

Upper Lachlan Shire Council



Upper Lachlan Shire Economic Development Strategy 2015 - 2020

Executive Summary

I am pleased to present the Upper Lachlan Shire Council's Economic Development Strategy 2015-2020.

While Council is conscious of the need to balance the current demands of business and community it is imperative that we have a strategy to secure a bright future for Upper Lachlan Shire and to stimulate economic development in the Upper Lachlan Shire through advocacy, investment and job creation, consistent with our competitive advantages.

The Economic Development Task Force (EDTF) was formed by Upper Lachlan Shire Council to drive economic development opportunities in the shire.

I encourage you to review this strategy so you can build a thorough understanding of where the shire is heading. This Strategy highlights the key points of interest and the most pressing challenges and opportunities that we need to address over the next 5 years.

There are five areas of focus:

- Business Attraction and Promotion
- Population Growth
- Tourism and Employment
- Education and Employment
- Digital & Communication Facilities

Having a strategy is one thing, making it work is another. Successful implementation depends entirely on the meaningful engagement and contribution of all stakeholders. Council is confident that with the skills and energy that exist in the community, an exciting future lies ahead.

This Strategy could not have been developed without significant contribution from a range of people. Council wishes to thank all of those who were involved, the EDTF, members of the public who participated in the Economic Survey and Council staff.

We look forward to working together to help build a future that will result in a quality living environment and a vibrant business community across the Upper Lachlan Shire.



Councillor John Shaw

Mayor

Upper Lachlan Shire Council

Our Strategy

Our Economic Development Strategy is created to facilitate growth in our local economy and to the benefit of our Shire in the short and long term. The strategy has been designed to promote the attractiveness of our Shire's natural and economic environment to residents and businesses to ensure growth and sustainability into the future.

The economic development strategy will be implemented immediately and will continue through the progressive stages of delivery of the strategy to support and secure a lasting legacy for our community. The economic development program will apply to the whole shire, including government and the private sector.

Opportunities to add economic value to the community by supporting existing enterprises and encouraging new enterprises to grow will be pursued as a priority. The economic development program will focus on addressing issues and stumbling blocks to establishing ventures and building new enterprises, particularly where this relates to enabling activities. Examples of this include:

- labour supply
- skills
- finance
- business planning
- clean industrial and distribution
- access to markets

The economic development program will coordinate a whole-of-government response to these matters.

Our Vision

- Encourage community growth and development and
- Contribute to the efficient and effective management of the environment, community and economy for present and future generations.



(Hockey Roo Parade 2014 – Photo provided by ULSC)

Background to the Upper Lachlan Shire

The Upper Lachlan is a Shire of breathtaking beauty, robust seasons, outlandish bushranger history and unique rural charm. Located in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales, just 2.5 hours from Sydney and 1 hour from Canberra, it has the feel of a secluded rural hideaway, which has been protected from the challenges of modern-day intrusions.

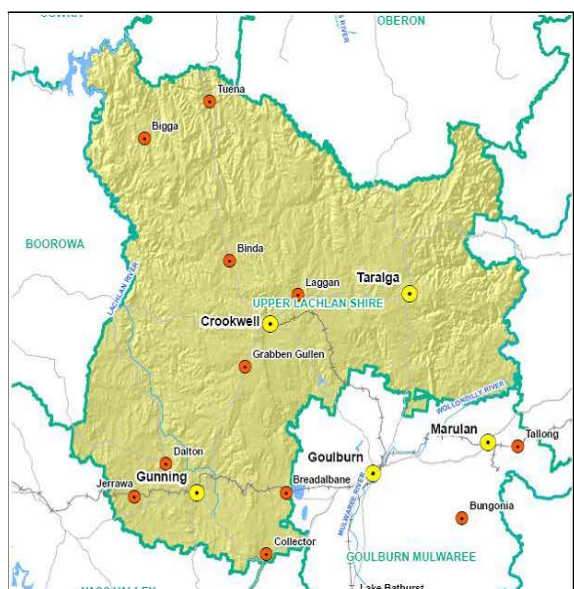
Riding high on the top of the Great Dividing Range (areas over 1,000m above sea level), Upper Lachlan Shire experiences the seasons in all their glory. Autumn blazes in outstanding gardens. Falling leaves shower the roads and countryside with their glory. Winter introduces you to rolling hills blanketed in snow and the perfect excuse to gather around a roaring log fire. Spring heralds the arrival of warmer times with masses of exquisite blossoms, bulbs and flowers of every description, while a mild summer allows you to escape the harsh heat and humidity of coastal regions.

Regional/Demographic Profile

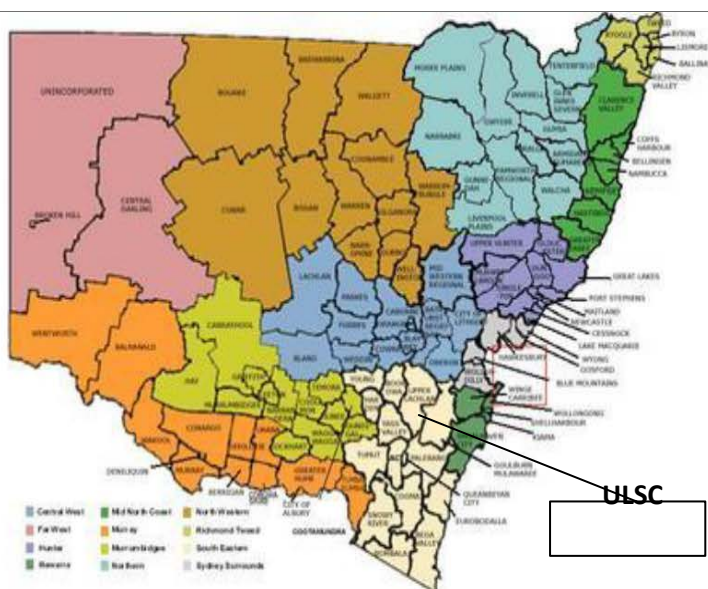
Upper Lachlan Shire is a New South Wales Local Council with an area of 7,243 sq. kilometres. As of 2014, Upper Lachlan's Shire's population was estimated by the ABS to be 7,761, with an average age of 46.8, there is 1.1 persons per km².

There are more people in their retiring stage of life, and fewer in the parenting age stage and the young adult stage, relative to NSW. In 2012 26.5% of the population were employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, 10.7% employed in Health Care and Social Services, 9.7% employed in Public Administration and Safety, 7.2% employed in Construction and 6.9% employed in Education and Training. In 2012 the total number of businesses recorded in Upper Lachlan Shire was 1,041 and 154 of those businesses employed 5 or more people. The 2011 Census found that the average income from all sources of adults (aged 15+) in Upper Lachlan was around \$43,624 per year, which was \$119 per week lower than the \$811 weekly average for NSW.

For more information: <http://upperlachlan.local-e.nsw.gov.au/about-the-shire-upperlachlan/community-portrait-upperlachlan/488107-upper-lachlan-shire-community-portrait-i> or http://stat.abs.gov.au/itt/r.jsp?RegionSummary®ion=17640&dataset=ABS_NRP9_LGA&geoconcept=REGION&datasetASGS=ABS_NRP9_ASGS&datasetLGA=ABS_NRP9_LGA®ionLGA=REGION®ionASGS=REGION



(Upper Lachlan Shire Council ULSC)



(NSW Local Government Map)

Our Strengths

Upper Lachlan Shire has many strengths and the greatest of these is its proximity to the major cities of Goulburn/Bathurst/Canberra/Sydney. This rural Shire is made up of smaller villages with exceptional liveability. The Shire has outstanding sporting fields, health care, excellent schools and low business set up costs.

Our strong sense of community makes the Upper Lachlan Shire a great place to raise children, retire or re-locate an established business.

A summary of our strengths;

- Proximity to Goulburn/Bathurst/Canberra/Sydney
- Liveability & Natural Beauty
- Shire of Villages
- Proximity to Highway & Rail Infrastructure
- Strong Sense of Community
- Excellent Health Care
- Diverse Agricultural Industry Base
- Good Sports Facilities
- Pre-school/ Primary & High School Education available
- Low Business set up costs compared to Sydney
- Main Street Business zone
- Supportive Council/Economic Development Task Force (EDTF)
- Tourist Association
- Fully Serviced Land & Rural Allotments available
- Community Support Services
- Safe Living Environment
- 5,000km of waterways

Opportunities

- Development of the Goulburn-Mulwaree/Upper Lachlan Rail Trail and Kiamma Creek
- Renewable Energy Projects & Green Technologies
- Regional Funding
- Affordable land prices
- Development of Digital Industry & Facilities
- Canberra/Gunning/Crookwell/Taralga/Bathurst tourism loop
- Heritage/History
- Coach Tours/Motorbikes/Caravans
- A range of tourist accommodation/Restaurants
- Industrial area/Distribution facility – Proximity to Highway and Rail in Gunning
- Food processing & related services
- Natural Gas installation for Crookwell and/or Gunning

Challenges

The Economic Development Strategy provides strategies that will help our rural community continue to build on their economic development success, both in the near future and years down the road. Stakeholders were engaged to identify challenges and areas where the Upper Lachlan Shire could flourish and grow.

Several key issues for ongoing rural economic development:

- There are barriers to development for next-generation, value-added enterprises to capitalise on new markets and new growth opportunities.
- There are financial obstacles for those businesses seeking capital for new and expanding enterprises.
- There are demographic realities. The rural population is greying as youth migrate to larger city centres. Attracting skilled workers and their families is a hurdle faced by rural industries and businesses across Regional NSW.
- There are infrastructure challenges such as digital connectivity that restricts future development and currently limits efficient communication and information delivery.
- There is a need for limited government coordination and cooperation to make effective use of resources.



(Lindner Sock Factory – Photo provided by ULTA)

Our Strategy Focus

- **Business Attraction and Promotion**
- **Population Growth**
- **Tourism**
- **Education and Employment Opportunities**
- **Development of Digital & Communication Facilities**

<i>Business Objectives</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Retain & enhance existing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form a network of Business Assoc. Shire wide• Promote available grants to encourage businesses• Conduct a survey to understand business needs and wants.• Assist rural businesses in capitalizing on opportunities in new expanding markets• Strengthen and encourage connections among networks for small businesses
Encourage investment in new business	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an educational campaign that encourages businesses to refer customers in town to other businesses in the Shire to keep the money circulating locally• Identify growth industries for the Shire• Promote residential attractiveness to potential new investors• Facilitate businesses to link in with grants programs• Investigate opportunity for growth in tourism accommodation properties• Investigate opportunity for growth in retirement residences• Review current council assets in view of possible divestment and investment into future community needs• Monitor opportunities for new business funding in the Shire• Investigate possible “Road Hub” and inter- modal terminal including possible storage/warehousing opportunities
Provision of natural gas to Crookwell and/or Gunning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate the opportunity for natural gas installation

<i>Population Growth Objectives</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Promote liveability and a peaceful country lifestyle to Retirees & Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a promotional media campaign
Identify gaps and develop an investment prospectus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an investment prospectus including planning & development opportunities
Communicate planning and development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the investment prospectus • Ensure competitiveness for development costs • Develop an external Shire promotion program
Monitor and Promote Rural Relocation Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the Regional Relocation Grants Act provides for payments to approved applicants who relocate from metropolitan areas of New South Wales to regional areas of New South Wales for the purpose of employment or self-employment www.osr.nsw.gov.au/grants/rrg

<i>Tourism Objectives</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Town beautification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village main street beautification strategy • Re-brand the shire for subsequent promotion
Ensure promotion and media campaign about the shire is up to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with Media Officer to ensure any developments in business or our shires economic success are clearly promoted • Build a competitive presentation package for the Shire
Green Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage community support and opportunities for establishing a clean green Shire
Goulburn-Mulwaree/Crookwell Rail Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with the ULTA to facilitate this attractive tourism and economic opportunity

<i>Education and Employment Objectives</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Education and employment opportunities for local young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus for local young people to stay locally and return after study • Encourage involvement of local employers in career talks to promote local opportunities • Encourage development of regional and rural focussed TAFE and University courses that encourage more young people to look at future options in the Shire. • Build on Council's role in Youth Week and other events that assist in building networks for youth

	<p>employment, needs and issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a partnership approach to provide critical mass to encourage linkages with educational institutions and employers that can improve options for young people. • Consider tertiary research opportunities for industries in the Shire to build industry capability
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<i>Digital & Communication Objectives</i>	<i>Actions</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Canberra Region Joint Organisations to develop an interconnected rural digital strategy • Attract funding from State and Federal Government to ensure our Shire is able to conduct business digitally • Lobby for the establishment of high speed fibre broadband throughout the Shire • Lobby for the expansion of mobile phone coverage to eliminate “black spots” in the Shire • Continue to push for free to air TV/Radio coverage throughout the Shire

Guiding these five Areas of Focus are four principles:

1. **Empower:** Sustained rural economic development has to be driven at the grassroots level. Our role together is to empower, connect and create a positive environment for rural businesses and communities to be successful.
2. **Local:** Actions need to recognise the unique needs and characteristics of different locations of the shire and should be coordinated at the community level to exponentially increase results.
3. **Collaborate:** Actions must be based on cooperation and partnership among communities, regions, non-profit organisations and across all levels of government.
4. **Experience:** Take advantage of existing knowledge and experience to maximise effective delivery of services to our community.

The Economic Development Strategy is not intended to capture the entire spectrum of services provided by the Upper Lachlan Shire that enables strong economic development in our rural shire; rather, this strategic plan identifies priorities to support targeted development.



(National Youth Science Forum – Photo provided by ULSC)

Coordination with Local Government

The economic development program activities will seek to build upon existing local government plans and activities and current Council economic development strategies. Ongoing consultation will be undertaken with surrounding regional Councils to ensure, where possible, consistency with the regional Councils' Economic Development objectives planning schemes, Council interests and plans:

- local business and industry development
- local laws, licensing and permits
- community health and safety, including waste management, and emergency planning
- environmental matters, including weed and pest control
- planning, policies, development assessment, building and construction.

Coordination with Upper Lachlan Social and Community Plan

This strategy co-ordinates with the Upper Lachlan Shire Social and Community Plan.

It is Council's aim to have a healthy and vibrant community, the Upper Lachlan Shire Social and Community Plan encourages Council and key stakeholders to work together to enhance the lifestyle of children and families, young people, older people, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

An important component of Council's strategic framework is to guide Council and other key agencies in the provision of appropriate and accessible services and facilities that meet the health, economic, environmental and social needs of people within the Upper Lachlan in an equitable manner.

Coordination with Regional Development Australia (RDA) Plan

This strategy is aligned with the RDA Vision 2025. RDA Southern Inland will work with the three levels of government, businesses and business groups and the community to deliver integrated regional development planning. This planning will support community prosperity that is socially and economically sustainable.

The region will benefit from the effective integration of planning mechanisms between the NSW and ACT jurisdictions that delivers consistency and efficiency in the areas of service delivery, regulations, skills, and training provision, industry investment and business development across the Greater Capital Region.

Coordination with 2021 Plan

The NSW Plan is based around the following five strategies;

- Rebuild the economy-restore economic growth and establish NSW as the “first place in Australia to do business”
- Return Quality Services – Provide the best transport, health, education, policing, justice, and family service, with a focus on the customer
- Renovate Infrastructure i.e. infrastructure that makes a difference to both our economy and people’s lives
- Strengthen our local environment and communities – improve people’s lives by protecting natural environments and building a strong sense of community
- Restore accountability to Government – talk honestly with the community.

Implementation and Action Plan

Key Action	Lead Agency & Partners	Target Delivery Date & Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Business Retention & Investment			
Carry out Shire wide Economic Development Survey to create an Economic Development Strategy	EDTF	2014-2015	Completed
Form a network shire wide of Business/Progress Associations	EDTF	Medium Priority - 2016	Ongoing
Shire promotion campaign towards growth industry in the Shire	ULSC, EDTF & Small Business Connect	High Priority - 2017	Commencement pending successful funding
Facilitate Business to link with grants programs	ULSC	2015 - 2018	Ongoing
Investigate the opportunity for natural gas installation to Crookwell and/or Gunning	ULSC & CENTROC	2016 - 2020	Ongoing
Population Growth from 1.5% to 1.8% by 2020			
Develop an investment prospectus	EDTF	2016	Commencement pending successful funding

Key Action	Lead Agency & Partners	Target Delivery Date & Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Carry out a promotional media campaign using an investment prospectus	ULSC & EDTF	2016-2018	Commencement pending successful funding
Promote rural relocation incentives	ULSC	2015-2018	Ongoing
Tourism			
Village main street beautification program	ULTA & EDTF	2016-2018	Commencement pending successful funding
Up to date Promotion & Media Campaign	ULTA & ULSC	2015-2018	Ongoing
Goulburn-Mulwaree/Crookwell Rail Trail	EDTF & ULTA	2015-2018	Ongoing
Education & Employment Opportunities			
Encourage involvement of local employers in career talks and linkages with educational institutions to improve employment options	EDTF & CHS	2015-2018	Ongoing
Build on Councils role in Youth Week	ULSC & YA'MAD	2015-2018	Ongoing
Development of Digital & Communication Facilities			
Lobby for full high speed broadband digital coverage by 2020	EDTF & ULSC	2015-2020	Ongoing
Attract funding from State & Federal Government to ensure our shire is able to conduct business digitally	ULSC & EDTF	2015-2020	Ongoing

Conclusion

The Economic Development Strategy provides strategies that will help our rural community continue to build on their economic development success, both in the near future and years down the road. Stakeholders were engaged to identify challenges and areas where the Upper Lachlan Shire could flourish and grow.

The actions laid out in the strategy directly respond to these challenges, and outline practical steps the Upper Lachlan Shire, in partnership our community, can take to ensure the Upper Lachlan Shire continues to thrive. Through collaboration and a shared commitment between all stakeholders, this Economic Development Strategy will support our community to continue down the path to a sustainable, modern and vibrant future.



(Goulburn/Crookwell Rail Train Information Session – Photo provided by ULSC)

Upper Lachlan Shire Social & Community Assets

There are a range of social and community assets in the Upper Lachlan area including both physical and service based assets. The range of services and providers changes over time and Council maintains a service directory for the Upper Lachlan community, which can be found online:

<http://upperlachlan.local-e.nsw.gov.au/community/directory.html>

Upper Lachlan has a range of social infrastructure and services typical of a rural local government area. The following key services are provided in the shire:

Hospital – located in Crookwell

- 50 staff with 24 hour service

Doctors/Medical

- Taralga – part-time GP Doctor service from Goulburn, Community Health
- Gunning – operated through Community Health
- Crookwell – Total 7 Doctors. 2 GP's and 5 at the Health Care Centre
- Wellness Centre at the Hospital
- Government Health Service providers
- Specialists available: Dentist, Physiotherapist, Audiologist, Podiatrist, Massage therapist, Pathology, Orthopaedic and other visiting specialists.

Aged Care

- **Taralga** - Sunset Lodge: 23 beds – Ageing facility with high and low care
- Quality private aged care/lifestyle units
- **Crookwell** - View Haven Lodge: 44 beds – Principally high care (Nursing Home)

Schools

- Crookwell (High School, Public School and Catholic Primary School),
- Primary Schools at Bigga, Binda, Breadalbane, Collector, Dalton, Gunning, Laggan, Taralga
- Crookwell SDN Pre-school Kindergarten

Child care centres

- Day care centres are located in Crookwell, Taralga and Gunning
- Crookwell Pre-school
- Crookwell Neighbourhood Centre Inc. provide the following services:
 - Crookwell Mobile Pre-School – weekly at Collector, Rye Park
 - Crookwell Mobile Long Day Care – weekly at Binda, Bigga, Laggan and Rye Park

Community Organisations

- Country Womens Association – Southern Tablelands Group
- Men's Shed - Crookwell
- Rotary and Lions Clubs
- View Club
- Probus
- Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades <http://upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au/community-directory-2474/emergency-services-upperlachlan>
- Volunteer SES <http://upperlachlan.nsw.gov.au/community-directory-2474/emergency-services-upperlachlan>
- Churches – Anglican, Catholic, Uniting & Presbyterian
- Crookwell Neighbourhood Centre Inc.
- Landcare groups
- Progress Associations

Community facilities

- Showgrounds in all towns/villages
- Library – Crookwell & Gunning
- Community halls
- Sporting fields, parks & gardens
- Crookwell & Gunning Pools
- Caravan Parks – Crookwell, Gunning, Taralga, Grabine State Park, Wombeyan Caves and there are many free camping areas
- National Parks and walking trails



(Crookwell Potato Festival – Photo provided by ULSC)



(Crookwell Potato Festival – Photo provided by ULSC)

References:

Upper Lachlan Community/Business Survey

The Upper Lachlan Shire Community/Business survey was conducted in December 2014 & January 2015. The following is a sample of some replies, giving an insight into community attitudes and lifestyle.

- Residents believe Upper Lachlan Shire is a great place to live because of our proximity to larger cities while maintaining our rural lifestyle and that Upper Lachlan Shire has friendly towns and a strong community pride.
- Residents believe that Upper Lachlan Shire is beautiful and peaceful with a picturesque countryside that has good facilities and tourism appeal.
- Some of the residents would like to have more restaurants, clothing stores and better TV/Mobile/Internet coverage.

Upper Lachlan Shire's Social & Community Plan (2013-2018)
Regional Development Australia Southern Inland Plan (2013-2016)
NSW Government 2021 Plan