA

PORT OF EDEN

# A connected and borderless Canberra region



## A key component in the success of the South East and Tablelands

Canberra and the South East and Tablelands are intrinsically linked. Canberra's transport connections, educational institutions, tertiary health services and employment will be accessed by people within NSW, while the region continues to offer a greater diversity of housing, experiences and opportunities beyond the ACT's limits.

The ACT and NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration underpins shared jurisdictional planning in the region. Initially signed in 2011 and re-committed to in November 2016, the Memorandum renews outcomes and prioritises the service delivery focus within the broader 'Canberra region'. A letter of intent has also been signed by the ACT Government and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council to improve road, cycling and walking connections and to plan for required infrastructure.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* represents a new approach. It takes a cross-border approach to economic investment, infrastructure delivery, servicing provision and housing development. This will facilitate sustainable growth and optimise economic prospects.

### Accessing global markets to drive regional economic development

Canberra Airport's international passenger and freight terminal is a tourism and export gateway, specifically in terms of movements from Singapore and New Zealand. Singapore provides access to the fast-growing Asian markets, particularly China. New Zealand provides an opportunity to attract leisure, government, business and education visitation.

The region offers a diverse and unique tourism mix across both jurisdictions. Visitors can enjoy adventure and recreational activities of skiing and surfing, and many different food and wine, cultural and nature-based experiences in places like the Snowy Mountains, the South Coast, or iconic rural hinterlands. Canberra's capital city status gives access to world-class cultural and heritage institutions, such as the National Gallery of Australia.

### Connecting with Canberra for jobs and services



20%

of South East and Tablelands workers commute to the ACT

2015



20%

of ACT public hospital admissions involve NSW residents

2013

Increasing numbers of domestic and international tourists will enable the region to be one of NSW's premier year-round destinations. This is helped by the \$44 million investment to extend the breakwater wharf at the Port of Eden to attract larger cruise ships to the region's south.

Canberra Airport will give producers access to growing Asian markets through various trade agreements. The region's high quality, niche, clean and green produce will underpin future growth. For example, live oysters from the South Coast are exported to Asia within 30 hours of harvest. Collaborative approaches and industry cooperatives will allow smaller producers to access larger export markets. To solidify these benefits, important agricultural land will be identified and opportunities for value-added activities such as boutique foods and beverages will be promoted.

## ACT Planning Strategy

The *ACT Planning Strategy* (2012) sets Canberra's economic, social and environmental aspirations. The Strategy focuses on:

- intensifying urban development around Canberra's existing centres and corridors, including a target to deliver 50 per cent of new housing through urban intensification;
- expanding greenfield sites around Gungahlin and Molonglo Valley; and
- improving transport connections for the 20,000 people travelling into Canberra from NSW each day.

The Strategy acknowledges that Canberra's success depends on its relationship to surrounding areas. It acknowledges the importance of regional collaboration on biodiversity, transport and economic development. A five-year review of the Strategy will commence in 2017.

## Connecting with Canberra for jobs and services

Canberra's growth will provide a wider range of service and job opportunities in public administration, professional services and education. Efficient travel to and from the ACT is therefore critical.

To meet this challenge, the NSW and ACT Governments will continue to collaborate to address legal and contractual barriers for public transport, including inconsistencies in fares, services and timetables. Other measures include park and ride facilities at key junctions and integrating community transport services into the overall transport system.

Further investment in the road network will improve access to the ACT's jobs and services. Existing projects include upgrades to the Barton Highway, linking the ACT and Southern Tablelands with Western NSW, and the Kings Highway between Queanbeyan and Batemans Bay.

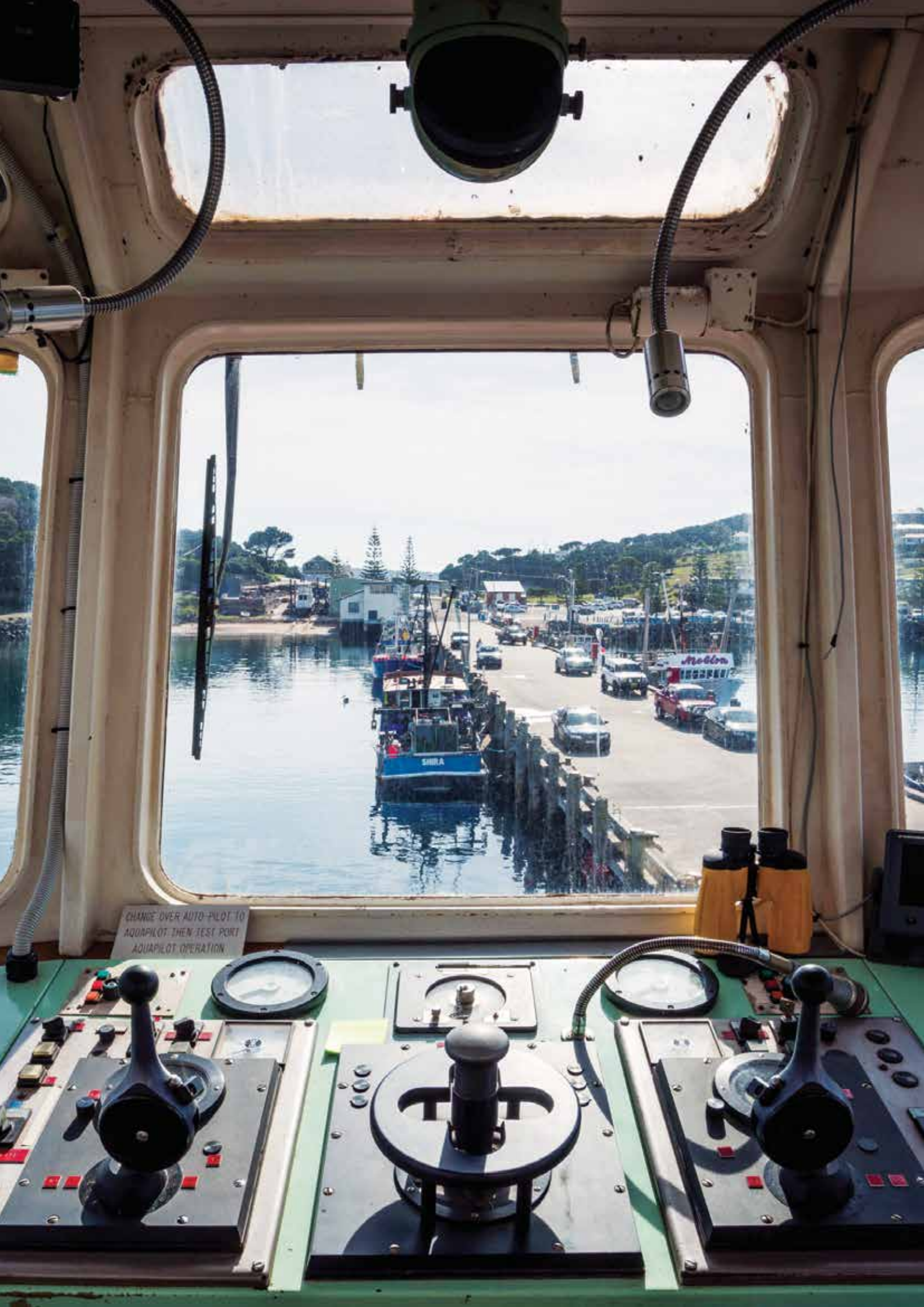
## Leveraging an interconnected housing market

The type of housing available within an hour of Canberra is driven by the ACT market, particularly in Queanbeyan-Palerang and Yass Valley local government areas, where people seek more affordable housing or larger blocks. Similarly, on the South Coast, many ACT residents own or rent holiday homes, or move there once retired.

While each jurisdiction plans for its own population growth and accompanying infrastructure and service delivery, the unique NSW-ACT cross-border relationship requires both jurisdictions to plan for a greater population than that within their own boundaries.

Rather than isolated land releases, a more strategic approach to housing will make the best use of existing infrastructure and maximise investment in planned infrastructure.

A cross-border land and housing monitor will better track and forecast housing land releases so that all levels of government have a better understanding of the infrastructure and service implications arising from growth, particularly close to the ACT.



CHANGE OVER AUTO-PILOT TO  
AQUAPILOT THEN TEST PORT  
AQUAPILOT OPERATION.

SHIBA

Red Bull





# GOAL 1

## ***A connected and prosperous economy***

The South East and Tablelands has a diverse economy, underpinned by connections to Canberra and Sydney and varied agriculture and tourism opportunities. It is a hub for renewable energy generation, and its nature-based tourism – including skiing, surfing and bushwalking – attracts increasing numbers of domestic and international visitors.

The region's prosperity relies on an efficient transport network, a healthy rural and natural environment, and a collaborative relationship with the ACT.

Access to global gateways at the Port of Eden and Canberra Airport are providing greater exposure to national and international tourism and export markets. Improved connections to Port Kembla, Port Botany, the Port of Melbourne and Western Sydney Airport will give a competitive advantage.

Considerable demand from middle-class Asian markets, combined with the ability to transport produce from Canberra Airport to Singapore and beyond to 11 Chinese cities, can be a game changer for agricultural exports.

The Snowy Mountains, the South Coast and the rural hinterland offer rich recreational experiences including food, wine and cultural trails. These areas can capitalise on international tourism demand to grow the visitor economy.

The Australian Government is likely to continue to be the biggest employer, with a 20 per cent share of jobs.<sup>2</sup> People who commute to Canberra will benefit from a greater diversity of work opportunities in public administration, professional services and defence.

Communities in the north of the region, including Moss Vale, Goulburn and Crookwell, will benefit from investment in Western Sydney, enhanced digital connections, sustainability and value-added agriculture.

### **Priority growth sectors for the South East and Tablelands**

This Regional Plan focuses on the following priority growth sectors to diversify the economy:

- tourism;
- agriculture and aquaculture;
- freight and logistics;
- health, disability and aged care;
- public administration and defence;
- education and training; and
- renewable energy.

The planning system needs to respond to the specific needs of these sectors to generate economic growth.



## Direction 1: Leverage access to the global gateway of Canberra Airport

Canberra Airport will drive economic growth in the region. It is expected to generate over 21,000 jobs by 2030 and contribute \$2.42 billion per year to the regional economy.<sup>3</sup>

As there is no aircraft noise curfew, its international services are unconstrained. Its passenger terminal has capacity to offer more services, and the master planned freight precinct offers a realistic alternative to Sydney Airport.

Canberra Airport's ongoing ability to operate and expand its services cannot be jeopardised by residential development.

Some freight routes across the ACT border are inefficient, and this will intensify as the South East and Tablelands grows. Improving the ability to move freight across the ACT border will better enable agricultural producers to access export markets through the airport. Consistent information on freight movements across jurisdictions will improve the planning for and efficiency of the freight network.

Networking Canberra Airport's international operations into the region's other airports, including those in Moruya and Merimbula, will increase exposure to other markets. Existing master plans aim to develop transport, tourism and commercial precincts around these regional airports.

## Actions

- 1.1 Protect Canberra Airport's current and future operations by maintaining restrictions on the location of nearby residential development.
- 1.2 Enhance data sharing on freight movements between the NSW and ACT Governments to improve freight planning and management.
- 1.3 Plan for compatible and complementary economic development opportunities around the region's airports, including in Moruya and Merimbula.

## Canberra Airport Catchment

2011



**900,000**

people live within a 2.5 hour drive

## Port of Eden

2016-2017



**14**

cruise ship visits

**19,258**

passengers



## **Direction 2: Enhance tourism and export opportunities through the Port of Eden**

The Port of Eden is the third deepest natural harbour in the Southern Hemisphere, making it ideal for large vessels. This working port is a premier location for whale watching, an emerging cruise destination and home to one of the largest fishing fleets in NSW. It is also home to Snug Cove, a popular refuge for yachts.

The port accommodates a Royal Australian Navy wharf and is the primary woodchip export site in Australia, supporting a strong timber industry in the region. General cargo is processed at the multipurpose wharf in Twofold Bay and the port includes an eight-hectare cargo storage facility.

The \$44 million extension of the breakwater wharf will allow more cruise vessels to visit, and a wave attenuator will improve the safety within the harbour.

The significant increase in passenger numbers from cruise ships will draw tourists to visit the world-class network of national parks and pristine marine parks, and experience wildlife events such as the migration of humpback and other whales or food journeys like the Oyster Trail. As a tourism gateway, the Port of Eden provides access to snow-based and eco-tourism activities that set the region apart.

Investment in the Port of Eden will benefit from additional landside infrastructure including a cruise terminal, more diverse local tourism services, and improved connections to Canberra Airport. This would boost visitor numbers and offer greater economic opportunities for local businesses, such as supplying quality regional seafood and produce to cruise ships.

The NSW Government is developing a long-term Cruise Development Plan to help NSW plan for the forecast growth in cruise ship calls and passenger numbers and to capitalise on opportunities to grow overnight visitor expenditure.

The Port of Eden, smaller ports in Batemans Bay and Bermagui, as well as boating harbours, marine parks and aquatic reserves offer opportunities for recreational boating, water sports, fishing, and commercial charters and touring experiences, such as whale and dolphin watching.

### **Actions**

- 2.1 Promote business and industry development to attract visitors and cruise vessels to Eden.
- 2.2 Develop a strategy to encourage marine-based tourism along the South Coast and Illawarra-Shoalhaven.
- 2.3 Foster opportunities for embarkation and disembarkation facilities around wharf infrastructure to support marine-based tourism.
- 2.4 Protect port-related infrastructure at the Port of Eden from encroachment through local environmental plans.
- 2.5 Continue to implement actions and prioritise investment in boating infrastructure as identified in relevant regional boating plans to improve boating safety, boat storage and waterway access, including better launching facilities for marine-based tourism.



Left: Canberra Airport

Above: Sunset, Port of Eden



### **Direction 3: Develop the Snowy Mountains into Australia's premier year-round alpine destination**

The Kosciuszko National Park, ski resorts and the nationally iconic Snowy River create a strong tourism economy, driven mainly by skiing and related winter sport experiences over a high season of 16 to 18 weeks. The sustainability of natural snow conditions within a changing climate will be a challenge if the area is to capitalise on the higher number of visitors who arrive through Canberra Airport.

This can be partly addressed by promoting an extended tourism season that will make the Snowy Mountains and Snowy River, like Queenstown New Zealand, a year-round destination for mountain biking, bushwalking, horseriding, kayaking, cultural and educational tourism, and recreational fishing.

An increase in visitor numbers requires better parking access, public facilities, signage and boat launching facilities. A Visitor Economy Strategy for the Snowy Mountains will identify investment opportunities agreed to by relevant stakeholders.

#### **Actions**

- 3.1 Enhance opportunities for visitation and recreation on the Snowy River by improving access and signage.
- 3.2 Develop a Visitor Economy Strategy for the Snowy Mountains.
- 3.3 Investigate opportunities for improved access to the Snowy Mountains through flexible transport options, improved connections through existing transport modes, and air travel.

### **Direction 4: Leverage growth opportunities from Western Sydney**

Western Sydney is Australia's third largest economy, with a bigger population and greater number of jobs than either Adelaide or Perth.<sup>4</sup> It is home to 2.2 million people and is expected to grow by 32 per cent over the next 15 years.<sup>5</sup>

The new Western Sydney Airport will be an important aviation, innovation and business hub increasing access to a range of employment opportunities for South East and Tablelands workers living in commuting distance. Already, almost 16 per cent of the resident workforce of Wingecarribee local government area commutes to Sydney for work.<sup>6</sup>

The South East and Tablelands should be promoted as an affordable place for Western Sydney-based industries to relocate and expand. It offers access to the M7 and M5 motorways, less pressure on land for urban development and a skilled workforce.

The region, especially Wingecarribee and Goulburn-Mulwarree local government areas are well positioned to use Western Sydney's growth as an impetus to create new jobs. The availability of jobs enables economic development, and employment lands at Goulburn or the Moss Vale Enterprise Corridor offer well located opportunities.

High quality infrastructure, including electricity, gas and telecommunications, must be available to service businesses and industries. For example, a deficiency in the gas network to service Harden has been identified as a barrier to attracting more diversity in the agricultural sector, including poultry farming, and capturing growth opportunities from Western Sydney.

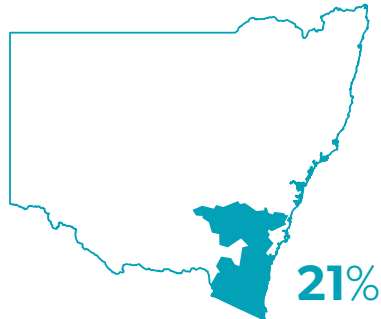
#### **Actions**

- 4.1 Foster initiatives to promote the South East and Tablelands as a suitable place for businesses to relocate.
- 4.2 Maintain a supply of appropriately serviced employment land to create opportunities for new industrial development.
- 4.3 Monitor development so that infrastructure planning responds to investment opportunities.



## Stone Fruit Supply

2011



of State production

## Bega Cheese Production

2016



**9.3b**  
consumer serves

**95,000**  
tonnes produced

### **Direction 5: Promote agricultural innovation, sustainability and value-add opportunities**

Farmers are becoming directly involved in retail, marketing and value-adding or secondary processing including small species abattoirs, Bega Cheese's processing and packaging unit, and regional saleyards such as the South Eastern Livestock Exchange in Yass.

Building innovation and sustainability into the agricultural sector will improve the sector's adaptability and ability to maintain high quality, clean and green produce. Digital technology creates greater efficiencies and cost competitiveness by improving the productivity and quality of produce or developing sustainable farm management practices.

The proposed Bega Cheese and the CSIRO agricultural research facility at Boorowa will enable research and development into innovative farming practices and new technologies to sustain production and productivity, open new market opportunities and maintain a competitive edge.

The South East and Tablelands is a major cherry producing region for NSW. Over 80 per cent of NSW cherry exports are destined for Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore markets.<sup>7</sup> The timing of the region's seasonal agricultural production provides opportunities for producers to expand supply to global markets in the Northern Hemisphere.

Small-scale producers of boutique foods and beverages such as truffles, processed meats and wines could access larger markets through collaborative approaches and industry cooperatives. These activities can promote regional tourism opportunities through farm stays, farm gate trails, food events and farmers markets in Young, Bungendore, Braidwood and Moruya.

Value-added agriculture opportunities need access to the regional freight network, utility infrastructure, skilled labour and export markets. New development must not create or exacerbate land use conflicts.

### **Actions**

- 5.1 Promote commercial, tourism and recreational activities that support the agricultural sector.
- 5.2 Encourage value-add agricultural opportunities through flexible planning provisions in local strategies and local environmental plans.
- 5.3 Encourage co-location of related value-added agricultural industries to maximise infrastructure, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract further investment.
- 5.4 Promote opportunities to better connect the agricultural industry to export markets.



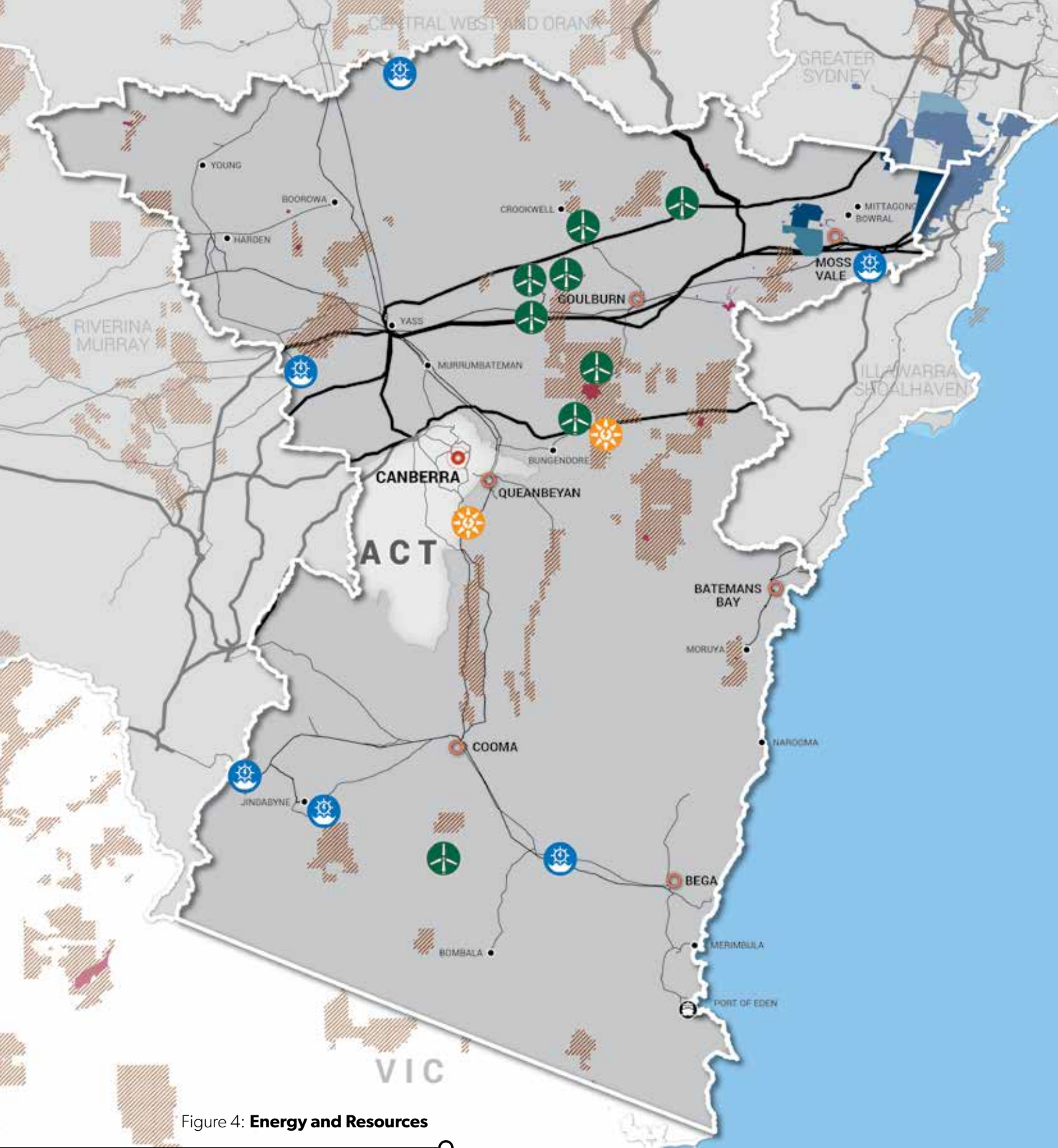





Figure 4: **Energy and Resources**

-  Strategic Centre


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-  Centre


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-  Wind Power Generation

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-  Solar Power Generation

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-  Hydro Power Generation

-  Coal Production Title


---

-  Exploration Title


---

-  Mineral Mining Title


---

-  Current Minerals Exploration Title


**Key Transmission Lines (kilovolts)**

-  500


---

-  330


---

-  220

---

-  132

---

-  66

An interactive renewable energy resources map is available at [www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au)



## **Direction 6: Position the region as a hub of renewable energy excellence**

The South East and Tablelands offers natural advantages in wind, hydro and solar energy generation. Already, the cluster of wind farms between Queanbeyan and Crookwell, as well as at Boco Rock, and the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, lead the provision of renewable energy. Further investment to increase the capacity of these facilities would enhance the region's reputation as a hub for renewable energy.

The region can also draw on the significant innovation and research on renewable energy from the Australian National University in Canberra. It can also take advantage of the established network of high voltage transmission lines that traverse the region, the NSW Government's target for net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and the ACT Government's renewable energy target of 100 per cent by 2020.

Becoming a renewable energy hub aligns with the work of the South East Region of Renewable Energy Excellence, an industry initiative to position the South East and Tablelands as a region of excellence for Australia's renewable energy industry.<sup>8</sup>

The NSW Government's *Renewable Energy Action Plan (2013)* guides renewable energy development and aims to streamline negotiations between network service providers and investors to make timeframes for grid connections in NSW more competitive. The Action Plan also encourages early and effective community engagement in renewable energy projects.

### **Actions**

- 6.1 Identify opportunities for renewable energy industries.
- 6.2 Develop analytical tools to map large-scale renewable energy potential.
- 6.3 Encourage the co-location of renewable energy projects to maximise infrastructure, including corridors with access to the electricity network.

- 6.4 Promote best practice community engagement and maximise community benefits from renewable energy projects.
- 6.5 Promote appropriate smaller-scale renewable energy projects using bioenergy, solar, wind, small-scale hydro, geothermal or other innovative storage technologies.

## **Direction 7: Grow the South Coast's aquaculture industry**

The South Coast supplies oysters, mussels and scallops to international as well as domestic markets. The coast's 103 oyster farmers mainly produce Sydney Rock Oysters and smaller quantities of Native Oysters and Pacific Oysters.<sup>9</sup> Significant land-based aquaculture will continue, including the farming of freshwater fish species such as trout, Murray cod, barramundi and yabbies.

The South Coast's oysters, mussels and scallops have an international reputation as being safe, sustainable and of high quality. The area known as Australia's Oyster Coast attracts increasing numbers of visitors keen to taste premium oysters from estuaries stretching 300 kilometres along the coast. Live oysters now can be delivered to Asia within 30 hours of harvesting.<sup>10</sup>

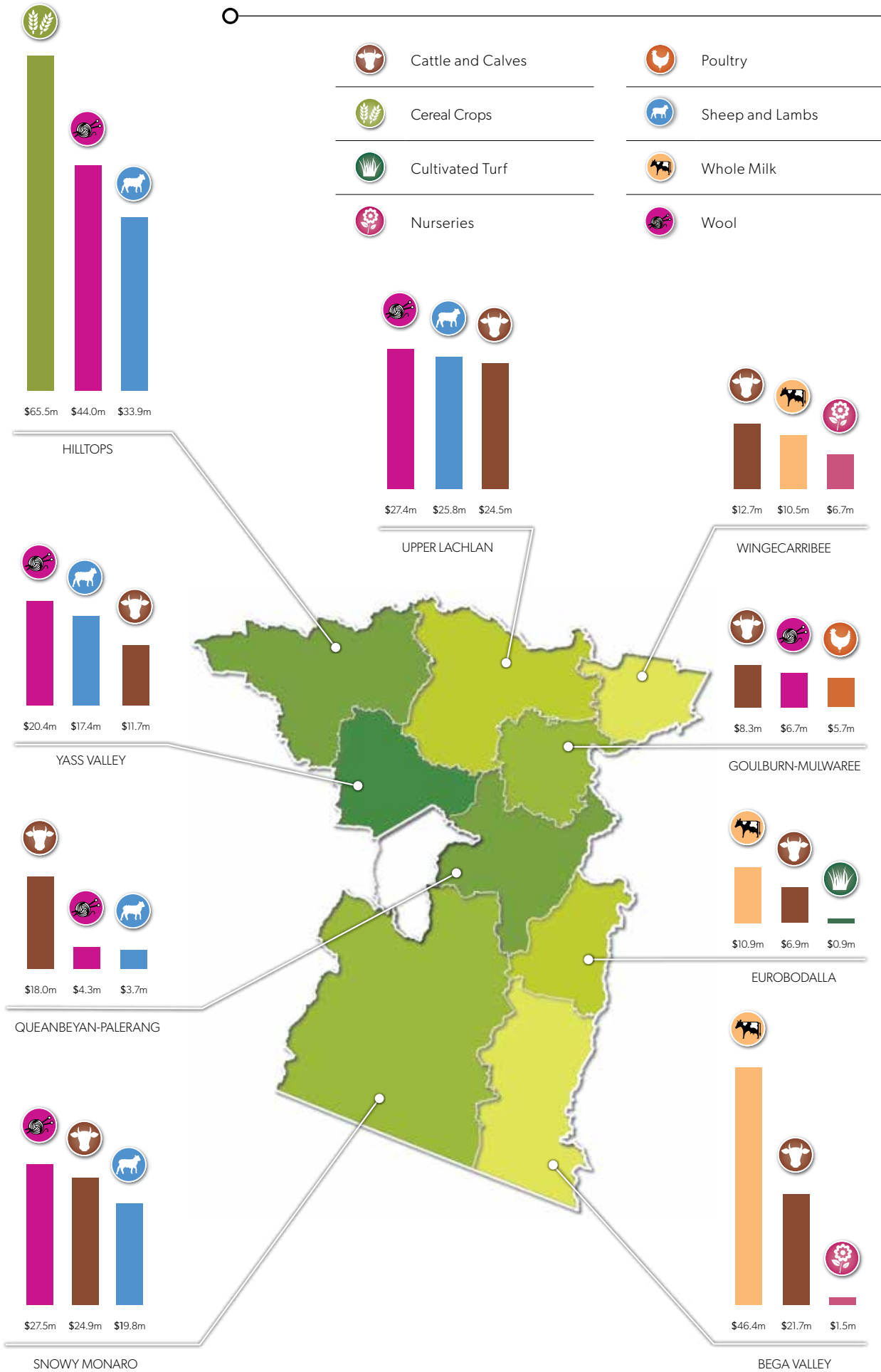
International and domestic demand exceeds supply, requiring the industry to expand production, while retaining its premium quality.<sup>11</sup> The industry is addressing the shortage of oyster spat from the recent Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome virus affecting Tasmanian hatcheries, and requires suitable land for a hatchery close to waterways with the right infrastructure.

The South Coast's aquaculture catchments will be protected from urban development and other activities that can negatively impact water quality.

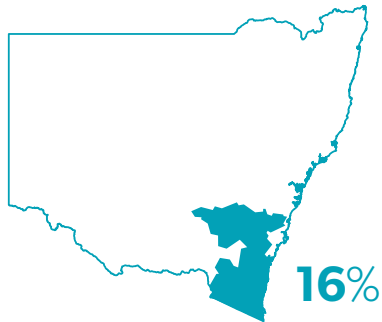
### **Actions**

- 7.1 Facilitate the development of a shellfish hatchery to safeguard oysters and other shellfish production.
- 7.2 Minimise the impacts of development on aquatic habitats in aquacultural estuaries.
- 7.3 Promote opportunities to better connect the aquaculture industry to export markets.

Figure 5: **Top Three Contributors to Agricultural Production in the South East and Tablelands, 2011**

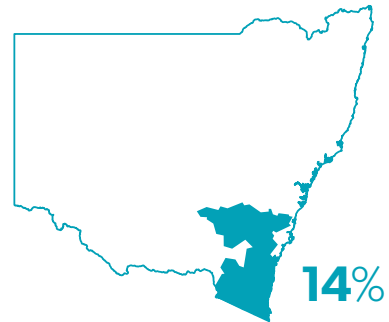


### Wool Supply 2011



of State production

### Milk Supply 2011



of State production

## **Direction 8: Protect important agricultural land**

The South East and Tablelands offers stable and favourable growing conditions and easy access to export markets. It is well placed to take advantage of growing demand from Asia and the Sydney Basin, where the capacity to feed residents is forecast to drop from 20 per cent of food demand to less than six per cent over the next 15 years.<sup>10</sup>

This requires a critical mass of agricultural industries that can increase productivity, sustain employment and contribute to a secure, local fresh food supply.

The NSW Government's 2014 Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land mapping identifies agricultural land of significance to the State. This could be complemented by regional-scale mapping that reflects regional climatic and geological conditions, and regional industry needs.

Important agricultural land will be mapped to guide planning decisions, local environmental plans and infrastructure investment, and to provide information on important agricultural industries and resources. They may include biophysical attributes and socio-economic data.

The protection of agricultural land also requires the management of biosecurity risks, which increase as a result of trade, the spread of feral and exotic species, tourism, climate variability and competing priorities for resources. These issues can be managed by applying the recommendations of biosecurity plans in land use planning decisions.

## **Actions**

- 8.1 Map important agricultural land to better inform strategic and local planning processes.
- 8.2 Protect identified important agricultural land from land use conflict and fragmentation and manage the interface between important agricultural land and other land uses through local environmental plans.
- 8.3 Develop profiles of the leading agricultural industries to guide future investment decisions.
- 8.4 Minimise biosecurity risks by undertaking risk assessments that take into account biosecurity plans, and applying appropriate buffer areas.



## Direction 9: Grow tourism in the region

Visitors to the South East and Tablelands enjoy year-round access to mountains, coasts and rural hinterlands, as well as Canberra’s world-class cultural institutions, such as the National Museum of Australia, the Australian War Memorial and the National Gallery of Australia.

The promotion of the diversity of experiences in the broader ‘Canberra region’ will recognise the South East and Tablelands as an important component of the ACT’s visitor economy.

Canberra Airport’s international links will create a global gateway to significant visitor destinations in the capital and surrounding region. Western Sydney Airport will provide another gateway for visitors. The region will also continue to be promoted as a destination for local visitors from Sydney and the Illawarra.

To capitalise on increased visitation from Asia, the region will showcase its clean and green reputation through locally grown produce from providores and farm gates. The variety of experiences can be expanded through the sustainable use of national parks, Crown Lands, agricultural lands and other assets. This can attract people interested in nature- and eco-based experiences, agri-tourism, adventure experiences (such as canoeing and mountain biking) or arts and cultural activities such as those offered on the Bundian Way.

Tourism places pressure on transport systems and services, particularly during holiday periods. An efficient transport system is critical to tourism growth.

### Actions

- 9.1 Enhance the broader tourism offering by collaborating with Visit Canberra and the ACT Government.
- 9.2 Encourage tourism development in natural areas that support conservation outcomes.
- 9.3 Align local strategies with the relevant destination management plan.
- 9.4 Collaborate with and support Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council’s development of the Bundian Way as a sustainable economic venture.
- 9.5 Address seasonal transport capacity shortages efficiently through initiatives such as:
  - branding public transport services;
  - raising awareness of travel options;
  - supporting seasonal transport options such as holiday bus services and/or park and ride services; and
  - introduce flexible and on-demand transport options.

### The Bundian Way

The Bundian Way is a shared history pathway between Targagal (Kosciuszko) and Bilgalera (Fisheries Beach, near Eden) that has served many purposes for Aboriginal communities and European settlers. The 365-kilometre pathway connects the highest part of Australia and the coastline via an ancient Aboriginal trade route. The route once brought people together for gatherings associated with springtime whale migration and swarms of bogong moths in the high country during the summertime.

Potential commercial opportunities include guided tours, camping, events, kayaking, and educational activities that also help to strengthen local Aboriginal communities.

Commercial development requires collaboration between the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Australian, NSW and local governments, as well as private landowners. This work must address the delivery of tourist infrastructure, access and funding arrangements.<sup>11</sup>



## Direction 10: Strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities

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

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

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

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

This information can inform practical options for the potential commercial use of the land, such as Aboriginal housing and employment opportunities. It could provide economic returns to the Local Aboriginal Land Councils that can be invested in assistance programs in the region.

## Actions

- 10.1 Work with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils to conduct a strategic assessment of their landholdings to identify priority sites with economic development potential.
- 10.2 Identify priority sites that can create a pipeline of potential projects.
- 10.3 Deliver opportunities to increase the economic independence of Aboriginal communities through training, employment and tourism.

### Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council land and economic participation in solution brokerage

Aboriginal Affairs NSW brought together several State agencies, Bega Valley Shire Council and Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council (Eden LALC) to collaboratively design and implement a mechanism to address long-standing issues impeding Eden LALC's land and economic participation aspirations.

Key outcomes from the solution brokerage include the establishment of working relationships between Eden LALC and several State agencies; an agreement to progress an Aboriginal Land Agreement (the first in NSW); and the development of a land capability database.

The agreed outcomes will set a foundation for the NSW Government and local government to continue to build and refine this collaboration to support Eden LALC's economic participation opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

Left: Tulip Time, Bowral, courtesy of Destination NSW

Above: Explanation of Aboriginal history at Twofold Bay, Eden

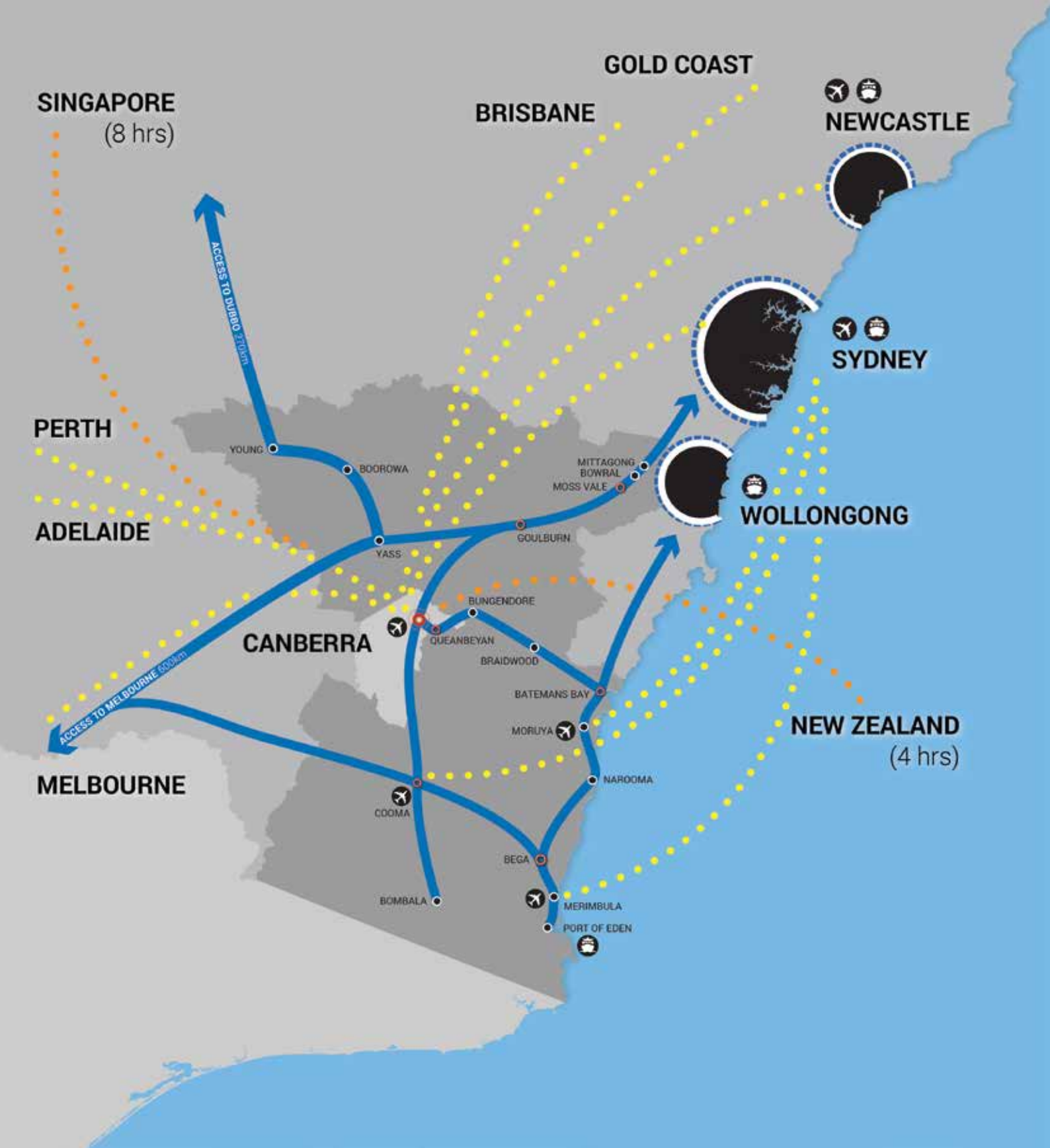
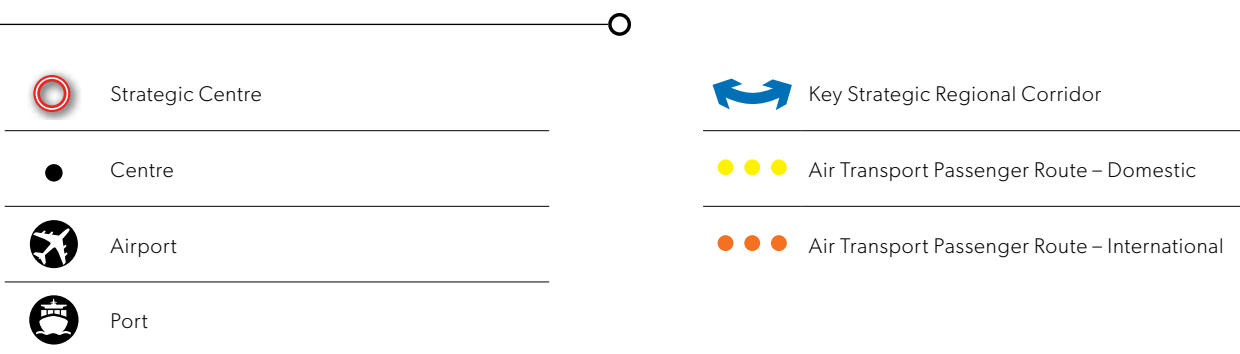


Figure 6: **Inter-regional Transport Connections**



## **Direction 11: Enhance strategic transport links to support economic growth**

Increasing the productivity of the freight network by improving travel times and freight capacity will bring considerable economic benefits. The road network, particularly strategic transport links, need to support higher productivity vehicles. This can be achieved by removing height and weight restrictions on major routes, improving rest area options and addressing the constraint of narrow bridges.

Improvements to the regional network are coordinated by Transport for NSW through two programs:

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

Major opportunities for the freight network include:

- improving east-west B-double access along major highways and key regional and local roads connecting the South Coast to Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne;
- managing amenity impacts where key routes run through town centres, particularly in the Hilltops and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas;
- planning for the potential duplication of the Barton Highway and other key routes;
- improving rail transport and investigating intermodal facilities and the potential to re-open non-operational lines to support connectivity to markets for passengers and freight;
- building on existing facilities such as grain silos and bunkers to support intermodal connectivity; and
- where sustainable freight demand exists, non-operational lines could be brought back into operation. The feasibility of reopening the Blayney to Demondrille line was investigated by Transport for NSW.

The Australian Government is investigating the viability of building a high-speed rail network to reduce travel time between capital cities along Australia's east coast. This network could present significant economic and housing opportunities that will require more detailed planning and consideration. Land uses that may affect the long-term viability of the proposed corridor should be avoided.

### **Actions**

- 11.1 Improve the capacity of the regional freight network by investigating and prioritising upgrades to narrow bridges, culverts, alignment, and lane and shoulder width that constrain restricted access vehicles.
- 11.2 Deliver local and regional road projects that support the regional freight network.
- 11.3 Limit inappropriate adjoining development and direct access points along strategic transport links including the Hume, Federal, Illawarra, Barton and Kings highways.
- 11.4 Investigate options to improve heavy vehicle rest areas appropriate for the demand.
- 11.5 Work with the Australian Government to plan for a future high-speed rail corridor.

### **Future Transport Strategy**

To better manage transport infrastructure and maximise road safety and other benefits for all road users, Transport for NSW is developing the Future Transport Strategy. This will involve a comprehensive engagement with the community and industry across NSW. The first stage of this engagement with rural and regional NSW will include activities with local entities and events across a sample of coastal, inland and remote locations covering regional cities, centres and towns. This engagement will take place in the middle of 2017.



## Strategic transport links

- Kings Highway
- Princes Highway
- Bungendore Road
- Macs Reef Road
- Hume Highway
- Barton Highway
- Federal Highway
- Main Road 92
- Monaro Highway
- Olympic Highway
- Lachlan Valley Way
- Burley Griffin Way
- Pialligo Avenue
- Canberra Avenue
- Snowy Mountains Highway
- Imlay Road

## **Direction 12: Promote business activities in urban centres**

Strategic and local centres will be the focus for more intensive employment uses, public space improvements, and technology and transport connections to Canberra and Sydney. This will encourage investment, housing, job opportunities and services.

Strategic and local centres also support tourism. Centres should be places of commercial and retail activity that are attractive for community and recreational activities to encourage visitors.

New retail activity will be directed to existing centres to increase centre vitality, capitalise on existing transport and community facilities, attract complementary activities, and enhance the value of existing public spaces. Any retail or commercial development outside of existing commercial centres will need to demonstrate social and economic benefits to the community.

New and emerging technologies will create employment opportunities as well as innovations in the way services are delivered. The National Broadband Network is enhancing digital connections and growing knowledge-intensive industries, small businesses and smart work hubs. There is enormous potential to attract professionals who want to enjoy the region's lifestyle while accessing wider employment markets.

## **Actions**

- 12.1 Use flexible planning controls to facilitate knowledge-intensive industries and the development of small work hubs.
- 12.2 Encourage mixed use developments that cater for commercial, retail, residential and tourism uses through local planning controls.





- 12.3 Reinforce the role and function of centres as the primary places for commerce, retail, social activity and regional services through local strategies and local environmental plans.
- 12.4 Focus future commercial and retail activity in existing commercial centres, unless there is a demonstrated need and positive social and economic benefits to locate this activity elsewhere.
- 12.5 Require proposals for new retail development to demonstrate how they:
- respond to retail supply and demand needs;
  - respond to innovations in the retail sector;
  - maximise the use of existing and planned infrastructure (including public transport and community facilities) commensurate with the scale of the proposal; and
  - enhance the value of the public realm.

### **Direction 13: Manage the ongoing use of mineral resources**

The South East and Tablelands contains valuable mineral resources including coal, precious and base metals, and extractive materials.

Coal resources are concentrated in the Wingecarribee Local Government Area where there are two active underground coal mines (Wongawilli and Dendrobium) on the eastern border of the area. Production is largely contained in the adjacent Wollongong Local Government Area.

There are deposits of important base metals (lead, zinc, silver, copper) around Woodlawn and Captains Flat. Extractive resources, such as sand and hard rock for construction and sources of clay/shale for brick making, are extracted around Marulan, Googong, Bungendore and Lake George. Limestone is extracted from Marulan and gold is extracted from Majors Creek.

Information about the location of current exploration and mining production titles in NSW, and explanations of mining and production titles and the role of the community and government in the decision-making process for mining or resource projects, is available at <http://commonground.nsw.gov.au>.

The location of many of these resources, near rail lines and freeways, and their proximity to Australia's biggest construction materials market in Sydney, makes them particularly important to NSW.

The impact of urban expansion on resource areas needs to be appraised when councils evaluate planning proposals to rezone land, review local environment plans or sequence land releases. In places like Wingecarribee Local Government Area, which has active mining, this also means avoiding new settlements in subsidence areas.

### **Actions**

- 13.1 Consult with the NSW Division of Resources and Geosciences when assessing applications for land use changes (strategic land use planning, rezoning and planning proposals) and new developments or expansions.
- 13.2 Protect areas of mineral and energy resources potential through local strategies and local environmental plans.





# GOAL 2

## A diverse environment interconnected by biodiversity corridors

The South East and Tablelands includes the alpine environment of Australia's highest mountains, the State's only wilderness coastline, rural landscapes and national parks. It is home to more than 100 threatened plant species, 112 threatened animal species and 13 endangered ecological communities.<sup>13</sup>

Biodiversity corridors help to connect plants and animals throughout the region, into and out of the ACT and beyond to Victoria. They form part of a national wildlife corridor extending from Victoria to Far North Queensland.<sup>14</sup> A strategic approach on public and private lands will protect and manage natural ecosystems and connect habitats.

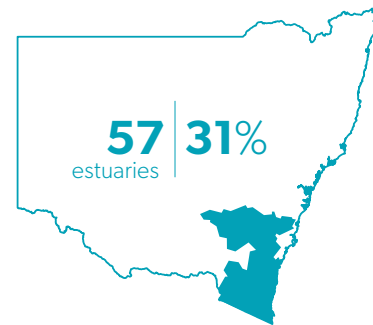
The region includes coastal lakes and lagoons, coastal wetlands, sensitive estuaries and the protected waters of the South Coast, where 57 estuaries represent almost one-third of those in the State. The Batemans Bay Marine Park showcases distinctive marine life and provides opportunities for the scientific study of marine biodiversity in a relatively natural state.<sup>15</sup>

The environmental, social and economic values of these landscapes underpin the region's character. These values can be affected by over-extraction of water, contamination, sea level rise and storm surge, and conflicting land uses such as urban expansion.

Protecting the environment and building greater resilience to natural hazards and climate change will ensure these values are enjoyed by future generations.

### Coastal Estuaries

2011

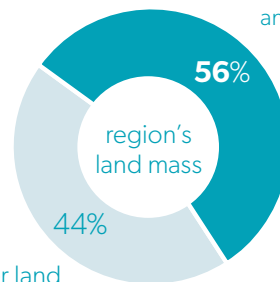


of State total

### Environmental Areas

3 million hectares

high environmental value, national park and forest



other land uses





## Sensitive estuaries in the South East and Tablelands

### **Eurobodalla Local Government Area:**

Bengello Creek, Bullengella Lake, Coila Lake, Congo Creek, Corunna Lake, Cullendulla Creek, Durras Creek, Kellys Lake, Kianga Lake, Brou Lake, Lake Brunderee, Mummuga Lake, Lake Tarourga, Little Lake, Maloneys Creek, Meringo Creek, Nangudga Lake, Saltwater Creek and Tilba Tilba Lake.

### **Bega Valley Local Government Area:**

Back Lagoon, Baragoot Lake, Bournda Lagoon, Boydtown Creek, Bunga Lagoon, Curalo Lagoon, Cuttagee Lake, Fisheries Creek, Merrica River, Middle Lagoon, Nadgee Lake, Nadgee River, Nullica River, Saltwater Creek, Shadrachs Creek, Table Creek, Wallaga Lake, Wallagoot Lake and Woodburn Creek.

10,600km<sup>2</sup> of National Park

3,600km<sup>2</sup> wilderness area



## Criteria for mapping high environmental value lands

Lands with potential high environmental value include:

- existing conservation areas such as national parks and reserves, declared wilderness areas, marine estates, Crown reserves dedicated for environmental protection and conservation, and flora reserves;
- threatened ecological communities and key habitats, and important vegetation areas;
- important wetlands, coastal lakes and estuaries; and
- sites of geological significance.

High environmental value mapping aims to provide a regional overview for strategic planning. Planning authorities should obtain the most recent spatial data from the Office of Environment and Heritage when considering proposals for land use change or intensification.

Up-to-date mapping can be found at <http://www.seed.nsw.gov.au/>

Validation rules for identification of high environmental value lands are found at [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)



## **Direction 14: Protect important environmental assets**

High environmental value lands and the region's networks of biodiversity corridors are mapped in Figure 7. These areas provide diversity and habitat for flora and fauna, including significant koala populations in the Snowy Monaro and Wingecarribee local government areas. Criteria developed by the Office of Environment and Heritage to map lands with high environmental value is detailed on the previous page.

Groundwater-dependent ecosystems and aquatic habitats associated with rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters that may not have been included in this mapping also have high environmental value. Maps of these areas are available on the Department of Primary Industries website.

The intensification of land uses through urban development and other activities must avoid impacts on important terrestrial and aquatic habitats and on water quality.

Mapping areas of potential high environmental value will inform local planning strategies and local environmental plans.

The 'avoid, minimise and offset' hierarchy will be applied to areas identified for new or more intensive development. The hierarchy requires that development avoid areas of validated high environmental value and considers appropriate offsets or other mitigation measures for unavoidable impacts.

Where it is not possible to avoid impacts, councils will be required to consider how impacts can be managed or offset through planning controls or other environmental management mechanisms.

Sensitive estuaries have been mapped as part of the region's high environmental value lands. These estuaries and their catchments are particularly susceptible to the effect of land use development and are not suitable for intense uses such as housing subdivision.

Travelling Stock Reserves move livestock and supplement land for grazing in times of drought. These reserves can contain significant biodiversity values and need to be carefully managed.

## **Actions**

- 14.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for the Snowy Monaro and Wingecarribee local government areas.
- 14.2 Protect the validated high environmental value lands in local environmental plans.
- 14.3 Minimise potential impacts arising from development on areas of high environmental value, including groundwater-dependent ecosystems and aquatic habitats, and implement the 'avoid, minimise and offset' hierarchy.
- 14.4 Improve the quality of and access to information relating to land with identified high environmental values.
- 14.5 Support planning authorities to undertake strategic, landscape-scale assessments of biodiversity and areas of high environmental value.
- 14.6 Protect Travelling Stock Reserves in local strategies.



Left: South East National Park

Above: Montague Island Nature Reserve

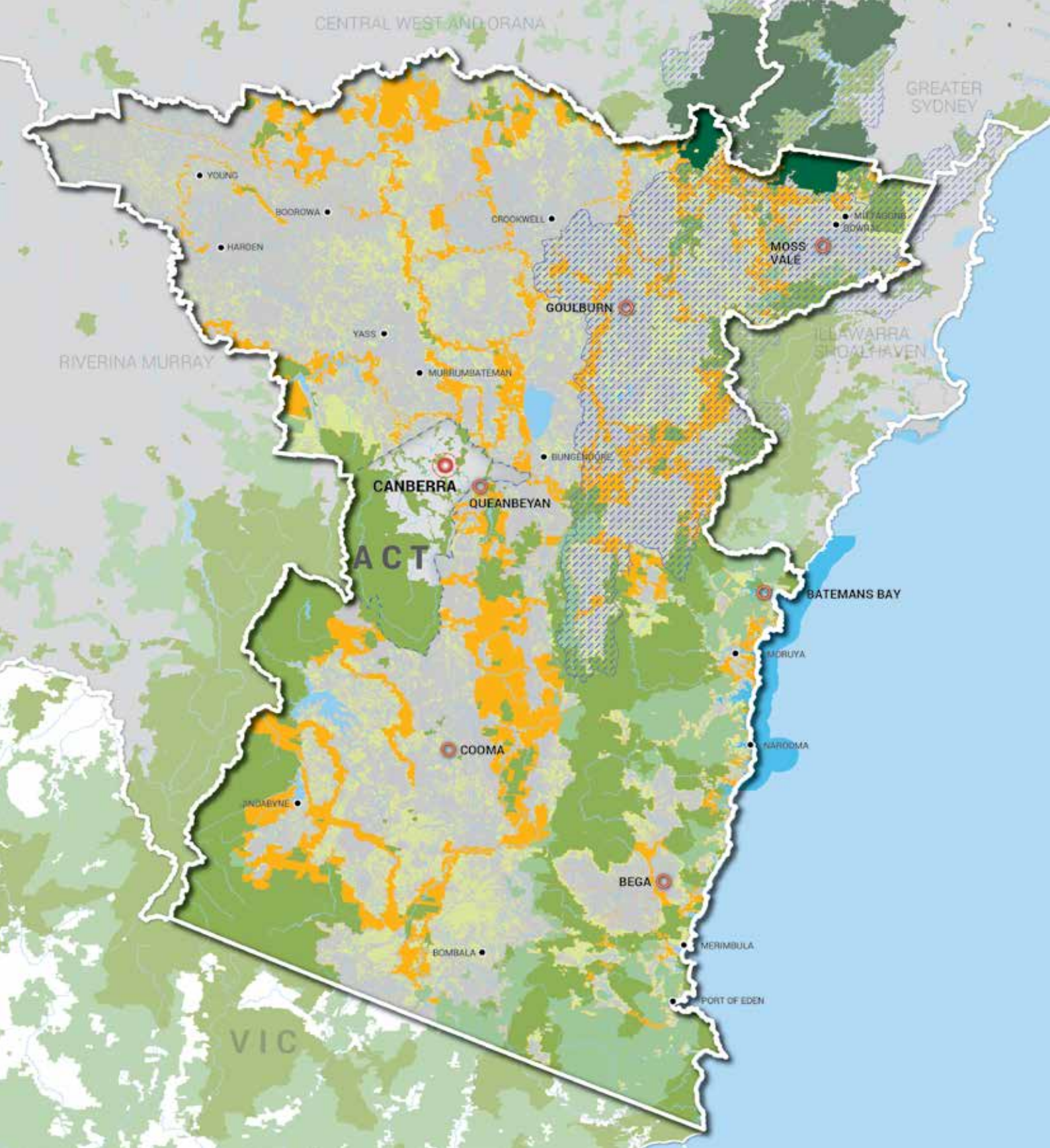
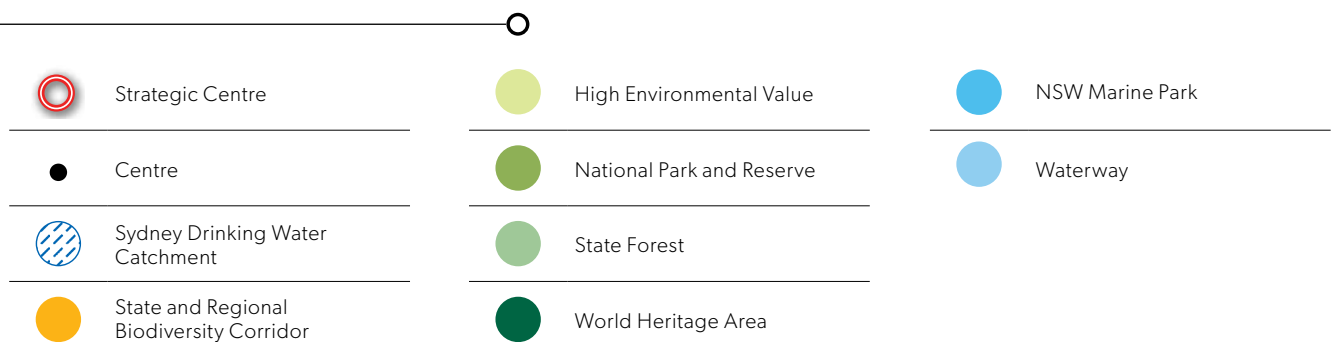


Figure 7: **Environmental Assets**



## **Direction 15: Enhance biodiversity connections**

Regional biodiversity corridors are native vegetation links within a region, between regions or between significant biodiversity features. They expand and link different habitats and are critical to long-term ecological connections, particularly in the context of long-term climate change.

Regional biodiversity corridors form part of the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative, to which the NSW Government is a partner. The initiative identifies biodiversity corridors across the continent, from the Grampians in Western Victoria to the wet tropics of Far North Queensland.<sup>16</sup>

Land uses within regional biodiversity corridors should maintain and, where possible, enhance ecological connectivity.

### **Actions**

- 15.1 Protect and enhance the function and resilience of biodiversity corridors in local strategies.
- 15.2 Improve planning authority access to regional biodiversity corridor mapping and methodology.
- 15.3 Confirm and validate the location and boundaries of regional biodiversity corridors.
- 15.4 Focus offsets from approved developments to regional biodiversity corridors, where possible.

### **Protecting sensitive urban lands on the South Coast**

The NSW Government's South Coast Sensitive Urban Lands Panel Review provides advice on planning outcomes for potential development sites in sensitive coastal locations on the South Coast (Long Beach, Malua Bay, Rosedale, Moruya Heads, Narooma South, Wallaga Lake, Bega South and West, Wolumla, Tathra River and Lake Merimbula).<sup>17</sup>

The Panel's recommendations are incorporated into planning for all sites and will continue to be considered for future land use planning decisions to protect and conserve sensitive coastal locations.

## **Direction 16: Protect the coast and increase resilience to natural hazards**

Most people live near areas subject to natural hazards. The appeal of these places is obvious, however, they may also come with challenges, such as flooding and bushfires.

Flooding is predicted to occur more frequently and with greater intensity in the future. Planning for new urban release areas and infill areas must consider the impact of climate change, including sea level rise, on flooding.

Councils are primarily responsible for flood risk management through the development and implementation of floodplain risk management plans. These plans are prepared in consultation with the local community and relevant agencies. They incorporate up-to-date information on regional climate projections and related impacts, and prioritise resilience to climate change in the siting and development of infrastructure and land uses.

The impacts of rising sea levels and climate change will be critical to managing coastal and floodplain risks. Relevant councils will need coastal zone management plans and associated controls to deal with current and potential erosion.

Other hazards, including bushfires, storms and landslips, may occur more frequently and, possibly, with greater intensity. These events may occur in areas that face development pressure.

### **Actions**

- 16.1 Locate development, including new urban release areas, away from areas of known high bushfire risk, flooding hazards or high coastal erosion/inundation; contaminated land; and designated waterways to reduce the community's exposure to natural hazards.
- 16.2 Implement the requirements of the NSW *Floodplain Development Manual* by developing, updating or implementing flood studies and floodplain risk management plans.
- 16.3 Update coastal zone/estuary management plans and prepare new coastal management programs to identify areas affected by coastal hazards.



- 16.4 Incorporate the best available hazard information in local environmental plans consistent with current flood studies, flood planning levels, modelling, floodplain risk management plans and coastal zone management plans.
- 16.5 Update and share current information on environmental assets and natural hazards with councils to inform planning decisions.
- 16.6 Manage risks associated with future urban growth in flood-prone areas as well as risks to existing communities.

### Enabling adaptation in the South East

The NSW Government's *South East Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment (2012)* identified regional climate change vulnerabilities and potential actions to reduce these vulnerabilities.

The assessment laid the foundations for the Enabling Adaptation in the South East project, which starts the planning process for government service delivery to sectors most vulnerable to climate change. It sets transition pathways for tourism, regional and agricultural centres, coastal development, mixed farming, dairy farming, landscapes and ecosystems, and infrastructure.

Wingecarribee Local Government Area will be incorporated into adaptation planning for the Illawarra region.

### Direction 17: Mitigate and adapt to climate change

Communities need skills and knowledge to deal with the effects of climate change. The NSW Climate Change Policy Framework and the draft *Climate Change Fund Strategic Plan* set policy directions and prioritise investment to reduce carbon emissions and adopt and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

The South East and Tablelands is the first region in NSW to implement a regional response within government to climate change, and this process has been adopted across NSW. The opportunity to work with the ACT Government (which undertook a parallel regional adaptation planning process and set similar policy targets) will allow the region to leverage the transition to a low emissions economy and prepare for climate change.

Preparedness will be enhanced by embedding emission reductions and climate change into business-as-usual planning, program delivery and governance. This will include initiatives to improve awareness of climate change impacts, strengthen natural ecosystems, safeguard public assets, support business and communities, unlock funds for communities to undertake adaptation strategies, and develop a services market to support adaptation strategies.

The infrastructure built today must consider the climate projections for the near future and, in some cases, the far future.

Building community capacity to deliver and own renewable energy, promoting the use of advanced technology vehicles, identifying low emission pathways for energy-intensive industries and improving access to start-up funding to accelerate innovation will help to reduce emissions and minimise energy consumption.





## Actions

- 17.1 Enhance government service delivery and implement local initiatives to address climate change impacts on local communities.
- 17.2 Collaborate with the ACT Government to reduce emissions and adopt adaptation strategies.
- 17.3 Support councils to assess and respond to impacts and opportunities associated with a changing climate.
- 17.4 Help communities and businesses to understand and respond to climate-related risks and opportunities by providing climate information, building capacity and unlocking financial mechanisms to help fund emission reductions and climate adaptation.

## Direction 18: Secure water resources

The future growth and development of the region, coupled with the uncertainties of drought and climate change, mean that long-term planning for water supply must be integrated into strategic planning. This planning must also consider the region as a source of potable water for Sydney.

In some areas, such as the Wingecarribee Local Government Area, water supply is comparatively secure – although much of Wingecarribee’s water resources flow north towards Sydney. Goulburn-Mulwaree Local Government Area has enhanced its water supply through the construction of an emergency pipeline from the Wingecarribee Reservoir. Hilltops Local Government Area includes areas that need to secure a sustainable water source for urban use, while the Yass Valley and Upper Lachlan local government areas face water security issues that are intensified by a changing climate. Eurobodalla Local Government Area can secure water resources by improving storage and reticulation to meet growth and environmental outcomes.

An acceptable reticulated water supply is required for any new land release or an increase in housing densities in existing areas. The provision of potable water must conform to the following water planning principles:

- a reliable supply to provide certainty for consumers (both residential and other);
- an affordable water supply in terms of both capital and recurring costs; and
- a quality of supply that meets relevant health standards.

In some areas, including Hilltops, Goulburn-Mulwaree and Upper Lachlan local government areas, securing an ongoing water supply for agricultural industries will bring economic opportunities.



Left: Woodlawn Wind Farm, Tarago

Above: Fishing, Merimbula

Parts of the region are covered by the Australian Government's *Murray-Darling Basin Plan* (2012) which sets out regional water use at environmentally sustainable levels by determining long-term 'average sustainable diversion limits'.

This is implemented through water sharing plans that include rules for managing extractions and licence holders, accounts, as well as water trading. Changes in water demand from different uses may require water to be reallocated over time.

## Actions

- 18.1 Locate, design, construct and manage new developments to minimise impacts on water catchments, including downstream impacts and groundwater sources.
- 18.2 Finalise water resource plans for rivers and groundwater systems as part of the *Murray-Darling Basin Plan* and implement water sharing plans.
- 18.3 Prepare or review integrated water cycle management strategies to ascertain long-term infrastructure needs to accommodate population growth.
- 18.4 Incorporate water sensitive urban design into development that is likely to impact water catchments, water quality and flows.

## Protecting the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment

Part of the region is located in the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, which supplies drinking water for almost 60 per cent of the State's population.<sup>18</sup> Protecting water quality and quantity in this catchment is essential for the health and security of communities in the region and Greater Sydney.

Rigorous planning and development controls apply to proposals within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment including:

- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Drinking Water Catchment) 2011*;
- local planning direction 5.2 Sydney Drinking Water Catchments, issued under Section 117(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*;
- the *Water NSW Act 2014* and the *Water NSW Regulation 2013*; and
- the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Under the *Water NSW Act 2014* and *Water NSW Regulation 2013*, land has been declared as parts of the Metropolitan, Woronora and Shoalhaven special areas, which are critical in protecting water quality in the storages.

The NSW Government has also announced the cancellation and buy-back of all petroleum exploration licences covering the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, including the special areas.<sup>19</sup>









# GOAL 3

## Healthy and connected communities

The South East and Tablelands is home to some of the most diverse communities in NSW, with a rich heritage; distinctive rural, alpine or coastal character; and strong relationships with Canberra. Retaining the region's distinctive character and appeal is essential.

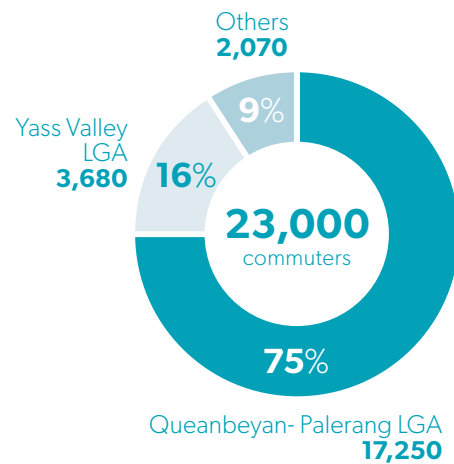
Some people travel to Canberra, Sydney or Wagga Wagga to access health, education and higher-order services. Canberra generates cross-border movements, especially for people commuting to work or school in the ACT.

As the population grows and changes, people will need better access to health and education services to sustain their standard of living.

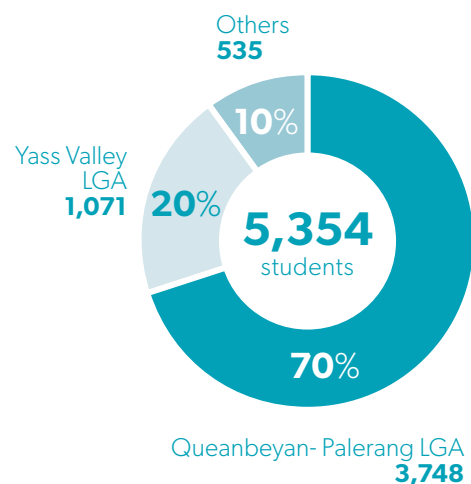
People want easy access to recreation and environmental areas, and best practice design features will integrate the planning for open space, public transport, walkways and cycleways. This will encourage healthy lifestyles and community engagement and help to manage the impacts of a changing climate.

The South East and Tablelands contains cultural heritage features that are important for Aboriginal communities. Effective and early consultation with the community on urban growth and development issues will enhance respect for cultural values and provide opportunities to pursue sustainable, social and economic outcomes for heritage assets.

**NSW Commuters to ACT**  
2011



**NSW Students Attending ACT Schools**  
2011





## **Direction 19: Strengthen cross-border connectivity**

Increased demand for housing in the areas bordering the ACT places pressure on roads and cross-border connectivity. Communities on both sides of the border have called for better integrated transport services.

For example, ACT buses are not authorised to travel into NSW and there are inconsistencies in fares, services and timetables between the State and Territory.

The ACT Government has identified an opportunity to increase access to the ACT for Queanbeyan commuters by providing park and ride connections to the Canberra Light Rail Network.

Achieving a seamless public transport connection between jurisdictions requires ongoing collaboration between the NSW and ACT Governments, which have commenced work on a cross-border transport model.

### **Actions**

- 19.1 Finalise a cross-border transport model that incorporates the ACT and the Queanbeyan-Palerang and Yass Valley local government areas.
- 19.2 Prepare an issues and options paper on cross-border public transport that maps public transport services and demand, and addresses legal and contractual barriers.

## **Direction 20: Enhance access to goods and services by improving transport connections**

One in three people in the region are projected to be over the age of 65 by 2036. This will require more trips for health, medical and recreation purposes. The dispersed settlement pattern and accessibility of public transport services can impact the way people access services and participate in the community.

Community transport provides older or mobility-impaired people, or people with a disability, with access to services and activities. Integrating community transport services into the public transport system will improve connections between centres and communities.

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

### **Actions**

- 20.1 Improve bus operations in centres and their connections with regional communities.
- 20.2 Work with community transport providers to meet future demand.
- 20.3 Integrate community transport services into the overall transport system to meet a broader range of needs.



## **Direction 21: Increase access to health and education services**

The NSW Government is looking at both short- and long-term plans to redevelop health campuses, with initial planning underway for the Goulburn, Cooma, Yass and Braidwood health services.

Bega's new South East Regional Hospital presents higher education development opportunities with links to the University of Wollongong. Planning for complementary health uses surrounding major health facilities can broaden the range of services available.

Schools near the NSW-ACT border face increased enrolments, and many schools have the capacity to use infrastructure more effectively. To achieve this, school catchment boundaries may be realigned and students directed to schools with surplus classrooms. Where appropriate, existing school assets will be renewed to provide contemporary learning spaces for students.

New schools, if required, will be established where there are no other sustainable options available within existing assets. Planning for new schools in regional NSW will consider the specific needs and characteristics of local student population trends. To improve curriculum choice, secondary schools may be combined.

Master planning for new urban release areas should optimise shared facilities for community and school uses.

Expanded tertiary education services and online access to education options will increase local access to services, particularly in smaller and isolated communities. Innovative concepts such as the Cooma Universities Centre will allow distance education students to complete studies in a building designed for educational services.

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

### **Actions**

- 21.1 Implement planning controls to grow complementary health uses around hospitals.
- 21.2 Work with the ACT Government to meet the growing and changing education needs of cross-border communities.
- 21.3 Facilitate joint venture opportunities to share community and education facilities.
- 21.4 Identify appropriate sites for cemeteries and crematoria in local strategies.



Left: Road bridge construction, Narooma

Above: University of Wollongong, Bega



## **Direction 22: Build socially inclusive, safe and healthy communities**

Neighbourhoods and centres will be environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, easy to access, healthy and safe. This is particularly important as the population ages and the climate changes.

The design and location of recreation facilities, sporting infrastructure, parks and public buildings should encourage people to be physically active where they work and in their neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood communities will reconnect with the surrounding landscape via walkways, cycleways and public transport. These networks will be considered for extension as part of planning for residential release areas and renewal sites.

With an older population, homes should be close to active and interesting public spaces, and should be well designed and adaptable. Adaptable housing has a flexible floor plan that enables simple modifications to suit the changing needs of residents. This allows people to stay in their own homes as they age, or as their level of mobility changes.

### **Actions**

- 22.1 Develop best-practice guidelines for planning, designing and developing healthy built environments and use the Neighbourhood Planning Principles (Appendix A) in local environmental plans, development control plans and local strategies in the interim.
- 22.2 Adopt elements of Livable Housing Australia's *Livable Housing Design Guidelines* in development controls for housing, where possible.
- 22.3 Integrate walking and cycling networks into the design of new communities to encourage physical activity.
- 22.4 Promote energy efficiency in new development proposals.

### **Increasing walking and cycling**

The South East and Tablelands has an extensive and expanding walking and cycling network focused on centres and access to waterways.

The design of the network needs to consider equal access, shade, landscaping, seating, water bubblers, rest points, signage, changes in surface treatments and end-of-trip facilities, such as showers and lockers.

Many councils use Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans to map and prioritise improvements to their networks.

Transport for NSW and councils co-create active lifestyle programs that:

- prioritise infrastructure improvements for footpaths and cycling tracks that lead to town centres, as well as improving access to transport interchanges; and
- use information and events to promote walking and cycling as a form of transport.

Well designed pedestrian and cycling options can link tourism areas. Examples in the South East and Tablelands include:

- the development of the Bundian Way as a cultural trail, linking the Snowy Mountains with Eden; and
- the potential use of non-operational railway lines as rail trails (including Goulburn to Crookwell, Bungendore to Captains Flat, and Monaro) subject to further community consultation and relevant legislative requirements.





## **Direction 23: Protect the region's heritage**

Cultural and historic heritage provides tangible connections to the past and attracts tourists. The landscape of the South East and Tablelands also creates an important cultural identity for its community, including the Lake George sand deposits; cultural landscapes between Gulaga and Biamanga national parks; remnant vegetation within roadside corridors; and Travelling Stock Reserves in Hilltops Local Government Area.

The Aboriginal community has strong links to the coastal, rural and alpine landscapes. The process of protecting and preserving Aboriginal heritage gives Aboriginal people the opportunity to be involved in and consulted about the conservation of their heritage.

Heritage is irreplaceable and should be appreciated, valued and protected for the benefit of current and future generations. Harm to Aboriginal objects and places, or areas of significance to Aboriginal people, should be avoided. Where impacts on Aboriginal and historic heritage cannot be avoided, appropriate heritage management mechanisms must be implemented.

Areas of high growth can have cumulative impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage values and historic places. Early investment at the strategic planning stage can protect and preserve heritage and provide greater certainty for stakeholders during the development assessment process.

Interpreting and adaptively re-using built heritage items gives smaller communities a new lease on life. Heritage conservation can renew main streets, using an area's authenticity and history to attract new businesses, residents and tourists. This can also build economic resilience in smaller communities.

### **Actions**

- 23.1 Undertake and implement heritage studies, including regional Aboriginal cultural heritage studies, to inform local strategies.
- 23.2 Consult with Aboriginal people and the broader community to identify heritage values at the strategic planning stage.
- 23.3 Conserve heritage assets during local strategic planning and development.
- 23.4 Provide resources for heritage advice to inform planning processes.
- 23.5 Acknowledge cultural heritage assets where appropriate, and consider how these assets can add value to a development.
- 23.6 Enhance heritage data sharing between NSW and ACT to support joint conservation planning.



Left: Merimbula coastal walk

Above: Historic Goulburn





# GOAL 4

## Environmentally sustainable housing choices

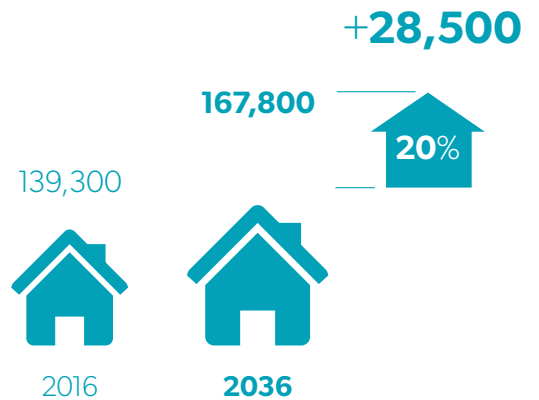
Population growth and the associated increase in new homes is influenced by the lifestyle available within commuting distance of Canberra and Sydney, the development of vibrant strategic centres and the amenity of coastal communities. Seventy per cent of the region's population growth to 2036 is projected to occur in the areas that share a border with the ACT.

Tourism will also influence housing demand, with growth in holiday lettings expected along the South Coast and the Snowy Mountains.

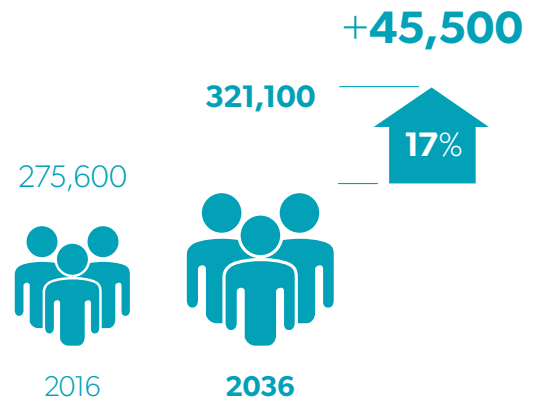
At least 28,500 new homes will be needed by 2036 to meet population growth and change. Providing the land and the infrastructure to meet this demand is central to this Plan. New housing must be located to take account of the character, environmental and agricultural qualities and capacity of the land, with an emphasis on residents access to services, jobs and transport.

The South East and Tablelands will continue to offer a variety of housing options from urban lifestyles in regional centres with shops, restaurants and services, to rural residential, coastal and alpine lifestyles.

### Dwellings Growth Forecast 2016-2036



### Population Growth Forecast 2016-2036





## Direction 24: Deliver greater housing supply and choice

Having a ready supply of well located land for residential development will create downward pressure on house prices, maximise the use of existing infrastructure and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

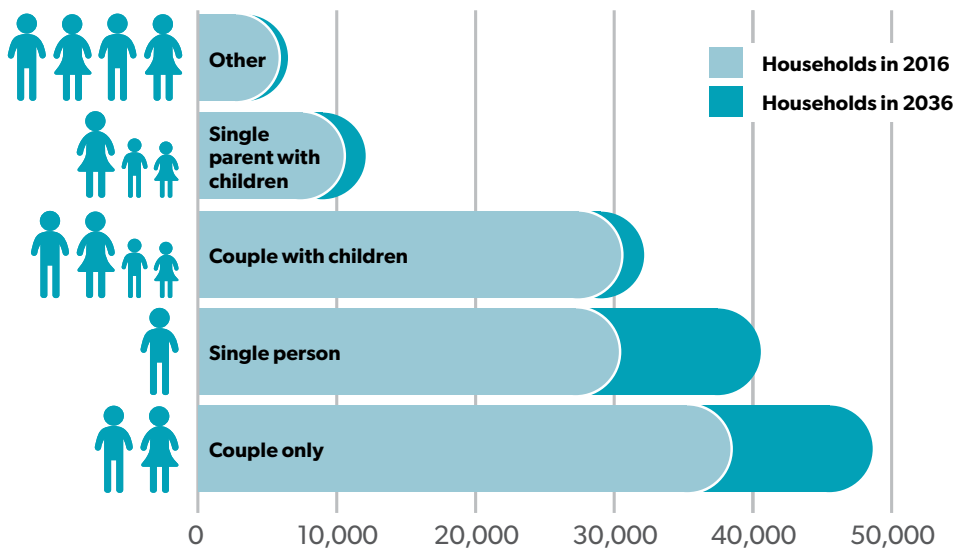
Local housing strategies prepared by councils are the first step in identifying housing needs and planning for a range of housing types. These strategies enable communities to assess the broader implications and consequences of identifying locations for proposed new housing. They also help identify the infrastructure needed to support local communities.

Local housing strategies need to consider community aspirations. They must be flexible and responsive to shifts in local housing markets for both greenfield and infill developments, and deal with unforeseen constraints, including uneven rates of development or unexpected population growth.

These strategies should plan for a range of housing choices, including retirement villages, nursing homes and opportunities to modify existing dwellings to enable people to stay in their homes as they age.

The strategies should be consistent with Settlement Planning Principles that align with the Memorandum of Understanding between the NSW and ACT Governments. These will be complemented by guidelines for local housing strategies that will assist councils when undertaking local strategic planning.

## Household Composition Forecast 2016-2036





Existing planning strategies show there is enough zoned land with development potential for the market to supply housing in a range of locations. There are opportunities for Wingecarribee and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas to review their capacity to provide an ongoing supply of land for both greenfield and infill development.

Greater housing choice in existing centres is needed to cater for the decrease in the average household size. Planning will need to cater for a rise in the number of single person households, a decrease in the number of occupants in each household, more affordable housing, the needs of tourists and an ageing population.

Focusing growth in existing centres rather than isolated land releases is a sustainable option because it takes advantage of existing job markets, commercial and retail opportunities, and infrastructure such as public transport.

## Actions

- 24.1 Prepare guidelines for local housing strategies.
- 24.2 Prepare local housing strategies consistent with the Settlement Planning Principles to provide a surplus supply of residential land to meet projected housing needs.
- 24.3 Promote increased housing choice, including townhouses, villas and apartments in strategic centres and locations close to existing services and jobs.
- 24.4 Promote opportunities for retirement villages, nursing homes and similar housing for seniors in local housing strategies.

## Settlement Planning Principles

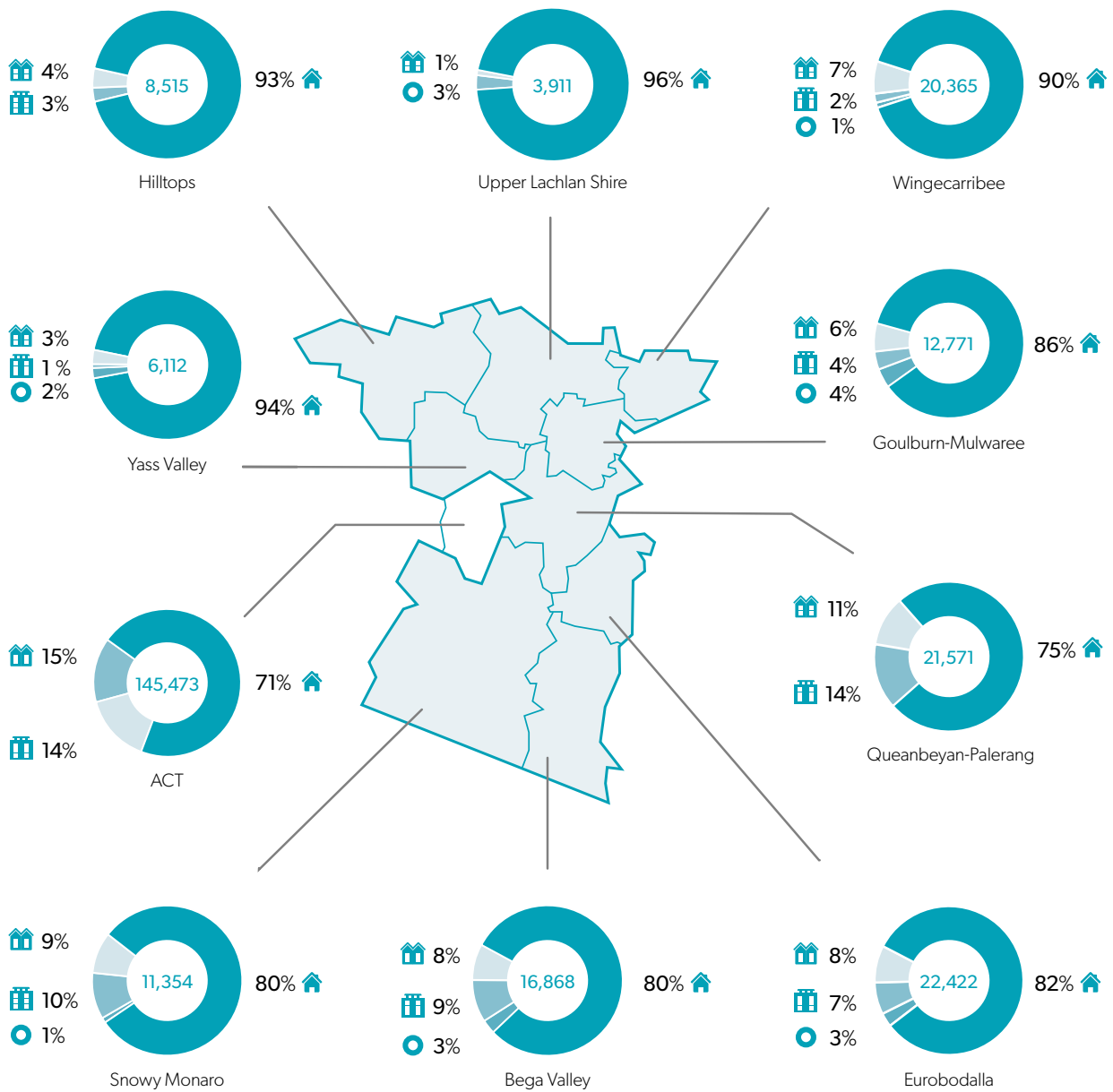
Local housing strategies focus on urban areas where residents can access services, jobs and transport. Some strategies will need to acknowledge connections to Canberra as a location for higher-order services and employment.

Decisions around the most suitable locations for new housing must consider the compatibility of land uses, as well as the availability of road connections and service infrastructure. Other considerations include:

- avoiding or mitigating the impacts of hazards, including the implications of climate change;
- protecting areas with high environmental value and/or cultural heritage value and important biodiversity corridors;
- identifying a sustainable water supply;
- protecting the region's water supply and the environmental qualities of rivers and streams;
- considering the impact of aircraft noise;
- protecting areas that contain important resources and minimising the potential for land use conflict;
- protecting important agricultural land to capitalise on its potential to produce food and fibre now and in the future; and
- identifying and designing new neighbourhoods so they are environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, easy to get to, healthy and safe.



Figure 8: **Dwelling types in South East and Tablelands and ACT (2011)**



- Separate house
- Townhouse
- Flat/apartment
- Other



## Direction 25: Focus housing growth in locations that maximise infrastructure and services

Pressure for housing in NSW is driven by ACT policies for more compact settlement and housing affordability. Demand for lower density or semi-rural housing in NSW is leading to development proposals that are inconsistent with current planning strategies in areas close to the NSW-ACT border – mostly within Yass Valley Local Government Area. These proposals could undermine sustainable urban outcomes from identified new urban areas and place undue pressure on infrastructure capacity.

New growth areas located away from established areas will only be supported where it is demonstrated that supporting infrastructure will be delivered and development will not undermine the approach to growth identified in the relevant local housing strategy.

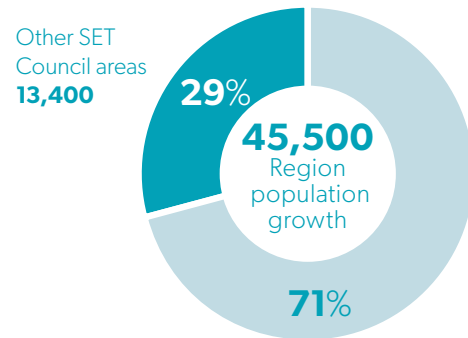
Development proposals that are inconsistent with current planning strategies will be required to show how they meet the Settlement Planning Principles and:

- achieve sustainable urban outcomes that do not undermine existing strategic and local centres;
- resolve servicing and access issues with a particular focus on water availability and servicing; and
- are of sufficient scale and capacity to provide infrastructure at no cost to government.

## Actions

- 25.1 Focus future settlement to locations that:
- maximise existing infrastructure and services and minimise the need for new services;
  - prioritise increased densities within existing urban areas; and
  - prioritise new release areas that are an extension of existing strategic and local centres.
- 25.2 Plan for and prioritise services and infrastructure investment to maximise cost efficiencies, coordinate the delivery of different infrastructure assets, and achieve equitable sharing of responsibility, including funding, procurement and ongoing maintenance.

## Population Growth Forecast 2016-2036



Queanbeyan-Palerang, Yass Valley and Snowy Monaro LGAs  
**32,100**



Left: Goulburn housing

Above: Local playground, Googong



## **Direction 26: Coordinate infrastructure and water supply in a cross-border setting**

Demand and supply of land and housing in the ACT and surrounding areas are inter-related. They operate within the same housing market. This has implications for infrastructure, water supply and service delivery by both jurisdictions.

The population of the Yass Valley and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas is expected to grow to 109,600 by 2036, which will require 15,050 new dwellings – more than 50 per cent of the region’s projected dwelling demand. These councils have indicated that existing release areas have capacity for almost 18,000 new dwellings in places such as Googong, South Jerrabomberra, Yass, Murrumbateman and the proposed cross-border development at Parkwood.

Coordinating the funding and delivery of infrastructure in a cross-border setting requires cooperation between jurisdictions and an understanding of their different governance and budgetary structures. Further work is required to create a consistent approach to infrastructure funding and delivery.

The availability of water will continue to drive or limit the amount and location of urban development. Significant work on the provision of water from the ACT will service the proposed development at Parkwood. However, future growth that requires the support of the ACT water and wastewater network would be subject to negotiations that may involve:

- sustainable diversion limits;
- trading of water entitlements;
- a bilateral agreement between jurisdictions requiring Cabinet endorsement; and
- a commercial agreement with Icon Water Limited that will require consideration of its business model, business cases for development and competing servicing priorities.

A cross-border land and housing monitor will better track and forecast housing and employment land releases. This will improve information about supply and demand and the infrastructure and service implications arising from growth, particularly in locations close to the ACT.

### **Actions**

- 26.1 Coordinate the provision of services and infrastructure required to support housing delivery in the Yass Valley and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas, including South Jerrabomberra and Parkwood.
- 26.2 Develop an agreed set of principles to inform a new cross-border infrastructure funding model.
- 26.3 Develop a regional water strategy for the Yass Valley and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas that clarifies the requirements, available volumes and quality of all water supplies and defines the optimal level of water use.
- 26.4 Enhance cross-jurisdictional collaboration to develop a coordinated strategic approach to water supply and investigate water supply options for growth areas.
- 26.5 Work with the ACT Government to develop a cross-border land and housing monitor.







## Water supply in the Yass Valley and Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas

Water is supplied to Queanbeyan by the ACT Government under the terms of the Queanbeyan Water Supply Agreement (2008). In the case of Yass Valley and parts of Queanbeyan-Palerang local government areas, water supply is managed by each council under the *Water Management Act 2000* and relevant water sharing plans.

The supply of water and sewer services in the ACT is driven by demand and provided by Icon Water. Icon Water is a Territory-owned corporation that delivers water to the ACT and Queanbeyan under the Queanbeyan Water Supply Agreement.

The Yass Dam is the main storage area for the Yass Valley Local Government Area. The dam wall has been raised to increase capacity. A pipeline from Yass to Murrumbateman is proposed to provide reticulated water to service the first stages of urban growth at Murrumbateman. Further growth of Murrumbateman will require support from the ACT for the provision of water. There is also demand for development in Bungendore, which must consider how to secure long-term water supplies.

Icon Water supports cross-border cooperation in water and sewerage matters. This includes mutual information-sharing (resources, knowledge and capabilities) between Icon Water and councils, particularly Snowy Monaro, Queanbeyan-Palerang and Yass Valley local government areas.

## Direction 27: Deliver more opportunities for affordable housing

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

- affordable housing contributions to fund the provision of new housing by community housing providers;
- planning and development controls to facilitate affordable housing development by local community housing organisations.

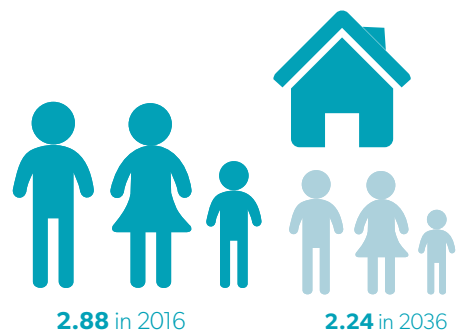
Incentives to influence housing affordability include planning incentives, such as increases in density, and new generation boarding houses and secondary dwellings, such as granny flats.

### Actions

- 27.1 Deliver greater housing affordability by incorporating policies and tools into local housing strategies and local planning controls that will enable a greater variety of housing types and incentivise private investment in affordable housing.
- 27.2 Facilitate greater housing diversity, including studios and one- and two-bedroom dwellings, to match forecast changes in household sizes.

### Average Household Size

2016-2036



## **Direction 28: Manage rural lifestyles**

Local housing strategies are the first step in identifying rural residential housing needs and understanding local supply. They also identify the infrastructure needed to support rural communities.

Rural residential development can conflict with environmental and agricultural lands, and impact water catchments due to the proliferation of dams and bores. Water supply to these developments, especially in stressed river catchments, has led to a water licensing embargo in the Yass River valley in the past.

Rural residential housing in areas of intact bushland presents bushfire risks. The clearing for house sites, bushfire asset protection and associated infrastructure, particularly local roads, has led to high clearing rates. Clearing associated with rural residential subdivision is currently the major source of vegetation removal in the South Coast and Southern Tablelands.

A consistent planning approach will identify suitable locations for new rural residential development that avoids fragmentation of productive agricultural land and lessens the impact on high environmental value assets, cultural and heritage assets, or areas with important rural landscapes. Rural residential development should not increase pressure on infrastructure and services, and should be located on land free from natural hazards.

## **Actions**

- 28.1 Enable new rural residential development only where it has been identified in a local housing strategy prepared by council and approved by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- 28.2 Locate new rural residential areas:
- close to existing urban settlements to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, including roads, water, sewer and waste services, and social and community infrastructure;
  - to avoid and minimise the potential for land use conflicts with productive, zoned agricultural land and natural resources; and
  - to avoid areas of high environmental, cultural and heritage significance, important agricultural land and areas affected by natural hazards.
- 28.3 Manage land use conflict that can result from cumulative impacts of successive development decisions.







Figure 9: **Local government areas of the South East and Tablelands**



Strategic Centre



# Local Government Narratives

The NSW Government will work with each council to deliver the directions and actions set out in this Plan. This section includes priorities for individual councils to guide further investigation and implementation.

The priorities build on the directions and actions in this Plan to achieve desired outcomes on the ground. Planning will encourage infrastructure delivery and target the needs of communities. It will also encourage more efficient allocation of resources and investment to improve the liveability and sustainability of the region.

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

## Bega

With 40 per cent of the Shire in National Parks or public reserves and a 225 - kilometre coastline encompassing 101 beaches and 29 estuaries, the Bega Valley Shire environment is a natural advantage that underpins the economy and the quality of life enjoyed by 33,000 residents. Agricultural lands encompass 27 per cent of the Shire and are principally home to dairy, beef and fodder-production enterprises.

Bega's natural advantage can attract new enterprise and industry, as well as emerging industries, market trends and technological advancement.

Bega Valley is predicted to grow by 2,650 people by 2036, requiring an additional 2,350 dwellings. Bega is the Shire's strategic centre and serves as an administrative, education and business hub. The major coastal towns of Merimbula, Pambula, Bermagui, Tathra and Eden satisfy residential and tourism needs. These towns experience a three-fold boost in their populations during the summer peak. On average, Bega Valley Shire receives over 820,000 visitors annually, spending around \$350 million each year.

The expansion of the Port of Eden, Merimbula Airport upgrade and the opening of the South East Regional Hospital are vital to the local economy. Improving transport links to the

Monaro, ACT and inland areas of NSW will continue to increase domestic and international tourism, grow and diversify local food production and attract industry and new businesses to the Bega Valley Shire.

## Priorities

- Continue to expand local health and educational facilities, with targeted attraction and recognition of research and innovation opportunities along with excellence in agritech and other sectors.
- Improve transport links between the Port of Eden and the Monaro, ACT and Hume rail and road corridor.
- Protect and enhance Bega Valley's environmental values, underpinning the smart growth of towns and the tourism industry.

## Economy and employment

- Leverage economic growth from infrastructure improvements at the Port of Eden through new and improved transport links.
- Promote and support the Shire as a base for innovation and entrepreneurs.
- Grow a unique, flexible and innovative agricultural industry, including a regional food brand.

## Housing

- Ensure residential growth in the coastal zone does not impact Bega's natural advantage.
- Consolidate rural residential growth in high demand catchments near existing developments and infrastructure.
- Implement long-term development plans for the Shire's villages.

## Eurobodalla

Eurobodalla Local Government Area has a strong rural and coastal heritage and Aboriginal culture. Its natural environment to the east is dominated by beaches, rivers, bays, lakes, inlets, wetlands, and dramatic rock formations and headlands. To the west are large areas of coastal wilderness, primarily in national parks and state forests. The economy—originally built on dairying, forestry and fishing—is now based around tourism, agriculture, aquaculture, retail, property and health services.

Eurobodalla Local Government Area is predicted to grow by 2,200 people by 2036, requiring an additional 3,000 dwellings, due to its ageing population and decreasing household size. Planning for population growth over the next 20 years will need to minimise impacts on the environment and other assets that existing residents enjoy. While there is sufficient land zoned to accommodate the anticipated growth, development must be environmentally sensitive, and new residential areas must be adequately serviced with community and transport infrastructure.

Batemans Bay will continue to be the main retail and commercial centre. It will be supported by a mix of new development including retail, commercial, residential and tourist accommodation. Moruya and Narooma will continue to function as local centres that will grow to support and provide services to their surrounding communities. In addition, Eurobodalla's many unique and character-filled coastal and rural villages will continue to offer a range of lifestyle choices.

Economic planning will strengthen the qualities that attract people to the area: high quality tourism and recreation opportunities; innovative agriculture; food and rural tourism; and heritage, cultural and natural experiences. In addition, improvements to transport and telecommunications infrastructure and education and health services will attract more clean, green and knowledge-based businesses and industries.

## Priorities

- Improve transport, communications and other infrastructure.
- Redevelop Moruya Airport to facilitate economic development and tourism.
- Re-develop the Mackay Park Precinct in Batemans Bay.
- Protect and enhance the natural environment to ensure ecosystems remain resilient.
- Strengthen the natural and cultural experiences that attract residents and visitors and provide a high quality of life.

## Economy and employment

- Develop a more diverse and growing economy.
- Grow tourism, maximise the opportunities of Canberra Airport, and position Eurobodalla as an iconic nature-based and regional food destination.
- Grow and diversify the area's agricultural and aquaculture, including value-added activities, access to national and international markets, and innovative industries.
- Support new and emerging job opportunities associated with knowledge-intensive industries and digital technology.
- Secure additional employment land.

## Housing

- Encourage more diverse and affordable housing choices, particularly for older people.
- Plan for sustainable land release communities.

## Goulburn-Mulwaree

As Australia's first inland city, Goulburn is a strategic centre rich in heritage, contemporary services and natural beauty. Goulburn and its surrounding towns and villages – including Marulan, Tallong, Windellama, Tarago, Towrang, Lake Bathurst and Bungonia – combine an easygoing lifestyle and city accessibility. Residents take pride in the city's heritage and modern assets, strong arts and emerging entertainment scene, and economic opportunities.

Investment in services and assets include a wastewater treatment facility; upgraded aquatic centre and adventure playground; and a CBD enhancement program. Cultural projects like the Wollondilly Walking Track and adaptive re-use of a heritage building for a Performing Arts Centre contribute to community life.

Affordable housing, a better cost of living and proximity to Canberra and Sydney, with easy access to the South Coast and the Snowy Mountains, attract new residents. Goulburn-Mulwaree's population is projected to increase by at least 4,700 people by 2036, requiring more than 3,000 new dwellings. While the city is expected to accommodate most of this growth, it will be a challenge to balance mixed uses and densities, valued heritage assets, affordable housing prices and access to essential services.

Goulburn-Mulwaree Local Government Area has expanded from traditional agricultural, with the region's largest employers being health care and social assistance, retail, trade, and public administration and safety. Hard rock and limestone extraction at Marulan and the region's only bioreactor at Tarago contribute to local and national construction markets.

As an accessible location on Australia's arterial highway, home to an intermodal rail transport facility, and an hour from Canberra's 24-hour international freight airport, Goulburn-Mulwaree is prepared for globalisation. An increasing number of start-ups, businesses and industries are taking advantage of the cost-effective opportunities and range of supporting and serviceable businesses.

## Priorities

- Continue to develop Goulburn as an inland transport hub to connect the region to local and global markets.
- Build capacity and self-sufficiency to create a resilient community.
- Create and maintain connected natural areas across the landscape for ecosystem functioning and biodiversity conservation.
- Sustainably manage natural resources using best practices and regional collaboration with key stakeholders.

## Economy and employment

- Support the resources, transport, health care and tourism sectors to facilitate employment and economic growth.
- Strengthen relationships and opportunities with Western Sydney and Canberra to grow the local economy.
- Grow existing businesses by establishing networks and providing information to business owners and business groups.
- Facilitate opportunities for education and development of the workforce, particularly in growing sectors.
- Develop a proud, active and safe culture, including a night-time economy within the Goulburn CBD, to attract skilled workers.

## Housing

- Diversify the housing market to respond to demographic change and pre-empt housing affordability pressures.
- Promote successful adaptive heritage, re-use opportunities and conserve the area's unique built heritage.
- Encourage design innovation and quality outcomes to complement the natural and built heritage with modern architecture.

## Hilltops

Located one and a half hours from Canberra and less than four hours from Sydney, Hilltops Local Government Area is a diverse agricultural and horticultural area that is renowned for its picturesque countryside and fresh produce.

Known as the 'Cherry Capital of Australia', it is home to the National Cherry Festival and is increasingly recognised for producing quality cool climate wines and foods such as organic lamb, pork, duck, beef, free range chickens, diverse grains, olive oils, cherries, plums, prunes, peaches and apricots. Agricultural production is estimated at \$269 million.<sup>20</sup>

The strategic centre of Young delivers local retail, commercial and community services and a high quality of life for residents and visitors. The Hilltops Local Government Area is also home to smaller rural towns and villages, including the local centres of Harden and Boorowa, home of the Irish Woolfest and the Running of the Sheep events. The population of these communities is changing, with 30 per cent expected to be over 65 by 2036 (up from 24 per cent in 2016), and the number of people under 14 expected to increase to 22 per cent (up from 18 per cent).

Hilltops Local Government Area is adjacent to the Upper Lachlan and Yass Valley local government areas and is bordered by the Riverina-Murray region to the south west and Central West and Orana region to the north. The Main Southern Rail line traverses the area and is an important freight link.

## Priorities

- Capitalise on economic, housing and servicing opportunities arising from the area's proximity to Canberra, including advances in technology to create smart work opportunities.
- Enhance community access to jobs, goods and services.
- Address land management issues that could impact agricultural productivity and viability, including erosion, salinity, weed management, on-farm practices and management of the water table.

## Economy and employment

- Grow and diversify the area's agricultural base, including value-add activities, expansion into agricultural research and technology and access to national and international markets.
- Capitalise on value-add opportunities in food processing with the growth of intensive farming industries.
- Leverage regional assets such as the region's quality wines and cherries to promote tourism.
- Capitalise on the area's freight links north and west off the Hume Highway.

## Housing

- Grow housing in Young, Boorowa and Harden.
- Support the unique character of the region's village and rural lifestyle.
- Enhance the variety of housing options to cater for an ageing population.
- Work with stakeholders to secure a sustainable water source for urban use.



## Queanbeyan-Palerang

Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area is home to historic towns and villages, productive rural activities, modern urban centres and high quality natural environments. It is adjacent to the ACT and is influenced by the activities of the ACT and Australian governments.

The rural character of Bungendore and Braidwood contrast with the largely suburban character of Queanbeyan. Proximity to Canberra means many residents live in NSW while travelling to the ACT for work. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council has formalised its relationship with the ACT to facilitate joint efforts such as an integrated transport strategy.

Natural areas include pristine streams and forests containing a diversity of flora and fauna, high-value grasslands and woodlands, and important biodiversity corridors linking to the ACT and beyond. High wind paths suit wind farms for renewable energy generation. The increasing interest in solar power generation is similar to that underway in the ACT, as well, interest in wind power continues.

Employment in public administration, defence, transport, professional, scientific and technical services is expected to continue, particularly given the relationship with Canberra. Traditional industries include sheep and cattle grazing, stone fruit production and newer niche rural industries such as viticulture, organic farming, olive production, truffle growing and alpaca breeding.

Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area is expected to require an additional 12,050 dwellings to accommodate 25,050 more people by 2036. Residential growth areas include Googong and Bungendore, and the proposed South Jerrabomberra. The availability of water will continue to influence the amount and location of additional urban development, particularly in areas such as Bungendore.

## Priorities

- Work with the ACT Government to improve road and active transport connectivity and public transport integration; manage water, sewage, waste and renewable energy on a regional scale; plan and collaborate on major contiguous developments; plan for infrastructure requirements to support population growth; and support major events.
- Protect and enhance the area's high environmental value lands, waterways and water catchments.

## Economy and employment

- Continue to identify opportunities for economic growth flowing from the activities of the ACT, NSW and Australian governments.
- Diversify the agriculture industry, including opportunities for value-added activities and access to national and international markets.
- Encourage small-scale intensive animal production where this can be done without compromising the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.
- Leverage the area's existing expertise in renewable energy to foster innovative economic development opportunities.

## Housing

- Coordinate the delivery of infrastructure for new release areas.
- Provide further opportunities for residential development where it is supported by a strategic approach to housing.
- Limit proposals for rural residential development to areas identified through an appropriate strategic planning process.
- Work with stakeholders to secure suitable services, including water, to support residential development in approved locations.
- Improve the attractiveness and amenity of main streets in towns and villages while retaining the rural ambience.

## Snowy Monaro

The Snowy Monaro Local Government Area attracts many visitors each year for recreation and relaxation. It is home to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, which produced around 30 per cent of all renewable energy generated in the eastern Australian grid in 2014.<sup>21</sup> It is located south of the ACT, with the NSW-Victoria border as its southern boundary. To its east is the South Coast, and to its west is the Riverina-Murray region.

Tourism contributes \$500 million to the regional economy each year and accounts for 27 per cent of the South East and Tablelands total economic contribution from tourism. In 2016, the Snowy Mountains welcomed more than 1.3 million overnight international, domestic and day-trip visitors.

The east of the area is known for its fine wool, beef cattle, timber and lavender production. A growing link with Eden is developing through the forestry and tourism industries. Other initiatives such as the development of the Bundian Way – the traditional Aboriginal route from the coast to the mountains – as a hiking trail improves tourism and cultural links with the coast.

The Snowy Monaro is known for its Aboriginal and European heritage and high environmental value lands, from the high plateaus of the Monaro Plains, the Snowy Mountains and the headwaters of the Snowy and Murrumbidgee Rivers. These values support quality lifestyles and a strong tourism market. The unique landscape creates a strong sense of place and identity. Kosciusko National Park is a significant natural asset that supports employment and recreational opportunities.

Cooma is a strategic centre providing business, retail and entertainment uses. It services a significantly larger population during peak tourist times, particularly the winter ski season. The area is also home to the local centres of Jindabyne and Bombala. The population of Snowy Monaro is ageing, with 27 per cent of the population predicted to be over 65 by 2036.

### Priorities

- Protect the unique alpine environment including scenic landscape qualities, acknowledging it as a cornerstone of the area's visitor economy.
- Recognise Cooma as a strategic centre, particularly in the winter months when the population swells.
- Enhance community access to jobs, goods and services by improving connections.

### Economy and employment

- Create a diverse and strong year-round tourism sector by maximising the opportunities associated with international flights at Canberra Airport and cruise ship visitation at the Port of Eden, and promoting year-round visitation in alpine areas.
- Grow and diversify the area's agricultural base, including opportunities for value-added activities, and capitalise on access to national and international markets.
- Capitalise on the area's proximity to Canberra to attract industry and investment, including advances in technology to create smart work opportunities.
- Embed water security as feature of the area to attract certain industries.

### Housing

- Promote well planned, efficient and sustainable development that complements the area's natural and cultural values.
- Increase housing in Cooma, Jindabyne and Bombala.
- Support the unique character of the area's village and rural lifestyle.
- Enhance the variety of housing options to cater for an ageing population.
- Leverage the area's access and proximity to Canberra to create new opportunities for housing.

## Upper Lachlan

The Upper Lachlan Local Government Area sits on the Great Dividing Range and is bounded by the Abercrombie, Wollondilly and Lachlan rivers. At the centre of the Shire is Crookwell, two and a half hours from Sydney and one hour from Canberra. Most people live in Gunning, Collector, Taralga, Dalton, Binda, Tuena, Grabben Gullen, Laggan, Breadalbane, Jerrawa and Bigga.

The area's villages have a rich history, particularly the stone architecture of Taralga, the gold mining history of Tuena, the fine wool heritage of Gunning and Bigga, and the bushranging past of Collector, Binda and Breadalbane.

The Upper Lachlan Local Government Area will see a 36 per cent growth in the number of people aged over 65 by 2036. The area has a population of around 8,000, with Crookwell and Gunning providing a health and medical service, a fire brigade, police services, banking, a post office and retail offerings.

Agriculture continues to underscore the economic and social fabric of the Shire, which is well known for its fine wool and potato production. Tourism is also a major economic driver. Wind farms are becoming an important part of the economic landscape, with the area home to the largest wind energy generator in NSW at Gullen Range.

## Priorities

- Protect and enhance the area's high environmental value lands, waterways and water catchments.
- Protect important agricultural lands as resources for food security.
- Protect the area's valued heritage assets.

## Economy and employment

- Capitalise on the area's proximity to Canberra and Sydney to attract industry and investment, including using advances in technology to create smart work opportunities.
- Promote the area as a destination and attract visitors from Canberra and Sydney.
- Leverage the area's existing expertise in renewable energy to foster innovative economic development opportunities.
- Diversify the agriculture industry, including opportunities for value-added activities and access to national and international markets.

## Housing

- Support the rural lifestyle and the unique cultural and historic heritage of the area's villages.
- Support a variety of housing options and land developments to cater for an ageing population.

## Wingecarribee

Within easy reach of Canberra, Sydney and the Illawarra, Wingecarribee Local Government Area is home to national parks, rural landscapes and historic country villages and towns. The traditional owners of Wingecarribee are the Gundungurra and D'harawal people. This area is recognised for its impressive 19th and 20th Century buildings and streetscapes. Berrima was the second settlement in the region and is the last remaining, largely intact, Georgian-period town on mainland Australia.

Over 103,000 hectares of land is either national parks or nature reserves, representing 38 per cent of the Local Government Area. Almost the entire Shire is located within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.

The population is expected to grow by 4,050 people by 2036, requiring an additional 3,300 dwellings. By 2036, 27 per cent of the population will be aged over 65.

Moss Vale, Bowral and Mittagong service the needs of its residents for government administration, education, health and retail opportunities.

Direct links to the Hume Highway, the M7 and the main North-South rail line and dedicated freight line to Port Kembla provide access to Sydney's economic markets. Almost 16 per cent of the resident workforce commutes to Sydney.

Tourism offers an array of activities and attractions including wineries, the Bradman Museum, and the Tulip Time Festival. Each year Wingecarribee Local Government Area has an average of 1.3 million visitors staying 925,000 nights, and spending approximately \$220 million a year.

## Priorities

- Protect high environmental value lands including regionally significant biodiversity corridors.
- Protect the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.
- Protect important agricultural lands as a resource for food security.
- Protect the Shire's valued heritage assets.
- Provide ongoing access to high quality health and education services.

## Economy and employment

- Capitalise on economic opportunities arising from the area's proximity to Sydney.
- Capitalise on the land availability in the Moss Vale Enterprise Corridor to attract industry and investment.
- Grow and diversify the area's agricultural base, including value-added activities, and capitalise on access to national and international markets in Sydney.
- Promote the Shire as a destination and encourage visitors to Canberra to also visit Wingecarribee Shire.

## Housing

- Strategically plan for residential growth in existing urban areas and greenfield areas.
- Increase housing in Moss Vale, Bowral and Mittagong.
- Protect the unique character of the Shire's village and rural lifestyle.
- Enhance the variety of housing options to cater for an ageing population.

## Yass Valley

Yass Valley Local Government Area has a proud heritage connection to early rural Australia, a modern food and wine scene, and a thriving arts culture. With its historic buildings, Burrinjuck Dam and cool climate wineries, it is an attractive place for visitors.

Yass supports a business district, hospital, medical services, schools and a TAFE. The local centre of Murrumbateman will experience substantial growth over the next 20 years.

The population is expected to increase by at least 6,250 people by 2036, requiring more than 3,000 new dwellings. Yass and Murrumbateman will accommodate the majority of this growth, maximising investment in infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer. The villages of Binalong, Bookham, Bowning, Gundaroo, Sutton and Wee Jasper are expected to retain their small village character and only accommodate minimal growth. Yass Valley Local Government Area is also home to the proposed cross-border development at Parkwood.

The area consists of predominantly productive rural lands and rural residential properties. Even though Yass provides residents with many services, its proximity to Canberra means people travel there for higher order services, health and tertiary education.

Grassland plains, gently rolling hills and green valleys give way to the spectacular Brindabella Ranges. The eastern part of the Local Government Area is in the Southern Eastern Highland Bioregion, while the western part is in the NSW South Western Slopes Bioregion.

Diversified rural products and emerging agricultural industries include wine, alpaca studs, olives and berries. Tourism will continue to be a significant economic driver, with opportunities to capitalise on tourists accessing the region from Canberra Airport.

## Priorities

- Work with stakeholders to provide critical community infrastructure, including educational services.
- Create efficient cross-border connections.
- Protect and maintain the area's high environmental value lands and heritage assets.
- Protect and rehabilitate waterways and catchments.

## Economy and employment

- Foster regional access to agricultural export opportunities through Canberra Airport.
- Capitalise on the area's proximity to Canberra to attract industry and investment.
- Promote the area as a destination that visitors to Canberra should also visit.
- Foster and develop a diverse, adaptive and innovative agricultural industry.

## Housing

- Focus housing on existing centres rather than isolated land releases.
- Work with stakeholders to secure a sustainable water source for urban use.
- Identify and manage the efficient delivery of services to the proposed Parkwood development.



# Appendix A

## Neighbourhood Planning Principles

The Neighbourhood Planning Principles provide overarching principles that may apply to new developments in both greenfield and existing urban areas. The application of the principles may apply more strongly depending on the context of the proposed development.

- Public transport networks that link frequent buses into the rail system.
- A range of land uses to provide the right mix of houses, jobs, open space, recreational space and green space.
- Easy access to major town centres with a full range of shops, recreational facilities and services along with smaller village centres and neighbourhood shops.
- Jobs available locally and regionally, reducing the demand for transport services.
- Streets and suburbs planned so that residents can walk to shops for their daily needs.
- A wide range of housing choices to provide for different needs and different incomes. Traditional houses on individual blocks will be available along with smaller, lower maintenance homes, units and terraces for older people and young singles or couples.
- Housing diversity can be facilitated by providing a number of purpose-designed smaller lots and dwellings.
- New housing developments are to provide a proportion of adaptable housing to further increase housing choice across the Region to cater for the ever changing needs of its residents.
- Conservation lands in and around the development sites, to help protect biodiversity and provide open space for recreation.
- Minimise the negative impacts on the natural water cycle and protect the health of aquatic systems, for example, through Water Sensitive Urban Design principles.







# Glossary

## Affordable housing

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

## Biodiversity

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

## Biosecurity

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

## Central business district (CBD)

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

## Centres

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

## Climate change

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

## Employment lands

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

## Household size

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

## Housing affordability

The term refers broadly to a person's ability to pay for their housing.

## Housing choice

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

## Housing types

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

## South East and Tablelands region

Includes the local government areas of Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Goulburn-Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan-Palerang, Snowy Monaro, Upper Lachlan, Wingecarribee, and Yass Valley.

## Strategic centres

Centres with the largest commercial component of any location in the region and that provide a full range of higher-order services, including access to hospitals and tertiary education services. Strategic centres in the region include Batemans Bay, Bega, Cooma, Goulburn, Moss Vale, and Queanbeyan.

## Sustainability

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

## Visitor economy

The production of goods and services for consumption by visitors, including the industries that directly serve visitors, such as hotels, transport providers, tour companies and attractions, as well as intermediaries and those involved indirectly, such as retailers and food producers.



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