

UPPER LACHLAN SHIRE COUNCIL

Community Engagement
Report, October 2021.



projectura

Contents

Summary findings..... 125

Methods and participation..... 126

Are we on track? 130

Q1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?130

Q2. Have you read the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?131

Q3. Do you agree with these strategic priorities? 132

Q4. Do you think we're on track with delivering the 5 high-level strategic priorities? 133

Q5. Is anything missing in the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?..... 133

Where are we now?..... 134

Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?..... 134

Q7. What do you think are the main challenges facing our community?..... 135

Where do we want to be in 10 years' time? 137

Q8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?..... 137

Q9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years? 138

How will we get there?140

Q10. What services or projects do you think Upper Lachlan Shire Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?.....140



Summary findings

Upper Lachlan Shire is home to an estimated 8,274 residents across a land area of 7,129 square kilometres. The First Nations of the area are the Gundungurra people. Upper Lachlan is situated along the Great Dividing Range and has diverse landscape and waterways access to Grabine/Wyangala Dam State Park and Wombeyan Caves National Park. Main townships in the Shire include Crookwell, Taralga and Gunning. The area is supported by a strong agricultural base and its proximity to both Sydney and Canberra along major transport links.

Over 270 people from the Upper Lachlan Shire took part in the Towards 2042 Stage 1 engagement from 21 June to 13 August 2021. The people of the community contributed their thoughts and opinions through an online survey, discussion guides, and telephone interviews.

The engagement aimed to review the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan and focused on four questions. Where are we now, where do we want to be, how will we get there and when will we know we have arrived.

The following is a summary of the high-level findings obtained from participant feedback.

- Women were more likely to take part in engagement activities (57.9 percent) and most participants identified as coming from rural areas (53.5 percent) within the Shire.
- Young people were less represented in feedback with the age group of 0-35 years not achieving participation in line with their proportion of the population.
- A large percentage of respondents (77.8 percent) indicated they were happy or very happy with the current Community Vision.
- 42.6 percent of respondents had read the current Community Strategic Plan. Of these, 58.1 percent agreed with all the strategic priorities and a further 32.3 percent agreed with some.
- When considering the strategic priorities of our environment, our economy, our community, our infrastructure, and our civic leadership participants feel Council is most on track with the area of our community with 29.0 percent indicating Council had delivered and 54.8 percent indicating Council had partly delivered.
- Respondents identified the main aspects of their community that made it a great place to live included a sense of community (14.2 percent), local people and spirit (11.8 percent) and the beautiful natural environment (11.6).
- The main challenges facing the community were jobs and employment (13.9 percent), changing demographics and size (11.9 percent) and retaining and supporting young people (9.6 percent).
- People told us that improved infrastructure (23.0 percent), parks and green spaces (19.7 percent) and economic growth (13.1 percent) were projects, places or things that would enhance the area.
- Infrastructure (16.7 percent), planning (12.3 percent) and economic growth (11.4 percent) were ranked highest when participants were asked what they would like to see achieved over the next 10 years.
- Respondents would like to see Council prioritise roads and parking (6.8 percent), land use and planning (5.4 percent) and aged and disability services and infrastructure (5.2 percent each).

Methods and participation

Stage 1 engagement activities gathered personalised views from a broad cross section of the community. The total participation level in Stage 1 was 279 people. Community members will have further opportunity to explore and prioritise strategies once the Draft Community Strategic Plan is available.

Table 61. UL - Participation summary

Total participation	Population (2020 ERP)	% of population engaged
279	8,274	3.4

As shown in Table 22, Upper Lachlan Shire Council used four different methods to engage with the community. The random telephone interviews and online survey generated the largest number of participants in Stage 1 Engagement. The online survey generated the greatest volume of useable data and participant demographic details.

Table 62. UL - Participation summary by method

Method	Participation	
	Measure	Number
Drawing sheets	Number of drawing sheets received.	0
Pop-ups	Number of people who attended pop up sessions.	0
Submissions	Number of formal submissions received.	0
Online survey	Number of individual survey responses.	86
Discussion Guides	Number of people who contributed to discussions.	62
Online workshop	Number of workshop participants.	0
Targeted telephone interviews	Number of telephone interviews completed by Projectura.	30
Random telephone interviews	Number of calls made by Jetty Taverner.	101

The following is a summary of community engagement data collected.

1. Drawing sheets

- 0 Drawing Sheets received.

2. Pop-up sessions

- 0 pop-up sessions were held.

3. Submissions

- 0 submissions received:

4. Online survey

- 86 individual responses were received to the Online Survey through SurveyMonkey.

5. Discussion Guide

- 8 Discussion Guide responses received within the Online Survey. 2 complete responses. 3 partially complete responses. 3 incomplete responses (only answered Q1).
- A total of 62 people contributed to the 5 completed responses.

6. Online workshop

- No online workshop held.

7. Targeted telephone interviews

- Projectura completed 30 telephone interviews.

8. Random telephone interviews

- 101 random phone calls completed by Jetty Taverner.
- The results will be provided by Jetty Taverner.



The profile of the participants shows a broad cross-section of the Upper Lachlan Shire community were involved in terms of age, gender, location, and diversity characteristics.

Table 63. UL – Respondent profile

Demographics		T2042 Engagement	CRJO Profile ID
Characteristic	Breakdown	%	2016 (%)
Age	Under 18 years	0.9	21.1
	18-34 years	6.1	14.1
	35-49 years	21.1	16.9
	50-59 years	25.4	16.7
	60-69 years	23.7	15.5
	70+ years	22.8	15.7
Gender	Female	57.9	49.1
	Male	40.4	50.9
Urban/Rural	Rural	53.5	-
	Urban	46.5	-
Diversity	LGBTQIA+	4.3	-
	Person with a disability	3.4	* 5.9
	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	0.9	2.3
	Non-English speaking background	0.0	* 1.6
	Lived experience of homelessness, mental health or drug issues	2.6	-
	Difficulty finding affordable housing	2.6	-

NOTE: Red represents underrepresentation, and green represents overrepresentation compared to the 2016 census data shown in Profile ID.

* Source: ABS Cat 2001.0

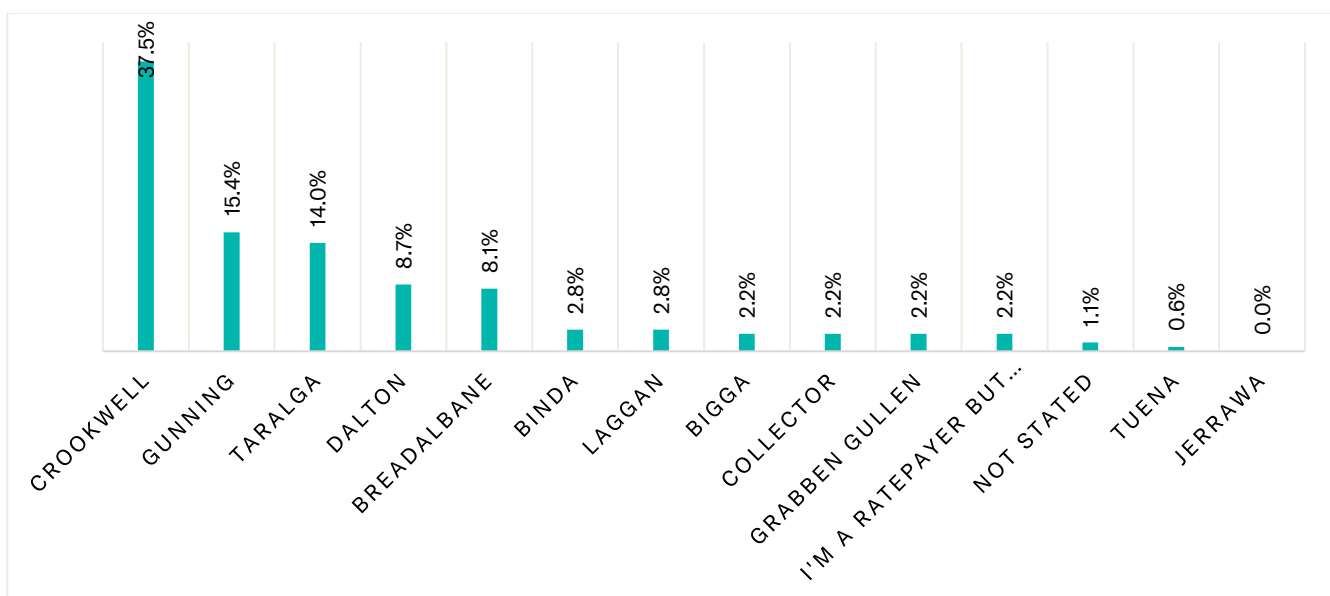


Figure 56. UL – Respondent location

Future engagement stages for the Community Strategic Plan should aim to improve representation of:

- People aged under 34 years (Pre-schoolers, Primary and Secondary schoolers, tertiary education and independence, and young workforce).
- Males.
- People with a disability.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds.

“Keep the community spirit and rural atmosphere while providing more opportunities for businesses and individuals.”

Individual survey respondent

“A safe community to raise children who have many and varied experiences from the local schools.”

Individual survey respondent

“Economic progress creating well paid sustainable employment – not just tourists and nimbys.”

Individual survey respondent

Are we on track?

The people of the Upper Lachlan Shire have an existing Community Strategic Plan. As part of the review and update of this document, we asked the community if they thought the plan was tracking well and if they had any feedback.

Vision 2036

To build and maintain sustainable communities while retaining the region's natural beauty.

Q1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?

n=90

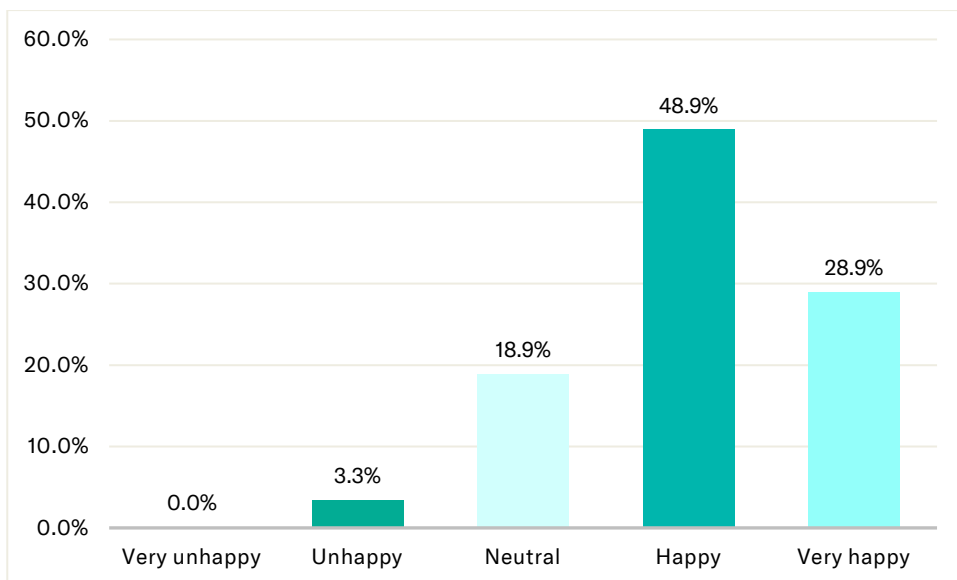


Figure 57. UL - Satisfaction with vision

Upper Lachlan Shire Council's Vision is derived from the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan. Of the 90 responses received, 77 percent were happy or very happy with the current Vision. A further 18 percent of respondents indicated they were neutral.

A further 30 respondents offered further comment with 7 offering ideas for adding to, altering, refining or defining the Vision further. A summary of suggested improvements is included below.

Table 64. UL - Considerations to improve Vision

Add	Alter/refine/define	Remove
Diverse economy.	Better define 'sustainable'. Too broad.	Nil.

Q2. Have you read the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?

n=94

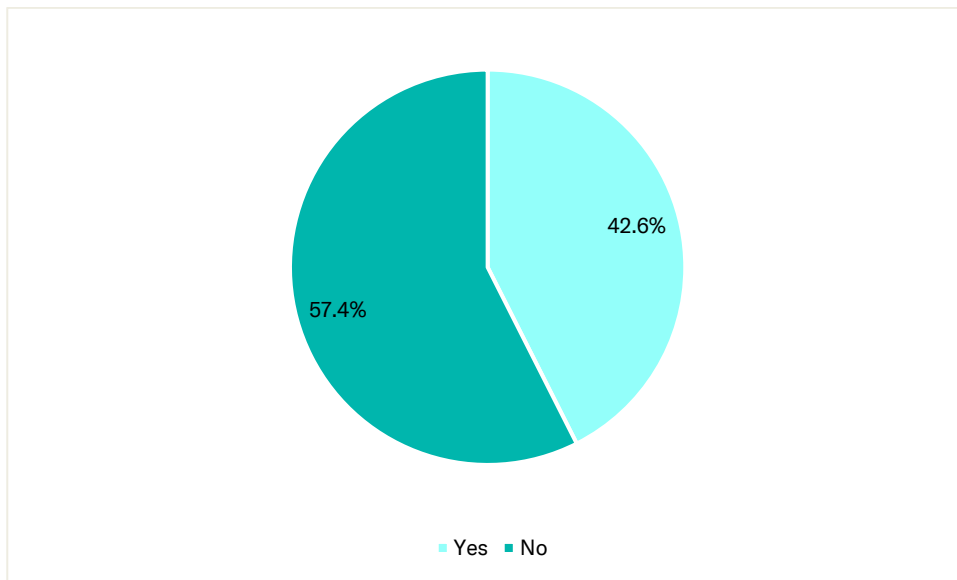


Figure 58. UL - Read CSP

Across the engagement, 57.4% of people had read the CSP. Those that had read the CSP were asked further questions. Their responses are detailed on the following pages.

Within the plan, there are 5 high level strategic priorities. The strategic priorities are:

1. Our environment.
2. Our economy.
3. Our community.
4. Our infrastructure.
5. Our civic leadership.

Q3. Do you agree with these strategic priorities?

n=31

A high percentage of Upper Lachlan respondents indicated they agreed with all (58.1 percent) or some (32.3 percent) of the strategic priorities. The remaining 9.7 percent responded 'other' or that they did not agree.

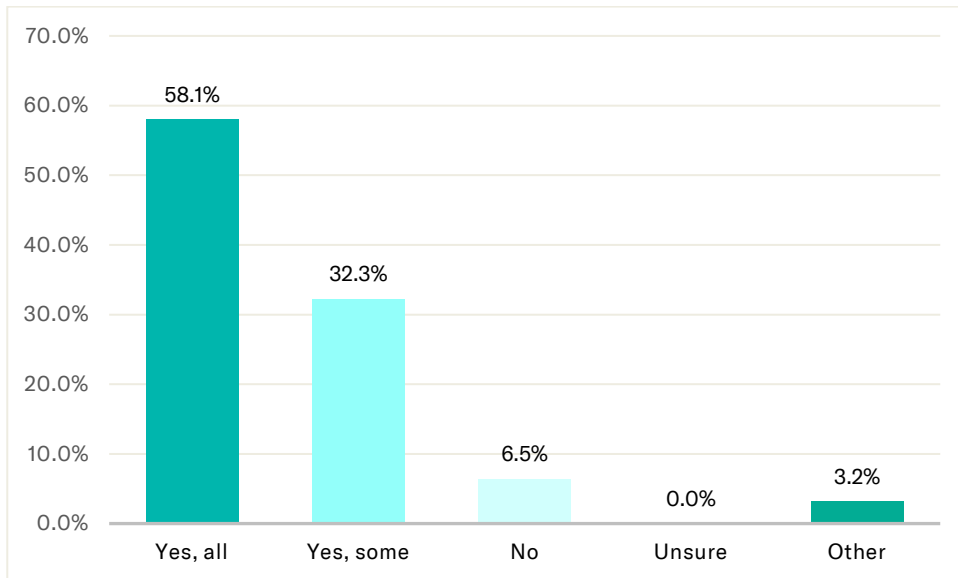


Figure 59. UL -Strategic priorities support

“They’re diverse.”

Individual survey respondent

Q4. Do you think we're on track with delivering the 5 high-level strategic priorities?

n=32

A large proportion of the respondents indicated that they believed they were on track or partly on track for delivering on the priorities of 'our civic engagement' (75.1 percent), 'our community' (83.8 percent), and 'our environment' (75.1 percent). Almost half of the respondents felt they were not on track for delivering on the 'our infrastructure' theme (48.4 percent).

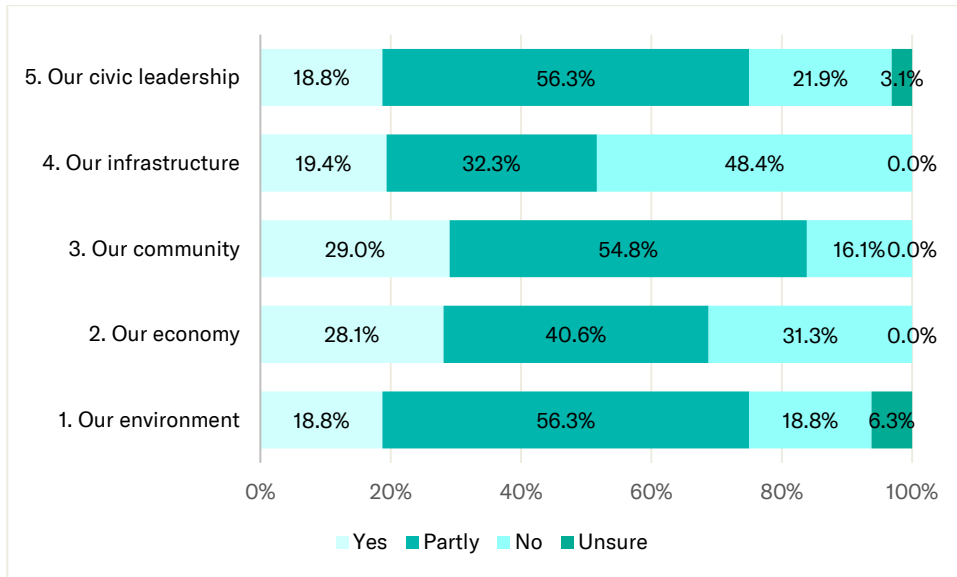


Figure 60. UL - On track with strategic priorities

Q5. Is anything missing in the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan 2016-2036?

n=17

Upper Lachlan currently have a regional CSP entitled the Tablelands Regional Community Strategic Plan. Five themes frame the Plan including our environment, our economy, our community, our infrastructure, and our civic leadership. Participants were also provided with the opportunity to comment on matters outside the themes under the heading of 'other'. A summary of the most common comments are provided below.

Table 65. UL - Missing from the CSP

Strategic priorities				
1. Our environment	2. Our economy	3. Our community	4. Our infrastructure	5. Our civic leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental stewardship. Weed management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commerce and industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better representation.
Other				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History and heritage. 				

Where are we now?

Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?

n=118

Upper Lachlan residents were asked to identify what made their community a great place to live. 493 insights were provided by 118 people across three engagement methods including online surveys, discussion guides and targeted telephone interviews.

The top 5 strengths identified across all methods include the sense of community, local people and spirit, beautiful natural environment, lifestyle and peace and quiet. Comments relating to these strengths include:

Sense of community (14.2 percent): There is a sense of community and support. Everyone chips in and looks out for one another in this unique, close-knit community. People know and talk to one-another, and there is a willingness to volunteer.

Local people and spirit (11.8 percent): Local people are kind and come together when times are tough. People are friendly and make everyone feel welcome.

Beautiful natural environment (11.6 percent): The natural and healthy environment, with stunning vistas and beautiful scenery. Still feels untouched and boasts fresh and clean air.

Lifestyle (10.5 percent): A relaxed lifestyle, easy going with a small-town feel.

Peace and quiet (8.9 percent): The area is peaceful and serene.

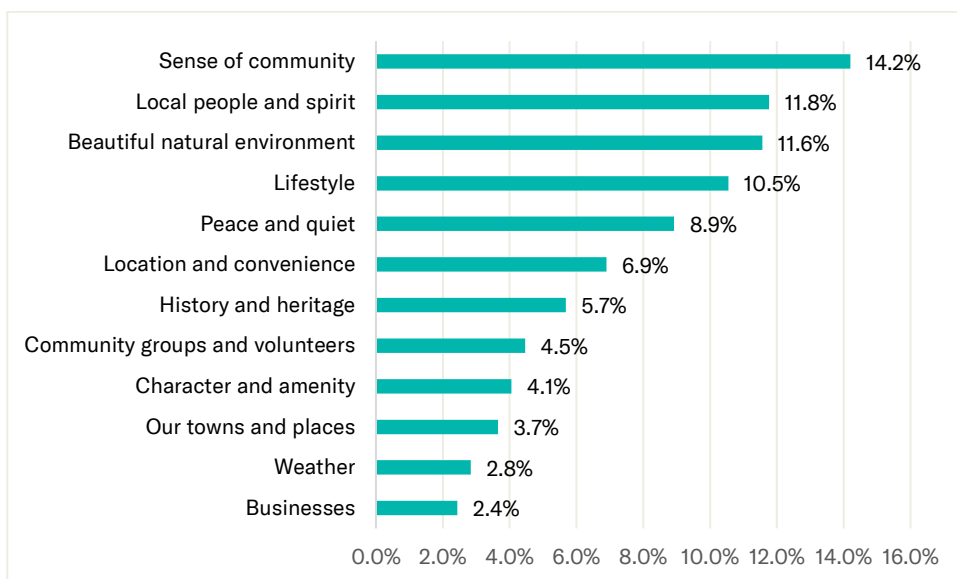


Figure 61. UL - Strength attributes

The majority of insights were gathered through the online survey (60.6 percent), however there were also a significant number of inputs collected through targeted telephone calls (36.1 percent). The strengths that have been identified through the overall analysis align with those identified by participants in the online survey and the targeted telephone calls. For those groups and participants who took part in the discussion guides, other important strengths identified were history and heritage, and tourism and visitors. This, however, is a very small proportion of people (3.2 percent).

Table 66. UL - Strength attributes by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Upper Lachlan <i>n=118</i>	Sense of community	Beautiful natural environment	Local people and spirit	Lifestyle	Peace and quiet
Online survey <i>n=53</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle	Sense of community	Peace and quiet	Local people and spirit
Discussion guides <i>n=36</i>	History and heritage/ Sense of community		Beautiful natural environment/ Lifestyle/ Peace and quiet/ Tourism and visitors		
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=29</i>	Sense of community	Local people and spirit	Location and convenience	Lifestyle	Peace and quiet

Q7. What do you think are the main challenges facing our community?

n=115

The Upper Lachlan community considered the main challenges facing their community. 489 insights were provided by 115 people across five engagement methods, including an online survey, discussion guides and telephone interviews. The most inputs were provided through the online survey (61 percent) followed by telephone interviews (21 percent).

The top five challenges identified by participants across the engagement methods were jobs and employment, changing demographics and size, retaining and supporting young people, financial sustainability and environmental sustainability. A summary of further comments provided by participants is outlined below.

Jobs and employment (13.9 percent): Creating local job opportunities, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce and industry development.

Changing demographics and size (11.9 percent): Evolving communities including a change in demographics, balancing rural and township needs, retaining the rural lifestyle, infrastructure keeping pace with change and population growth, community participation and ensuring older people are catered for.

Retaining and supporting young people (9.6 percent): Providing local employment and training opportunities, activities and services to retain young people.

Financial sustainability (7.0 percent): Council viability and financial management.

Environmental sustainability (6.7 percent): Conservation, land management, water security, weed management and sustainability in general.

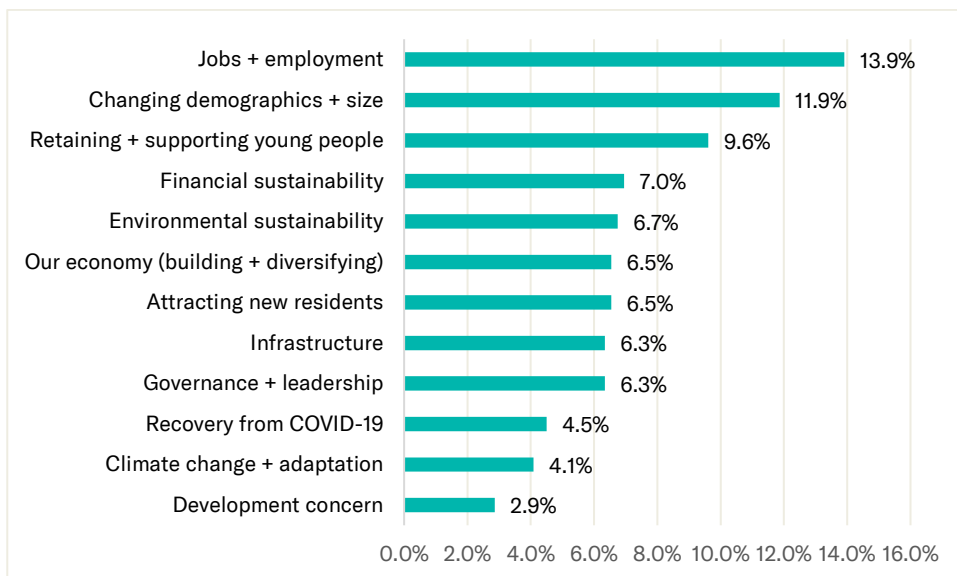


Figure 62. UL - Challenge attributes

In addition to the five challenges above which align with the findings of the online survey, participants who took part in telephone calls also identified development concerns, infrastructure and services as key challenges.

Table 67. UL - Challenge attributes by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Upper Lachlan <i>n=115</i>	Jobs and employment	Changing demographics and size	Retaining and supporting young people	Financial sustainability	Environmental sustainability
Online survey <i>n=53</i>	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Our economy	Financial sustainability	Governance and leadership
Discussion guides <i>n=36</i>	Amalgamation and boundary alignment/ Environmental sustainability/ Recovery from COVID-19		Attracting new residents/ Changing demographics and size/ Council independence/ Financial sustainability/ Governance and leadership/ Jobs and employment/ Our economy/ Recovery from natural disasters		
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=26</i>	Changing demographics and size	Jobs and employment	Infrastructure	Retaining and supporting young people	Development concern/ Services

Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?

Q8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?

n=82

The Upper Lachlan community were asked if they had seen anything in another area or shire that would be good in their community. Of the 82 respondents, 68.3 percent answered 'yes', resulting in 61 people contributing suggestions. We heard from people who participated through three engagement methods, including online surveys, discussion guides and targeted telephone calls.

The top five categories of things the community would like to see, across all methods of engagement included improved infrastructure, parks and green space, economic growth, more activities and events, and town planning. Comments relating to these categories include:

Improved infrastructure (23.0 percent): More sports facilities including an indoor pool, improved road maintenance, and utilisation of existing nature and heritage.

Parks and green space (19.7 percent): A rail trail, improved walking and bike paths, additional gardens and landscaping, and dog-friendly parks.

Economic growth (13.1 percent): Diversifying industry, improving employment options, increasing tourism, and additional shopping and restaurant options.

Town planning (11.5 percent): Improving the main street and streetscapes and preserving the history and heritage.

More activities and events (11.5 percent): More community events, additional things to do in the evening/night, places to go with children, and entertainment options.

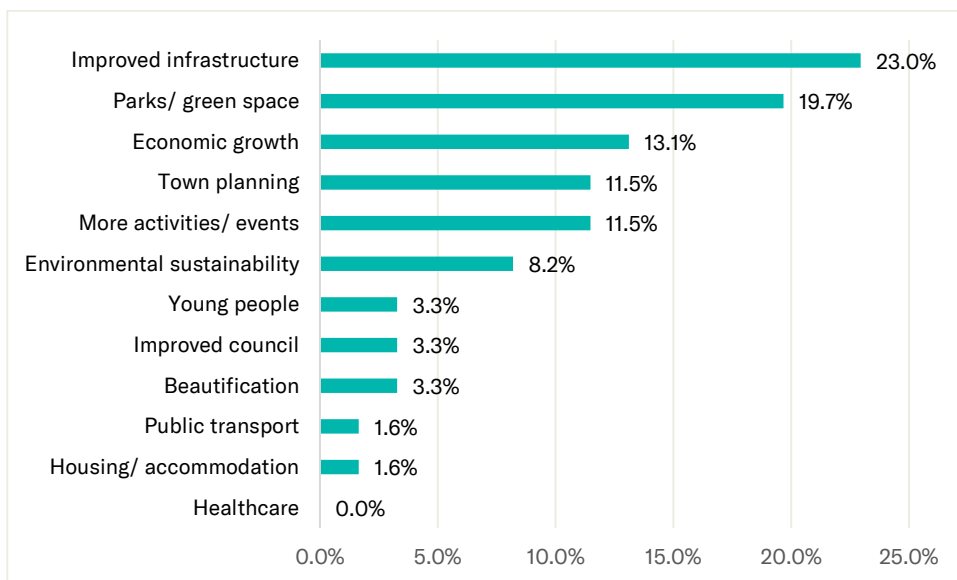


Figure 63. UL - Major suggestions from other areas

While most people had their say through the online survey (52.5 percent), there were also a significant number of telephone calls conducted (42.9 percent). The categories that have been identified through the overall analysis align with those identified by participants in the online survey and the targeted telephone calls. Another category featuring significantly (although not featured in the top 5 categories) is that of environmental sustainability, having been indicated by 8.2 percent of participant inputs. Most inputs regarding environmental sustainability spoke of waste management and council leadership.

Table 68. UL - Suggestions from other areas by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Upper Lachlan <i>n=76</i>	Improved infrastructure	Parks and green space	Economic growth	More activities and events	Town planning
Online survey <i>n=32</i>	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	Economic growth	Town planning	Environmental sustainability/ More activities and events
Discussion guides <i>n=24</i>	Improved infrastructure	More activities and events	-	-	-
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=20</i>	Improved infrastructure/ More activities and events		Economic growth/ Environmental sustainability/ Parks and green space/ Town planning		

Q9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?

n=96

Upper Lachlan residents were asked what they would like to see achieved in the next 10 years. 96 respondents provided 114 points of feedback. The feedback was provided across three engagement methods, including an online survey, discussion guides, and targeted telephone interviews.

The top five categories of the one thing the community would like to see achieved in the next 10 years across all methods of engagement include infrastructure, planning, economic growth, beautification and town identity, and sports and recreation facilities. Comments relating to these categories include:

Infrastructure (16.7 percent): Car parking, drainage, foot paths, improved and sealed roads, and upgrading the public toilets.

Planning (12.3 percent) Community engaged in planning, a sustainable population growth and accommodating new families.

Economic growth (11.4 percent) Supporting businesses, diversifying industry, attracting more tourism, additional business opportunities in technology.

Beautification and town identity (9.6 percent): Maintaining the rural atmosphere, keeping a clean town, revitalising the main street and improving general streetscape appearances.

Sports and recreation facilities (8.8 percent) Additional paths and walking tracks, opening a heated swimming pool, upgrading the sports oval, and developing a multi-use recreational area.

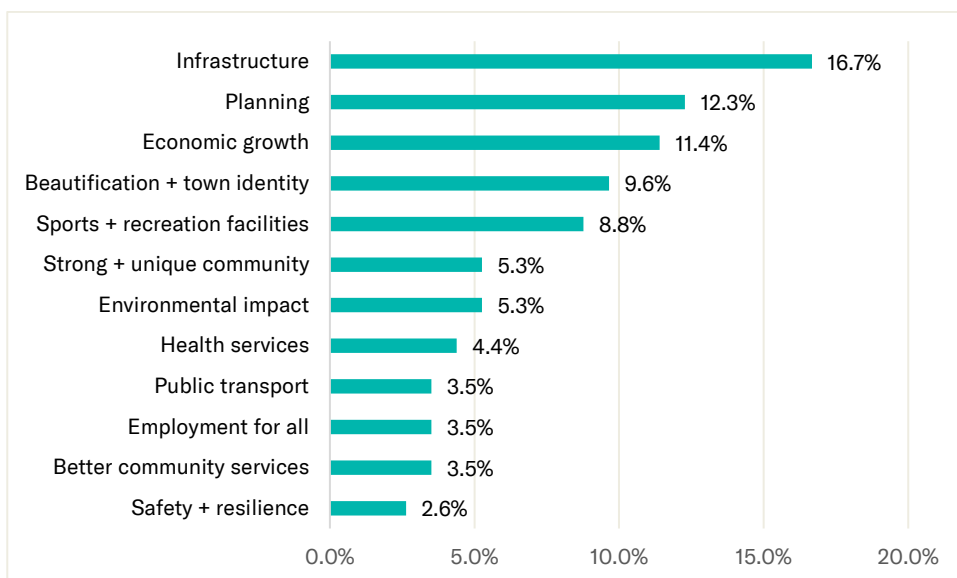


Figure 64. UL - Priorities

The method with the greatest input for this question was the targeted telephone interviews, with 50 percent. Close in proportion of inputs with 48 percent was the online survey. Whilst the inputs largely were uniform across the various methods, the online survey and the discussion guide methods also indicated that mitigating negative environmental impact was something they'd like to see achieved in the next ten years

Table 69. UL - Priorities by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Upper Lachlan <i>n=96</i>	Infrastructure	Planning	Economic growth	Beautification and town identity	Sport and recreation facilities
Online survey <i>n=42</i>	Infrastructure	Economic growth	Planning	Sport and recreation facilities	Environmental impact/ Beautification and town identity
Discussion guides <i>n=24</i>	Environmental impact/ Safety and resilience		-	-	-
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=30</i>	Infrastructure	Beautification and town identity/ Planning		Economic growth/ Sports and recreation facilities	

How will we get there?

Q10. What services or projects do you think Upper Lachlan Shire Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?

n=104

Participants were asked what services and projects they would like Council to focus on. Of the 104 respondents across three engagement methods, 424 insights were provided. The most feedback was provided through the online survey (57 percent) followed by telephone interviews (40 percent). The engagement methods included an online survey, discussion guides and targeted telephone interviews.

The top five challenges identified by participants across the engagement methods were roads and parking, land use and planning, aged and disability services, infrastructure and health services. A summary of further comments provided by participants is outlined below.

Roads and parking (6.8 percent): Road maintenance and improvements, making sure centre lines are marked and widening bitumen roads.

Land use and planning (5.4 percent): Planning that protects land and preserves space for farming. Additionally, making land available through zoning practices.

Infrastructure (5.2 percent): Improving public amenities such as toilets, leisure infrastructure and improved accessibility, upgrading existing infrastructure.

Aged and disability services (5.2 percent): Improved services and additional facilities for older residents.

Health services (4.7 percent): Health services, including mental health services and access to medical expertise.

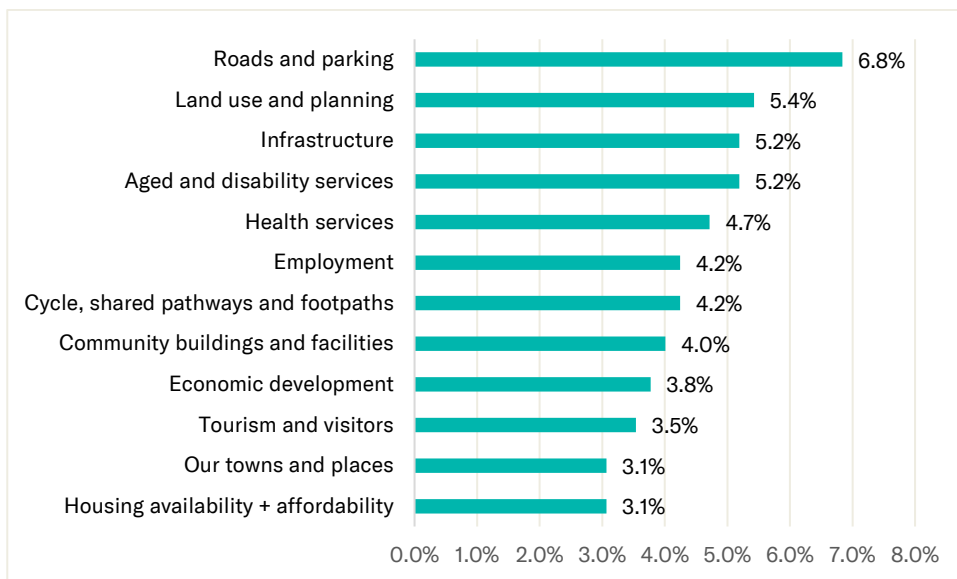
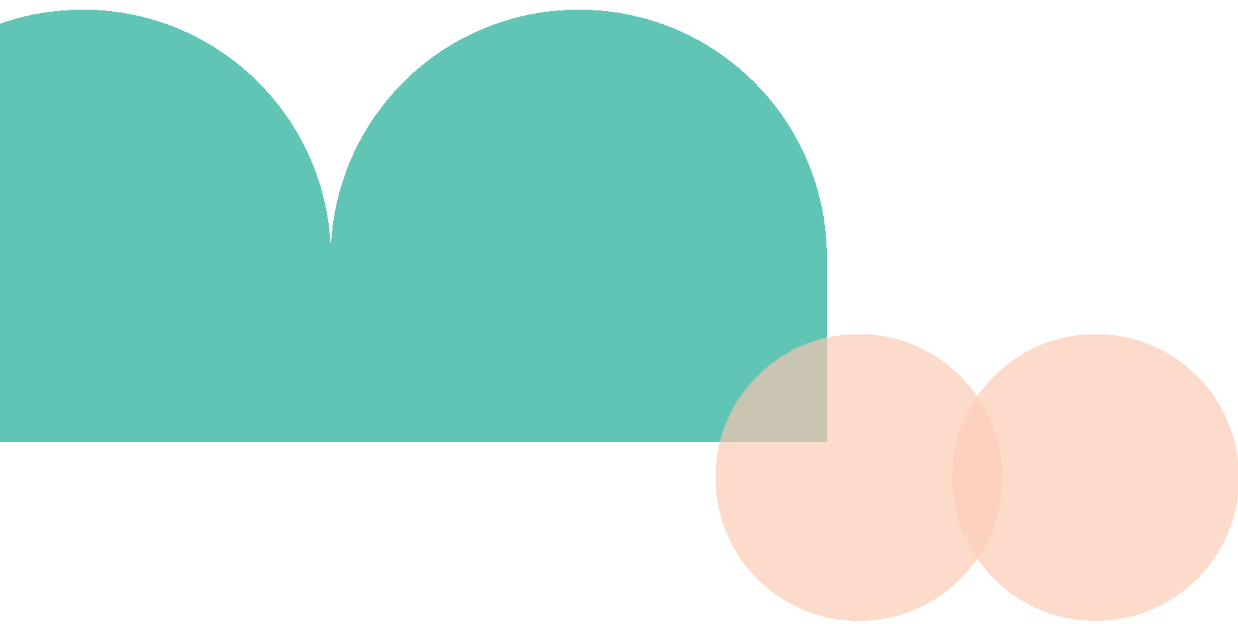


Figure 65. UL - Services & projects

In addition to the five major priorities outlines, respondents of the telephone calls and discussion guides identified priorities including tourism, cycle, shared pathways and footpaths, community facilities and employment. Most of the inputs from the targeted telephone interviews pertained to land use and planning and roads and parking.

Table 70. UL - Services & projects by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Upper Lachlan <i>n=104</i>	Roads and parking	Land use and planning	Infrastructure	Aged and disability services	Health services
Online survey <i>n=50</i>	Health services	Infrastructure	Employment	Economic development	Aged and disability services
Discussion guides <i>n=24</i>	Roads and parking	Aged and disability services/ Aquatic facilities/ Arts and cultural services/ Community buildings and facilities/ Community engagement/ Health services/ Housing availability and affordability/ Tourism and visitors			
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=30</i>	Roads and parking	Land use and planning	Infrastructure	Our towns and places	Housing availability and affordability



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