



Planning &  
Environment

**2036**

***Riverina  
Murray***

***Regional  
Plan***



RIVERINA MURRAY REGIONAL PLAN 2036  
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# Foreword



A region of natural beauty, varied climate and a strong network of interconnected centres, the Riverina Murray is a great place to live, work and visit. Its location and infrastructure means it makes a significant contribution to NSW's overall prosperity.

We've heard and understood community and stakeholder aspirations for the region, and we've drawn on this feedback to create a Regional Plan that focuses on a more diverse economy and resilient communities. The Plan builds on the Riverina Murray's excellent freight connections, strong and connected centres, quality education institutions, varied landscapes and potential for industry diversification and innovation.

It includes directions that will promote more local jobs through a stronger agribusiness sector; expanded advanced and value added manufacturing; diversified energy production; and forestry and tourism.

The Riverina Murray is one of the most significant locations for freight and logistics in Australia, with major intermodals and corridors servicing the eastern seaboard of Australia. With access to the Port of Melbourne, the region's producers have strong connections to export markets and will continue expand as the nation's food bowl.

More housing and a greater choice in housing throughout the Riverina Murray will give communities greater flexibility to accommodate an ageing population and seasonal workers.

The region's cities – Albury, Griffith and Wagga Wagga – will accommodate the highest rates of growth over the next 20 years. Investment in major services, facilities and industrial activity will distribute the benefits of growth across all centres in the region.

This Plan recognises the need to maintain the natural assets that underpin communities and business. It includes directions to protect high environmental value areas and biodiversity corridors as well as the nationally significant Murray and Murrumbidgee river corridors.

The region's proximity to Victoria and the Port of Melbourne presents opportunities to strengthen links between cross-border communities and move agricultural produce to export markets. This Plan will expand transport networks, including cycling and walking paths, for recreation and commuting, and improve connections between centres and other regions to bolster business and industry growth.

The Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa, Wadi Wadi, Muthi Muthi, Latji Latji, Barkandji and Nyampa peoples, as the original custodians of the region, will be essential partners as we plan for the region's economic, social and environmental future.

The Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 encompasses a vision, goals, directions and actions that were developed with the community and stakeholders to deliver greater prosperity for this important region.

I urge everyone committed to the Riverina Murray and its sustainable, prosperous future to work together and get behind it.

**Anthony Roberts MP**

Minister for Planning  
Minister for Housing  
Special Minister of State









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# Introduction

## **The Riverina Murray is characterised by highly valued rural and biodiversity lands, the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers, and an interdependent network of distinctive communities**

The region is highly regarded as a destination to live and visit – 4.2 million people visit each year.<sup>1</sup> By 2036, the population is projected to increase by 11,150, with Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith expected to play an important role in accommodating growth and providing employment, health, education and recreation opportunities to the region's smaller communities.

Managing settlement along the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers is of national importance so that future generations are able to use and benefit from the rivers.

Agriculture is integral to the success of the economy and a major force in the State. The Riverina Murray makes the largest regional contribution to agricultural production in NSW (\$1.4 billion).<sup>2</sup> Agricultural productivity, combined with the region's strategic locational advantages and value-added manufacturing capabilities, make for an exciting future for this region.

The *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* (the Plan) establishes a framework to grow the region's cities and local centres, supports the protection of high-value environmental assets and makes developing a strong, diverse and competitive economy central to building prosperity and resilience in the region.

The Plan will guide the NSW Government's land use planning priorities and decisions over the next 20 years. It is not intended to be a step-by-step approach to all land use planning. Rather, it provides an overarching framework to guide subsequent and more detailed land use plans, development proposals and infrastructure funding decisions. While a series of priority actions are included, medium-and longer-term actions have also been identified to coincide with population and economic change.

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

The *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* is the product of extensive consultation with councils, stakeholders and the wider community, through a draft plan released in 2016. The feedback from these consultations has been integral to finalising the Plan.

The *Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036* provides the strategy necessary to deliver the vision for the region.

### **Riverina Murray infrastructure investments**

The NSW Government is supporting the economy and communities in the Riverina Murray with the following investments in infrastructure:

- \$270 million for the Wagga Wagga Rural Referral Hospital Redevelopment;<sup>3</sup>
- \$70 million for the Gocup Road upgrade between Tumut and Gundagai;<sup>4</sup>
- \$19.5 million for the Wagga Wagga courthouse upgrade;<sup>5</sup>
- \$18 million for the Deniliquin Police Station;<sup>6</sup> and
- \$11 million for the Riverina Highway safety upgrade.<sup>7</sup>



**Population Growth**  
2016-2036



Albury-Wodonga

**117,000 (2036)**

92,125 (2016)

**Largest** Gross Regional Product Contributor  
2011



**Agriculture**

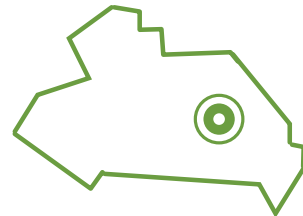
**\$1.4**billion

**Iconic** Waterway



**The Murray River**  
Australia's longest river

**NSW's Largest** Inland City



**63,400 pop.**

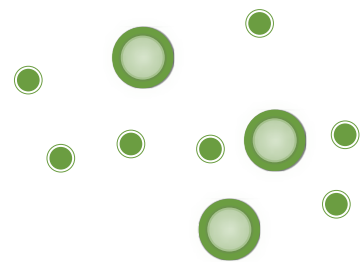
**City of Wagga Wagga Council**

2015



**Inter-regional** Connections

**Interconnected** Network



**3** REGIONAL  
CITIES

**23** LOCAL  
CENTRES

**Largest** Hydro-electric  
Scheme in Australia

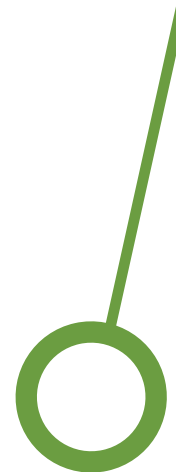


Home to 7  
**Cross-border**  
Communities



# Delivering the Plan

## The NSW Government's commitment



To deliver the *Riverina Murray 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 Riverina Murray Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee (the 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 joint organisations and regional organisations of councils, and State agencies. It will listen and work with stakeholders to make sure that growth is aligned with infrastructure to support growth and change in the region.

### Delivery

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

In the short term, its focus will be on planning for growth in regional cities, agribusiness, advanced manufacturing, the regional freight network, and the protection of the Murray River waterfront. 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, and to inform ongoing planning and delivery of infrastructure, asset management and services.

The Plan sets in place line-of-sight land use planning for the region, district 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 2017–19 accompanies this Plan.

Regional district planning may be undertaken through 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.

Figure 1: **Riverina Murray Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee**

| Riverina Murray Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Coordination  | Delivery  | Accountability  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Aligning across Government</b></li><li>• <b>Partnering with local government</b></li><li>• <b>Listening to the community</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Actioning the Implementation Plan</b></li><li>• <b>Supporting local planning</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Monitoring activity and trends</b></li><li>• <b>Publishing annual reports and information</b></li><li>• <b>Revising and adjusting directions towards goals</b></li></ul> |

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 (see Figure 2).

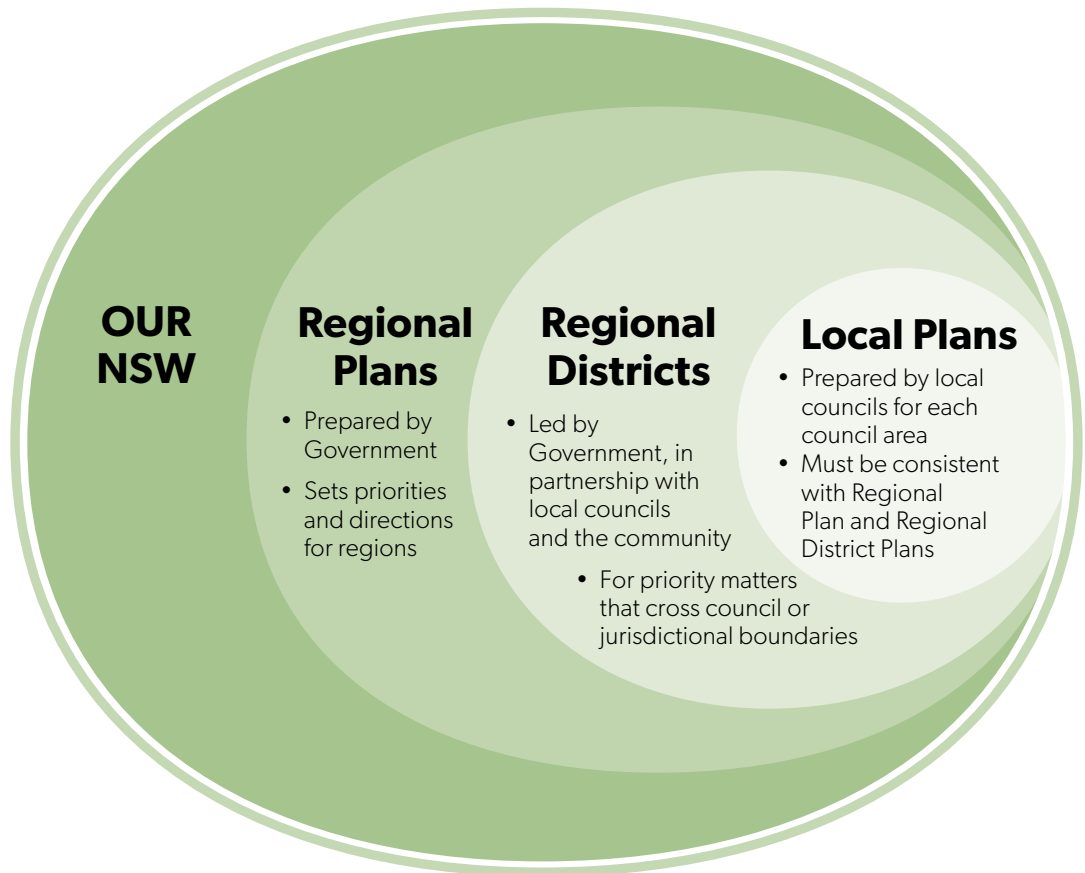
### **Accountability**

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 diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a network of vibrant connected communities**

The Riverina Murray is a leading and highly diversified economy, with growing local job opportunities and sustainable communities. The region is acknowledged as one of Australia's premium agricultural areas. It leads the way in agricultural innovation and value-adding, and is leveraging advanced and automated technologies to maximise agribusiness diversification. This agricultural base benefits from a well-connected export conduit to Melbourne and ports in NSW.

Identifying and protecting agricultural land preserves the region's fresh produce sectors and their potential to keep growing. Packaged food and fresh produce are highly sought after in domestic and global markets.

The security of long-term timber supplies is supporting jobs and economic growth in the lucrative forestry industry. A thriving renewable energy industry is generating reliable energy for the Riverina Murray and the nation. Advanced health and education sectors are delivering essential services to the region and beyond.

The region sets benchmarks for sustainable and equitable water management for industries, communities and the environment, and is renowned as a leader in climate change adaptation and resilience to natural hazards. Environmental assets, including major rivers, waterways and wetlands, are protected and actively managed for the ongoing enjoyment of residents and visitors.

The region is acknowledged for its role as a major freight and transport distribution hub. The delivery of essential infrastructure is generating more efficient and higher capacity freight routes, better access to air and sea ports, competitive freight costs and higher regional productivity.

The region is characterised by a network of centres comprising vibrant communities making the most of successful places, abundant arts, dining, entertainment and recreational opportunities. Communities enjoy a high standard of living with housing choice for all sections of the community. These are well-connected communities as a result of improved public and community transport and reliable telecommunications systems.

Acknowledging, protecting and celebrating Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage has reinforced the character of the region and consolidated the sense of belonging in communities. This Aboriginal heritage, the river lands and the overall regional character will continue to draw visitors to the region and its towns.

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

***acknowledged the important role  
of this region's centres and their  
relationship to, and export potential  
with, Melbourne and Victoria and ...***

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

- **A growing and diverse economy**
- **A healthy environment with  
pristine waterways**
- **Efficient transport and  
infrastructure networks**
- **Strong, connected and healthy  
communities**



Figure 3: Riverina Murray 2036



Regional City

Centre

Cross-Border Settlements

Proposed Inland rail

Cross-Border Connection

Inter-regional Connection

Port

Airport

Hospital

University

National Park and Reserve

State Forest

Waterway

Murray/ Murrumbidgee Rivers

Far West

Hillston

CARRATHOOL

HAY

Hay

GRIFFITH

GRIFFITH

Darlington Point

MURRUMBIDGEE

EDWARD RIVER

Conargo

Jerilderie

Murray Downs

Swan Hill

Wakool

Barham

Deniliquin

MURRAY RIVER

Mathoura

Berrigan

BERRIGAN

Barooga

Cobram

Local Government Area Economic Opportunities

Health Service

Information Communication Technology

Forestry

Agribusiness

Value-Add Manufacturing

Tourism

Transport and Logistics

Renewable Energy

Mining

Aged Care

Moama

Echuca

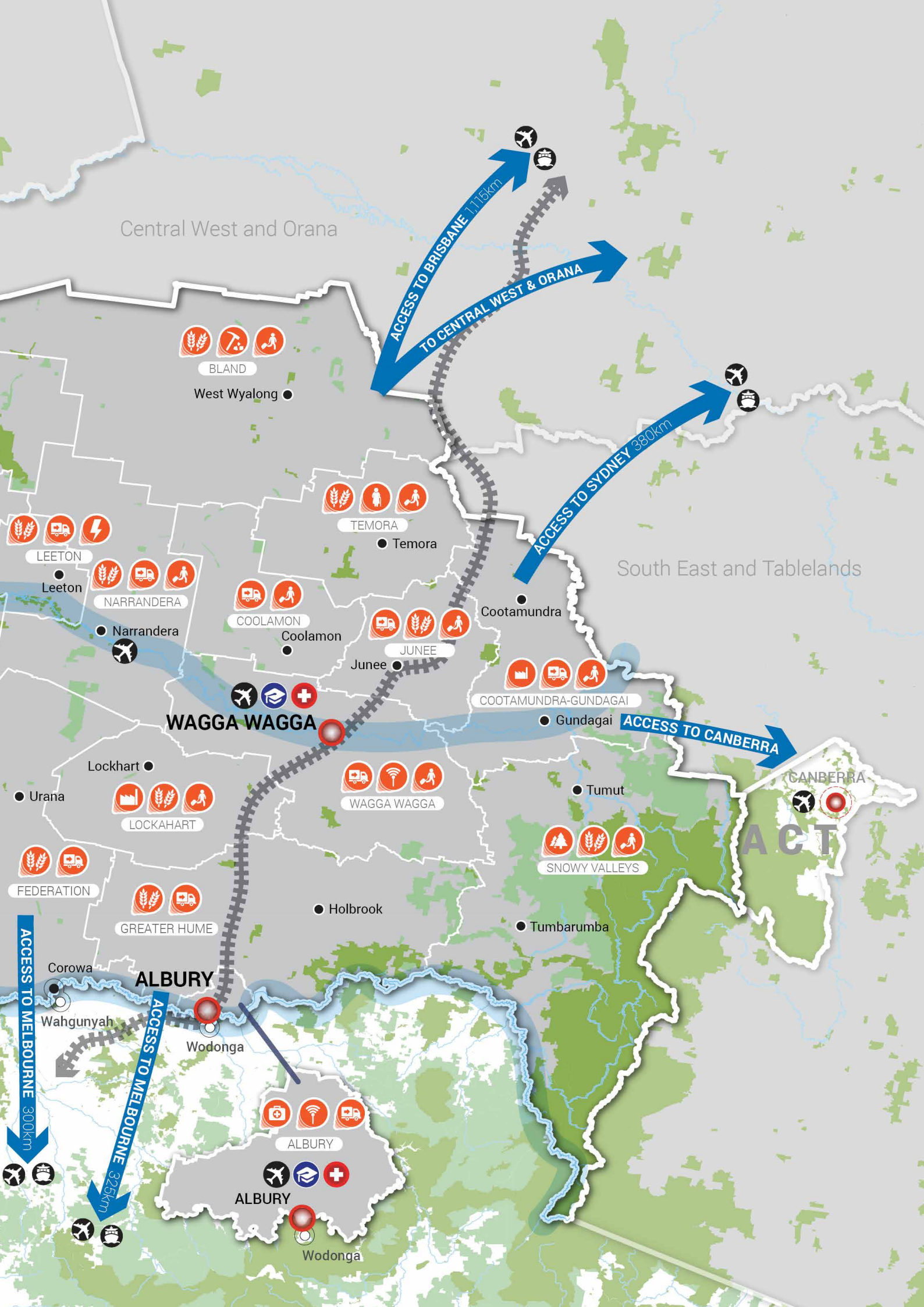
ACCESS TO MELBOURNE 225km

ACCESS TO MELBOURNE 265km

ACCESS TO FAR WEST AND ADELAIDE 600km

VIC





Central West and Orana

South East and Tablelands

ACT

**BLAND**  
West Wyalong

- Wheat
- Tractor
- Person

**TEMORA**  
Temora

- Wheat
- Person
- Person

**LEETON**  
Leeton

- Wheat
- Tractor
- Lightning bolt

**NARRANDERA**  
Narrandera

- Wheat
- Tractor
- Person

**COOLAMON**  
Coolamon

- Tractor
- Person

**JUNEE**  
Junee

- Tractor
- Wheat
- Person

**COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI**  
Gundagai

- Factory
- Tractor
- Person

**WAGGA WAGGA**

- Airplane
- University
- Hospital

**LOCKHART**  
Lockhart

- Factory
- Wheat
- Person

**WAGGA WAGGA**

- Tractor
- Internet
- Person

**SNOWY VALLEYS**

- Tree
- Wheat
- Person

**FEDERATION**

- Wheat
- Tractor

**GREATER HUME**

- Wheat
- Tractor

**ALBURY**  
Corowa

- Wheat
- Tractor

**ALBURY**  
Wahgunyah

- Wheat
- Tractor

**ALBURY**

- Internet
- Tractor

**ALBURY**

- Airplane
- University
- Hospital

**ALBURY**  
Wodonga

- Wheat
- Tractor

ACCESS TO BRISBANE 1,116km

TO CENTRAL WEST & ORANA

ACCESS TO SYDNEY 380km

ACCESS TO CANBERRA

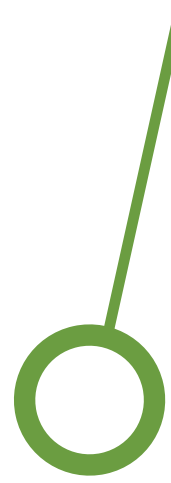
ACCESS TO MELBOURNE 300km

ACCESS TO MELBOURNE 325km





# Strategically located to access markets



## A key component in the Riverina Murray's success

The Riverina Murray's strategic location is a major competitive advantage and critical to growing a diverse economy and building a strong network of centres.

The region's proximity and interface with Victoria and its ability to use the export potential of Melbourne has presented, and will continue to present, the region with significant ongoing growth opportunities.

Leveraging its location will help the region to capitalise on the growing demand in Asia for agricultural produce, greater demand for value-added manufacturing of products and increasing environmental tourism.

These communities of interest exist and will continue to develop across this state border. The region benefits from these pathways for business opportunities and supporting facilities.

### **The essential role of freight and logistic hubs and corridors**

The region is one of the most significant locations for freight and logistics in Australia, with major freight and logistic facilities and corridors servicing the eastern seaboard of Australia. A number of national companies have established freight and logistics hubs around Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Cootamundra and Albury. These facilities are helping to shore up the region's agricultural competitiveness.

National freight corridors traverse the region and extend to Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide, providing direct access to national and global markets.

Freight corridors through to the Port of Melbourne present a significant opportunity to grow the freight and logistics sector in the Riverina Murray.

The region's proximity to Canberra and the opening of its new international passenger and freight terminal at Canberra Airport underscores the potential for growth across the region.

The region has significant potential to capitalise on its strategic location and to leverage growth in the freight and logistics sector. Major growth in freight volumes, both within the region and across the eastern seaboard, will continue to drive demand for more efficient and higher capacity freight and logistics facilities.

The development of freight hubs and intermodal facilities, such as the Western Riverina Intermodal Freight Terminal located between Griffith and Leeton, have the potential to reshape the way freight is moved – particularly with the potential from the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. The trend of freight and logistics companies relocating to the Riverina Murray, to leverage its land availability and workforce, will continue to benefit the region.

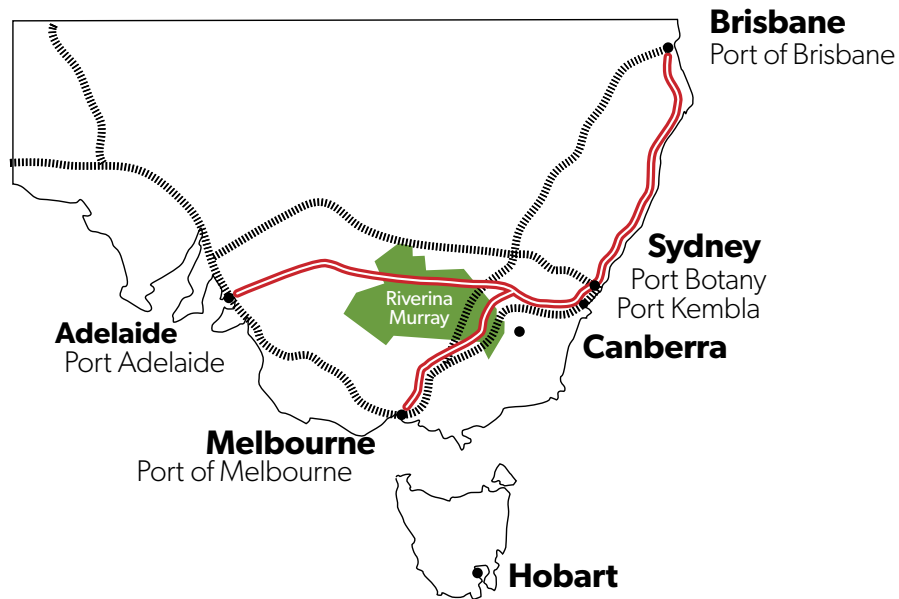
The integration of intermodal and logistics facilities into industrial precincts provides further opportunities to maximise the efficiency of freight movements from the region.

Freight corridors are essential to the success of the agribusiness, manufacturing, forestry, and freight and logistics sectors. New freight facilities will expand opportunities to transport a wide range of bulk products, including cotton, wine and grain. They also support tourism and provide access to high-quality jobs and services, including health care, education and training.

The corridors strengthen relationships between centres within the region, to adjoining regions and to interstate locations, particularly Victoria.

Protecting existing transport corridors and enhancing the freight network will also provide greater access to ports and airports for exporting produce, enable more competitive freight costs for local producers and promote industry expansion and increased productivity.

## Riverina Murray's Strategic Location



### ***Growing agricultural and value-added manufacturing sectors***

The region is one of the most productive and diverse agricultural regions in Australia, giving rise to its claim as the 'food bowl of Australia'. The growing size and wealth of the middle class, particularly in Asia, has created new opportunities for Australia's premium agricultural exports. There are opportunities for the Riverina Murray to target high-end food markets by exporting products built on a reputation for safety, integrity and quality. The region will continue to capitalise on these opportunities by using Melbourne as part of its well-connected export network.

In addition to its strategic locational advantage, the region comprises varied landscapes and access to two of the longest rivers in Australia – the Murray and the Murrumbidgee. These river systems are the lifeblood of agriculture in the region, enabling a diverse range of agricultural products across different climate zones and supporting major irrigation schemes.

Identifying and protecting important agricultural land is fundamental to the future of agricultural production. As agricultural output continues to increase, expanding value-added manufacturing of agricultural produce, including food and beverage manufacturing, will also help drive diversity in the economy.

### ***Supporting strong regional cities and local centres***

The regional cities of Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith benefit from competitive locational advantages within the region. They are located along major transport routes that support, and are supported by, a network of interdependent centres, including local centres, towns and villages. Over time, they have capitalised on their locational advantages, anchoring them as drivers of economic and housing growth and diversity throughout the region. In addition, a trend has been observed of companies locating away from metropolitan areas to regional areas because of the land availability, price and workforce.

Having multiple centres means that facilities and services are spread more evenly across the region, making them accessible to even the most remote communities. Growing the social and economic links between the regional cities and smaller towns and villages makes access to new markets easier and helps to drive sustainable economic growth.

Proximity to Victoria will continue to influence the economic future of the region, particularly for communities close to the border. Strong relationships between the centres on the border are important from an economic point of view as they create larger, more sustainable and relatively diverse economic zones. Communities of interest exist across this border and the region will continue to benefit from business opportunities and supporting facilities.

An objective of this Plan will be to continue to leverage the region's strategic location by strengthening and supporting regional cities and infrastructure delivery.







# GOAL 1

## A growing and diverse economy

The region is recognised as an economic powerhouse, given its strategic location and evolution as a centre of knowledge and innovation for agribusiness and value-added manufacturing, and green technologies and products.

Ongoing economic prosperity is closely tied to efficient transport and infrastructure networks, a healthy environment and water security for industry.

The region has access to the major capitals of Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane – and the international gateways of Port Botany, Port Kembla, the Port of Newcastle, the Port of Melbourne and the Port of Brisbane. There is real potential to build on this competitive advantage to stimulate further economic development and generate more local jobs. As a region, the Riverina Murray is already well-connected and will continue to grow from its network of freight and logistics hubs servicing Australia's eastern seaboard.

Increasing domestic and global demand for food and fibre will drive demand for higher value agricultural production, including dairy, fruit, wine, high-grade meats, grains and organics.

The region's valuable resources are sometimes subject to a variety of competing land uses such as agriculture, mining, forestry, energy generation, rural residential development and tourism. If not managed sustainably this can potentially restrict growth and discourage investment.

Rural and natural resources are the mainstays of the economy, which is strengthened by a diverse range of employment opportunities including manufacturing, retail, health, tourism and education. Emerging opportunities for aviation

and defence industries also exist in places like Albury and Wagga Wagga. The high growth service industry sectors of education, health and tourism benefit from opportunities presented by an interconnected network of centres.

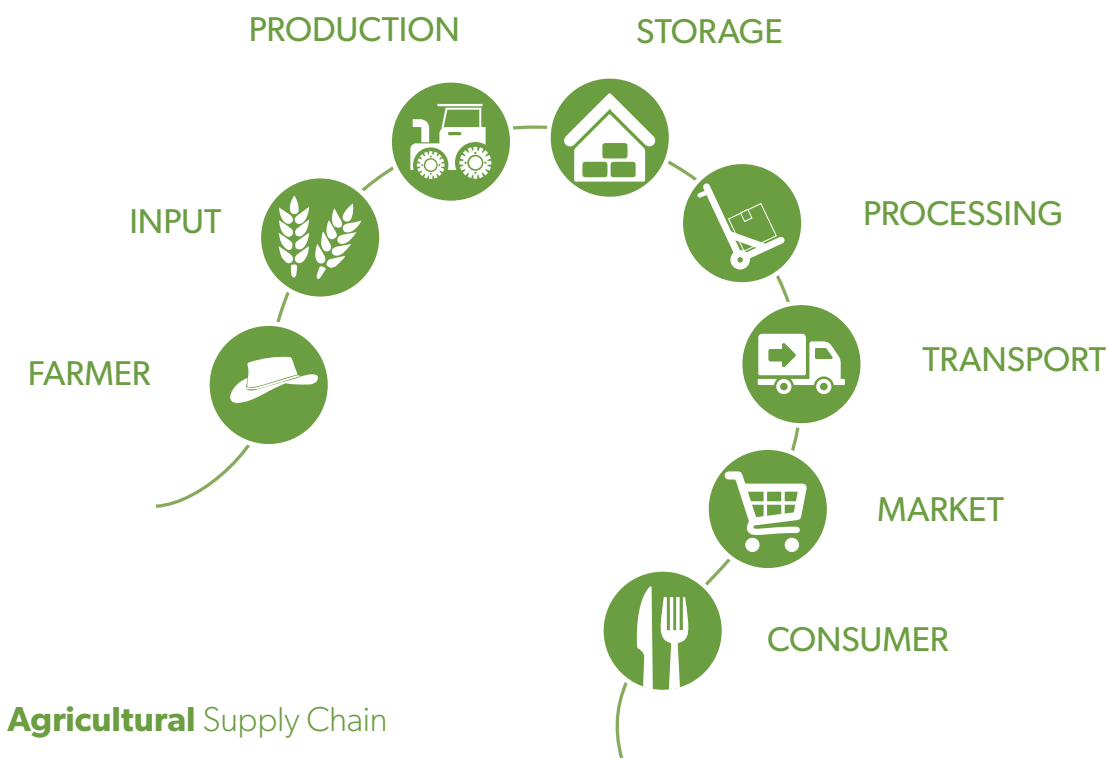
Well-located and serviced industrial and commercial land is essential to support new and emerging industry and business development. Future economic growth will benefit from a high-speed, affordable and reliable communication network, as well as access to utility infrastructure (including electricity, water, wastewater and gas).

### Priority growth sectors

Further diversification of the economy will be achieved through a focus on the following priority growth sectors:

- agribusiness;
- advanced and value-added manufacturing;
- health and aged care;
- education and training;
- tourism;
- freight and logistics;
- forestry; and
- renewable energy and mining.

The planning system needs to be responsive to the specific needs of these sectors to generate industry growth.



## Agricultural Supply Chain

This will be especially important for attracting agricultural processing, manufacturing and technology-based industries.

New facilities and improvements in telecommunications will help unlock new opportunities and service models in the health and education sectors to help satisfy an increasing demand for these sectors.

Economic opportunities associated with the landholdings of Local Aboriginal Land Councils will also be explored as there may be potential to build capacity and economic independence for Aboriginal communities.

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

Agricultural production takes place across the semi-arid rangelands in the west to the alpine areas in the east and the riverine landscapes in the south. Highly productive agriculture requires ready access to water (including irrigation), high-quality soils and suitable climates. While the total area of land available for agriculture in the region is large, there are comparatively few locations with access to all these characteristics.

The co-location of incompatible land uses can inhibit agricultural processes and, over time, affect productivity. The fragmentation of

agricultural land can also impact its productivity by limiting its ability to operate at a sufficient economic scale.

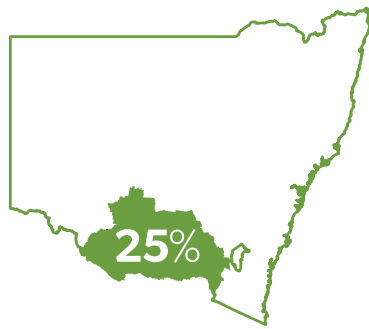
The region's important agricultural land needs to be identified and protected, and a critical mass of agricultural industries maintained. This will capitalise on increasing demand for agricultural products, support the growth of agribusiness, achieve productivity increases and sustain employment levels. Protecting important agricultural land will also help to keep fresh food available locally and help meet increasing demands for food products emerging from the larger middle class in South East Asia.

An agricultural development strategy will be developed for the region to identify and map the important agricultural land, identify emerging opportunities for agriculture, and guide and direct local planning in the context not only of the region, but also NSW. Mapping will incorporate biophysical, infrastructure and socio-economic factors, complementing existing Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land mapping, and will be used to inform land use planning decisions.

Protecting agricultural land also extends to managing biosecurity risks, which are increasing nationally as a result of trade, the spread of feral and exotic species, tourism, climate variability and competing priorities for resources. Risks can be managed by applying the recommendations of biosecurity plans in land use planning decisions.

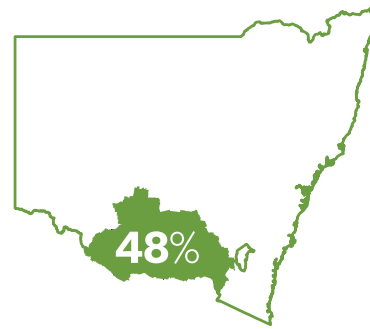


## Milk Supply 2011



of State production

## Fruit and Nut Supply 2011



of State production

### Actions

- 1.1 Develop a regional agricultural development strategy that:
  - maps important agricultural land;
  - identifies emerging opportunities for agriculture; and
  - sets direction for local planning of agricultural development.
- 1.2 Protect important agricultural land identified in the regional agricultural development strategy from land use conflict and fragmentation, and manage the interface between important agricultural lands and other land uses.
- 1.3 Minimise biosecurity risks by undertaking risk assessments, taking into account biosecurity plans and applying appropriate buffer areas.

### **Direction 2: Promote and grow the agribusiness sector**

Agribusiness sustains the local economies of many communities in the region. It comprises businesses that support agricultural production, such as professional agricultural services, storage and warehousing, machinery and equipment, transport and logistics, and food, beverage and other product outlets.

A key component of growing the agribusiness sector is the recognition, protection and expansion of the agricultural supply chain.

Supply chains begin on farms and can extend beyond regional and state borders to national and global export markets.

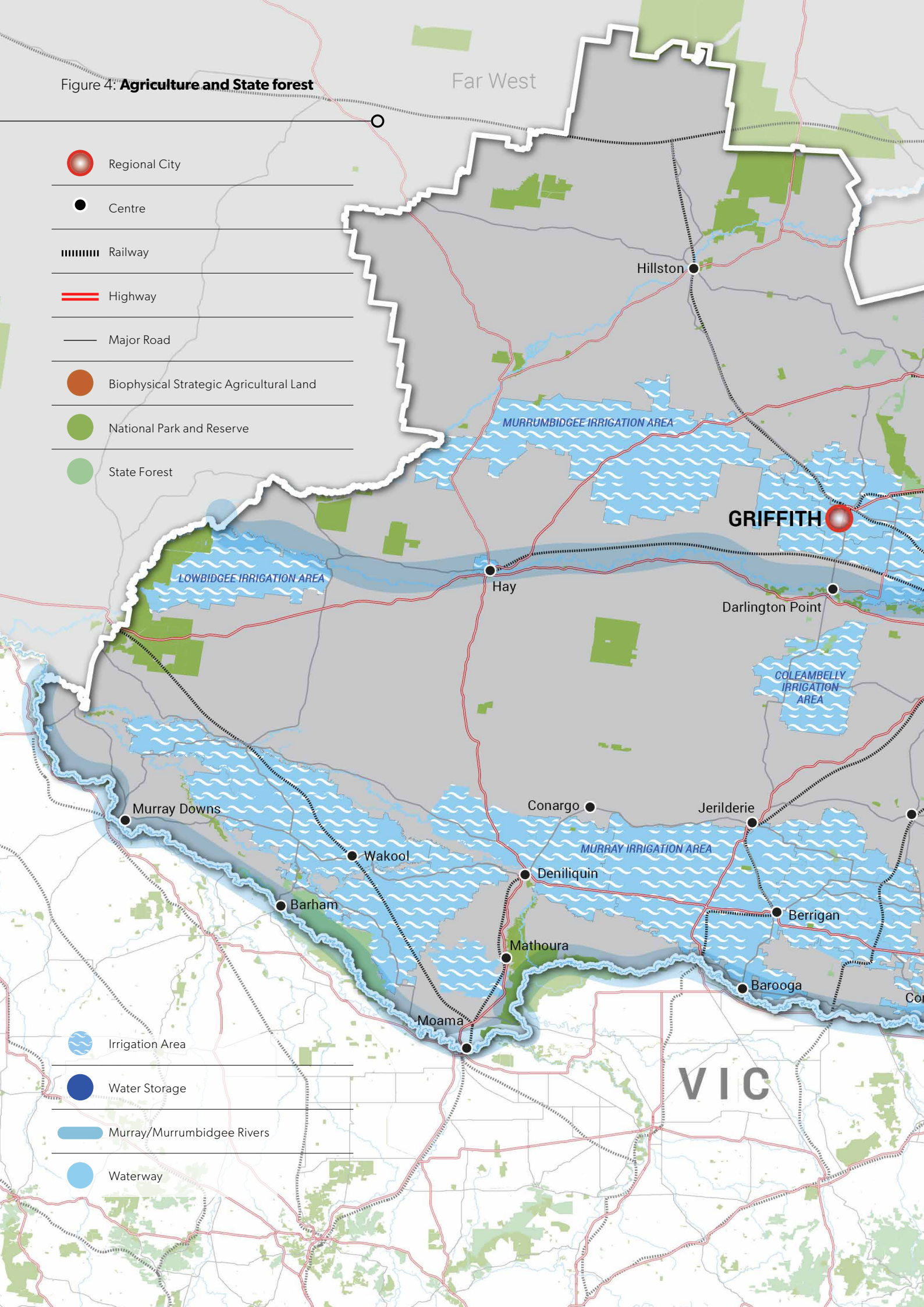
The focus for the future is to be responsive to the needs of agriculture and agribusiness to enable industry growth and to promote the take-up of emerging opportunities. To do this, the planning system must formally recognise the importance of agricultural land, provide direction about managing this land, consider the effects of climate change, support agribusiness and guide councils when they are preparing local land use strategies.

The region experiences a large influx of seasonal workers during harvest periods to support agribusiness industries, including wine, orchard fruit, cotton and berries. The importance of providing housing choices for these workers is addressed in Goal 4.

### Actions

- 2.1. Encourage agribusiness diversification by reviewing local plans and removing restrictive land use zonings and outdated land use definitions.
- 2.2. Provide opportunities to improve support to agriculture through better guidance on protecting agricultural land and managing the interface with other land uses.
- 2.3. Facilitate investment in the agricultural supply chain by protecting assets, including freight and logistics facilities, from land use conflict arising from the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

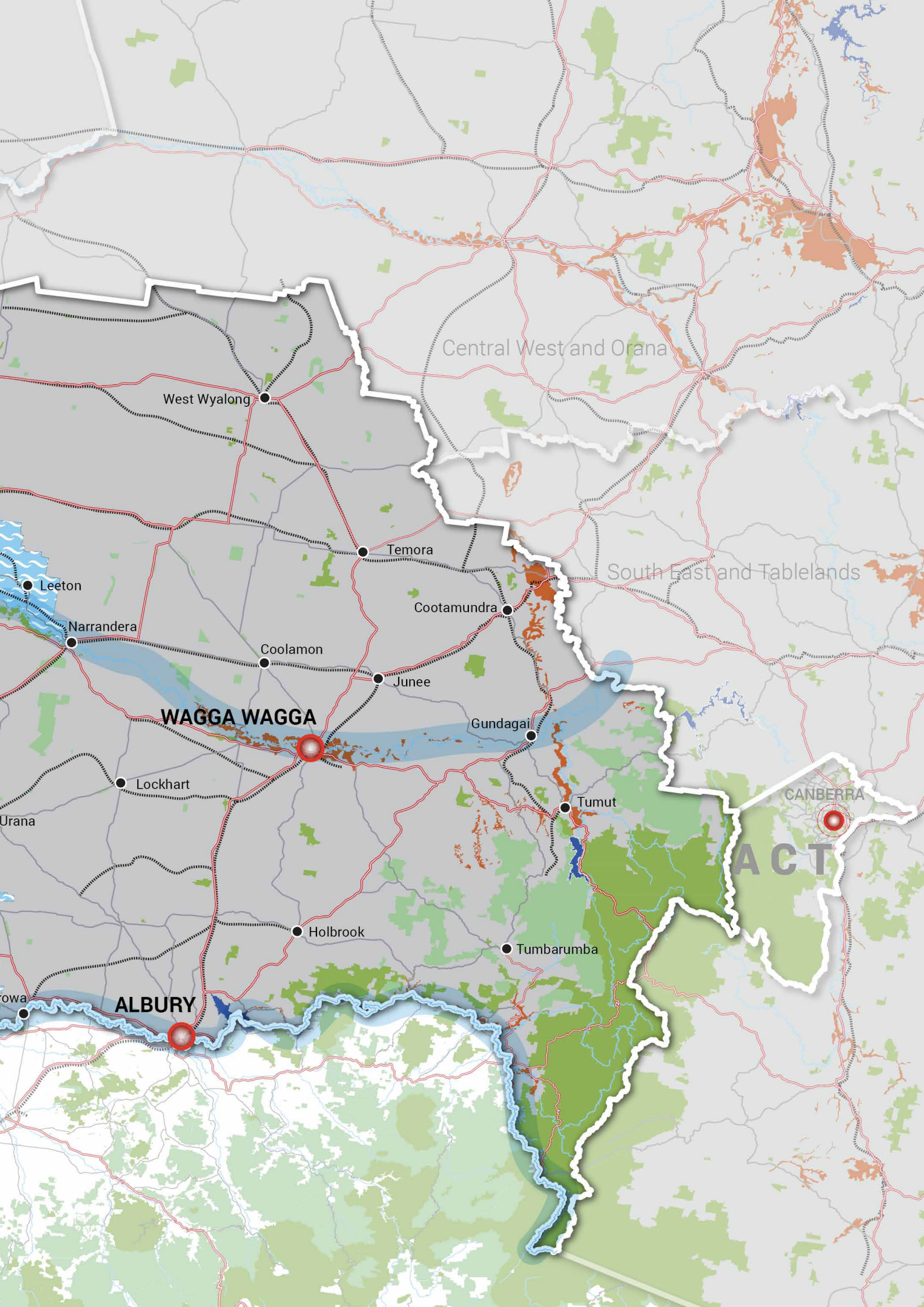
Figure 4: **Agriculture and State forest**



- Regional City
- Centre
- ⋯⋯⋯ Railway
- == Highway
- Major Road
- Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land
- National Park and Reserve
- State Forest

- ⊙ Irrigation Area
- Water Storage
- Murray/Murrumbidgee Rivers
- ⊙ Waterway





Central West and Orana

South East and Tablelands

**WAGGA WAGGA**

**ALBURY**

CANBERRA

**ACT**

West Wyalong

Temora

Cootamundra

Coolamon

Junee

Gundagai

Tumut

Lockhart

Holbrook

Tumbarumba

Leeton

Narrandera

Urana

Albury





### **Direction 3: Expand advanced and value-added manufacturing**

There are a variety of value-adding opportunities in the region, including organic and free range production methods, milling of grain and oilseeds, ginning and spinning of cotton, packaging of raw fruits, vegetables and meats, and preparing processed foods such as jam, and dairy products. The region has a considerable marketing advantage with its value-added agricultural products as it can trade on its 'clean and green' environment.

Value-added manufacturing industries need to be strategically located so they have ready and cost-effective access to the regional freight network, utility infrastructure, skilled labour and export markets.

The significant investment in establishing new value-added manufacturing facilities in the region must be supported and protected. The co-location of related industries will maximise efficiency and infrastructure use, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract further investment.

### **Actions**

- 3.1 Promote investment in advanced and value-added manufacturing by removing restrictive land use zonings and outdated land use definitions in local plans.
- 3.2 Protect advanced and value-added manufacturing industries and associated infrastructure from land use conflict arising from the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses.
- 3.3 Encourage co-location of related advanced and value-added manufacturing industries to maximise efficiency and infrastructure use, decrease supply chain costs, increase economies of scale and attract further investment.

### **Direction 4: Promote business activities in industrial and commercial areas**

Demand for well-located and serviced employment and industrial land is driven by its strategic location, increases in agricultural outputs, diversification of agribusiness and new value-added manufacturing opportunities. The latter requires the development, operation and expansion of new processing and manufacturing facilities.

#### **Industrial Areas**

Ongoing investment and development of the Bomen Business Park in Wagga Wagga and the Nexus Industrial Precinct in Albury will contribute significantly to jobs and economic growth. Other areas are also likely to experience take-up of industrial land. For example, Corowa and Deniliquin have industrial areas that support specialised industries linked to value-adding of local produce.

Monitoring the supply and take-up of significant industrial land in the regional cities will help to identify the timing and location of infrastructure to support development, such as for water, wastewater, electricity, gas and telecommunications services.

As the region grows, the encroachment of incompatible activities on industrial land will need to be managed so that an ongoing supply of land is retained to meet market demand.

#### **Commercial Areas**

The regional cities are expected to have the highest growth and take-up of commercial employment lands, and will continue to provide higher-order retail and business services for surrounding networks of local centres, towns and villages. Revitalisation of centres can promote the Central Business District as the central place for retail and business activity.



The preference is to place new retail activity in existing commercial centres to strengthen the role and function of these areas, capitalise on existing infrastructure (including transport and community facilities), continue to attract new retail investment, and enhance the value of existing public spaces. New centres outside existing commercial centres will need to demonstrate their social and economic benefits to the community.

### Actions

- 4.1 Encourage the sustainable development of industrial land to maximise the use of infrastructure and connectivity to the existing freight network.
- 4.2 Promote specialised employment clusters and co-location of related employment generators in local plans.
- 4.3 Protect industrial land, including in the regional cities (Bomen, Nexus and Tharbogang) from potential land use conflicts arising from inappropriate and incompatible surrounding land uses.
- 4.4 Encourage the consolidation of isolated, unused or underused pockets of industrial zoned land to create new development opportunities over the long-term.
- 4.5 Monitor the supply and demand of employment and industrial land in regional cities to inform the planning and coordination of utility infrastructure to support new development.
- 4.6 Accommodate future commercial and retail activity in existing commercial centres, unless there is a demonstrated need and positive social and economic benefits for the community.
- 4.7 Require proposals for new retail developments to demonstrate how they:
  - respond to retail supply and demand needs;

- respond to innovations in the retail sector;
- maximise the use of existing infrastructure (including public transport and community facilities) commensurate with the scale of the proposal; and
- enhance the value of the public realm.

### Direction 5: Support the growth of the health and aged care sectors

The projected ageing of the population will drive demand for higher-order medical services in the regional cities, such as hospitals and specialist services, as well as demand for tailored community based healthcare facilities, such as multipurpose services and e-health initiatives in smaller and isolated communities.

There are significant opportunities for the development of complementary health services around existing public health facilities in Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith. This will help to broaden the range of services available, enable business synergies and improve community access to health services. Similar opportunities on a smaller scale can be provided through complementary flexible and adaptable health services in local centres that respond to the needs of local communities.

Ongoing and equitable access to aged care services across the region will help smaller regional communities retain and potentially grow their population and allow people to age-in-place. Technology offers medical connectivity across regions.

Cross-border health services also play an important role in meeting the healthcare needs of the region. Albury–Wodonga Health, the first cross-border public health service in Australia, operates under an agreement between the NSW and Victorian Governments to provide healthcare services to a catchment population of 250,000.<sup>8</sup>

Left: Rice storage, courtesy of Sunrice

Above: St Vincents Private Community Hospital, Griffith, courtesy of Griffith City Council







## Actions

- 5.1 Establish health precincts around hospitals in the regional cities of Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith.
- 5.2 Promote development of mixed-use facilities and precincts for research and accommodation, to meet the needs of the health and aged care service sectors.
- 5.3 Facilitate multipurpose, flexible and adaptable health and education infrastructure that responds to community needs.
- 5.4 Protect health facilities from the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses.
- 5.5 Improve transport connections in cross-border communities to enhance access to health facilities.

## Direction 6: Promote the expansion of education and training opportunities

The region has a shortage of skilled workers, particularly in agribusiness, health, education and manufacturing that may affect future economic potential.<sup>9</sup> Tertiary education and training will be crucial to overcoming the shortage of skilled workers, particularly in agribusiness, health, education and manufacturing,<sup>10</sup> and to meet future workforce demands.

Education and training providers will partner with government and private industry to address regional skills shortages and provide tailored regional training programs. For example, skill shortages in the health sector may be resolved through medical training in university rural health schools and through the co-location of the private hospital in Griffith with the Murrumbidgee Clinical Teaching and Learning Centre.<sup>11</sup>

## Largest Employer

2011

HEALTH CARE AND  
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



12,100 Jobs

## Tertiary Education



8

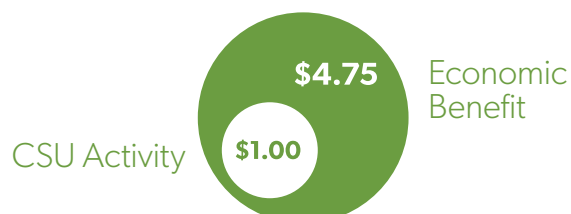
Regional University  
Campuses

## Charles Sturt University (CSU)

+70%

CSU graduates from regional and rural areas remain employed and living in regional and rural areas.

## University Multiplier Effect





The region is also well placed to attract more interstate and international students by promoting the range of specialist agribusiness courses available; for example, the Bachelor of Wine Sciences offered through Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga.

Additionally, there are 18 TAFE campuses located across the region, including the National Environment Centre in Albury and the Primary Industries Centre in Wagga Wagga, which provide extensive vocational training opportunities, focused on key regional industries, including sustainable forestry, agro-ecology, wine and food, and water operations.

Expanding tertiary education services and online access to distance education increases local access to services and sustains community wellbeing, particularly in smaller and isolated communities. The NSW Government is working to deliver better community access to quality vocational education and training, to support global competitiveness and innovation.

The Department of Education is reviewing its approach to long-term asset and network planning, including exploring opportunities for partnerships between schools and councils for resource pooling and cost-sharing to make the best use of community assets.

## Actions

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

## Direction 7: Promote tourism opportunities

The region's market share of the lucrative tourism sector can be increased by enhancing the appeal of its urban, rural and natural areas, and leveraging the expected growth in international tourism from the Asian middle class. The region's access to international airports in Canberra and Melbourne can help to underpin a greater tourism focus.

Key tourism sites, including the iconic Murray River, the significant waterways of the Murrumbidgee and internationally recognised wetlands, need to be protected and enhanced. The Newell Highway also has potential as an inland tourism corridor between Victoria and Queensland.

Promoting eco-tourism, agritourism, lifestyle activities (events and festivals), recreation, and Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage can help to sustain the economies of local towns and villages, aid food growers and potentially attract visitors in off-peak seasons.<sup>12</sup> The Riverina–Murray Destination Network will develop and implement a new Destination Management Plan to support emerging tourism opportunities, and develop visitor experiences and tourism products for the region.

## Actions

- 7.1 Align local land use strategies and tourism strategies with the Destination Management Plan for the Riverina Murray Destination Network.
- 7.2 Enable opportunities for tourism development and associated land uses in local plans.
- 7.3 Target experiential tourism opportunities and tourism management frameworks to promote a variety of accommodation options.
- 7.4 Continue to implement actions and invest in boating infrastructure priorities identified in the *Murray–Riverina Regional Boating Plan* to improve boating safety, boat storage and waterway access.

Above: HMAS Otway, Holbrook

Right: Street market, Tumut



## Regional Tourism 2015



**4.2m**

Overnight and  
Day **Visitors**

**\$1.2b**

Direct Expenditure

### **Direction 8: Enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities**

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

It focuses on:

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

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

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

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

### **Actions**

- 8.1 Work with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils to conduct a strategic assessment of their landholdings to identify priority sites with economic development potential for further investigation.
- 8.2 Identify priority sites that can create a pipeline of potential projects that the Local Aboriginal Land Councils may wish to consider.

### **Direction 9: Support the forestry industry**

The region has a wood product industry based on softwood plantations, with some hardwood forests, mainly located in (Tumut, Tumbarumba, Holbrook and Gundagai).<sup>13</sup> Timber processing takes place in Albury, Greater Hume and Snowy Valleys for timber, print paper, kraft paper and pulp and particle board products.

Securing the long-term wood supply from plantation forests will enable the industry to make ongoing large-scale investments in processing, value-adding and plantation development.

*The NSW Forestry Industry Roadmap (2016)* is the NSW Government's plan for building a stronger, more competitive and ecologically sustainable forestry industry. It is predicated on balancing the relative value and compatibility of agricultural lands with plantation forestry. Protecting timber supplies, processing facilities, and forestry hubs of related industries from the encroachment of incompatible land uses will also be important.





The growth of the forestry industry has led to significant increases in the transport of logs and processed timber products to processing plants and export markets via Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. Regional road improvements are necessary to cope with the increased volumes and size of trucks.<sup>14</sup>

### Actions

- 9.1 Facilitate long-term requirements for plantation forest land and opportunities for industry hubs and transport network improvements.
- 9.2 Encourage forestry processing operations in appropriate locations that are protected from the encroachment of other sensitive land uses.
- 9.3 Protect native and plantation forests and processing industries predominantly in the Snowy Valleys and Greater Hume area from the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses.

### Direction 10: Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities

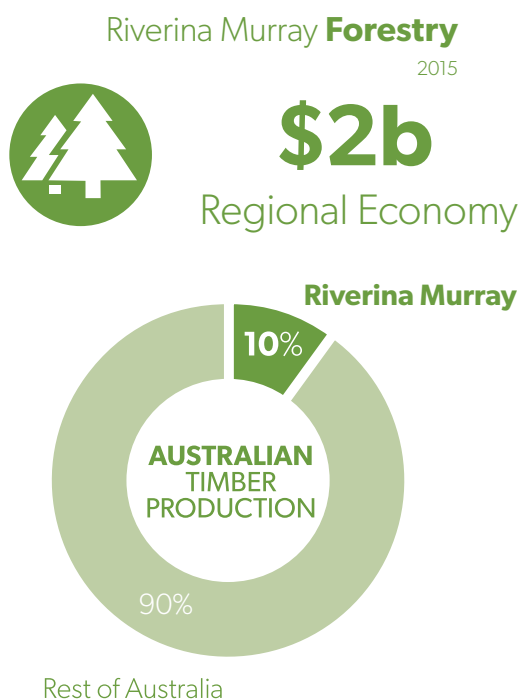
A sustainable and equitable supply of water for present and future generations is required to manage increasing demand for water from urban and industry uses, and pressures from a changing climate.<sup>15</sup>

Water resource management is vested in all three tiers of government, so a cooperative and collaborative approach that involves all stakeholders is required.

Land use planning can play a key role in protecting the security of water supplies by appropriately locating, monitoring and managing development, and the impact of existing land uses. This is especially relevant in the Murrumbidgee and Coleambally irrigation areas, where significant investments have been made in irrigation networks and water storages.

The NSW Government has developed water sharing plans which set limits on extraction and rules for sharing water sustainably between water users and the environment. The Commonwealth's *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* (2012) has set lower extraction limits for the surface water and these will be implemented through water resource plans to be completed by 2019.

Coordinating and managing water resource requirements across business and industry, communities and the environment relies on a better understanding of local water allocations and using water more resourcefully. Water allocation is complex due to seasonal fluctuations and is an ongoing concern for agricultural producers in some parts of the region. More efficient irrigation technologies and non-traditional agricultural pursuits are a response to water scarcity and climate change.<sup>16</sup>







## Actions

- 10.1 Implement the *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* to ensure a balance of social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- 10.2 Finalise water resource plans for rivers and groundwater systems as part of the *Murray–Darling Basin Plan* and implement water sharing plans.
- 10.3 Plan for high–water use industries in locations where water access and security is available.
- 10.4 Protect land in the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Coleambally and Lowbidgee irrigation areas from the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses that limit the economic potential of these areas.

## Direction 11: Promote the diversification of energy supplies through renewable energy generation

The region has significant potential for renewable energy industries, with vast open spaces and a strategic advantage in hydro-electric energy generating capacity.

Different parts of the region have potential for different types of renewable energy. Tumut and Wagga Wagga have potential for wind-generated energy, while Griffith and Carrathool are suitable for large-scale solar power generation and geothermal energy. TransGrid’s NSW Connection Opportunities identified Darlington Point and Griffith as two locations with capacity for renewable energy generation.<sup>17</sup> An interactive map of renewable energy potential is available at: [www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au).

The NSW Government’s *Renewable Energy Action Plan* (2013) guides renewable energy development. As part of the plan, negotiations between network service providers and investors will be streamlined so that time frames for grid connections in NSW are competitive.

Leveraging renewable energy opportunities for the long-term sustainability of the region depends on adopting a strategic approach to new projects and incorporating small-scale cogeneration measures into the design of new developments.

## Actions

- 11.1 Encourage renewable energy projects by identifying locations with renewable energy potential and ready access to connect with the electricity network.
- 11.2 Promote best practice community engagement and maximise community benefits from all utility-scale renewable energy projects.
- 11.3 Promote appropriate smaller-scale renewable energy projects using bioenergy, solar, wind, small-scale hydro, geothermal or other innovative storage technologies.

## Direction 12: Sustainably manage mineral resources

The mineral resources sector delivers economic and employment benefits in the region. Significant mining activity is occurring at Lake Cowal Gold Mine near West Wyalong and some other parts of the region have mineral and petroleum potential.

Communities can benefit from the development of mineral resources, with the degree of benefit and impact varying across the life cycle of a development. Care must be taken to manage the impacts of mining to produce long-term sustainable economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Areas containing mineral and energy resources must be protected and managed so that there is potential for other land uses, where feasible, in the life of a mining development, and so that valuable resources are not sterilised. The Council Of Australian Governments Standing Council on Energy and Resources prepared a Multiple Land Use Framework, which includes planning



principles that can assist in planning around known mineral and energy resources where other high-value land uses exist.

The location of current exploration and mining production titles in NSW, explanations of mining and production titles, and the roles of community and government in the decision-making process for mining/resource projects may be accessed at: [www.commonground.nsw.gov.au](http://www.commonground.nsw.gov.au).

The NSW Government also recently developed the Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum, which includes processes for preliminary regional issues assessment and community engagement so that the potential impacts of a mining development are considered in advance of the release of exploration licences.

Mining activities have specific operational needs that can compete with other land uses; however, they are also temporary and dependent on the productive life of the facility or resource. Once extractive resource lands have been identified, there may be opportunities to identify interim activities that will enable lands to be used productively, without sterilising the future potential of the underlying resource.

Developing local land use strategies that respond to the life cycle of the extractive resource area will provide all stakeholders, including investors, with certainty around the long-term productive value of the land.

Population and economic fluctuations can occur with the development of mineral and energy resources. Some regional communities will need support to diversify and transition their economy out of the sector as mineral extraction diminishes.

## Actions

- 12.1 Consult with the NSW Department of Industry (Division of Resources and Energy) when assessing applications for land use changes (strategic land use planning, rezoning and planning proposals) and new development or expansions.
- 12.2 Protect areas of mineral and energy resources potential in the region through local land use strategies and local plans.
- 12.3 Protect infrastructure that facilitates mining industries from development that could affect current or future extraction.
- 12.4 Support communities that are transitioning out of mining operations to manage changes in population and demand for service delivery, and explore new economic opportunities.



Left: Tumut 3 Power Station, Talbingo  
courtesy of Snowy Hydro

Above: Lake Cowal Gold Mine,  
courtesy of Evolution Mining







# GOAL 2

## ***A healthy environment with pristine waterways***

The diversity and richness of the Riverina Murray environment is highly valued by residents, a major attraction for visitors and the foundation for the region's productive natural resources.

The Riverina Murray is a mosaic of diverse landscapes. It has major river systems and catchments, such as the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers, as well as the Lachlan and Tumut river systems; lakes and wetland systems; alpine and river red gum forests; lignum swamps; semi-arid shrublands; open woodlands; and grassy plains. These landscapes support native flora, fauna and aquatic habitats, including for over 180 threatened species and 11 threatened ecological communities.<sup>18</sup> Sustainably managing these environmental assets will protect them for future generations and help underpin the agricultural and tourism sectors.

The Murray River is one of Australia's most iconic and valuable waterways. It supports agriculture; has great scenic beauty and diversity; a rich cultural heritage; and boasts enviable lifestyle, tourism and recreational opportunities. These land uses are often in competition with each other.

The Murrumbidgee River is one of Australia's most regulated river systems. It supports a major irrigation network, which poses some unique challenges as well as opportunities to manage environmental flows in the catchment.

The region's natural environment presents a number of challenges, such as floods, bushfires, and droughts, and these are expected to be exacerbated by climate change.

The focus for the future is not just to protect, but also to actively manage and restore environmental values and connections, support healthy riverine environments, and contribute to healthy, engaged communities.

### ***Direction 13: Manage and conserve water resources for the environment***

The health of the region relies on maintaining and protecting water catchments, waterways and riparian land. Water quality influences the ability of waterways and aquifers to sustain healthy aquatic ecosystems.

Significant volumes of water have been recovered for the environment through the environmental rules set out in water sharing plans and through significant water recovery programs, such as the Living Murray and the Commonwealth's *Murray-Darling Basin Plan*.

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

Surface water in some areas may not be suitable for potable use and this could place pressure on groundwater supplies to meet the needs of settlements. Due to the competing needs of communities, the environment, industry and agriculture, all water sources including groundwater, need to be managed carefully.





The fragility of the landscape means that water resources are vulnerable to both individual and cumulative impacts. The sensitive locating of development can mitigate risks to the environment. New development, particularly in the southern part of the region, needs to be located to minimise negative effects on aquatic habitats, such as waterways and wetlands, and downstream.

### Actions

- 13.1 Locate, design, construct and manage new developments to minimise impacts on water catchments, including downstream and groundwater sources.
- 13.2 Minimise the impacts of development on fish habitat, aquaculture and waterways (including watercourses, wetlands and riparian lands) and meet the Water Quality and River Flow Objectives.
- 13.3 Adopt an integrated approach to water cycle management across the region, taking into account climate change, water security, sustainable demand and growth, and the natural environment.

### Direction 14: Manage land uses along key river corridors

Managing settlement along key river corridors, such as the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers, is of national importance and essential to conserving and enhancing their environmental values.

Generally, settlement and urban land uses are directed away from riverbank areas, consistent with setbacks contained in local plans. However, some policies applying to rivers, particularly the Murray River, are outdated, irrelevant or inconsistently applied. This is resulting in poor development outcomes, such as extensive ribbon development along the riverbank.

There is an opportunity to collaborate with key regional stakeholders and all three levels of government to deliver improved policy and approaches that consider the complex relationships and legislative requirements of various jurisdictions and better manage the sometimes competing land uses along these river corridors.

A waterfront management strategy will be prepared for the Murray River that will consider existing and potential riverfront land uses, applicable government policies, projected growth pressures, heritage values and the effect of climate change, and identify appropriate responses to these issues.

Development along other river corridors in the region, such as the Murrumbidgee, Lachlan and Tumut Rivers, is generally less intensive; however, the development of the waterfront management strategy will help contribute to planning for other river corridors in the region.

### Actions

- 14.1 Prepare and implement a waterfront management strategy for the Murray River.
- 14.2 Retain riverfront setback provisions in local plans and limit ribbon development along the Murray River.
- 14.3 Consider and assess the potential impacts of new development on biodiversity along river corridors, including the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers, and manage offsets.



## **Direction 15: Protect and manage the region's many environmental assets**

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

Potential high environmental value areas have been mapped by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. This mapping and other data can be used upfront at the strategic land use planning stage to consider the effects of potential new development on these areas of high environmental value, rather than later at the development assessment stage.

Groundwater-dependent ecosystems and aquatic fish habitats also have high environmental values. Maps of these areas are available from the Department of Primary Industries.

The region includes a number of Travelling Stock Reserves, which are used primarily to move livestock and as supplementary grazing areas in times of drought. These reserves can contain significant biodiversity values and, therefore, need to be carefully managed.

### **Actions**

- 15.1 Protect high environmental value assets through local plans.
- 15.2 Minimise potential impacts arising from development in areas of high environmental value, and consider offsets or other mitigation mechanisms for unavoidable impacts.
- 15.3 Improve the quality of, and access to, information relating to high environmental values.
- 15.4 Protect Travelling Stock Reserves in local land use strategies.

### **High Environmental Values Criteria**

Areas identified with high environmental values relate to known natural features that are protected under legislation, regulation, policy or intergovernmental agreement. Criteria used to identify and map land with high environmental values include:

- areas protected for conservation, including national parks, State flora reserves and Crown reserves that connect biodiversity in extensively cleared landscapes;
- native vegetation of high conservation value, including over-cleared vegetation types and vegetation within over-cleared landscapes;
- threatened species, populations or ecological communities, represented as threatened, such as vegetation of high conservation value;
- wetlands and lagoons, such as the Ramsar listed Werai, Koondrook and Millewa wetlands, and Fivebough and Tuckerbil swamps; and
- areas of geological significance, such as karst landscapes like Yarrangobilly Caves and Cooleman Plain Karst.

The data used to identify high environmental values in this Plan is intended to provide a regional-level overview for the purposes of strategic planning. This data will continue to be updated as new information becomes available. Interested parties should contact relevant agencies, including the Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services and the Department of Primary Industries, for current data and further support. Up-to-date mapping can be found at: [www.seed.nsw.com.au](http://www.seed.nsw.com.au).





Far West

**GRIFFITH**

Hillston

Hay

Darlington Point

Murray Downs



Conargo

Jerilderie

Wakool

Deniliquin

Berrigan

Barham



Mathoura



Barooga

Moama

VIC



Figure 5: **Environmental assets**







## **Direction 16: Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change**

Climate change poses significant risks for the region's ecosystems, agricultural productivity, health and wellbeing, and the sustainability of rural communities.

Projections indicate the region is likely to be significantly impacted by a changing climate (see box on next page – Projected climate change impacts in the Riverina Murray).<sup>19</sup> A warmer climate in NSW will result in altered rainfall patterns and more intense bushfires, droughts and floods (caused by intense rainfall events) to 2050 and beyond.<sup>20</sup>

Combined climatic changes are likely to affect natural systems, species and ecosystems, and those that cannot adapt are likely to decline, contract or become extinct.

Communities need skills and knowledge to be prepared to deal with the effects of climate change. The *NSW Climate Change Policy Framework* (2016) and the *Climate Change Fund Draft Strategic Plan* (2016) set policy directions and prioritise investment to reduce carbon emissions and adapt and mitigate impacts of climate change.

Managing flooding is an important priority for the NSW Government and councils.<sup>21</sup> Most councils currently include flood planning area mapping in local plans and hydraulic and hazard category mapping of flood prone land, which provides government, developers and landowners with a level of certainty about the risks for particular sites.

The *NSW Floodplain Development Manual* (2005) and the NSW Flood Prone Land Policy aim to reduce the impact of flooding on individual owners and occupiers of flood prone property and to reduce private and public losses resulting from floods.

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

Bushfire hazards and risks are identified on maps of bushfire prone land that are prepared by councils and certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service. The extent of bushfire prone land may increase with climate change; therefore, mapping will need to be reviewed at regular intervals.

Naturally occurring asbestos with potential impacts from ground-disturbing activities occurs in the Riverina Murray, primarily in the Gundagai and Coolac Serpentine Belt areas, including the local government areas of Cootamundra, Junee, Gundagai and Snowy Valleys.<sup>22</sup> Naturally occurring asbestos only poses a health risk when elevated levels of fibres are released into the air, either by human activities or by natural weathering, and the fibres are inhaled. The Office of Local Government's *Model Asbestos Policy for NSW Councils* (2015), helps councils to formulate asbestos policies and to promote a consistent approach to managing asbestos.

### **Actions**

- 16.1 Locate developments, including new urban release areas, away from areas of known high biodiversity value, high bushfire and flooding hazards, contaminated land, and designated waterways, to reduce the community's exposure to natural hazards.
- 16.2 Incorporate the findings of the Riverina Murray Enabling Regional Adaptation Project to inform future land use and planning decisions.



Above: Noreuil Park, Albury, courtesy of Albury City Council

Right: Cocoparra National Park, courtesy of Office of Environment and Heritage



- 16.3 Adopt a whole-of-government approach to information exchange on climate change adaptation and preparedness.
- 16.4 Respond to climate-related risks by applying and communicating fine-scale climate information to support decision-making.
- 16.5 Implement the requirements of the *NSW Floodplain Development Manual* by updating flood studies and floodplain risk management plans.
- 16.6 Incorporate the best available hazard information in local plans, consistent with, current flood studies, flood planning levels, modelling and floodplain risk management plans.
- 16.7 Update and share current information on environmental assets and natural hazards with councils to inform planning decisions.
- 16.8 Manage the risks of disturbance in areas affected by naturally occurring asbestos.

### Riverina Murray integrated regional vulnerability assessment

In 2012, the NSW Government, in partnership with the University of Technology Sydney, conducted a collaborative planning process with local communities and other stakeholders across the Riverina Murray to identify and better understand regional vulnerabilities and emerging risks from a changing climate. This process is known as the *Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment: Riverina Murray*.

This provides a strong evidence base to inform the Riverina Murray Enabling Regional Adaptation Project and will identify adaptation pathways and opportunities to minimise climate change impacts on local communities. It will help to identify responses to vulnerabilities and will inform government service delivery at a regional and subregional scale.

### Projected climate change impacts in the Riverina Murray

The region will experience:

- increased occurrence of heatwaves hot days, and fire risk;
- potential for increases in seasonal extremes, particularly rainfall events and droughts;
- decreased spring rainfall in both the near and far future, with the rainfall patterns projected to vary across the region;
- increased short and intense rainfall events, resulting in increased localised flooding from smaller urban streams and urban drainage systems;
- increase in maximum temperatures in the near future (2020–2039) by 0.4°C to 1°C and in the far future (2060–79) by 1.3°C to 2.4°C;
- a projected increase in minimum temperatures in the near future by 0.4°C to 0.8°C and in the far future by 1.3°C to 4°C;
- a projected increase in average and severe fire weather days in summer and spring; and
- a projected increase in severe fire weather days in summer and spring.





# GOAL 3

## **Efficient transport and infrastructure networks**

The Riverina Murray is one of the most significant locations for freight and logistics in Australia. The convergence in the region of the major freight corridors between Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane gives it a potent competitive advantage to leverage now and into the future.

The agribusiness sector relies heavily on transport infrastructure to efficiently move products, including commodities, such as beef, grain, manufactured food and paper, to market.

More than 41 million tonnes of freight is moved annually between NSW and Victoria, and 6 million tonnes is moved between NSW and South Australia, with the majority traversing the Riverina Murray by either road or rail.<sup>23</sup> Freight volumes across NSW are projected to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.<sup>24</sup>

Cross-border connections to Victoria, via road and rail river crossings, will remain a critical component of the regional freight transport network, enabling movement of freight to Victorian ports. This is particularly important given that the Port of Melbourne handles 35 per cent of the nation's container trade.

The region has competitive advantages and market opportunities arising from freight and logistics growth, including its strategic location between multiple metropolitan markets, access to ports, a skilled workforce and a strong agribusiness sector.

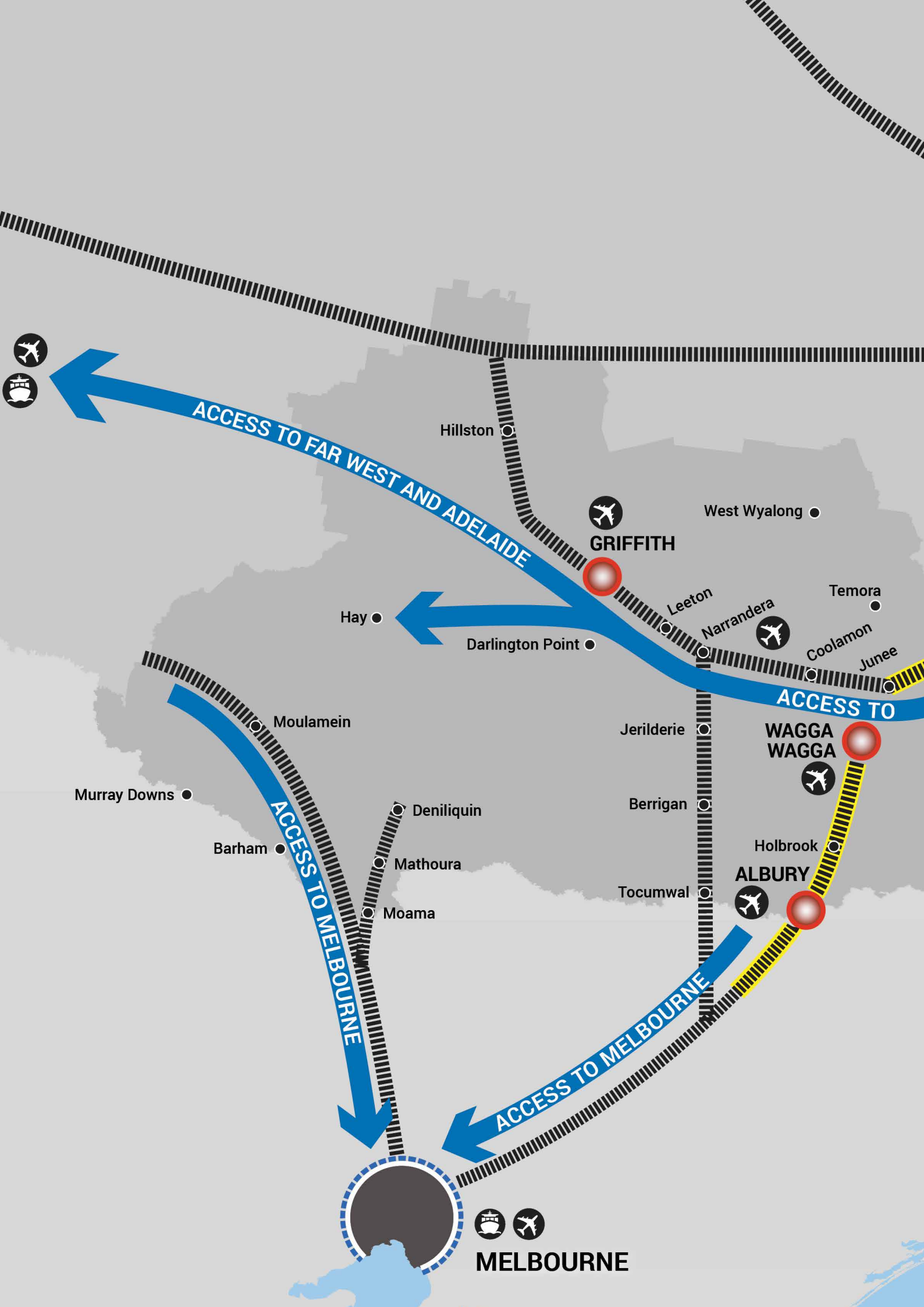
Maximising industry productivity and reducing transport costs will help industry to grow into the future. The connectivity of the road networks within the region will influence its economic potential, and road planning needs to be considered as a comprehensive whole-of-government matter.<sup>25</sup>

### **Connections to the Port of Melbourne**

Connections to the Port of Melbourne are critical for the region's economy. A large portion of the region's exports are transported south to the Port of Melbourne. Maintaining connections and access to the port will become increasingly important as agricultural production and output increases into the future.

Road and rail access to the Port of Melbourne relies on adequate bridge infrastructure across the Murray River. Upgrades to, and replacement of, existing bridges, and construction of second river crossings at some locations, such as Echuca–Moama are a key priority to ensure these freight networks remain viable.





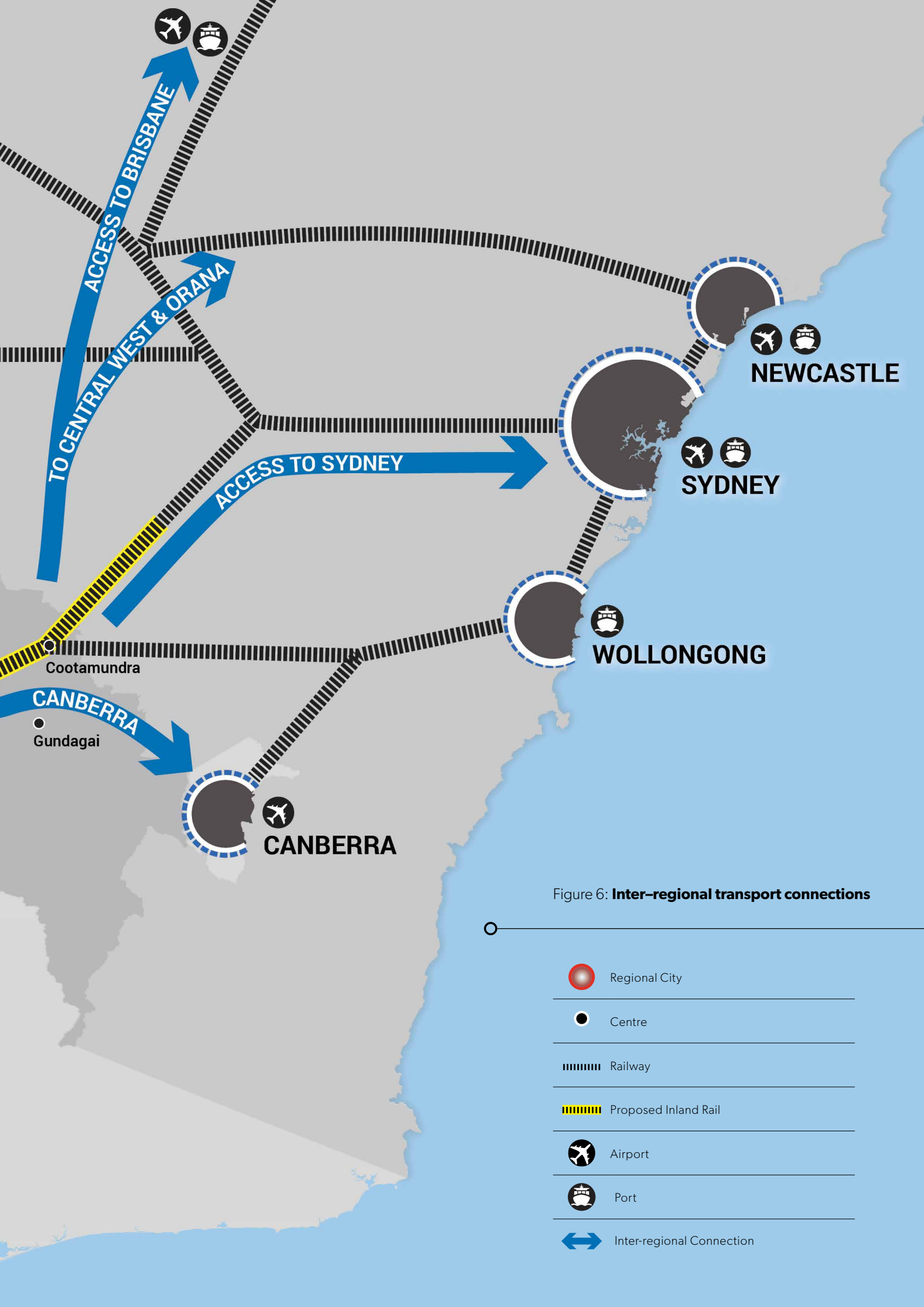


Figure 6: **Inter-regional transport connections**

- 
- Regional City
- Centre
- Railway
- Proposed Inland Rail
- ✈ Airport
- ⚓ Port
- ↔ Inter-regional Connection





## **Direction 17: Transform the region into the eastern seaboard's freight and logistics hub**

The Riverina Murray has a number of freight and logistics hubs that combine to make the region one of Australia's key freight hubs servicing the eastern seaboard. The expanding business environment in the regional cities of Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith, combined with the region's strategic location, existing infrastructure and agricultural production capacity, point toward a rapid growth curve for freight and logistics.

Growing the region into the eastern seaboard's freight and logistics hub will require leveraging the region's strategic location and new and existing freight and logistics facilities, and maximising the use of available industrial land.

Freight and industry hubs, and intermodal terminals, support improved freight movement throughout the region and will potentially reshape the way freight is moved. The private sector is already committing investment to a number of intermodal terminals that will enable business and industry to move freight more efficiently and competitively.

The availability of industrial land, particularly in the regional cities, is a key enabler to support the ongoing growth of the freight and logistics sector. New freight and logistics facilities are able to take advantage of land located near major transportation facilities, often with road and rail access that enables the efficient movement of freight, and the movement and storage of goods.

Transport for NSW is committed to engaging with councils to explore planning issues associated with the development of intermodal facilities within industrial precincts, such as adjoining land uses, and road and rail access.

### **Actions**

- 17.1 Strategically locate freight and logistics hubs to support further industry development.

- 17.2 Support the ongoing performance of existing freight and logistics facilities, particularly those in the regional cities of Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith.
- 17.3 Protect freight and logistics facilities from the encroachment of inappropriate land uses.
- 17.4 Target opportunities for new freight and logistics facilities in areas that maximise the use of available industrial land, access to transport and specific labour market requirements.

### **Freight hubs**

The Ettamogah Rail Hub is a significant intermodal hub located within the Nexus Industrial Precinct in Albury. The hub has capacity to service the movement of more than 16,000 containers per annum. Rail freight services have already increased through the hub as a result of strong industry growth.

Another key freight hub that transports freight to the Port of Melbourne is located at Tocumwal for containerised trains heading to Melbourne via Shepparton, while another significant hub is located in Griffith that specialises in the transportation of grain for export.

## **Direction 18: Enhance road and rail freight links**

Much of the freight generated from the region's agriculture, forestry, and food and beverage manufacturing and processing, starts and travels on local and regional roads. Some local or regional roads are either failing under the pressure of freight movements, or limiting the ability to move freight due to their condition or alignment. This issue will become more challenging as freight movements increase.



Initial work has already been completed by the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils and the Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils to identify local and regional road pressure points. A key input to this work is the role that Victorian transport networks play in supporting NSW freight and passenger demands.

Transport for NSW will work with councils on a prioritised program of works to upgrade and improve local and regional roads that connect to the State and national road freight network.

Heavy vehicle access through town and city centres is a widespread issue for many communities in the region, particularly in Griffith and Temora. Councils and State agencies will consider the viability of local bypasses to improve freight efficiency, reduce travel times and costs, improve safety for road users and increase the amenity of towns. They will also strategically identify and protect viable bypass corridors.

Transport for NSW is proposing to develop a Defined Freight Network for the region (including key national, State, regional and local roads and the rail network).<sup>26</sup> This would be used to prioritise the delivery of future freight network improvement projects where they provide the greatest benefit for the region, and to improve coordination between all levels of government and stakeholders.

### Actions

- 18.1 Identify the regional freight network (including key national, State, regional and local roads and the rail network).
- 18.2 Prioritise projects that address impediments to the regional freight network to improve capacity and opportunities in the network.
- 18.3 Assess the viability of local bypasses and identify and protect future bypass corridors in strategies.

18.4 Identify, coordinate and prioritise the delivery of local and regional road projects that help support the regional freight network.

18.5 Protect freight and transport corridors from the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

### Direction 19: Support and protect ongoing access to air travel

Regional economic growth will be underpinned by the ongoing operation and expansion of air travel and related facilities across the region.<sup>27</sup> Maintaining 20 per cent of flight slots at Sydney Airport for regional NSW services is critical to supporting business and providing convenient air travel to Sydney for regional communities.

The region's largest commuter airports are located in Albury, Griffith, Wagga Wagga and Narrandera-Leeton. In addition to traditional domestic uses, air-based operations support essential community services, such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service, and defence and training operations, such as the Royal Australian Air Force, which has a substantial airbase at Wagga Wagga. The Australian Airline Pilot Academy at Wagga Wagga trains local pilots in what will be an increasingly important sector for economic growth.

Airport facilities need to be protected from the encroachment of incompatible development that could impede air service operations. Future opportunities for airport expansions need to be resolved through land use planning.

### Actions

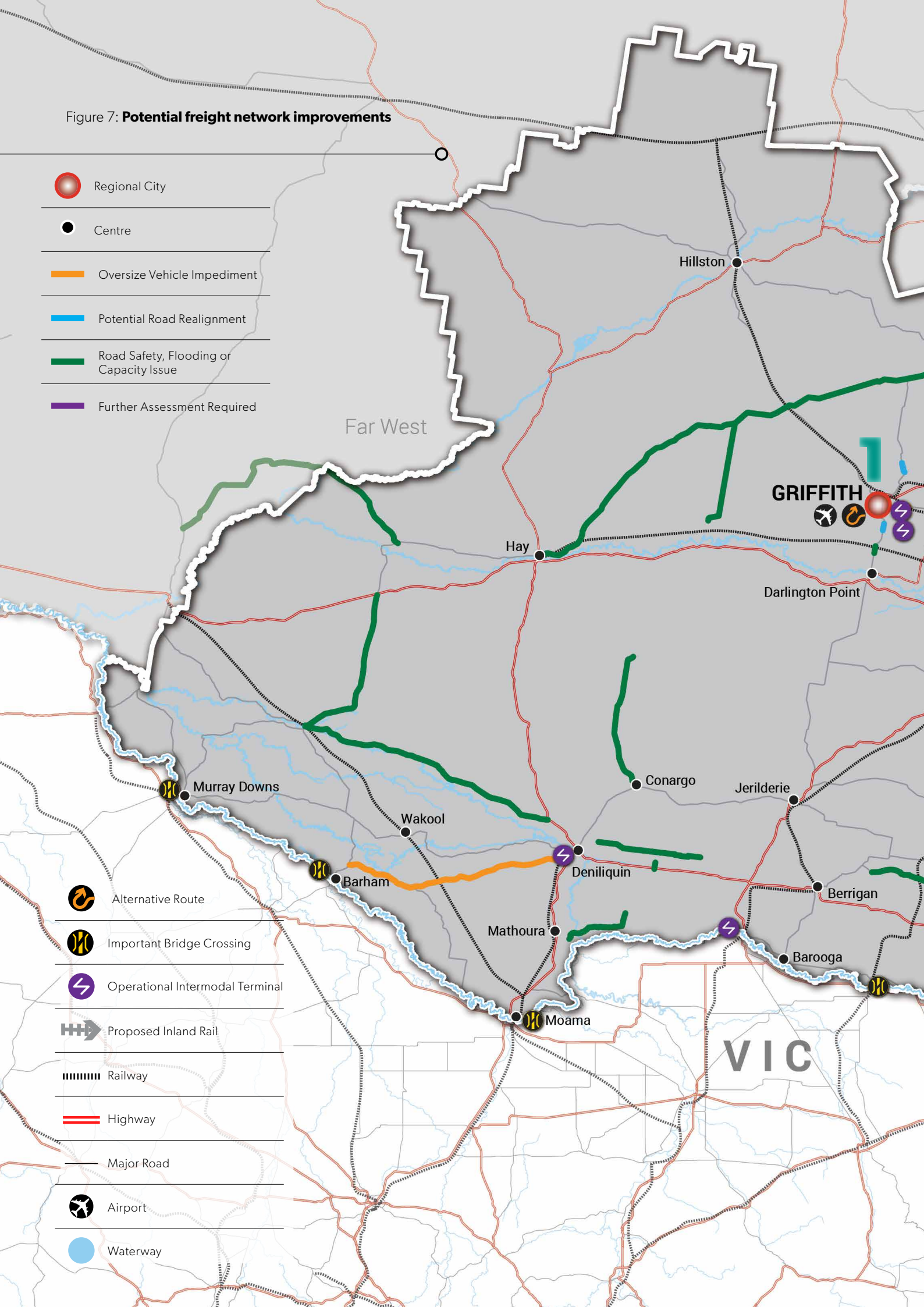
- 19.1 Protect airports from the encroachment of incompatible development, including airports in Wagga Wagga, Albury, Griffith and Narrandera.
- 19.2 Support the continued allocation of 20 per cent of flight slots at Sydney Airport to regional NSW services and seek a greater allocation in peak periods.

Above: Intermodal hub, Albury, courtesy of Albury City Council

Right: Albury Airport, courtesy of Albury City Council



Figure 7: Potential freight network improvements





1

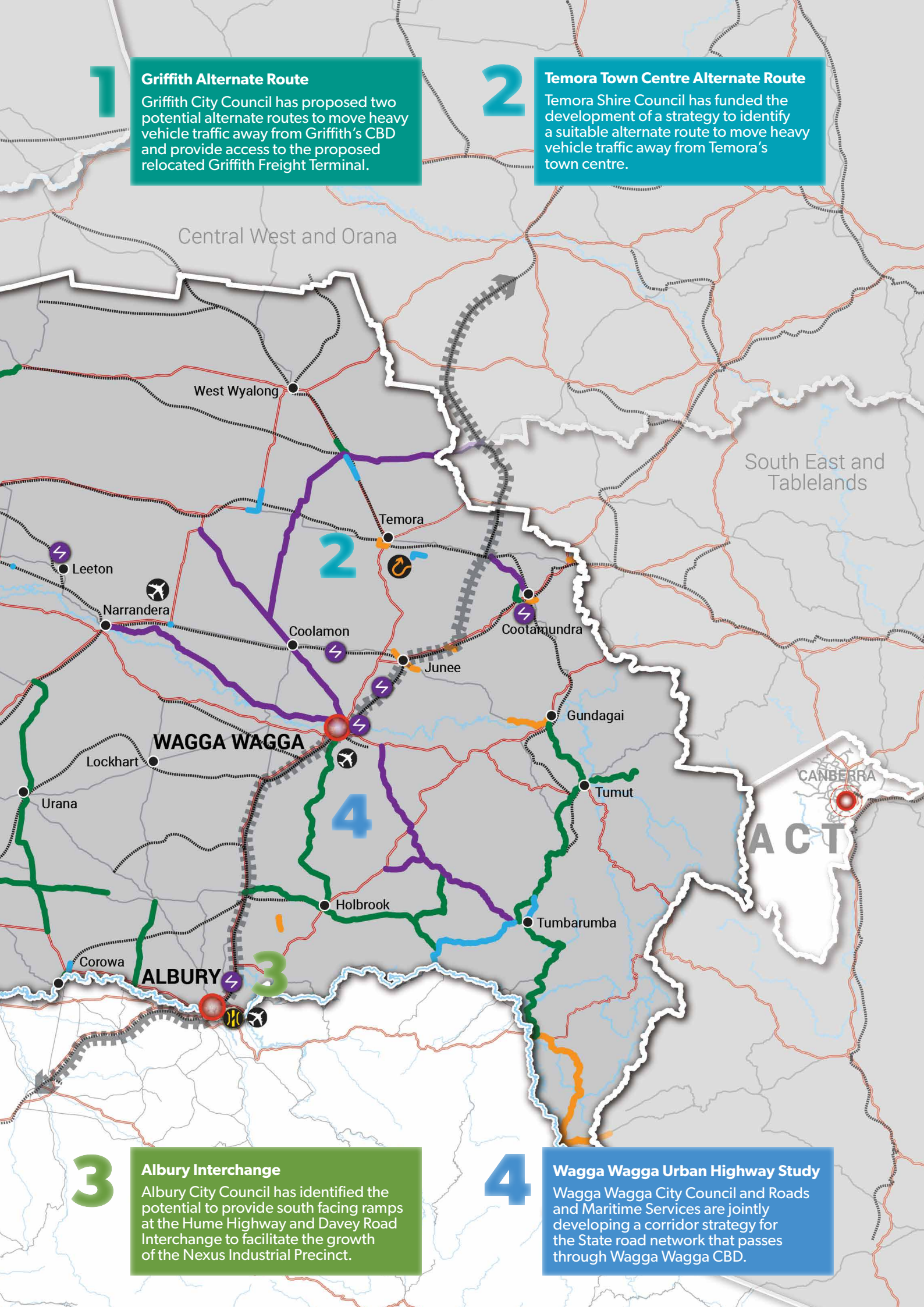
**Griffith Alternate Route**

Griffith City Council has proposed two potential alternate routes to move heavy vehicle traffic away from Griffith's CBD and provide access to the proposed relocated Griffith Freight Terminal.

2

**Temora Town Centre Alternate Route**

Temora Shire Council has funded the development of a strategy to identify a suitable alternate route to move heavy vehicle traffic away from Temora's town centre.



3

**Albury Interchange**

Albury City Council has identified the potential to provide south facing ramps at the Hume Highway and Davey Road Interchange to facilitate the growth of the Nexus Industrial Precinct.

4

**Wagga Wagga Urban Highway Study**

Wagga Wagga City Council and Roads and Maritime Services are jointly developing a corridor strategy for the State road network that passes through Wagga Wagga CBD.



## **Direction 20: Identify and protect future transport corridors**

Major infrastructure corridor planning is necessary to enable long-term, sustainable growth.

The 2010 *Melbourne–Brisbane Inland Rail Alignment Study*, prepared by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), identified the preferred corridor for inland rail, which passes through the region in Wagga Wagga and Albury.<sup>28</sup> The fine-scale alignment of the corridor is yet to be settled. The Australian Government and ARTC are working to finalise planning, engineering design and assessment for the corridor. The NSW Government will work with councils and the Australian Government to finalise the planning and design of the Melbourne–Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor.

The Australian Government is also investigating opportunities for a high-speed rail network between capital cities along the east coast. If feasible, it would significantly reduce travel times between the east coast capital cities and regional centres, and increase transport options in regional NSW. This is likely to generate new opportunities for economic development in the region.

### **Actions**

- 20.1 Work with the Australian Government to finalise planning, engineering design and assessment of the Melbourne–Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor.
- 20.2 Work with the Australian Government to plan for future high-speed rail corridors in the region.

## **Direction 21: Align and protect utility infrastructure investment**

The region relies on high-quality utility infrastructure, including electricity, gas and telecommunications, to service agricultural and manufacturing industries and drive future economic competitiveness.

Deficiencies in the energy network across the region, particularly in areas such as Carrathool and Hay, have been identified as a major barrier to business development and industry diversification or expansion.

The challenge of providing cost-effective extended and upgraded services to some remote areas creates opportunities for stand-alone alternative energy generation, and the use of renewable energy options such as wind and solar generation.

Current contribution, funding and servicing models for utility infrastructure do not provide the flexibility to respond to and support opportunities for new industry development with high water or power needs.

Implementing new funding models for utility infrastructure (such as cost-sharing between industries) will support and stimulate growth in agribusiness and value-added manufacturing industries, as well as other development.

Access to telecommunications is inconsistent across the region, which affects the ability to attract jobs, grow business and deliver e-programs for health and education. The delivery of reliable telecommunications infrastructure is problematic in some areas, with mobile phone black spots and delays in the roll-out of the National Broadband Network to areas including Hay, Carrathool, Deniliquin and Jerilderie. Areas not identified in the National Broadband Network roll-out program will need to investigate alternative access arrangements.

Regionally and nationally significant defence telecommunications installations exist in places such as at Morundah and Collingullie. These need to be protected for long-term use, and surrounding land uses need to be managed to preserve their operational capabilities.

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

### **Actions**

- 21.1 Monitor development and ensure that infrastructure is responsive to investment opportunities.
- 21.2 Investigate opportunities for new funding models for utility infrastructure.
- 21.3 Protect the function of the defence communication facilities in Wagga Wagga, Lockhart, Federation and Narrandera.
- 21.4 Provide sufficient space for cemeteries and crematoria by identifying appropriate sites in local land use strategies.







# GOAL 4

## **Strong, connected and healthy communities**

Over the next 20 years, the region will experience change as a result of new agricultural technology and productivity, freight and transport connections, water trading and regulation, climate, and economic and market conditions. These changes will affect the region's communities and their centres.

Population growth across the region will not be evenly distributed, with Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith projected to experience the highest rates of growth, followed by the Murray River Local Government Area. Investment in major services, facilities and industrial activity will drive growth in these places, distributing benefits across the region.

The population across other smaller towns and villages is likely to remain relatively stable or, in some cases, decline. However, these numbers don't reflect the dynamic nature of some communities, with high levels of transient workers and populations that fluctuate at different times of the year.

Communities with large agricultural sectors will experience some decline as agricultural technology and innovation reduce the need for workers. The connection between agriculture and value-adding opportunities, including manufacturing and processing, will become increasingly important to support the resilience and future growth of many towns and villages.

Creating liveable places will become increasingly important due to future demographic changes. Enlivening regional cities and revitalising local centres will make them more appealing places to visit and do business, as well as improve social cohesion and community wellbeing.

### **Direction 22: Promote the growth of regional cities and local centres**

Regional cities and local centres are important to the economic prosperity of the region and they underpin the appeal of places for residents and business. Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith are regional cities and there are 23 local centres, including Deniliquin, Cootamundra and Hay. This interrelated network of centres is considered a major strength for the region.

The growth of regional cities will encourage future investment, increase supply of housing, diversify industry and increase job opportunities and services – all of which will benefit the immediate and broader regional community.

Over the next 20 years, the majority of housing is likely to be delivered in regional cities and this will need to be supported by infrastructure delivery. Significant release areas are located at Thurgoona and Wirlinga in Albury; Estella, Lloyd and Boorooma in Wagga Wagga; and Hanwood and Lake Wyangan in Griffith. These areas will provide sufficient housing to accommodate the projected demand for 12,600 new dwellings.

Albury and Wagga Wagga are also home to significant defence and aerospace industries, and associated housing, logistics, technology, education and manufacturing industries. Significant industrial land releases also exist in Nexus (Albury), Bomen (Wagga Wagga) and Tharbogang (Griffith).





Across the region, many councils have planned for aspirational growth, which reflects the desires of their local communities for the future. Aspirations for growth are reflected in land use planning decisions, for example, making land or infrastructure available for development. This may influence future population growth patterns.

Local centres and regional communities need good access to regional cities so they can take advantage of high-level services such as health, education and recreation. With an increase in the ageing population, public transport and community transport will assume greater importance.

Transport for NSW is committed to developing a long-term plan for regional transport to improve services and connections to other regional centres, cities and metropolitan cities, including Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.<sup>29</sup>

## Actions

- 22.1 Coordinate infrastructure delivery across residential and industrial land in the regional cities.
- 22.2 Consider the role, function and relationship between regional cities and centres in local land use strategies.
- 22.3 Protect strategic defence establishments in Albury and Wagga Wagga and encourage compatible adjoining land uses.
- 22.4 Improve transport in regional cities and their connections with regional communities.
- 22.5 Work with local councils, local transport operators and community transport providers to identify opportunities and plan for a range of flexible transport options/models to meet specific local needs.
- 22.6 Improve access to regional cities and connections out of the region.

## Direction 23: Build resilience in towns and villages

Helping towns and villages to become more robust and dynamic places will increase their appeal for residents and contribute to their growth and prosperity.

Establishing strong networks, both in the region and with centres in adjoining regions and states, will help to build community resilience and capacity. Fostering these networks will be a shared responsibility between communities, organisations, business and government.

Tools and resources, such as the NSW Government's *Strengthening Rural Communities: Resource Kit* (2001) can help communities to enhance their capabilities and become more self-sufficient. This resource needs updating to reflect the current challenges, including declining populations, the ageing of populations and a decline in younger adult populations.

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

A series of roundtable consultations with State agencies and councils in the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC) will be helpful in achieving better regional planning outcomes, delivering on community strategic plans and developing a more collaborative approach to planning across the region.

## Actions

- 23.1 Update the *Strengthening Rural Communities: Resource Kit*.
- 23.2 Work with councils to better understand the drivers of population change and implications for local communities.



- 23.3 Conduct a pilot State agency and local government area roundtable meeting with councils in the REROC area.
- 23.4 Build drought resilience in rural communities by providing targeted support to primary producers and communities to improve preparedness and improve decision-making.

### **Direction 24: Create a connected and competitive environment for cross-border communities**

A number of the region's settlements are located along the Murray River, with neighbouring settlements located across the river in Victoria. Often these 'twin towns' function as one larger settlement; for example, Albury–Wodonga, Echuca–Moama and Mulwala–Yarrowonga.

The proximity of the NSW towns to Victorian regional cities provides benefits, such as retail and business opportunities, and access to health care and education services. There is also a significant relationship between the demand and supply of land and housing for both NSW and Victorian Murray River councils, as they both operate within the same housing market.

Albury–Wodonga is recognised as one of Australia's major inland cities. It is the largest of the twin towns in the Riverina Murray and is expected to grow significantly, with the population projected to increase by 27 per cent to 117,000 by 2036.

Almost one-quarter of the workforce (3,800 people) in Albury accesses job opportunities in Wodonga.<sup>30</sup>

As the twin towns along the Murray River are subject to different NSW and Victorian laws, policies and service delivery models, there are shortcomings in some areas, such as a lack of customer focus around public transport and taxi services. For example, fares and some NSW concessions are not recognised.

Consistent and complementary policy approaches in cross-border communities can help to achieve cost-efficiencies in retail catchment planning and delivery of shared services, such as transport, health care, education and water supply.

The twin towns' relationship highlights the need for an approach that integrates regional land use with infrastructure and service planning, to achieve cost-efficiencies in the delivery of shared services, such as transport, health care, education and water supply. It will also help to support future economic opportunities within cross-border communities.

### **Actions**

- 24.1 Work with the Victorian Government and cross-border councils to examine:
  - barriers to and enablers of economic, housing and jobs growth;
  - service delivery models; and
  - infrastructure delivery, including transport infrastructure.
- 24.2 Work with the Victorian Government and adjoining Victorian councils to develop a cross-border land and housing monitor.
- 24.3 Examine opportunities to better standardise development provisions in NSW and Victoria, particularly for seniors and affordable housing developments.
- 24.4 Make travel across the NSW–Victorian border easier and more convenient for cross-border communities.

Left: Griffith, courtesy of Griffith City Council

Above: Bell Bridge, courtesy of Albury City Council





## **Direction 25: Build housing capacity to meet demand**

Housing in the region has historically been characterised by single detached dwellings, with some larger residential lots and rural lifestyle options. As the population grows and changes, there will be demand for new housing and a greater variety of housing. Making more housing available in existing urban areas will be more sustainable because it takes advantage of existing infrastructure and services.

Councils' local housing strategies are the first step to identifying housing needs and planning for a range of housing types. They also help to identify the infrastructure needed to support local communities. Local housing strategies need to be flexible and responsive to shifts in the demand and supply of the local housing market, and deal with unforeseen constraints, including uneven rates of development, or unexpected population growth.

Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith are expected to play an important role in catering for housing demand. Opportunities for higher-density development should be encouraged near town centres to take advantage of existing services. Local centres will also have an ongoing need to provide housing choice. The timely provision of infrastructure is essential to support the provision of new housing, including in land release areas.

In some areas with stable or declining populations, there will still be demand for new dwellings and for a greater variety of housing types, and these should reflect the character and heritage of the area.

## **Actions**

- 25.1 Prepare local housing strategies that provide housing choice and affordable housing.
- 25.2 Facilitate increased housing choice, including townhouses, villas and apartments in regional cities and locations close to existing services and jobs.
- 25.3 Align infrastructure planning with land release areas to provide adequate infrastructure.
- 25.4 Locate higher-density development close to town centres to capitalise on existing infrastructure and to provide increased housing choice.

## **Direction 26: Provide greater housing choice**

Greater housing choice is needed to cater for changing household size, particularly a rise in the number of single person households and a decrease in the number of occupants in each household, the needs of tourists and an ageing population. More studio, one- and two-bedroom homes, and smaller homes that have good access to infrastructure and services will be needed. Councils need to consider these factors when they are providing opportunities for housing in local land use strategies.

There are State planning policies that streamline approval processes for seniors housing. The incentives in these policies need to be reviewed to better suit regional circumstances. Often, they do not deliver benefits due to higher development costs and lower demand in the region (as facilities need to cater for smaller populations compared to metropolitan areas).

The region experiences a large influx of seasonal workers to support agribusiness industries, including wine, orchard fruit (including citrus and nuts) and cotton and berry industries, particularly during harvest periods.



An adequate range of accommodation, or capacity within existing options, needs to be provided to meet the future needs of seasonal workers.

Some parts of the region, such as Coolamon, Gundagai and Griffith, have experienced rental supply shortages as a result of the conversion of private rental stock to owner-occupied housing.

The Government can help councils to improve the availability of affordable housing by:

- expanding the range of model provisions that promote or require the inclusion of affordable housing in developments. For instance, councils may consider a floor space bonus to deliver a percentage of affordable housing in a development;
- providing additional development incentives and reduced contributions, or other mechanisms that may boost construction of secondary dwellings as alternative affordable housing. Councils could also consider planning incentives under the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009*; and
- promoting new caravan parks and manufactured home estates on unconstrained land in existing settlements, and new land release areas. Councils can identify sites that are in suitable locations to meet the needs of residents and tourists.

### Actions

- 26.1 Remove planning barriers to provide a range of low-care and independent seniors' accommodation options across the region.
- 26.2 Promote opportunities for seniors and disability housing by reviewing the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability) 2004* to identify opportunities to make it more applicable for private developers in regional areas.

26.3 Promote opportunities for retirement villages, nursing homes and similar housing needs of seniors in local land use strategies.

26.4 Locate new housing for seniors in close proximity to existing services and facilities, and on land free from hazards.

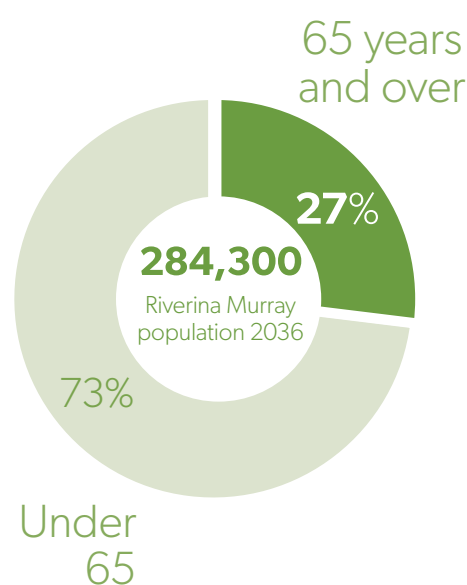
26.5 Promote ageing-in-place by adopting elements of Livable Housing Australia's *Livable Housing Design Guidelines* in development controls for housing, where possible.

26.6 Release guidelines to help councils plan and manage seasonal and itinerant worker accommodation.

26.7 Promote incentives to encourage greater housing affordability, including a greater mix of housing in new release areas.

### Population Ageing

2036







## **Direction 27: Manage rural residential development**

Rural residential housing is a popular lifestyle housing option. This type of housing has the potential to create land use conflicts with productive agricultural land and industrial land, or with other potentially productive land uses, such as areas with mineral or renewable energy potential.

Managing this type of development and its cumulative impacts will become increasingly important as the regional economy diversifies and as development pressure for this type of housing increases.

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

### **Actions**

27.1 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.

27.2 Locate new rural residential areas:

- in close proximity to existing urban settlements to maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, including roads, water, sewerage and waste services and social and community infrastructure;
- to avoid or 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 or areas affected by natural hazards.

27.3 Manage land use conflict that can result from cumulative impacts of successive development decisions.

## **Direction 28: Deliver healthy built environments and improved urban design**

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

When planning and redeveloping town centres, design and environmental considerations, such as pedestrian movement, vegetation, water management (water sensitive urban design) and infrastructure for public spaces, should be incorporated into the decision-making process. New and existing development should be designed to provide opportunities for walking and cycling, where appropriate.

Councils need to promote water sensitive urban design techniques to improve water use planning and supply, and water security. Councils can also apply water sensitive urban design through wastewater re-use on parks, gardens and reserves, or to supplement agricultural uses.

Urban design guidelines are commonly developed with a metropolitan focus and are not necessarily easily applied to regional and rural environments. Developing regional urban design guidelines will help councils when they are preparing environmental planning instruments for new release areas and infill development, to revitalise town centres and respond to the climate and water security challenges.



The Department of Planning and Environment is preparing design guidelines that promote design excellence, particularly in higher-density areas, such as in regional cities.

### **Actions**

- 28.1 Release regional urban design guidelines to create healthy built environments and guide local decision-making.
- 28.2 Promote high-quality open spaces that support physical activity, including walking and cycling networks, in the design of new communities.
- 28.3 Reflect local built form, heritage and character in new housing developments.
- 28.4 Incorporate water sensitive urban design in new development.

### **Direction 29: Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage**

The region has diverse cultural, historical and recreational assets that enrich the character of its places.

Heritage protection and promotion can attract more visitors to a place and help to support the local economy, which in turn can sustain smaller communities. Better promotion and targeted community education initiatives, such as advertising and access to information, may help to increase community support for managing and protecting heritage assets.

The Art-Deco 1930s Roxy Theatre in Leeton and the 1930s Montreal Theatre in Tumut are good examples of where councils have leveraged their heritage assets through interpretation and adaptive re-use.

The region has a rich Aboriginal cultural heritage, which is highly valued by the community. Rivers have spiritual and cultural significance for many

Aboriginal communities, including the Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa, Wadi Wadi, Muthi Muthi, Latji Latji, Barkandji and Nyampa peoples.<sup>31</sup>

Historically, the region's rivers have also facilitated European settlement, trading, agriculture, irrigation and transport.<sup>32</sup>

Heritage is irreplaceable and should be appreciated, valued and protected for the benefit of current and future generations. Appropriate heritage management mechanisms must be put in place in consultation with communities, including the Aboriginal community, to avoid harm to Aboriginal objects and places, and other heritage objects and sites.

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

### **Actions**

- 29.1 Undertake and implement heritage studies, including regional Aboriginal cultural heritage studies, to inform local land use strategies.
- 29.2 Consult with Aboriginal people and the broader community to identify heritage values at the strategic planning stage.
- 29.3 Increase heritage protection and revitalise main streets and town centres, through community education and development incentives in local plans.
- 29.4 Recognise and conserve heritage assets that have community significance in local plans.
- 29.5 Provide resources for heritage advice to inform planning processes.







# Local Government Narratives

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

Priorities for each council are set out in the following section and will guide further investigations and implementation.

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

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

## Communities of Interest

One of the predominant features of the Riverina Murray is that many of the settlements are interconnected, linked geographically, socially and economically. This interconnectedness has created 'communities of interest'. In some instances, these communities of interest extend across a number of settlements, as well as to settlements in neighbouring regions and interstate, for example, settlements along the Murray River or those centres in close proximity to Canberra. The region's infrastructure and services in these locations also often extend beyond the boundary of the region to communities in other regions and interstate, and vice versa.

Regional cities play an important role in shaping these communities of interest, providing higher-order services to wide catchment areas, with some areas overlapping and forming part of another community of interest. For example, Temora and Lockhart and cross-border towns such as Corowa and Moama sit within multiple communities of interest and access higher-order services in multiple regional cities and centres.

## Albury

Albury, together with the neighbouring Victorian city of Wodonga, functions as a single economic centre, with employment, investment and services accessed across both locations. With a population of 51,722 in 2015, Albury services an extensive catchment of approximately 200,000 people. It provides higher-order services, including for business, office and retail uses, and arts, culture, recreation and entertainment, which support the needs of smaller settlements across the region and in cross-border communities.

Albury services the wider community through the Albury–Wodonga Health Service, tertiary education services such as Charles Sturt University and TAFE, and a major regional airport, with direct connections to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

The economy is driven by healthcare and community services, and retail and government services, including a major Australian Taxation Office administrative centre and defence service/support industries. Albury hosts around 4,000 businesses and continues to provide a high level of business confidence, with major construction projects ongoing.

### Priorities:

- Support the delivery of residential release areas, including Thurgoona and Wirlinga, and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas.
- Support industrial land development around Nexus, and protect industrial areas from incompatible land uses.
- Support the establishment of a health precinct around Albury Base Hospital.
- Support the provision and continued development of major regional sports, recreation and cultural facilities.





## Berrigan

Berrigan Shire is located in the south of the region, midway between Albury and Echuca in Victoria. The shire had a population of 8,416 in 2015. In 2013, it contributed \$287 million toward the region's gross regional product. The shire's key employment industries include agriculture, construction, tourism and social services. The shire's predominantly irrigated agricultural lands facilitate the productivity of export-oriented grain and dairy producers.

Less than 300 kilometres from Melbourne, the towns of Barooga, Berrigan, Finley and Tocumwal offer a range of recreation, health and tourist facilities. Barooga and Tocumwal, located on the Murray River, support a range of rural residential and urban communities, and have access to walking and cycling networks, which connect to the river and surrounding retail precincts. Lifestyle activities and opportunities in these towns have promoted continued population growth.

### Priorities:

- Identify opportunities for strategic investment and job creation.
- Partner with government and industry to renew and promote the development of council-owned land and assets.
- Develop and promote Berrigan Shire's regional transport and freight infrastructure.
- Protect the water quality and aesthetic values of the Murray River.

## Bland

Bland Shire is located in the north of the region, at the junction of the Newell and Mid Western highways and Goldfields Way. The shire had an estimated population of 5,959 in 2015. It contributed an estimated \$314 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013.

The economy is underpinned by agriculture and mining, with the region's most significant mining activity occurring at Lake Cowal Gold Mine.

The shire includes the local centre of West Wyalong, as well as a number of smaller towns and villages, including Wyalong, Barmedman, Tallimba, Ungarie, Weethalle and Mirrool.

### Priorities:

- Support agriculture, including broadacre cropping and grazing, and agribusiness diversification.
- Support the mining and resources sector and associated businesses.
- Leverage opportunities from the shire's location to support diverse industries, including freight and logistics industries.
- Support tourism opportunities in the shire.

## Carrathool

Carrathool Shire, situated in the far north-west of the region, encompasses predominately rural land. The shire had a population of 2,733 in 2015. It contributed an estimated \$115 million to the region's gross regional product, mainly through irrigated agricultural produce such as cotton, wheat, rice and vegetables. The shire includes the local centre of Hillston and the surrounding villages of Goolgowi, Merriwagga, Rankins Springs and Carrathool.

Key opportunities for the shire include ongoing large-scale cotton farming and processing, agricultural transport services and value-added manufacturing.

### Priorities:

- Enhance community wellbeing through better access to services, particularly health and education.
- Attract investment to promote private sector development of value-adding agricultural processing facilities.
- Support the sector through diversification and more intensive production of crops, including cotton, nuts and olives, as well as poultry.

## Coolamon

Coolamon Shire is one of the richest agricultural and pastoral areas of the region, comprising the local centre of Coolamon and the smaller towns and villages of Ganmain, Ardlethan, Marrar, Matong and Beckom, just north of Wagga Wagga. The shire had a population of 4,342 in 2015 and is renowned for its production of wheat, canola, oats and other cereal crops, as well as wool, lamb and beef products. The shire contributed an estimated \$124 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013.

The shire's close proximity to Wagga Wagga and advances in IT and its improved internet connectivity are supporting the emergence of home-based business and e-commerce opportunities, in addition to the agricultural-dominated economy. The local centre of Coolamon is also well known for its picturesque rural heritage and character.

Key opportunities involve extending tourism opportunities from Wagga Wagga, exploring scaled efficiency of wheat production and further developing value-added agriculture.

### Priorities:

- Sustain the strong agriculture-based economy in an evolving global market.
- Promote and support existing and new business investment, taking advantage of the shire's proximity to Wagga Wagga.
- Continue to deliver a high standard of services, facilities and infrastructure to support residents and visitors.
- Adapt to climate variability and protect environmental assets.

## Cootamundra–Gundagai

The Cootamundra–Gundagai Regional Council area is located in the eastern part of the region, and is traversed by the Murrumbidgee River and Hume Highway. The council area had a population of 11,461 in 2015. The council's economy is primarily based on dryland cropping and grazing, as well as horticultural products and cereal crops grown on the rich alluvial river flats.

The two main towns in the shire, Cootamundra and Gundagai, are halfway between Sydney and Melbourne, with the Hume Highway, Olympic Highway and Melbourne to Sydney rail line playing a crucial role in the economy. The council area contributed an estimated \$468 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013, with key sectors, besides agriculture, including freight and transport, education, health, and food and beverage manufacturing.

### Priorities:

- Support agriculture as the dominant industry, encouraging development of large-scale livestock production and processing, as well as development of key freight transport services.
- Develop niche value-added agricultural produce and related tourism opportunities.
- Capitalise on the existing access to rail and road infrastructure.
- Enhance access to services and facilities, including health and aged care, to support a healthy rural community.

## Edward River

Edward River Council had a population of 8,962 in 2015. The council area supports both dryland and irrigated agriculture, with one of the most extensive high water irrigation areas in NSW. Significant production of rice and winter cereals, and sheep farming, as well as contributions from the service sector meant the council area contributed an estimated \$387 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013.

Deniliquin provides education and health services to the greater council area, including early childhood to high school services, a TAFE campus and a hospital. Deniliquin is also the headquarters of Murray Irrigation Limited, one of the largest privately owned irrigation supply companies in the world. The council area is also home to numerous merino sheep stations which produce fine wool. The council area is seeking investment in food production, with opportunities to develop additional value-adding operations to maximise job retention and employment.



### Priorities:

- Develop Deniliquin into a thriving local centre through industry development and job creation to promote population growth.
- Ensure that irrigated land is appropriately zoned and protected from inappropriate development.
- Double the size of the visitor economy through new product development and promotion.
- Improve the council area's liveability and lifestyle opportunities.

## Federation

Federation Council is centrally located in the heart of the Riverina on the Murray River and is home to the local centres of Corowa and Urana and the smaller towns of Howlong and Oaklands. The council area sits between the regional cities of Albury and Wagga Wagga and had a population of 12,629 in 2015.

The council area hosts an array of small-to medium-sized enterprises in tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. Major industries include agricultural machinery sales and services, munitions production, cropping and food processing. These industries are prompting more freight transport and tourism businesses, which together contributed an estimated \$560 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013.

Key opportunities include value-added food and beverage products such as free range and health foods, and further private sector development in livestock processing facilities as well as expanding the tourism economy.

### Priorities:

- Diversify the economy by supporting the growth of the tourism sector.
- Explore options to expand value-add manufacturing and agricultural opportunities.
- Plan for the efficient delivery of infrastructure and services to promote high-quality lifestyles.
- Protect the water quality and aesthetic values of the Murray River.

## Greater Hume

Greater Hume Shire is located between the regional cities of Albury and Wagga Wagga and had a population of 10,378 in 2015. The shire borders Victoria and is traversed by the Hume, Riverina and Olympic highways. The shire is home to the local centre of Holbrook, as well as a number of smaller towns, including Culcairn, Henty, Jindera and Walla Walla. The towns and villages play a key role in servicing traffic between regional and metropolitan centres, while also servicing surrounding agricultural industries.

The shire's strategic location between Albury and Wagga Wagga creates opportunities for both economic and population growth and enhances its access to global gateways such as the Port of Melbourne.

The shire contributed an estimated \$385 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013, and key sectors in the local economy include agriculture, education, manufacturing and construction. There are also tourism opportunities in the shire, particularly in riverfront areas along the Murray River, with associated recreational activities.

### Priorities:

- Capitalise on economic opportunities from the key economic corridor between Albury and Wagga Wagga.
- Capitalise on the shire's role as a key freight corridor between NSW and Victoria.
- Support large-scale food manufacturing developments, while continuing to support the wool, grain and livestock industries.
- Protect the water quality and aesthetic values of the Murray River.

## Griffith

Griffith is the focal point for population and housing growth in the west of the region. It provides higher-order services including for business, office and retail uses, arts, culture, and recreation and entertainment which support the needs of smaller settlements across the region's north and north-west. It had a population of 25,986 in 2015 and provides services to a wide catchment of approximately 50,000 people through its base hospital, St Vincent's Private Community Hospital, tertiary education services and major regional airport.

Griffith is home to several wineries, has one of the largest TAFE campuses in the Riverina and is the regional city servicing the vast Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area.

Griffith contributed an estimated \$1.3 billion to the region's gross regional product in 2013, with strong employment growth occurring in the transport, machinery equipment manufacturing and food product manufacturing sectors. Opportunities exist to support innovation and investment in value-adding, development of food and agritourism, and to encourage manufacturing.

### Priorities:

- Support the delivery of residential release areas, including at Lake Wyangan, and Griffith North, and at Hanwood and Yenda in Griffith, and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas.
- Support industrial land development, including at Tharbogang in Griffith, and protect industrial areas from incompatible land uses.
- Support the establishment of a health precinct around Griffith Base Hospital and St Vincent's Private Community Hospital.

## Hay

Hay Shire is situated on the Murrumbidgee River and incorporates the town of Hay and the villages of Booligal, Maude and One Tree, and had a population of 2,999 in 2015. The local government area is serviced by the Sturt, Mid Western and Cobb highways, intersecting at Hay, which is halfway between Sydney and Adelaide and about 400 kilometres from Melbourne.

Hay's economy is reliant on tourism, agriculture and associated industry. Its parks, sporting facilities, amenities along the Murrumbidgee River and museums make it an attractive place to live.

### Priorities:

- Recognise the value of the environment and biodiversity, and promote sustainable production and consumption through the use of environmentally sound technologies and practices.
- Recognise and build on the distinctive places, culture, history and natural systems of Hay, and sustainably use council-owned land.
- Provide road infrastructure to capitalise on Hay's central location and improve connectivity.
- Ensure that irrigated land is appropriately zoned and protected from inappropriate development.

## Junee

Junee Shire is a rural area and home to the local centre of Junee, which provides services to the surrounding towns and villages of Bethungra, Illabo, Wantabadgery, Harefield, Old Junee, Junee Reefs, Dirnaseer and Eurongilly. The shire had a population of 6,230 in 2015. Located on the Southern Train Line between Sydney and Melbourne, and with the regional city of Wagga Wagga only 41 kilometres away, Junee also enjoys access to regional-level amenities and services.

Junee continues to build on its agricultural history, with this sector contributing strongly to jobs and economic growth.



### Priorities:

- Encourage economic growth by supporting agriculture and other emerging industries such as tourism and freight-related opportunities.
- Increase access to local services and infrastructure within the community, including improving recreation and sporting facilities and enlarging efficient sewerage systems.
- Leverage growth opportunities through its proximity to Wagga Wagga.

## Leeton

Leeton Shire is situated approximately 550 kilometres west of Sydney and 450 kilometres north of Melbourne, in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. The shire includes the town of Leeton and villages of Yanco, Whitton, Murrumbidgee and Wamoon, and had a population of 11,645 people in 2015.

Leeton's economy is primarily driven by agriculture, with citrus, rice, grapes and wheat important commodities. The shire is home to the Sunrice Headquarters, Berri Juices, Swift Beef Cattle Feedlot, Freedom Foods and Murrumbidgee Irrigation, and is an important education centre for the Riverina Murray region.

### Priorities:

- Effective access to quality local services that are relevant to the community's needs.
- Encourage maintenance of a healthy environment through sustainable use of water resources and effective waste management.
- Create a diversity of jobs by promoting tourism opportunities.
- Ensure that irrigated land is appropriately zoned and protected from inappropriate development.

## Lockhart

Lockhart Shire is located to the east of Wagga Wagga and had an estimated population of 3,025 in 2015. The shire includes the local centre of Lockhart and other towns and villages including The Rock, Milbrulong, Yerong Creek and Pleasant Hills.

Lockhart Shire has access to rail and is relatively close to the regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Albury. The shire's main economic drivers include a strong agricultural sector – producing quality grain, lamb, beef and wool – supported by a number of secondary and service industries. Industries such as tourism, particularly heritage and eco-tourism have experienced growth over recent years.

### Priorities:

- Protect important heritage, environmental and biodiversity values that contribute to the lifestyle enjoyed by residents and visitors.
- Leverage opportunities from the shire's close proximity to Wagga Wagga and provide an appropriate mix of land uses supported by infrastructure.
- Deliver healthy built environments with sufficient community infrastructure and improve the appearance of towns and villages.
- Encourage tourism, including eco-tourism opportunities.
- Protect important agricultural lands to support the strong agribusiness sector.

## Murray River

The Murray River Council area is located in the south-west of the region on the NSW-Victorian border, and had an estimated population of 11,586 in 2015. The local centre of Moama, together with its Victorian neighbour Echuca, service a population of over 20,000 people. Other smaller towns and villages in the council area include Mathoura, Bunnaloo, Womboota, Cumberagunja, Barham, Moulamein, Wakool, Tooleybuc, Murray Downs, Caldwell, Koraleigh and Goodnight. Deniliquin, to the north of the

shire, also provides services for residents in the northern part of the council area.

Located on the Cobb Highway just three hours from Melbourne, the area is also serviced by rail transport. Moama is serviced by daily passenger bus (via Echuca) and rail connections to Melbourne and many regional cities and local centres.

Key industries include agriculture – such as rice, wheat, barley, fruit and vegetable production – as well as wool and dairy production, feed lots, vineyards, tourism, food services, manufacturing, construction, retail and health care. Tourism is a strong economic driver and the area is a popular destination for visitors with attractions including the Murray River and other natural watercourses, red gum forests, the historic port of Echuca and a number of cultural and recreational events.

#### **Priorities:**

- Work collaboratively with stakeholders to improve cross-border connections.
- Protect the character and heritage values of the area's towns and villages to support residents' lifestyles and the tourism sector.
- Ensure that irrigated land is appropriately zoned and protected from inappropriate development.
- Protect the water quality and aesthetic values of the Murray River.
- Plan for a range of community services and facilities, including health and aged care, to meet the current and future requirements of the community.
- Implement council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan.

### **Murrumbidgee**

Murrumbidgee Shire had a population of 4,084 in 2015. The council area is home to the local centres of Darlington Point and Jerilderie, and the town of Coleambally.

The primary economic drivers are agriculture, with a focus on sheep, cattle, wheat, corn, winter cereal, rice, horticulture, poultry and egg production, and timber milling and food processing.

#### **Priorities:**

- Attract businesses and industry to the shire – in particular those industries that support or value-add to the agricultural sector and will provide local employment opportunities.
- Develop a strong tourism industry that leverages the area's strong high environmental values.
- Create a resilient agricultural sector by securing long-term water supply and developing strong partnerships within the agricultural sector.
- Protect local heritage and the environment, and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.
- Provide infrastructure that supports business and industry growth and productivity, and responds to community needs.

### **Narrandera**

Narrandera Shire is centrally located at the junction of the Sturt and Newell highways, and at the gateway to the productive Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. The shire had a population of 5,920 in 2015, and includes the local centre of Narrandera and the smaller towns of Barellan, Grong Grong and Binya, which are supported by the shire's close proximity to the regional cities of Griffith and Wagga Wagga.

The regional cities are an important factor in the success of the shire's main employment industries of agriculture and associated value-added manufacturing.

#### **Priorities:**

- Encourage local entrepreneurship and seek to attract new business and industry, and support and encourage emerging industries such as nuts and aquaculture to create long-term employment opportunities and attract skilled workers.
- Provide an adequate supply of industrial land to attract new industry and accommodate future expansion.



- Upgrade town streetscapes to support commercial transactions and social interactions, and provide appropriate infrastructure to support recreational facilities, as well as infrastructure to support tourist destinations in the shire, including river and forest areas.
- Enhance the freight network and infrastructure, including rail infrastructure, to facilitate a mode shift from road to rail, linking freight corridors to rail networks.

## Snowy Valleys

Snowy Valleys Council area is located on the south-western slopes of the Snowy Mountains, about halfway between Sydney and Melbourne. With a population of 14,994 in 2015, the council area includes the local centres of Tumut and Tumbarumba, along with other smaller towns and villages including Batlow, Adelong, Talbingo, Brungle, Cabramurra, Khancoban, Jingellic, Rosewood, Tooma and Laurel Hill. Communities to the south of the local government area have established cross-border connections with Victoria and rely on some Victorian services.

Key employers and economic drivers for the local government area include the timber and timber processing industry, agriculture, horticulture and viticulture. Other key employers include Snowy Hydro, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Justice (Mannus Correctional Centre) and Murrumbidgee Local Health District, which provides health services across the council areas. Being located on the south-western slopes of the Snowy Mountains provides tourism and recreation opportunities such as bushwalking, horseriding, fishing and cycling.

### Priorities:

- Expand, capitalise on and maintain the natural commercial advantage the area has due to the abundance of plantation softwood.
- Support, sustain and grow the existing primary industry base, especially in food and beverage production and manufacturing.
- Continue to develop a visitor experience that celebrates and protects the culture, heritage and outstanding natural environment of the area.
- Provide efficient road and transport infrastructure and utilities to maintain the competitiveness of existing industries and enhance the attractiveness of the area to new industries.
- Capitalise on long-term infrastructure initiatives, such as connections to Canberra and Victoria, to ensure optimal economic outcomes for the area.

## Temora

Temora Shire is located approximately 400 kilometres south-west of Sydney and approximately 80 kilometres north of Wagga Wagga, which provides some locational advantage for the shire's economy. Major industries include agriculture, aviation, retail, tourism, health, education and training.

Temora Shire had a population of 6,071 in 2015 and includes the local centre of Temora and the villages of Ariah Park, and Springdale. It also provides outreach services to other local centres outside the shire boundary. The diversity and strength of agriculture is the foundation of the local economy – it is one of the State's biggest producers of wheat, canola, other cereals and wool.

### Priorities:

- Support the ongoing growth opportunities presented by agriculture and value-add manufacturing.
- Take advantage of tourism opportunities, focusing on heritage, aviation, agriculture, sport and recreation.
- Provide facilities, services and housing options to support diverse community needs, including for seniors.
- Grow awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the shire's natural environment.

## Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga is the largest inland regional city in NSW and had a population of 63,428 in 2015. It is also the largest retail, commercial, administrative and population centre in the Riverina Murray, servicing the needs of surrounding settlements in a catchment of over 185,000 people.

Wagga Wagga contributed \$3.3 billion toward the region's gross regional product in 2013. It exhibits strong economic growth and is set for a positive, exciting future with genuine confidence evidenced by significant development activity. Wagga Wagga has a low unemployment rate and diverse economy that does not rely on a single sector. Industry benefits from its strategic location with excellent transport options and connectivity to Australia's major cities by road, rail and air.

Wagga Wagga provides services to the wider region through the Rural Referral Hospital, and is also a key educational centre, providing quality education and training across the full spectrum of learning, including Charles Sturt University's largest campus and TAFE Riverina.

### Priorities:

- Establish an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and start-up businesses, with the aim of inspiring innovation and advances in technology.
- Support industrial land development, including at Bomen Business Park in Wagga Wagga.
- Support the delivery of residential release areas in the council's proposed local plan review and increase the range of housing options in existing urban areas.
- Support the establishment of health precincts around Wagga Wagga Rural Referral Hospital.
- Facilitate a greater share of the national freight activity by improving and developing the city's road, rail and air connections to Australia's major cities and sea ports.
- Contribute to a sustainable environment for future generations through proactive waste management and responsible sustainable practices.







# Glossary



## Affordable housing

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

## Agribusiness

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

## Agricultural supply chain

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

## Biodiversity

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

## Biosecurity

Biosecurity is the term used to apply to measures that are taken to protect the economy, environment and community from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds.

## Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Lands

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

## Central business district (CBD)

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

## 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.<sup>33</sup>

## Employment lands

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

## Gross domestic product (GDP)

A measure of the size of a country's economy and productivity. GDP is defined as the market value of all final goods and services produced in a country within a given period of time.

## Gross regional product (GRP)

A measure of the size of a region's economy and productivity. Similar to gross domestic product GRP is defined as the market value of all final goods and services produced in a region within a given period of time.

## Household size

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





## Housing affordability

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 diversity 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 homes, residential flat buildings, secondary dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, seniors housing and shop top housing.

## Important agricultural land

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

## Infill development

Development in areas already used for urban purposes. Specifically, the re-use of a site within the existing urban footprint for new housing, businesses or other urban development.

## Local centres

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

## Local plans

A statutory, spatial plan, typically prepared for a local government area by a council, and endorsed by the Minister for Planning. A local plan is the main mechanism for determining the type and amount of development that can occur on each parcel of land in NSW. Local plans are the main planning tool that shape the future of communities and ensure local development is appropriate. They guide planning decisions by local councils.

## Riverina Murray region

The region comprises the local government areas of Albury, Berrigan, Bland, Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra–Gundagai, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

## Ribbon development

Extensive residential/commercial/industrial development occurring in a linear pattern along a river corridor.

## Regional city

A place that has the largest commercial component of any location in the region and that provides a full range of higher-order services, including hospitals and tertiary education services. Albury, Griffith and Wagga Wagga are the three regional cities in the Riverina Murray.

## Sustainability

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



Apple trees courtesy of  
Batlow Fruit Co-operative







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