

# Upper Lachlan Strategy Vision 2020

February 2009

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Upper Lachlan Shire Council

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NSW GOVERNMENT  
**Department of Planning**

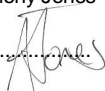
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# Part A – Introduction and background

## 1. Introduction

In 2004, the newly formed Upper Lachlan Council resolved to prepare a Strategy and draft Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan to reflect the Council's new local government area boundaries. In April 2005, Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) was initially commissioned by Council to commence investigations into the suitability and capability for growth in the Upper Lachlan Local Government Area. The development of the Strategy had been deferred while Council commissioned a number of separate investigations in 2006 and 2007. This Strategy represents the most current position of Council.

Council's key objective has been to prepare a local Strategy to guide the ongoing sustainable management of land use decisions to 2020.

This Section of the Upper Lachlan Strategy provides background regarding the need for the Strategy and the key investigation areas. It also defines the scope and limits of the investigations.

### 1.1 Need for the Strategy

The Upper Lachlan Strategy will be used as the basis for preparation of a comprehensive local environmental plan for Upper Lachlan. The Strategy will also provide the necessary strategic framework to guide planning and land use decisions and outcomes to the year 2020. The future Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan will replace the three current local environmental plans that apply to the Council area.

The investigations for the Upper Lachlan Strategy were undertaken in parallel with similar research for the Goulburn Mulwaree Council by Parsons Brinckerhoff. This assists to provide sub regional context for the strategy.

Preparation of a Strategy for Upper Lachlan has arisen as a result of the need to:

- provide technical research to underpin a new local environmental plan for the Upper Lachlan, using the Department of Planning's Standard Instrument LEP
- address sub-regional issues, particularly community and access linkages between Crookwell, Goulburn and other rural and urban centres
- give consideration to rural employment, including agriculture and tourism, and to promote rural activity where appropriate
- identify opportunities for investment and employment to promote the economic development of the Upper Lachlan
- reinforce initiatives established in the *Southern Tablelands Planning Framework for Natural Ecosystems* (ACT Government et al 2002) through the strategic planning process
- prepare a new local environmental plan for the Upper Lachlan, which is consistent with and gives effect to the *Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy*

- maintain consistency in strategic planning with the Drinking Water Catchments Regional Environmental Plan No.1
- undertake a comprehensive analysis of the capacity of rural and urban areas in the Upper Lachlan to sustain further residential activity, particularly large lot residential development.

In considering these inter-related factors, the Strategy documents the rate and capacity for growth in the LGA through a variety of planning investigations across.

### 1.1.1 Sustainable urban settlement guidelines

The former Department of Urban Affairs and Planning's (2000) *Sustainable Urban Settlement: Guidelines for Regional NSW* establishes a framework for the preparation of land use strategies and the identification of potential growth and activity areas.

In summary, the guidelines note that strategic land use direction:

- gives land owners and investors greater certainty about the future
- removes the speculative element in land use planning and settlement
- informs land owners with property outside strategy release areas so they are less likely to have false expectations
- decreases conflict over land use decisions in the future
- maximises the efficient economic use of public and private resources
- provides a framework for informed decisions to be made at the local environmental planning or development stages
- ensures there is enough land available to prevent further large increases in land prices.

The issues surrounding the need for the Upper Lachlan Strategy are further explained in the newsletter distributed by Council to the Upper Lachlan community during the community consultation phase for the Strategy. A copy of the newsletter is included in *Appendix A*.

### 1.1.2 NSW planning reforms

Councils across NSW have historically prepared local environmental plans based on local circumstances and needs. This has generated complexities in achieving consistent regional planning outcomes, particularly in implementing cross-boundary planning initiatives. There is now great variety in definitions and standards across NSW.

Reforms introduced by the Department of Planning have been designed to create uniformity in environmental planning provisions across the State, while allowing flexibility at the local level to respond to local needs. The approach provides improved clarity and certainty for residents, businesses and the wider community.

The Department of Planning gazetted the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006 on 31 March 2006 which provided Councils across NSW with a standardised approach to preparing local environmental plans including a range of compulsory and optional clauses.

The reforms to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* include a number of amendments that are designed to:

- ensure that local councils prepare new Local Environmental Plans in accordance with the Standard Instrument
- allow the council and the Director General to agree to make changes to the draft plan after it has been submitted to the Director General under section 68 of the Act
- allow the Director General to send a Local Environmental Plan back to Council so it can amend the draft plan in accordance with a standard instrument or any directions under section 117 of the Act.

For further information refer to Planning Circular PS06-008 issued by the Department of Planning.

As Upper Lachlan is a newly established local government area, the Council's current planning instruments and supporting planning controls need to be reviewed, updated and consolidated to reflect the new Upper Lachlan local government area boundary. This provides Council with an opportunity to undertake a strategic review of planning issues, reflect on current social, economic and environmental trends and reassess current assumptions about the future of the area.

## 1.2 Strategy purpose and objectives

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a Strategy to manage growth and to provide strategic direction for urban and rural development.

Due to the 2004 local government amalgamations, the Upper Lachlan Council currently operates under the existing Gunning, Mulwaree and Crookwell Local Environmental Plans. In order to prepare a new draft Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan, Council must prepare a local environmental study pursuant to Section 57 of the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This Upper Lachlan Strategy, which incorporates the basis of a local environmental study, will provide Council with the required information base and policy direction to enable the preparation of an Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan in accordance with the Standard Instrument.

The Strategy seeks to document the pressures for growth and identify current and future opportunities for sustainable growth across the local government area.

Pursuant to Section 62 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, relevant government departments and councils have been consulted throughout the process. In addition, key stakeholders and the general public have been engaged in the preparation of this Strategy. The community and stakeholder consultation program was implemented from the beginning of the Strategy process, as discussed at *Section 5*.

Preparation of the Upper Lachlan Strategy requires an assessment of the whole local government area, through an examination of its physical, social and economic environment, including:

- agricultural lands, hydrology, protected lands, flora and fauna, steep areas, gorges, water recharge areas, karst areas, mountain ranges and Aboriginal heritage

- hazards such as land and soil degraded areas, flood-affected areas, contaminated sites, salinity-affected areas, abandoned mines and mining areas and likely odour and noise-affected areas
- land capability mapping, including strategic land and water capability assessment, geotechnical and groundwater assessment and water cycle management studies required to assess the potential expansion of urban areas.

Specific objectives of the Upper Lachlan Strategy are to:

- reflect strong community engagement so that the land use outcomes reflect community values and expectations
- provide an understanding of the existing social, economic and physical characteristics of the local government area
- analyse trends and patterns, and identify the 'drivers of change' across the local government area
- identify challenges facing the Upper Lachlan community, including social, economic, environmental and infrastructure issues
- undertake an industry analysis for the local government area, with particular emphasis on agricultural activities and production and its contribution to economic outcomes
- identify the wider regional context, beyond the boundaries of the local government area, to those elements that may influence or be affected by planning approaches promoted through this Strategy
- identify and analyse constraints to development
- outline the current NSW Government policy setting (including State environmental planning policies, Regional environmental plans, the Department of Planning's Standard Instrument and other government policy positions and known issues)
- identify broad solutions/policy directions that may be implemented in the new draft Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan, but also through development control plans and (potentially) through other Council management tools such as the Management Plan or Social Plan
- identify an ongoing review process and action plan that may include key performance indicators of change in the local government area.

### 1.3 Strategy and study area

The Upper Lachlan Strategy study area comprises the entire Upper Lachlan local government area as shown in Figure 1-1.

The Upper Lachlan Council was proclaimed on 11 February 2004 and commenced operations on that same day. On 11 February 2004, the Council area included parts of the former Gunning, Mulwaree and Yass Councils and the entire area of the former Crookwell LGA. Following an inquiry in the latter part of 2004, the transfer of the area known as the Kangiara Locality from Upper Lachlan Council to Yass Valley Council was proclaimed on 3 December 2004.

The Upper Lachlan Council became the Upper Lachlan Shire Council on 6 July 2005 after a request was made to the Department of Local Government in May 2005. Two further

proclamations have occurred since. On 26 May 2006, the local government area boundary was realigned with Yass Valley and on 30 June 2006, there was a further boundary adjustment which included a transfer of land from Palerang local government area.

The Upper Lachlan LGA occupies an area of about 7,102 square kilometres and now comprises all of the former Crookwell LGA and parts of the former Gunning and Mulwaree LGAs.

The population of the Upper Lachlan is 7,053 people (ABS, 2006). This population predominantly lives within the towns of Crookwell, Gunning and Taralga and a number of surrounding rural villages, including Bigga, Binda, Breadalbane, Collector, Dalton, Grabben Gullen, Jerrawa, Laggan and Tuena.

Areas of Upper Lachlan are located across the Great Dividing Range within the NSW Southern Tablelands. This area includes the headwaters of two major river systems: the west-flowing Lachlan River and the east-flowing Tarlo and Wollondilly Rivers. The latter two rivers flow into the Sydney water supply system. Other significant rivers include the Abercrombie River, Grabben Gullen Creek, the Bolong, Crookwell and Phils Rivers, and numerous creeks and rivulets.

The Upper Lachlan LGA varies in elevation from 220 to 1,160 metres above sea level in the north, with an average elevation of about 750 metres refer to Figure 1-2. The landscape varies from flat in the south-west, to the mountainous terrain of the Blue Mountains in the north-east. Much of the LGA features rolling country that varies in elevation between 700 and 1,000 metres above sea level.

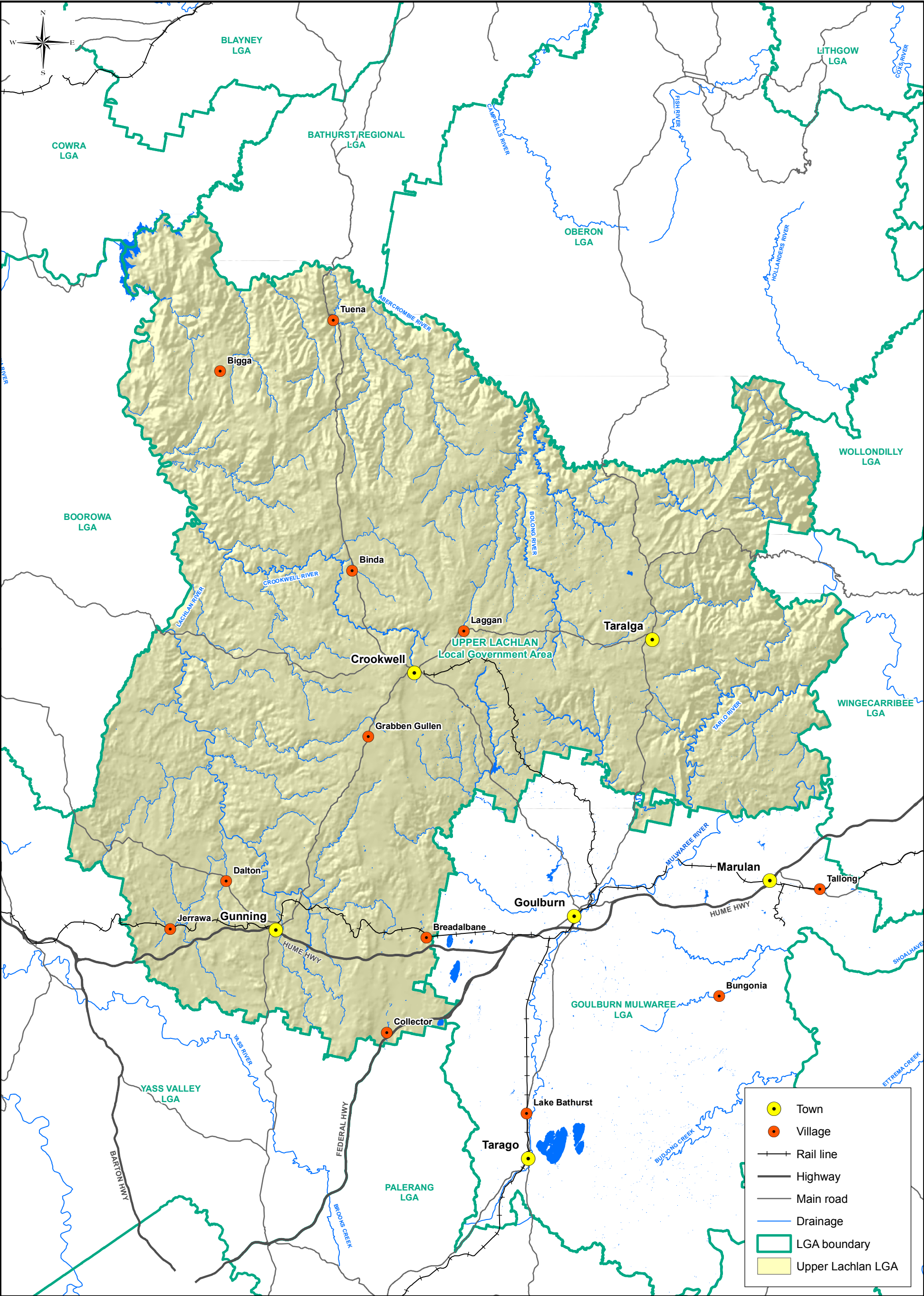
Geologically, a broad band of granite runs north to south-east of the Lachlan River, with smaller bands in the valleys of the Bolong and Wollondilly Rivers and minor outcrops elsewhere. Around Crookwell and across towards Taralga, the formation is basaltic. The remainder of Upper Lachlan's geology is either Silurian or Ordovician, consisting of slates, tuffs, lavas and limestone. The Wombeyan caves are noted for their high grade limestone and marble formations (ACT Commissioner for the Environment 2004).

The following minerals have been found in the area: gold, copper, pyrites, gemstones, iron, aluminium, emery and lead.

Upper Lachlan is regarded as one of the NSW's more active earthquake zones, centred on the Dalton-Oolong district. The area is dissected by a large number of faults through a granite slab, which has an area of about 15 by 9 kilometres. It is wedged into a bed of shale and slate under tectonic pressure. Excessive stress in the rock formations is released through movement along fractures and faults in the slab, resulting in earthquakes, some of which have been of a similar magnitude to that experienced by Newcastle in 1989 (ACT Commissioner for the Environment 2004).

The Upper Lachlan LGA is surrounded by nine local government areas, including Boorowa to the west, Goulburn Mulwaree, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly to the east, Yass Valley and Palerang to the south, Cowra to the north-west, the Bathurst Regional to the north and Oberon to the north-west.





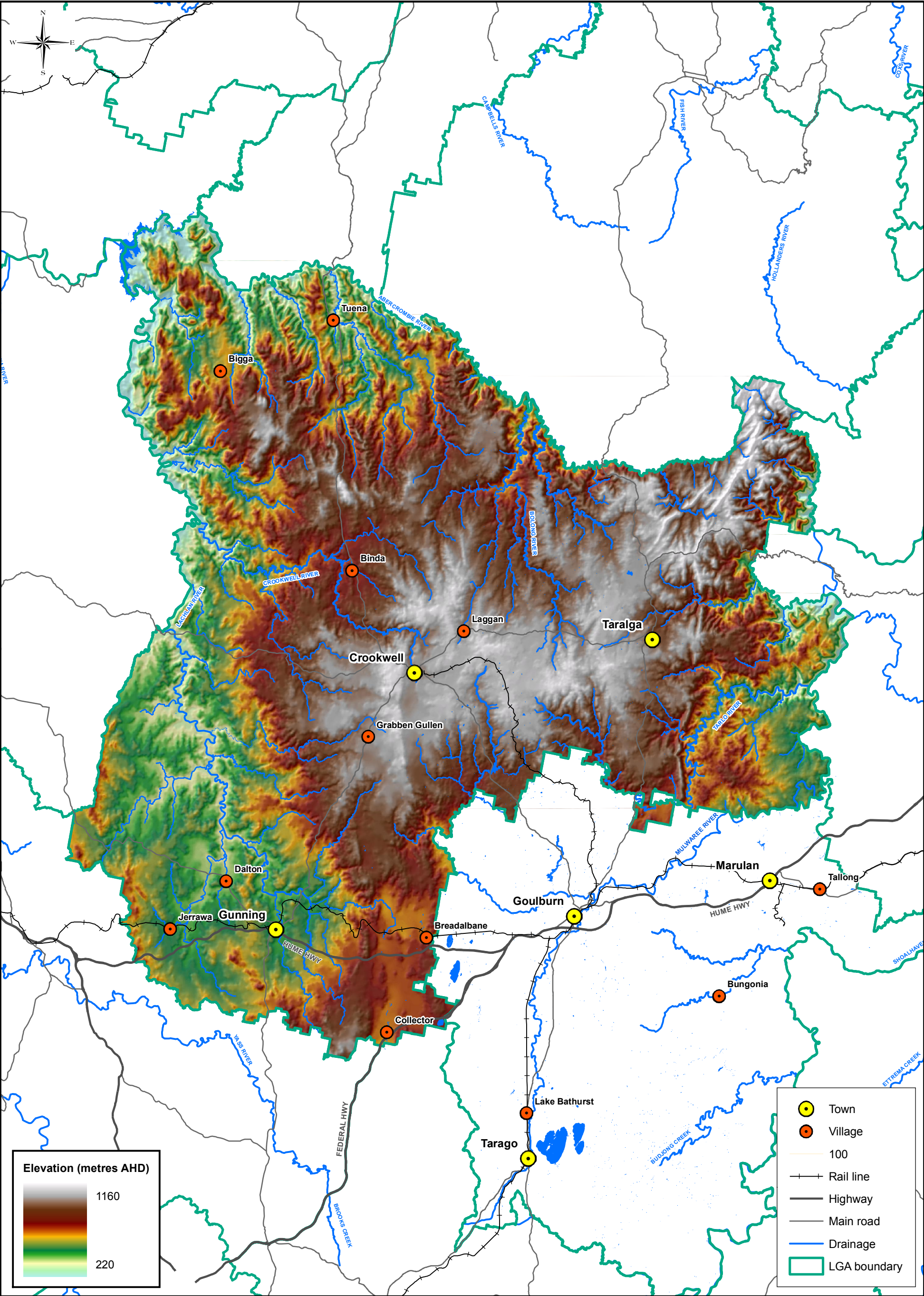
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## 1.4 Methodology and limitations

The Upper Lachlan Strategy involved the analysis and review of all existing data and material supplied by the Upper Lachlan Shire Council, relevant government agencies and community representatives relating to the Strategy study area (including maps, plans, reports, strategies, data, literature, aerial photographs and development and rezoning applications).

In preparation of this Strategy, desktop investigations were undertaken for the assessment of:

- agricultural land capability/suitability and buffering
- flora and fauna
- bushfire prone areas
- traffic, transport and intersection impacts
- hydrological characteristics, including flooding and stormwater
- geotechnical characteristics and known contamination analyses
- European and Aboriginal heritage
- existing services and utilities.

A Biodiversity Planning Framework has been prepared to provide guidance for protecting and enhancing the biodiversity values of the Shire, while accommodating sustainable development. This framework has been incorporated into the preparation of the Strategy and will also be reflected in the LEP and subsequent DCP.

No new engineering or additional scientific field survey work was undertaken in preparation of this Strategy. The approach has been to gather data from a wide range of existing sources. In determining where future growth should be accommodated, a range of assumptions have been used.

More detailed individual site investigations would be required to accurately determine the extent to which land within the study area would have the potential to accommodate development.

Such investigations would form part of individual development or rezoning applications and would include detailed:

- traffic, transport and intersection impact assessments
- assessments of development impacts, including amenity (noise, odour, privacy) and impact to existing rural aesthetics
- hydrological and hydrogeological assessments
- geotechnical, contamination field work or borehole drilling
- economic analysis and impact assessments (particularly in relation to the need for new commercial areas)
- social, recreational and community needs assessments
- flora and fauna assessments

- agricultural land capability assessments
- archaeology and cultural heritage assessments.

## 1.5 Structure of this report

This Strategy is divided into three parts:

- Part A – Introduction and Background
- Part B – Environmental Planning and Environmental Context
- Part C – Growth Strategy for the Upper Lachlan.

*Part A* provides the background and scope of the Upper Lachlan Strategy and investigations. This Part also establishes the basis for preparing a Strategy that will guide future land uses across Upper Lachlan to 2020. Reforms to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* are also addressed to demonstrate the importance of the Strategy in guiding future land uses and provisions that would be encompassed within the Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan.

*Part B* discusses the planning context within which the Upper Lachlan Strategy has been prepared. It also identifies the legislative and policy framework that directs the form and content of the Strategy. *Part B* also identifies the consultation and visioning activities undertaken throughout the preparation of the Strategy and illustrates how community and agency stakeholders have influenced outputs of the Strategy and future direction for the Upper Lachlan. Population and growth drivers which have direct and indirect impacts on land demands are identified and used to inform population trends.

Various environmental themes and urban infrastructure issues are also addressed in *Part B* to define opportunities and environmental constraints that will guide the direction and speed at which future growth will occur. Environmental themes addressed include agricultural land capacity, flora and fauna, bushfire, geotechnical make-up, heritage and archaeology. Infrastructure issues considered include sewerage, water, waste, electricity, telecommunications and gas facilities.

*Part C* comprises the strategic directions arising out of the environmental, social and economic themes. This part also presents a growth strategy and principles that will underpin the Upper Lachlan Local Environmental Plan and comprehensive development control plan.

## 2. Existing and future settlement

### 2.1 Existing settlement pattern

#### 2.1.1 Regional context

Upper Lachlan had a population of approximately 7,053 at the 2006 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). The LGA is located approximately 240 kilometres south-west of Sydney and 130 kilometres from Canberra on the NSW Southern Tablelands.

Physical characteristics which distinguish Upper Lachlan from other NSW regional areas include:

- an elevated position (Crookwell is 900 metres above sea level) with a temperate climate characterised by four distinct seasons
- climatic and soil conditions that are ideal for grazing by sheep and cattle for fine wool, prime lamb and beef production
- compact urban settlements, which are based on historic settlements and grid layouts, including a range of built heritage items.

Upper Lachlan comprises several rural centres including Gunning, Taralga, Bigga, Binda, Breadalbane, Collector, Dalton, Grabben Gullen, Jerrawa, Laggan and Tuena, with Crookwell the primary administrative and commercial centre for the LGA.

The population of the former Crookwell Shire at the 2001 Census was 4,331 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001). Population numbers for the former Crookwell Shire had been declining since the 1981 Census, at a rate of approximately 0.5% per year. The populations of both the Gunning and Mulwaree LGA's, however, had been increasing, although much of Mulwaree's increase had been in the south, rather than in the area that has now been incorporated into the Upper Lachlan LGA.

Evidence from recent development applications indicates that the new population has begun to increase. This increase is in response to new development interest in the towns, villages and rural areas. This is partly a reflection of the 'tree change' phenomenon, which has been stimulated by lifestyle choices and higher property prices in the metropolitan areas and the coastal zone.

Upper Lachlan is served by rail and road. Gunning has the only railway station within the LGA, which is located on the main Sydney to Melbourne rail link. Canberra International Airport is the closest fully serviced air link to the LGA and is under two hours by road from Crookwell. Figure 2-1 illustrates the regional context of Upper Lachlan.



## 2.1.2 Growth settlement history

Evidence of early growth and settlement of the area that now comprises Upper Lachlan LGA is seen in its historical sites and buildings. The built heritage of the area dates back to the earliest years of European settlement in the 1820s. The following provides a brief history on the development of Upper Lachlan, particularly within Crookwell, Taralga, Binda, Laggan and Tuena.

### Crookwell

Settlement of the Crookwell area occurred in the late 1820s, initially by squatters. By this time, landholdings had already become established on large grants at nearby Taralga, which is the earliest settlement in the Crookwell area.

By the 1840s there was an inn and store near where the northern road to Taralga crossed the Crookwell River. At that time, the major town and administrative centre of the district was at Binda.

A number of villages were established throughout the Crookwell district from the 1830s to the 1850s (Binda, Bigga, Laggan and Grabben Gullen) to serve the adjacent farming areas.

A village reserve for Crookwell was set aside in 1848 on the eastern side of the Crookwell River, but was then moved further up the hill on the western side where the town centre is today. The Royal Hotel was built in 1862, a school in 1864, followed by the Wesleyan (1865) and Anglican (1866) churches, and a post office (1867). The main street was established in 1869. During this time, the population grew from just 130 in 1864 to over 1,000 by 1872.

The 1870s represented a period of prosperity and growth for Crookwell. A passenger coach ran regularly to Goulburn, and the local economy grew from the production of oats, wheat, cattle, potatoes and sheep. The first local agricultural show was held in 1879; this was an important display of the significance of rural production to the local community.

Many of the public buildings within Crookwell date from this growth period to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, including hotels, banks, the courthouse and police station (1878), shops, factories (tannery, cordial maker, smiths, flour mill, saddlery) and the school.

By the early 1900s, Crookwell was the regional centre and major town. The former Crookwell Shire was established in 1906, which was marked by the opening of the district hospital in the same year. Crookwell was of sufficient importance for a branch railway line to be built from Goulburn in 1901.

The Great Depression, two world wars, and the increasing centralisation and industrialisation of the nation changed the economic context for Crookwell. Like many NSW country towns, by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the town was still catching up on key infrastructure, including electricity (1947), sealed roads (1954), sewerage (1961), and a high school (1963).

Traditional agricultural practices were changing and this was reflected in landholding and subdivision patterns. Small holdings, along with dairying, became less viable and were replaced by large-scale potato growing. Large wheat, oats and barley production also became less viable and, instead, specialisation in fine wool production and stud cattle grew.

Bulk transport affected smaller rural holdings, as it was simpler and more economic to transport commodities from major centres. This trend has continued to today. Although



agriculture still remains the primary industry within Upper Lachlan, retail and more contemporary industries and the service sector are increasing in value and importance.

The population of Crookwell has doubled since 1890. Its position as a regional centre is important and it remains the primary commercial and administrative centre for Upper Lachlan.

### **Taralga**

Taralga lies about 40 kilometres north of Goulburn and 38 kilometres east of Crookwell, north of the Cookbundoon Ranges. Throsby and Meehan explored most of the southern tablelands for European settlement and identified the Taralga area in 1819.

Taralga was recognised as a locality in 1825; although the village was not established until many years later. For the first few decades, most settlers comprised convicts assigned to land owners. Convicts were largely responsible for the broad clearing of lands, construction of dwellings and management of farm operations.

Taralga as a town was established in the 1860s, with a school in 1857, and churches in 1861 (Presbyterian), 1864 (St. Ignatius (RC)) 1866 (St. Lukes Anglican) and 1868 (Methodist, now the Historical Society building). Macarthur Street was the original main street and some of the earliest buildings can be found there.

The rapid expansion after the 1860s was partly due to an influx of migrants following the gold rushes, and the Land Acts of 1861, which made it possible for people to take up small grants from the government at favourable rates. Taralga's architectural style and form differs from many towns. A notable proportion of buildings date from the 1860s to 1890s and were constructed from stone.

These two factors combined produce an architectural style which is unique to Taralga and permits the town to claim a special heritage of particular interest to tourists.

The population of Taralga has fluctuated over time, from approximately 100 in 1863, to over 700 by 1900. This was followed by a major decline immediately after the 1890s depression. Although the town had regained much of its population by the mid 1950s, like many other rural areas, it has declined in population as rural practices changed. Today, Taralga has a population of approximately 370 people.

### **Binda**

Binda is the Gandangara word for 'deep water'. Binda is an important heritage village and was the original administrative centre of the former Crookwell Shire. European settlement of Binda began in 1825 and the town was first identified as a locality in 1828. During the 1830s and 1840s, further development took place within Binda, including a hotel, police barracks, store, blacksmith and a Wesleyan chapel.

The town was gazetted in 1850, making it the first town in the Crookwell Shire. The land was surveyed and subdivided for sale in 1852. The following 20 years saw Binda as the commercial and administrative centre of the Crookwell district. It had the first school (1851), post office (1852), court of petty sessions (1863), and Anglican parish (1872).

The discovery of gold at Tuena in the 1850s was an important development. This discovery, however, also attracted gangs and bushrangers to the region, which affected residents and commercial operators within the town. During this time, Crookwell had grown to over 1,000

inhabitants, and the commercial and administrative functions at Binda were relocated to Crookwell, making it the primary centre of both the district and, later, the Shire.

During the 1920s, Binda shared in the general post-war prosperity of the bush with a number of local developments, including the Memorial Hall (1920), a convent and school run by the Sisters of Mercy (1920–58), the Graziers Association (1923), and new additions to the Anglican rectory (1928).

Today, the village of Binda is surrounded by farmlands that produce fine wool, and it contains some excellent examples of late 19th Century architecture.

### **Laggan**

The area around Laggan was first settled in the 1830s, when many Scottish and Irish settlers took up small holdings in Redground, just a few kilometres north of the town.

By 1845, wheat growing was sufficiently widespread for a steam-driven flour mill to be built and within 15 years wheat was the main crop of the area. The mill served the region for almost 100 years, initially providing flour and fodder for cattle from the waste and supplying this to local farmers. The mill also produced export flour.

The mill, caught fire in the 1880s and was rebuilt in 1891. Production at the mill continued up until 1918. It was used to process wheat from surrounding regions, including Crookwell and Taralga and to service the First World War effort. The building is now a restaurant and bed and breakfast.

From the late 1860s, wool was a major industry, and was shipped out of the area destined for textile mills overseas. At this time, one of the main roads from Goulburn to the new goldfields at Tuena (1850s onward) passed through Laggan, with through-traffic contributing to the development of the town.

By this time, around 300 people lived in Laggan. They were served by several stores, a post office, school, church, courthouse, lockup and police barracks, hotels, a flour mill, tannery, blacksmith, wheelwright, two racecourses and a cricket ground.

In the late 19th Century, Laggan was predominantly a wool growing area. The arrival of the railway to nearby McAlister in 1902, made shipping wool out of the area more economic. Wool and beef production continue to operate within the Laggan area.

Laggan benefited from the rural boom of the post war era in the 1920s. Several prominent buildings were erected in the town at this time: the Laggan Hotel (1924, on the site of a former hotel), the Community Hall (1926), the St. Andrews Roman Catholic Church (1924, replacing an earlier church) and the All Saints Anglican Church (1922).

These, together with the Old Mill, schoolhouse, and a small number of historic houses, can still be seen today and are all that remain of a once vibrant rural community.

### **Tuena**

Tuena lies high in the Abercrombie district of the Great Dividing Range, half-way between Goulburn and Bathurst. Through it runs Tuena Creek, a tributary of the Abercrombie River which feeds Lake Wyangala. For over 60 years, a gold rush occurred along these waterways, from the junction of the Abercrombie, 9 kilometres south to Tuena and on through Mt. Costigan to Peelwood.

Soon after the discovery of gold at Ophir, near Bathurst, prospectors shipped the first gold out of the Abercrombie area to Goulburn (August 1851). Also in 1851, gold was discovered just over a kilometre from Tuena, within months up to 500 people were prospecting on the Tuena Creek.

Gold worth over many millions in today's value was extracted from Tuena in 1852, with gold bearing quartz discovered at Junction Point in 1854, making it the oldest reef mine in Australia.

The first settlement at Tuena was a miner's shanty town, with hundreds of tents and huts. Hotels (1854) and stores soon followed and Tuena was formally declared a town in 1859.

Although the majority of the original buildings are no longer standing, Tuena retains some notable heritage buildings from this time. The oldest is the 'Bookkeeper's Cottage'. Built in 1861, the Cottage was both office and home to the official who weighed the gold.

The post office and police station opened in Tuena in 1852 and a courthouse in the early 1860s. The courthouse operated until 1958 and also served as a social centre until it was demolished in 1978. The NSW Fire Brigade is now located on this site. The police station was built in 1900.

The first school in Tuena was opened in 1860, with another built in 1889. Due to falling numbers, the school has closed and children now attend other local schools, including Binda, Crooked Corner, Laggan and Crookwell.

St. Mark's Anglican Church was built in 1886. The Presbyterian Church was erected in 1890 and St. Mary's Catholic Church in 1896.

During the second half of the 19th Century, a number of other mines existed around Tuena. These produced copper, silver, lead and gold at Peelwood from the 1870s to 1884, and from the mid- to late-1880s at Mt. Costigan and Cordillera. From the beginning of the 20th Century, Tuena's main industry has been agriculture, including sheep, cattle and potatoes.

Today Tuena remains a small rural village with much of the commercial operators now gone. Agriculture now dominates Tuena's local industry.

## Gunning

Gunning was first settled in 1821 as a transport, administrative, legal and service centre, and it still retains some of these characteristics. Hamilton Hume and William Hovell in 1824 established a route from Westernport to Gunning, which led to the location of Gunning on the main road from Sydney to Melbourne. Gunning was located on the Hume Highway until the 1993 bypass construction and is now approximately one kilometre from the highway. The railway was established in Gunning in 1875.

Although there were properties established at Gunning in the 1820s, it was not until 1830 that the NSW Government made the first land sales in the area. The fine wool industry in Gunning commenced in the 1820s. Gunning continues to be renowned as a major centre for fine wool production in Australia.

Gunning still retains many of the village's historic buildings, including Pye Cottage (built in 1860), the Telegraph Hotel, London House, Caxton House and the old bank and courthouse. The wide main street is an important 19<sup>th</sup> Century urban feature.



## **Bigga**

Bigga was first established in the 1820s when Samuel Blackman brought land in the area and then later sold it to his son-in-law, Tom McGuinness, in 1848.

Several local bushrangers targeted Bigga, including John Piesley and Frank Gardner in 1861, and the Whitton gang in 1840, this led to several casualties.

The Bigga post office was established in 1861, when Tom McGuinness became the post master. Bigga was proclaimed in 1892 and churches such as the Uniting and Anglican churches were built in 1906.

## **Grabben Gullen**

Grabben Gullen originated from an Aboriginal name meaning 'small waters'. The village was known historically for the large amount of fossickers that came to the area searching for minerals. Sapphires, garnets, zircons and gold were commonly found in Grabben Gullen in the small streams which feed into the local Lachlan River.

## **Collector**

The area surrounding Collector was settled in 1829 when the first land parcels were granted to T.A Murrar. The postal service began in 1827. It covered areas such as Lake George and Yass, and villages such as Collector and Gundaroo were established as staging posts.

The town's population increased with five inns and numerous stores established in the village to serve passing travellers. Collector also benefited from the location of the Federal Highway through the village however, now the Highway by-passes the village.

Historic buildings, such as the Bushranger Hotel built in 1860 and the Collector Inn General Store built in 1824, still remain along with a large amount of memorabilia on Ben Hall and his gang, who were notorious in the area.

## **Dalton**

Dalton was historically described as 'the haunt of cattle duffers, bushrangers and robbery under arms.' The village has a strong agricultural past, which continues today. The agricultural past of Dalton is captured in the Dalton Shearing Co-op and Farm Museum. Today, Dalton remains a small village, retaining its heritage character with buildings such as the Dalton Hotel (built in 1865).

## **Breadalbane Plains**

The Breadalbane Plains were discovered by Hamilton Hume in 1814, but the population only began to grow in 1829, when Surveyor General Major Thomas Mitchell declared that the quality of the road from Bong Bong through to Breadalbane was of sufficient quality for a regular coach service to be established to the area. The service led to population growth, as well as an increase in bushrangers in the area including Ben Hall's gang.

## **Jerrawa**

Jerrawa; 19 kilometres north-east of Yass, 7.5 kilometres south-west of Dalton and 10 kilometres west of Gunning, is little more than a locality now. It possesses some old slab buildings, several homesteads and more modern development. Jerrawa is located in a region traditionally known for its wool, merino studs and agriculture.

Prior to European occupation there was a large Aboriginal population (primarily Ngunnawal people) within this region stretching through to Yass.

### 2.1.3 Current urban structure

Crookwell can be defined as Upper Lachlan's urban centre, given its administrative and commercial importance for the surrounding towns and villages.

The current urban structure of Crookwell shows key development phases over time and is dominated by a commercial main road surrounded by low density residential areas. There has been only limited consolidation of residential dwellings in the town, which demonstrates the community's historic preference for low-scale and low density residential living, reflecting the rural lifestyle of the area.

The hillside location of Crookwell offers spatial connections and views to the surrounding countryside, while promoting an enclosed rural character focusing traffic onto designated through-routes.

Figure 2-2 shows Crookwell's current urban structure and street layout.

Since the mid-1950s, Crookwell has retained its current urban structure. The *Crookwell Local Environmental Plan 1994* is primarily focused on conservation of the area's rural and agricultural make-up and cultural values, including rural serenity. Low density subdivision and development has continued within and around Crookwell town, in addition to rural residential living outside of the town centre.

Other key identifiable features of Crookwell's spatial layout include:

- noticeable areas of expansion of residential and rural residential land uses, particularly south, east and west of the existing centre
- concentrated retailing, administrative and service facilities (Goulburn Street)
- presence of incompatible adjoining land uses such as industrial and residential.

### 2.1.4 Economic base

The agriculture, forestry and fishery industries are the largest employers in the Upper Lachlan LGA. Figures provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2006, Census of Population and Housing indicate that over 31% of the region's population (more than 15 years of age) is employed in these industries. It should be noted that there was negative growth in this proportion of the population employed in this sector (979 persons) from the 2001 (1,124 persons) and 1996 (1,087 persons) Census data.

For comparative purposes, the next largest employer is health care and social assistance, which employs 10% of the total population (more than 15 years of age). The importance of this sector to the LGA's labour force is further demonstrated by comparing the proportion of people employed at the NSW level. The proportion of people employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishery industries across NSW in 2006 was at only 2.7% whilst comparatively the health care and social industry comprises 10% of the total population (over 15 years of age) across NSW (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). This provides emphasis to support these strong employment sectors in the region.

Apart from the traditional agricultural industries within Upper Lachlan, several smaller niche industries are growing in importance to the rural economy. Examples include olives and grapes, flowers (such as gladioli and daffodils) and a range of berries. Furthermore, a number of niche animal enterprises are present, including ostriches, alpaca and deer (Capital Region Development Board 2005).

Retail and business services are predominantly concentrated within the Crookwell town centre, however, these services are also located in Taralga and Gunning, as Gunning was the centre of the former Gunning Shire. A network of smaller commercial operations and services support surrounding towns and villages.

Industrial, manufacturing and warehousing activities employ 8 % of the Upper Lachlan's workers. (ABS 2006) Enterprises are dispersed around the local government area and within Crookwell. Demand for industrial land for new enterprises has declined, with established business parks in other local government areas attracting investment. This has been due to accessibility to markets and proximity to Goulburn via the primary Sydney to Melbourne route along the Hume Highway.

10 persons are currently employed within the mining sector (based on the data contained in the 2006 Census). Previous Census data also recorded a small number in this sector (ABS 1996, 2001).

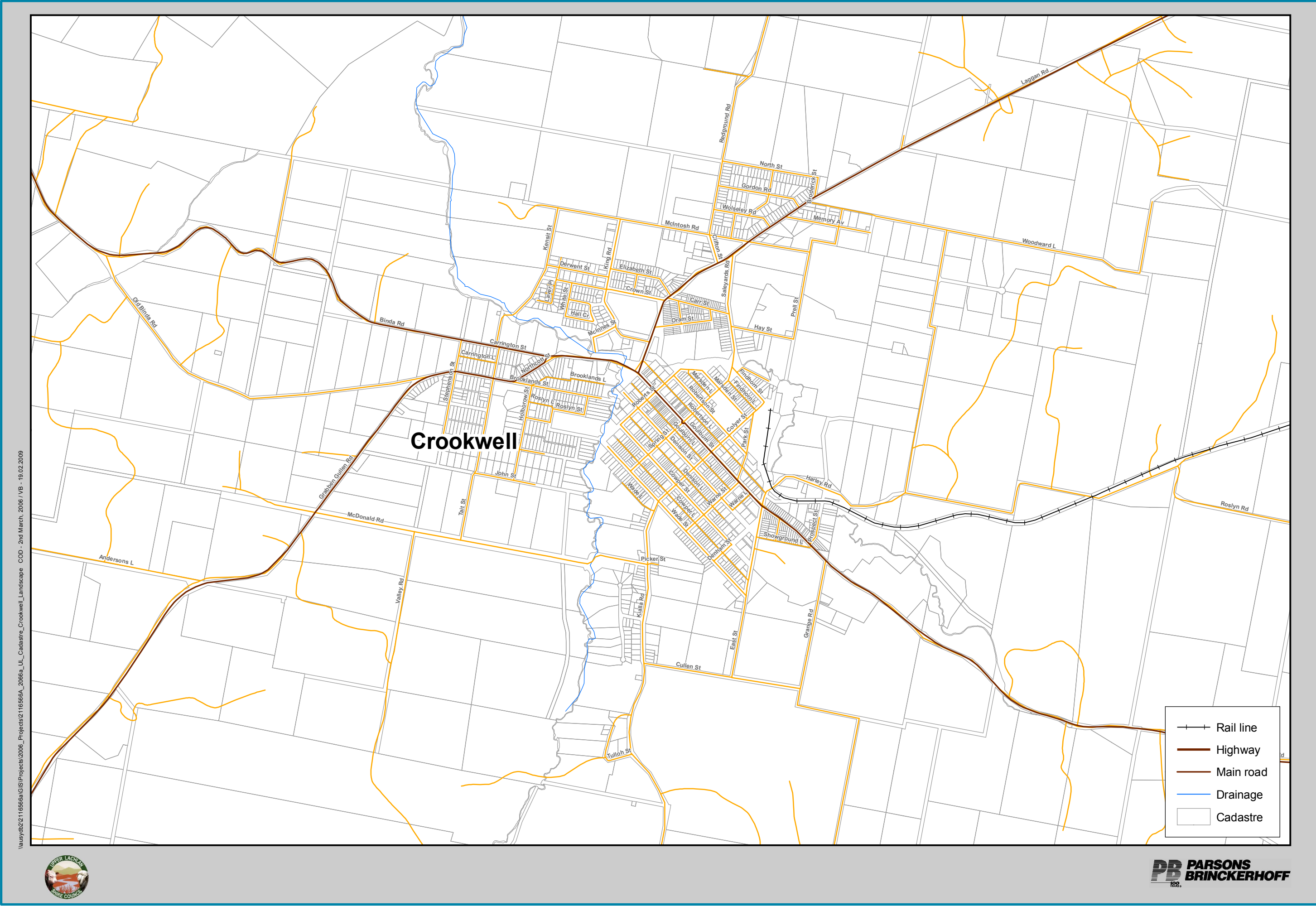
Retail trade, public administration, health and community services are important employers in Upper Lachlan. Retail trade employs 7.3 % of workers, while the public administration and safety sector employ 9.1 % of the Upper Lachlan workforce. (ABS 2006)

Between 1996 and 2006, health and community services were amongst the fastest growing industries in the local government area with a growth rate of 29 %. Similarly, the public administration and safety sector had solid growth at an overall rate of almost 34 % for the period of 2001 to 2006. (ABS 2001, 2006) The construction sector has also established as an important industry, employing almost 7% of the workforce. This sector grew by approximately 35% over the 2001 to 2006 period. (ABS 2001, 2006)

Although manufacturing services grew over 34 % during the 1996 – 2001 period, the sector has now contracted by approximately 12%. (ABS 1996, 2001, 2006) In real figures, this was a growth of 23 persons between 1996 and 2001 and a reduction between 2001 and 2006 of 17 persons. This represents similar growth patterns for the wholesale trade and financial and insurance services sectors.

Gunning has a high proportion of employment in the public administration and safety; health care and social assistance; retail trade; accommodation and food services; and transport, postal and warehousing sectors. . Over 42 % of the Gunning workforce is employed as managers, administrators or professionals. This proportion is similar to Crookwell (almost 38 %) and Taralga (40 %). (ABS 2006)

Between 1996 and 2006, Gunning experienced an increase of 123 % in the number of managers living within this locality (13 persons increasing to 29 persons), and a 100 % increase in the number of people working in the clerical and administrative service sectors (28 persons increasing to 56 persons). This is due to Gunning's location and accessibility in relation to the major centres of Goulburn and Canberra, which generates considerable demand for these employment sectors (ABS 1996, 2006).



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Recent trends in the local economic profile for Upper Lachlan that illustrate the relative diversity of the local economy include:

- A relatively small decline in agriculture (this sector continues to dominate employment and income in the local government area).
- Sharp increases in employment in the construction and manufacturing sectors and health and community services.
- An absence of the mining sector within Upper Lachlan. (This reflects trends in this sector throughout the entire Sydney to Canberra corridor, where overall employment in the mining sector reduced by 52 %.) (ABS 2001, 2006).

Some of the LGA's economic activities are likely to have an impact on urban growth decisions in the future.

## 2.2 Shaping the urban form

### 2.2.1 Sustainable development and strategic planning

Ecologically sustainable development and the appropriate balancing of natural, social and economic issues are fundamental principles that underpin environmental planning in NSW.

Sustainable development is development that balances environmental, community and economic outcomes. It involves three principal objectives — ecological integrity, community well-being and economic prosperity (Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 2000). These attributes need to be understood for any given area, so that these often competing interests can be balanced for overall community benefit.

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning's (2000) *Sustainable Urban Settlement: Guidelines for Regional NSW* provides guidance as to how sustainable development principles can be applied at the strategic or structure planning phase. Recommended principles are further discussed in *Section 3.2.9*.

### 2.2.2 How can growth be accommodated

There are various approaches to addressing land demands for urban, rural and agricultural purposes in the future, including:

- planning for growth of existing towns and villages where demand is likely to outstrip supply
- permitting release of additional satellite towns and villages outside of existing centres.
- promoting infill development within existing towns and villages and permitting higher density development, including residential flat development
- allowing further subdivision of rural and agricultural allotments for rural residential purposes, regardless of the impacts on agricultural operations and viability.

The Rural SEPP has phased out concessional subdivisions for rural properties, negating the need for a minimum subdivision requirement where a dwelling could be proposed.

Based on the broad constraints, the urban expansion model could see rural lands surrounding towns and villages gradually transferred to urban uses. While selected areas



are affected by a range of environmental constraints, pursuit of this approach, in isolation, could result in the urban area spreading even further into the rural lands. However, where growth is directed into existing rural areas, this should be a direct extension of existing urban areas and avoid isolated development outside of established areas. Further, development extending into rural areas should be directed at less fertile lands where the agricultural capacity of the land is reduced and minimal environmental constraints are identified.

Constraining growth to existing towns and villages is possible through local environmental plan provisions, however, the following possible consequences may arise:

- the constrained availability of new land may further increase land prices and reduce affordability
- the emergence of satellite towns would require servicing and could adversely affect the viability and existence of existing towns and villages
- provision of denser living precincts which, without commensurate investment in urban services (for example, new public transport and more public open spaces), may reduce existing residential amenity.

As a result of these and other factors, the attractiveness of existing towns and villages as serene rural living areas may become eroded.

These factors suggest that the community needs to continue to plan for a defined level of expansion. In a regional area such as Upper Lachlan, infill development is likely to fulfil most future housing needs although some residents choosing to live in Upper Lachlan, generally seek larger land parcels to meet their housing and amenity needs.

In terms of extending the town boundaries for existing towns and villages, the questions are:

- Where should they be?
- When should they be developed?
- What should they look like and how should they function?
- Where is extending town and village boundaries required?

Considerations for the possible location and timing of release areas based on environmental opportunities are addressed in Part C of this Strategy.

### **2.2.3 Integrated communities**

If integrated development is assumed to be favoured over sprawl (or satellite communities) then, apart from the location of sites, two key considerations for a successful community are likely to be centres and transport.

Urban and regional planning in recent years has shifted new urbanism principles and an emphasis on the importance of effectively integrating land use and transport planning. The NSW Government has issued a policy package to address these issues in the context of planning for metropolitan areas (Department of Urban Affairs and Planning 2001). Although metropolitan areas are its focus, the Policy does raise several important approaches that can be related to planning for Upper Lachlan. Some of the approaches to planning new areas include:

- A return to more self-contained compact communities (avoiding unnecessary sprawl) by integrating a range of centrally-located services in mixed use centres.
- Promoting greater use of walking and cycling as opposed to motor vehicles.
- Promoting commercial and housing developments which better integrate and interface with public places, to create a sense of community.
- Ensuring sensitive land uses, including residential, educational and senior living land uses, are protected from incompatible and potentially hazardous uses.

Applying these principles to the Upper Lachlan 's Shire's growth would require resolution of a range of issues, including the potential for higher density housing in traditional low density locations, access networks and subdivision patterns, locations of centres and market preferences.

Recommendations addressing integration of urban areas and urban form generally are addressed in Part C of this Strategy.

## 2.3 Summary

Although Upper Lachlan is a relatively new local government area, it defines a prosperous inland region with a rich history and growth based on agriculture. The local government area has historically experienced some population decline as a result of a number of social and economic factors. However, the Upper Lachlan and surrounding region has been developing an increasingly varied economic base underpinned by specialist farming, service industries, retailing and tourism. These suggest that the Shire will continue to grow in the medium to long term, as it becomes increasingly known for its natural beauty and proximity to key regional NSW centres, including Sydney.

The physical structure that supports economic and social activity in the Upper Lachlan Shire is based on three key town centres and numerous supporting villages that surround each of these towns. The three town centres include Crookwell, as the central administrative and commercial centre, Taralga in the east and Gunning in the south, both providing a supporting administration role.

Construction of the Gunning by-pass in 1993 resulted in a significant drop in the number of vehicles travelling through the centre of Gunning, which affected trade and activity within this centre.

Upper Lachlan is likely to need more appropriately zoned land to accommodate growth in the future. Key factors to be considered in decisions about where growth should occur will include:

- Water catchment areas affecting the local government area, in particular special protection areas surrounding Taralga.
- Fertile agricultural lands and buffer areas around agricultural activities.
- Buffer areas around employment and utility areas (particularly those situated around sewerage treatment plants at Crookwell and Gunning and, in the future, Taralga).
- Ridgelines, scenic quality areas and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Areas which are either currently developed for residential or rural residential development, or which are required for institutional or special use purposes.

- Areas for which the cost of servicing would render urban development uneconomic.
- Flora and fauna.
- Heritage and Aboriginal archaeology.

In the future, population growth could be accommodated by:

- consolidation or infill development in the existing urban area
- identifying new urban release areas
- a combination of both.

In planning for the Upper Lachlan Shire's future, there is a need to balance the demands for growth, with the capability and suitability of the land to support urban development. The Strategy has therefore been prepared to support and reinforce the continuation of existing centres, with a focus for these to become integrated and more 'self-contained' communities that reinforce social and economic functions, while preserving the environmental asset base of the LGA.