



Gwydir Shire Council

DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

Prepared for Gwydir Shire Council | 21 February 2024





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21 February 2024

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 About this Strategy	6
1.2 How the Strategy was developed	6
1.3 The housing needs of Gwydir Shire	7
1.4 Addressing the housing needs of Gwydir Shire	7
1.5 Document structure	9
2 THE EVIDENCE	12
2.1 The Gwydir Shire	12
2.1.1 Regional context	12
2.1.2 Local context	12
2.1.3 Key trends and projects	14
2.2 Planning and policy context	16
2.2.1 Policy Alignment	16
2.3 Demographic and social overview	19
2.4 Housing supply overview	21
2.5 Housing demand and needs summary	23
2.5.1 Housing for a growing population	23
2.5.2 Housing for changing demographics	24
2.5.3 Housing for specific needs and preferences	25
2.6 Addressing the identified housing needs: opportunities and constraints	27
3 THE PRIORITIES	36
3.1 Housing vision	36
3.2 Housing objectives	36
3.3 Housing strategies	37
3.3.1 Land use planning mechanisms: within the current framework	37
Strategy 1: Deliver new residential development on government-owned land	38
Strategy 2: Support the delivery of residential infill development	49
Strategy 3: Support Torrens title subdivision and infill development within town centres	57
Strategy 4: Promote the delivery of diverse low-rise housing within town centres	60
Strategy 5: Support the delivery of aged-care and seniors housing, and housing for people with disability	63
3.3.2 Land use planning mechanisms: outside the current framework	64
Strategy 6: Prepare the Gwydir Shire Development Control Plan or similar guideline(s)	64
Strategy 7: Review opportunities for the provision of worker's accommodation	65
Strategy 8: Review the provision of residential dwellings on rural and semi-rural land outside town and village centres	66

	Strategy 9: Identify land for rezoning around town centres	68
	3.3.3 Non-planning mechanisms	70
	Strategy 10: Build relationships and collaborative partnerships with independent and/or Government agencies	70
	Strategy 11: Assist landowners and applicants navigate the planning framework	72
	Strategy 12: Actively pursue grants and funding to support the delivery of housing and supporting infrastructure and community services	74
	Strategy 13: Deliver new infrastructure to support the growing and changing population	76
4	ACTIONS	78
	4.1 Implementation and delivery plan	78
	4.2 Monitoring and review	82
	4.3 Monitoring and review	83

Tables

Table 3.1	Summary of housing policy alignment	17
Table 3.2	Summary of demographic and housing overview	19
Table 2.1	Addressing identified housing needs: opportunities and constraints analysis	27
Table 3.1	Government-owned opportunity sites summary, Warialda	41
Table 3.2	Government-owned opportunity sites summary, Bingara	45
Table 3.3	Potential investigation areas summary, Warialda	51
Table 3.4	Potential investigation areas summary, Bingara	54
Table 3.5	Description of common low-rise housing typologies	61
Table 4.1	Local housing strategy action plan	78

Figures

Figure 2.1	Context plan	13
Figure 2.2	Housing policy framework	16
Figure 3.1	Government-owned opportunity site map, Warialda	40
Figure 3.2	Government-owned opportunity site map, Bingara	44
Figure 3.3	Potential investigation areas map, Warialda	50
Figure 3.4	Potential investigation areas map, Bingara	53
Figure 3.5	Land capable of subdivision, Warialda	58
Figure 3.6	Land capable of subdivision, Bingara	59
Figure 3.7	Examples of low-rise housing typologies	60
Figure 3.8	Attached dual occupancy – example ground floor plan	61
Figure 3.9	Detached dual occupancy – example ground floor plan	61
Figure 3.10	Terrace housing – example ground floor plan	62
Figure 3.11	Manor house – example ground floor plan	62
Figure 3.12	Example of large-lot residential dwelling in Burundah Mountain, Warialda	69

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gwydir Local Housing Strategy establishes the strategic framework for residential growth within the Gwydir Shire and specifically the townships of Bingara and Warialda over the next 20 years.

The Strategy sets out Council's vision and objectives for housing in the Shire and responds to Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The housing vision for Gwydir Shire is that:

“The People of Gwydir Shire will have access to a diverse range of quality, accessible and affordable housing types, which reflect the changing needs and lifestyles of people living in the Shire, as well as help attract future residents to Gwydir Shire.

People will choose to live in Gwydir because they will want to live the “Gwydir Good Life.”

The vision has been inspired by feedback received during community consultation and sets the scene for housing and liveability in the Shire over the next 20 years.

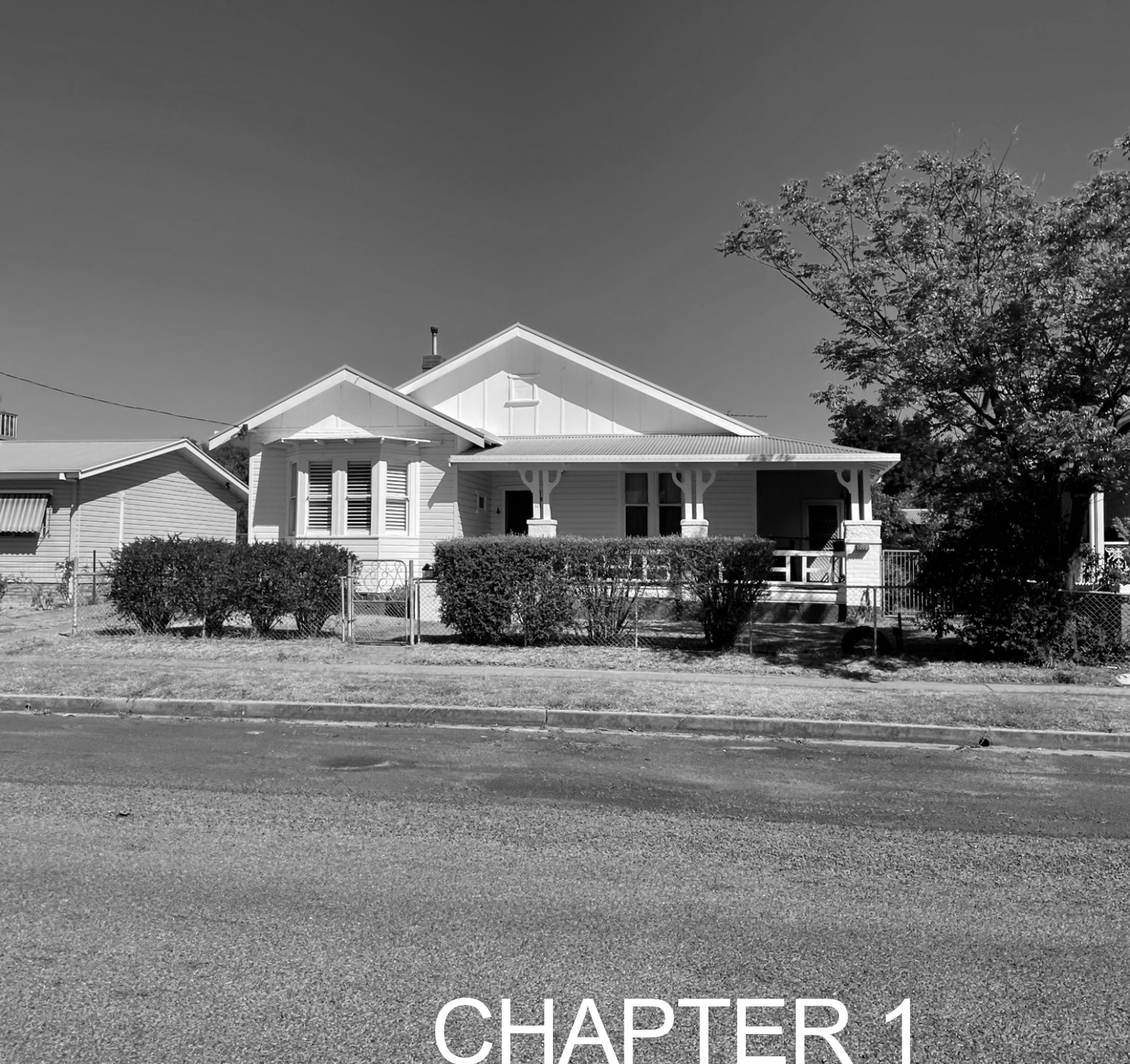
Whilst it is acknowledged that the population of Gwydir Shire will experience limited population growth between now and 2041, there is opportunity to attract more people to the Shire and to retain existing residents by catering for a range of lifestyles and life stages with a more affordable and diverse range of housing. Bingara and Warialda are expected to experience the most population growth, given existing infrastructure and services, and the impact from new projects. For these reasons, Council has identified a need to ensure that housing supply can match demand, as well as the changing demographics of the community such as an ageing population.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) *Local Housing Strategy Guideline and Template* (2018) and NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) *Local Government Housing Kit* (2019).

The Strategy includes consideration of demographic factors, local housing supply and demand, and local land-use opportunities and constraints. The Strategy details where additional housing should be provided and recommends a range of housing types to accommodate the housing need, as detailed in the *Gwydir Housing Needs Assessment* (2024).

This LHS outlines 13 strategies to support the delivery of housing within the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years to achieve the housing vision and objectives. Whilst many of the strategies support the delivery of housing across the Shire, the established town centres of Warialda and Bingara will be the primary focus for the delivery of new housing, with a secondary focus on the villages North Star, Gravesend, Warialda Rail (subject to further analysis). Emphasis will be on well-serviced housing that contributes to the unique local character of these towns, villages, and the broader Shire.

The recommendations outlined in this Strategy will form the basis for future Council projects, policies and controls, and set the direction for review of current residential zoning in certain selected areas under the Gwydir Local Environmental Plan 2013. The Strategy will also inform budget and investment decisions regarding infrastructure funding, as well as opportunities for private public partnerships and grant funding opportunities to ensure appropriate infrastructure is provided to support growth.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 About this Strategy

This Local Housing Strategy (LHS) has been prepared to set a clear plan for housing within the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years. The LHS takes a whole-of Shire approach and aims to bring about better housing outcomes for the Shire's communities, ensuring sustainable growth while enhancing liveability and preserving the unique character of the Shire.

Building on the findings of the *Gwydir Shire Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (2024)* and the *Survey Outcomes Report (2023)*, the LHS:

- Identifies key housing needs based on a review of national, state, regional and local strategic plans and policies, key demographic, and housing data, as well as key trends, projects, and factors influencing housing demand and supply across the Shire.
- Outlines the capacity of the Shire, and its townships, villages, and localities, to accommodate forecast population growth and the identified housing needs of current and future residents.
- Identifies potential areas for new housing and the types of housing needed in each area.
- Outlines strategies to support the delivery of new housing, including land use planning and non-land use planning mechanisms.

Preparation of the LHS has been informed by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) *Local Housing Strategy Guideline and Template (2018)* and NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) *Local Government Housing Kit (2019)*.

1.2 How the Strategy was developed

The Gwydir LHS was developed by building on two important background documents:



A detailed methodology is provided within the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) and the Survey Outcomes Report (2023).

1.3 The housing needs of Gwydir Shire

Liveable, sustainable, and thriving communities need a range of accessible, well-designed, and affordable housing options, to provide security, enable independence, and improve quality of life. Meeting people's housing needs benefits more than just the individual having wider economic, social, and environmental impacts.

The Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) identifies the housing needs of the Gwydir Shire local government area (Shire) and establishes the evidence base for this LHS. A summary of the existing capacity or residential land and housing supply is outlined in the sections below, along with the need for new dwellings and a more diverse range of housing types to cater for the growing and changing populations.

1.4 Addressing the housing needs of Gwydir Shire






This LHS seeks to provide a vision, objectives, and strategies to guide the delivery of housing in the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years to meet the identified housing need.

Housing vision

The People of Gwydir Shire will have access to a diverse range of quality, accessible and affordable housing types, which reflect the changing needs and lifestyles of people living in the Shire, as well as help attract future residents to Gwydir Shire.

People will choose to live in Gwydir because they will want to live the “Gwydir Good Life”.

Housing objectives

	1 New housing	To support the delivery of new housing in the right locations to meet the needs of current and future Shire residents.
	2 Diverse housing	To support the delivery of a variety of housing options that cater to diverse households and their needs.
	3 Affordable housing	To increase the supply of social and affordable rental housing in the Shire.
	4 Adaptable, accessible, and inclusive housing	To ensure housing meets universal design principles.
	5 Resilient housing	To deliver housing that supports community and environmental resilience in the context of a changing climate.
	6 Supported housing	To ensure all new housing is adequately supported by appropriate infrastructure.
	7 A proactive council	To foster collaborative partnerships with government agencies, developers, and landowners; pursue funding; and deliver services and infrastructure to support a growing population.

Housing strategies

This LHS outlines 13 strategies to support the delivery of housing within the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years to achieve the housing vision and objectives. The strategies are organised into the following three categories:

- land use planning mechanisms within the current framework (refer to Section 3.3.1),
- land use planning mechanisms outside the current framework (refer to Section 3.3.2), and
- non-planning mechanisms (refer Section 3.3.3).

Whilst many of the strategies support the delivery of housing across the Shire, the established town centres of Warialda and Bingara will be the primary focus for the delivery of new housing, with a secondary focus on the villages North Star, Gravesend, Warialda Rail (subject to further analysis). Emphasis will be on well-serviced housing that contributes to the unique character of these towns, villages, and the broader Shire.

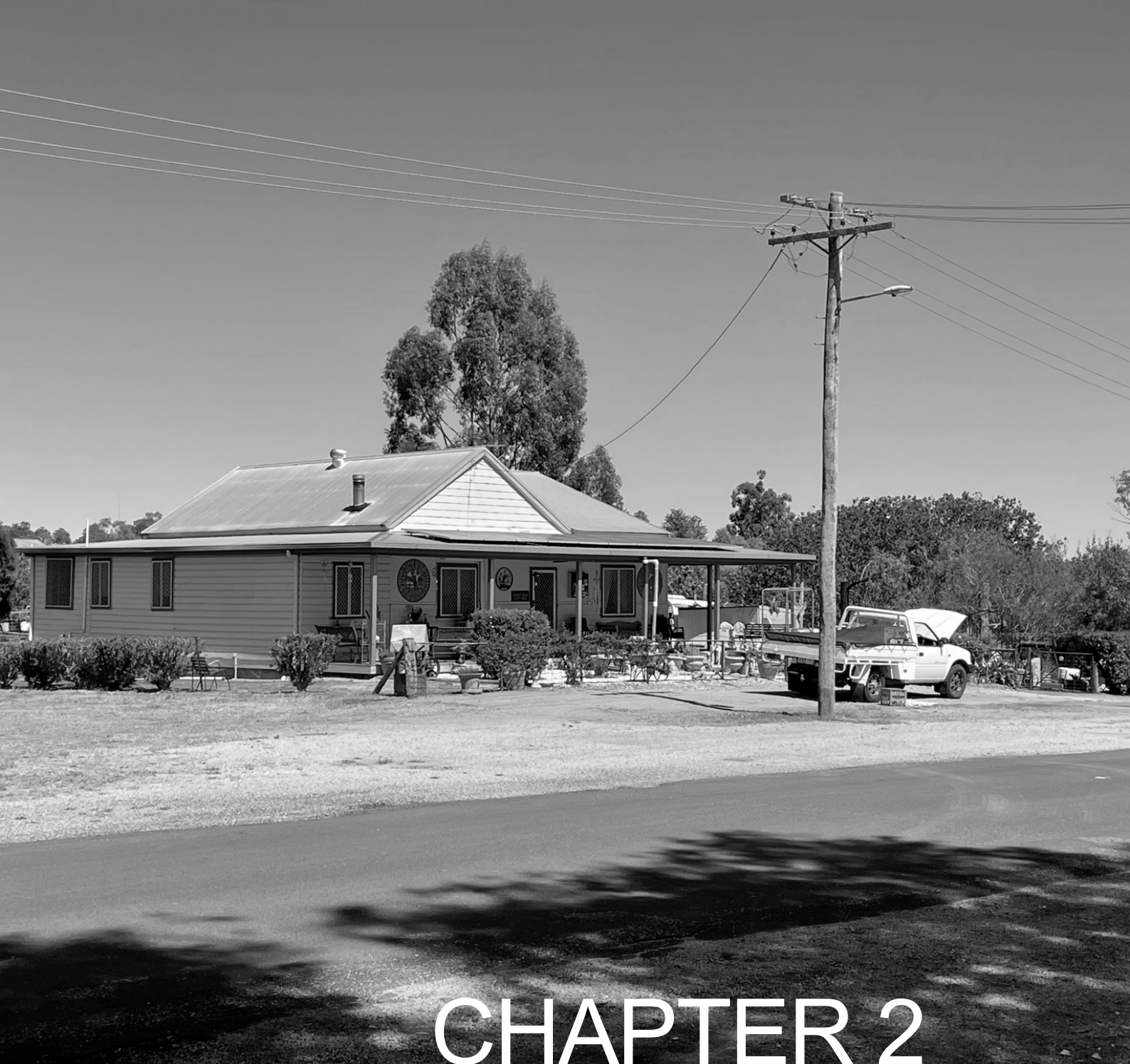
Strategies focus on the entire housing supply continuum to address the needs of housing for families, seniors and persons with a disability, Indigenous people, aged care, social housing, and short-term and key worker accommodation.

Utilising the strategies outlined in Section 3 below it is anticipated that GSC can meet the projected dwelling demand for the Shire to 2041.

1.5 Document structure

The structure of this LHS is as follows:

- **Section 1 – Introduction** – introduces the LHS.
- **Section 2 – The evidence** – provides an overview of the research and analysis undertaken to inform the LHS, including a summary of the regional and local context; strategic plans and policies; key trends and projects; demographic and social indicators, factors influencing housing supply and demand; identified housing needs; as well as opportunities and constraints influencing housing delivery.
- **Section 3 – The priorities** – brings together the research and analysis undertaken to provide a vision, objectives, and strategies to guide the delivery of housing in the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years.
- **Section 4 – Actions** – outlines a plan for the implementation of the housing strategies, and the delivery of new housing, as well as the monitoring and reporting process for the LHS.



CHAPTER 2

THE EVIDENCE

2 THE EVIDENCE

This chapter summarises the findings of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) and the Survey Outcomes Report (2023). It provides an overview of the research and analysis undertaken to inform the LHS, including a summary of the regional and local context; strategic plans and policies; key trends and projects; demographic and social indicators, factors influencing housing supply and demand; identified housing needs; as well as opportunities and constraints influencing housing delivery.

2.1 The Gwydir Shire

2.1.1 Regional context

Gwydir Shire (the Shire) is located on the North West Slopes and Plains of New South Wales (NSW), approximately 460 kilometres (km) north of Sydney and 300km south-west of Brisbane. The Shire forms part of the New England – North West Region of NSW (also known as the Northern Inland Region). It is in proximity to the regional city of Tamworth and the strategic centres of Moree (40km to the west), Inverell (40km to the east) and Narrabri in NSW, and Goondiwindi in Queensland. Refer to Figure 2.1 below.

The Shire benefits from good regional connectivity, located at the crossroads of the Fossickers Way, a popular north-south touring route, the Gwydir Highway, a significant east-west route linking the NSW North Coast to Outback NSW, and Nature's Way (State Touring Route 3), which links Narrabri to Inverell via Gwydir Shire. The Bruxner Highway, an east-west route, traverses the northern edge of the Shire which links into southern Queensland. Regional coach and rail services operate across the region. The Boggabilla freight railway line (subject to upgrades as part of the Inland Rail project) between Moree and Boggabilla passes through the villages of Crooble, Croppa Creek and North Star. The nearest airports with commercial regular public transport (RPT) services are Tamworth Regional Airport (160km to the south-east) and Moree Regional Airport (80km to the west), offer services to Sydney and to Brisbane.

Source: Gwydir Shire Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 and Gwydir Shire Economic Development Strategy 2017-2020.

2.1.2 Local context

The Shire has an area of 9,122 square kilometres, extending from the Nandewar Range in the south, north towards the Queensland border. It has a temperate climate with warm to hot summers (25°C-35°C) and cool to mild winters (10°C-20°C). The average elevation across the Shire is approximately 350 metres (m) above sea level. The landscapes and natural assets of the Shire are diverse. The southern and central areas of the Shire are located within the Gwydir River catchment, with the Gwydir River flowing through Bingara and Gravesend. This area is characterised by hills and highly fertile river flats.

The northern part of the Shire lies within the 'Golden Triangle', and characterised by black soil plains, it is one of the most productive agricultural areas in Australia. Agriculture is the primary land use and economic activity within the Shire. Livestock production dominates the southern and central areas of the Shire, and broadacre cropping is undertaken in the northern part of the Shire.

The Shire contains two towns, Warialda, and Bingara; five rural villages, North Star, Gravesend, Croppa Creek, Coolatai and Upper Horten; and 21 rural localities, Boonal, Blue Nobby, Yallaroi, Crooble, (part of) Pallamallawa, Balfours Peak, Warialda Rail, Gineroi, Bangheet, Riverview, Elcombe, Pallal, Rocky Creek, Back Creek, Cobbadah, Gundamulda, Dinoga, Gulf Creek, Upper Bingara, Keera, and Copeton. Refer to Figure 2.1 below.

Source: Gwydir Shire Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027.

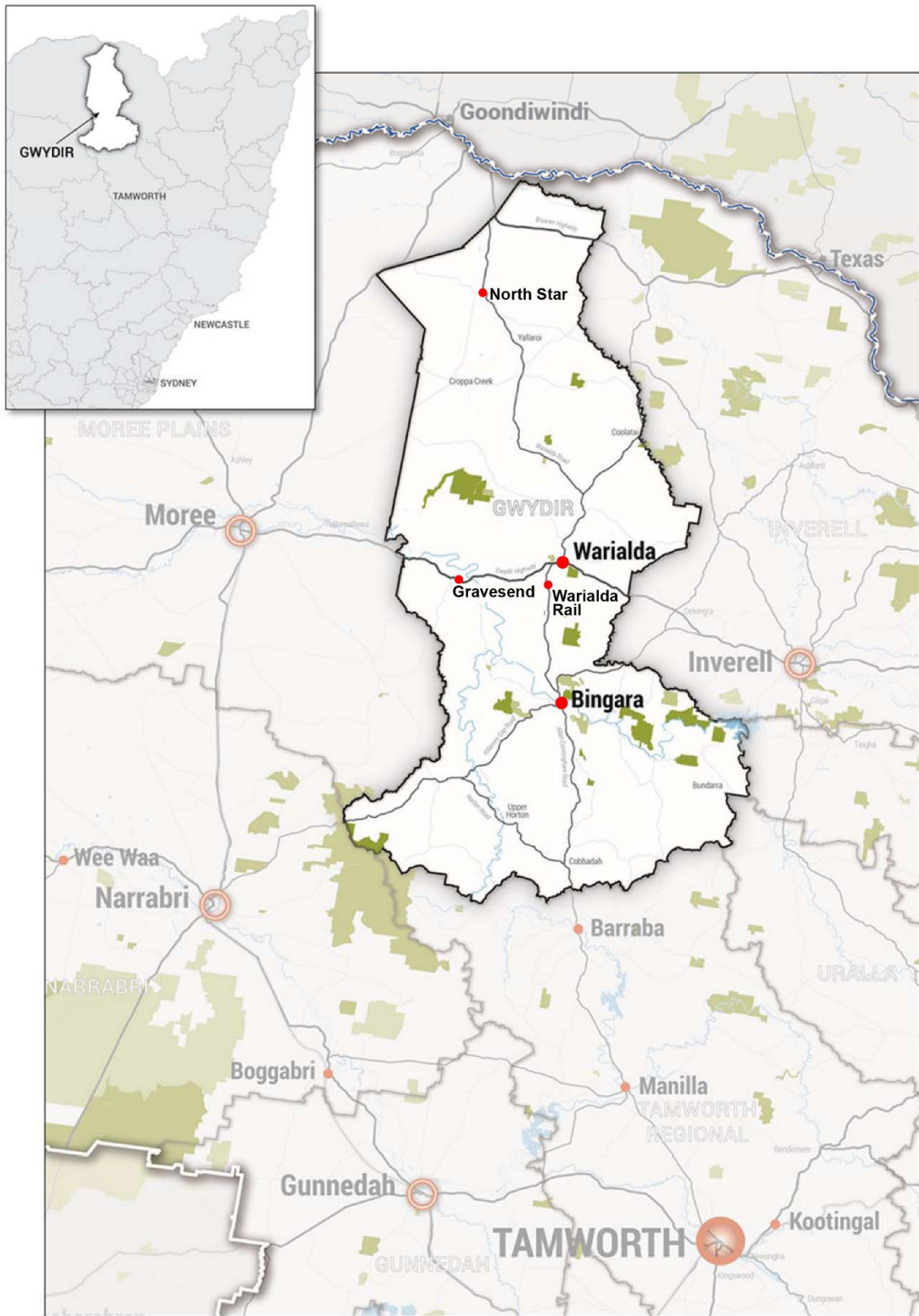


Figure 2.1 Context plan

Source: Gwydir Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (p.7), with edits by Element.

2.1.3 Key trends and projects

Key trends and projects with the potential to influence housing provision within the Gwydir Shire has been detailed within the Gwydir Shire HNA.

Key trends

The below provides a summary of the key trends, projects and findings affecting housing supply and demand in Gwydir Shire.

Demographic and social changes – Gwydir Shire is experiencing demographic and social change, including the departure of the working age population in search of employment and higher education opportunities, and an aging population.

Internal migration – Urbanisation, the Covid-19 pandemic, technological advancements, including the ability for individuals and businesses to operate efficiently outside urban centres, and a desire for ‘work-life-balance’ or a ‘tree’ change are some factors creating a more mobile population. This has resulted in internal migration to and from Gwydir Shire.

Rising construction costs – Construction costs in NSW have been rising significantly, due to increased approval requirements, skilled labour shortages, supply chain disruptions, rising transport costs (including fuel and labour costs), and shortages in key building materials.

Labour shortages – A shortage of skilled professionals, including tradespersons and Private Certifiers, is a key issue in the post-pandemic landscape of NSW and has a direct impact on housing provision.

Growth in regional tourism – Gwydir Shire has a strong nature-based and outdoor tourism sector. There is a desire by GSC to continue growing this sector, attracting more tourists and visitors to the Shire.

Disaster resilience – The cumulative impact of multiple natural disasters, including a one-in-100-year drought, bushfires, floods, mouse plague and a global pandemic has significantly impacted regional NSW. There is a need to enhance climate and disaster resilience, with a focus on the resilience of physical infrastructure, including housing.

Water insecurity – Severe drought has resulted in water insecurity across the region. Water resources, both surface and ground supplies, need to be maintained and utilised in an increasingly environmentally sustainable manner as climate change impacts rainfall patterns and ground water recharge rates. Locally, there is a need to ensure Gwydir Shire has sufficient water to cater to population growth, and subsequent housing provision.

Diversification of the economy – The Gwydir Shire economy has a heavy dependence on primary agriculture production. There is a desire to diversify the economy and grow employment. There are opportunities for positive change in the agricultural, green, and renewable energy sectors.

Key Projects

The below is a list of key projects with the potential to affect housing supply and demand in Gwydir Shire. A detailed summary of each project is provided in the Gwydir Shire HNA.

- Inland Rail Project
- Moree Special Activation Precinct (SAP)
- New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)
- Namoi Regional Jobs Precinct (RJP)
- Warialda Bypass (Gwydir Highway)
- Gwydir Circular Economy Project
- Gwydir Learning Region
- Myall Creek Cultural and Education Precinct
- Big River Dreaming Bingara Projects.

2.2 Planning and policy context

2.2.1 Policy Alignment

To provide policy consistency across the planning system, the vision and objectives of the Local Housing Strategy are designed to align with relevant State, and local government legislation, strategies, plans and policies developed for NSW, the North West Region and the Gwydir Shire (refer to Figure 2.2 below).

Table 4.1 provides a summary of how relevant housing plans and policies are considered and addressed in the development of this LHS. Specifically, the alignment of the key housing objectives and strategies.

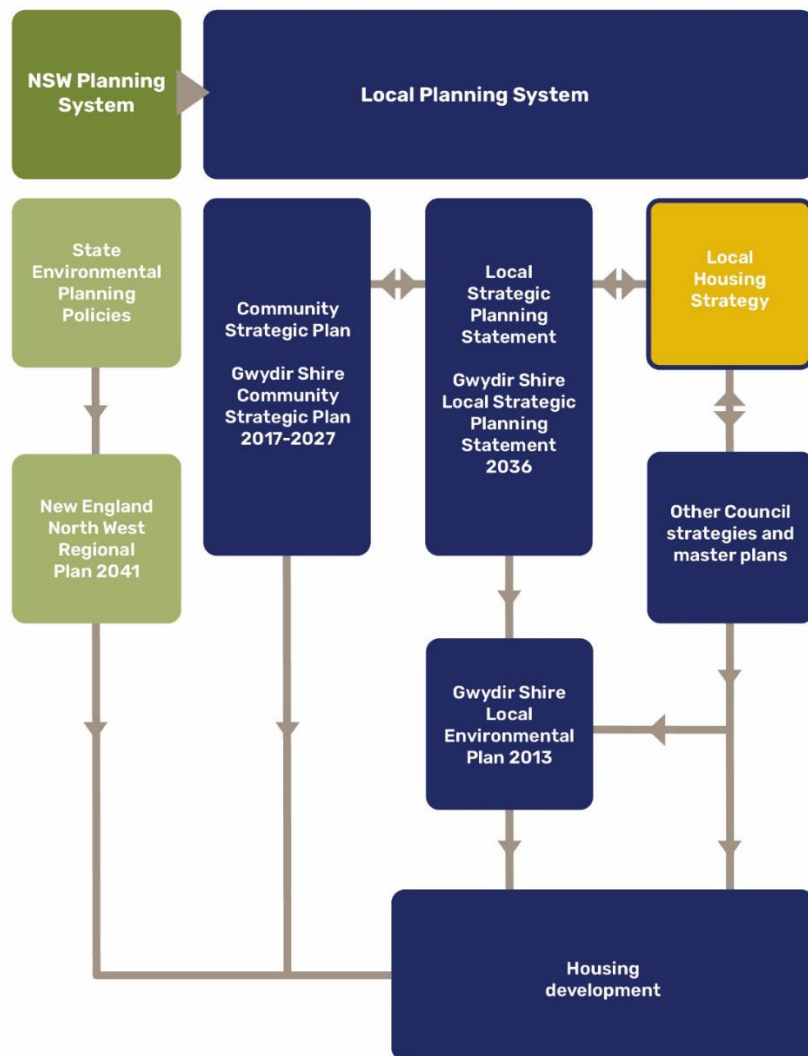


Figure 2.2 Housing policy framework

Source: Element, 2023.

Table 3.1 Summary of housing policy alignment

Policy	Direction	Alignment with LHS
State		
<i>Housing 2041: NSW Housing Strategy</i> (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment)	Partner with councils to develop modern, fit-for-purpose social and affordable housing on Land and Housing Corporation land and support implementation of local housing strategies.	Strategy 10
	Support councils to explore potential use of under-utilised operational land for the purposes of housing where this is deemed appropriate by local communities.	Strategy 1
	Encourage and support NSW councils to update their planning controls to improve environmental performance, compliance with code and contribution to community net-zero targets.	Strategies 6, 9 and 10
State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	Allows complying development for dwellings, one and two storey dual occupancies, manor houses and terraces.	Strategy 4
State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021	Aims to increase the supply and diversity of affordable rental and social housing in NSW, including guidance for the design quality of residential apartment development.	Strategies 5 and 10
Regional		
<i>New England North West Regional Plan 2041</i> (NSW Department of Planning and Environment)	Objective 1: coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and direct suitable land to accommodate planned growth. ▪ Undertake infrastructure service planning to establish land that can be feasibly serviced prior to rezoning. 	Strategies 1-3 and 13
	Objective 2: protect the viability and integrity of rural land, including consideration when locating new housing e.g., limit land fragmentation (lot size considerations), capacity for sustainable agriculture.	Strategies 8 and 9
	Objective 5: enhance the diversity and strength of Central Business Districts and town centres, including consideration when locating infill development, underutilised portions of land within town centres, viability, and attractiveness.	Strategies 1-3 and 6
	Objective 8: adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience durability, location of housing (avoid intensification) in hazardous areas.	Strategies 1-3 and 6
	Objective 11: sustainably manage and conserve water resources – connection to mains water, ground water usage, impacts to water quality from land use change.	Strategy 13
	Objective 12: protect regional biodiversity and areas of High Environmental Value - avoid intensification, biodiversity mapping.	Strategies 1-3 and 6
	Objective 13: provide well located housing options to meet demand – infill, greenfield and rural residential development, aging population, seasonable and itinerant workers.	Strategies 1-5 and 7

Policy	Direction	Alignment with LHS
	Objective 14: provide more affordable and low-cost housing, including smaller lots, fewer bedrooms.	Strategies 3-5 and 10
	Objective 17: celebrate local character.	Strategy 6
	Objective 19: leverage new and upgraded infrastructure e.g., Moree SAP, Inland Rail etc.	Strategies 1-3 and 13
Upper North West Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 and 2023 Update	Key action: explore opportunities to bring on more housing and greater variety of housing choice to address housing shortages.	Strategies 1-5, 7-9
	Ensure sufficient availability of housing for project workforces – improving the supply of adequate housing is critical to ensuring long term benefits flow to the region from investment.	Strategies 1-4 and 7
New England Joint Organisation Economic Development Strategy 2022	Priority actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Housing – matching demand with supply, critical to skills employment attraction. 	Strategies 1-4 and 7
Local		
Gwydir Shire Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027	Principles – access, equity, participation, rights.	
	Goal – A healthy and cohesive community (social), e.g., Town Strategy Rollout of the Mongard Warialda Community Plan and Bingara Town Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1.2 Our community is an inviting and vibrant place to live. 	Strategies 1-5
	Goal - Building the business base. For example, making more land available for sale and development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 2.1 Our economy is growing and supported Strategy 2.1.1 Plan for and develop the right assets and infrastructure Strategy 2.1.2 Support the growth of our business community. Strategy 2.1.3 Promote our community as the place to visit, live, work and invest 	Strategy 1
	Goal – Proactive regional and local leadership (civic leadership). For example, deliver more housing, to lower the cost of living. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 4.1 we are engaged and connected community. Strategy 4.1.3 build on our sense of community. 	1-5 and 7-10
Gwydir Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement 2036	Review planning controls for Warialda and Bingara.	Strategies 6 - 10
	Investigate provisions for large lot residential areas in villages and towns.	Strategy 8-9
	Promote additional housing in villages.	Strategies 1-5
	Planning Priority 4: deliver housing that reinforces our unique character. Action: plan for housing to meet the needs of a changing population. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 directing future residential and large lot housing on R5 and RU5 zoned land. 4.1 support where appropriate the development of communal settlements within rural and semi-rural areas in harmony with existing agricultural and biodiversity values. 	Strategies 6, 8-9

2.3 Demographic and social overview




This section provides a summary of relevant demographic, social and economic data for Gwydir Shire, including population and housing projections. A detailed overview is provided within the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024).



It is noted that the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data is based on the following statistical areas:

- Gwydir Shire LGA.
- Warialda (SAL14167).
- Bingara (SAL10364).
- North Star (SAL13018).
- Gravesend (SAL1174).
- Warialda Rail (SAL14168).

Suburbs and Localities (SALs) are an approximation of the officially recognised boundaries of suburbs (in cities and larger towns) and localities (outside of cities and larger towns). It is noted that the SALs are larger in area than the indicative Study Area boundaries outlined above.

Table 3.2 Summary of demographic and housing overview

Consideration	Key findings
 <p>Population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2021, the Gwydir Shire LGA had a population of approximately 4,910 persons (all persons based on place of usual residence). ▪ Between 2016 and 2021, the total population of Gwydir Shire declined by approximately 6.6%. ▪ Warialda (SAL14167) had a population of approximately 1,480 persons (or approximately 1,130 persons within the urban area (UCL115152)). ▪ Bingara (SAL10364) had a population of approximately 1,318 persons (or approximately 1,028 persons within the urban area (UCL115018)). ▪ North Star (SAL13018) had a population of approximately 214 persons. ▪ Gravesend (SAL1174) had a population of approximately 299 persons. ▪ Warialda Rail (SAL14168) had a population of approximately 182 persons.
 <p>Cultural diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The traditional custodians of the Gwydir Shire are the Kamilaroi people. According to 2021 Census data, 343 persons, or 7%, of the Gwydir Shire population are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island (ATSI), from some 132 families. Of the selected localities, the ATSI community predominantly resides in Warialda and Bingara. ▪ Compared to the broader NSW population, Gwydir Shire population has a high proportion of residents born in Australia. ▪ The next most common birthplaces amongst the population are England, New Zealand, Germany, the Netherlands, and Fiji. ▪ The Gwydir Shire population has a high proportion of people with Australian or English ancestry, accounting for approximately 88.3% of the population.
 <p>Family and household composition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to 2021 ABS Census data, within Gwydir Shire 50.1% of families comprise a 'couple family without children'. ▪ Families comprising a 'couple family with children' is 33.1% and 'One parent families' is 15.3%. ▪ Two was the average number of children per family, according to the 2021 Census. This has remained stable since 2011. ▪ The category of 'families with children under 15 years and/or dependent students' appears to have decreased since the 2011 Census. This is consistent with population data showing lower percentages of younger people, and higher percentages of older people. ▪ Family households (67.4%) form the majority household composition within the Gwydir Shire, followed by single or lone person households (30.2%) and group households (2.4%). ▪ Gwydir Shire has an average of 2.3 people per household. This is lower than the NSW average of 2.6 people per household.

Consideration	Key findings
 <p data-bbox="268 461 416 517">Employment and income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to 2021 ABS Census data, the participation in the labour force of people 15 years and older within Gwydir Shire is approximately 50.4%. This is slightly lower than NSW (58.7%), Moree Plains Shire (53.4%) and Inverell Shire (52.2%). ▪ Unemployment has declined since 2011, to 4.2%, which is lower than NSW, and Inverell, but higher than Moree. ▪ The primary industries of employment for persons within the Gwydir Shire are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Beef cattle farming (specialised) (13%), – Grain-sheep or grain-beef cattle farming (8%), – Local government administration (6.6%), – Other grain growing (5.6%), and – Aged care residential services (4.4%). ▪ The average median weekly incomes (accounting for persons aged 15 years and over) in Gwydir Shire is \$541 (person), \$1,308 (family), and \$1,029 (household), less than NSW, Inverell and Moree Shires.
 <p data-bbox="292 1193 392 1223">Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to 2021 ABS Census data, Gwydir Shire contains 1,898 occupied private dwellings and 348 unoccupied private dwellings. ▪ Separate houses (detached dwellings) comprise the overwhelming majority of dwellings within Gwydir Shire (95.9%). This is consistent across all selected localities, noting that North Star, Gravesend, and Warialda Rail comprise only separate houses. ▪ Dwellings within Gwydir Shire have an average of 3.2 bedrooms, with 3 and 4 or more-bedroom dwellings forming the majority (76.5%). North Star and Gravesend have a higher average number of bedrooms (3.7 and 3.5, respectively). ▪ The 2021 ABS Census data identified 31 dwellings that needed extra bedrooms and 1,455 dwellings with spare bedrooms. This indicates a trend of larger dwellings accommodating a smaller household. ▪ The majority of dwellings (51.2%) within Gwydir Shire are owned outright, which is significantly higher than NSW (31.5%). A total of 21.2% of dwellings in Gwydir Shire are owned with a mortgage and 18.1% percent are rented. ▪ According to 2021 Census data, the median mortgage repayments within Gwydir Shire is \$997 per month. This is less than the average for NSW (less \$1,170), Moree Plains Shire (less \$303), and Inverell Shire (less \$213). This suggests a relative affordability compared with adjoining Shires. Notably, the majority (67.2%) of mortgage holders have repayments less than or equal to 30% of household income. ▪ According to the 2021 Census data, the median rent within Gwydir Shire is \$200 per week. This is comparable to the adjoining Shire's, however, significantly lower than the NSW average of \$420 (less \$220). ▪ However, according to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), <i>New England North West – What's Happening in the Housing Market?</i> Report, the median rent for all dwellings within Gwydir Shire increased from \$200 in September 2017 to \$260 June 2022, reflecting a 30% increase. ▪ Industry data provided by Realestate.com.au indicates that median rents have increased across the localities. As of October 2023, the following was recorded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Warialda – \$300 per week, compared to \$230 in the 2021 ABS Census data. – Bingara - \$310 (18.1% growth over the past 12 months), compared to \$200 in the 2021 ABS Census data.

2.4 Housing supply overview

Supply in the housing market is influenced by factors including land and dwelling availability, infrastructure and construction costs, profitability, and regulations. Demand in the housing market is influenced by factors including demographic changes and preferences, income, and rental prices and availability.

Regarding demand, 'underlying demand' refers to the theoretical 'need' or number of new homes required based on the projected number of people and households for a particular area. Underlying demand is largely influenced by population migration, demographic changes, and preferences. Whereas, 'effective demand' refers to size, type and location of dwellings and whether these correlate with what the population is willing and able to buy or rent. Effective demand is influenced by wider market forces, including desirability of an area, proximity to employment and local services, access to transport, land values, taxes, and interest rates. Effective demand is a key consideration when identifying areas for new housing.

The Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) provides a detailed overview of the key factors influencing housing supply within the Shire. Key findings are listed below.

Existing residential dwellings – According to 2021 ABS Census data, Gwydir Shire contains 1,898 occupied private dwellings and 348 unoccupied private dwellings. Separate houses (detached dwellings) account for 95.9% of occupied dwellings, indicating a lack of housing diversity across the Shire. The average number of bedrooms per dwelling is 3.2, and the average number of people per household is 2.3 across the Shire.

Residential land use and development controls – The RU5 Village zone provides for a wide range of residential uses. This supports the delivery of diverse housing within town centres, including within the selected localities. The MLS for the RU5 zone is generally 550m² allowing for subdivision within the town centres which could facilitate the supply of additional housing.

Capacity of existing residential land – A preliminary assessment of theoretical housing capacity has been undertaken, limited to the selected study areas of Warialda, Bingara, North Star, Gravesend, and Warialda Rail (refer to Gwydir Shire HNA for detail). The assessment identified the number of residential lots within the study areas (on land zoned RU5 Village and R5 Large Lot Residential), and then determined whether the lots are occupied (contain a building or structure), or unoccupied. This approach has crudely identified residentially zoned lots within the study areas that could accommodate additional housing.

The preliminary housing capacity assessment has identified an indicative total of 579 unoccupied residential lots (lots that do not contain a building or structure) on land zoned RU5 Village or R5 Large Lot Residential across the study areas. This comprises:

- Warialda – approximately 126 lots,
- Bingara – approximately 227 lots,
- North Star – approximately 14 lots,
- Gravesend – approximately 137 lots, and
- Warialda Rail – approximately 75 lots.

The ownership of the lots varies but mainly comprises freehold land. Theoretically, if these lots were developed to accommodate a single residential dwelling, this could provide for an additional 579 dwellings across the study areas. However, the development potential of these lots will vary based on several opportunities and constraints, including a range of assumptions and limitations outlined in the Gwydir Shire HNA. Constraints include physical constraints such as lot size, flood prone land and servicing, as well as effective demand considerations such as, ownership, the desirability of an area and proximity to employment and local services. The true viability of developing the identified unoccupied lots will require further assessment.

Further, observational research has identified multiple larger lots within the study areas that may have the potential to accommodate two or more dwellings via subdivision. Many of these lots have dual frontages, with rear lane access (formal or informal) provided. For example, south-west of the Bingara town centre.

Notwithstanding, the above indicates that subject to further assessment, the existing residential land identified within the indicative study areas has some capacity to accommodate infill residential development on established lots on residential owned land.

Residential housing and subdivision applications – Development application (DA) numbers have generally remained steady between 2016 and 2023, with an average of 20 (rounded to the nearest whole number) DAs per calendar year. Across all localities, an average of 14 (rounded to the nearest whole number) DAs per calendar year relate directly to the provision of new dwellings (comprising a mixture of single-detached dwellings, dual-occupancy, secondary dwellings, granny flats, rural workers dwellings, boarding houses, and/or prefabricated relocatable dwellings). It is noted that an increase in applications relating to secondary dwellings is seen across the period. Notably, most of the DAs related to the towns of Warialda and Bingara, with limited applications relating to the selected localities of North Star, Gravesend, and Warialda Rail.

Recent residential subdivisions within the Shire include Poinciana, comprising large lots in Burundah Mountain Estate which is awaiting its final subdivision plan. All 22 lots have been sold in the Jacaranda Estate, Riddell Street, and the Blue Hill Estate, bound by Martyn and Heber Streets, Bingara. Building has commenced in the Blue Hill Estate, with some nearing completion. Subdivisions by their nature are large investments, and typically higher risk to developers. The County of Murchison Estate of 10 lots currently has power infrastructure. It will still require extension of the roadway for half the lots and all will require extension of the water and sewer services at some stage.

The total number of complying development certificates (CDC) for Gwydir Shire issued between 1 January 2016 and 17 November 2023 is very low, with only eight relating to residential development (dwelling or residential buildings-other) for the entire period. The majority (5 CDCs) were for land within Bingara.

The Gwydir HNA includes a list of assumptions and limitations regarding the housing and subdivisions data and its analysis. Building approvals data provided by the ABS for Gwydir Shire indicates relatively low numbers of buildings approved to between 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022, being 6 dwellings. It is noted that number is lower than indicated in the analysis undertaken of Gwydir Shire application data detailed above.

Residential sales and rental data – According to ABS data, there was an average of 73 residential property transfers per annum between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2021. The general trend has been an increase in median sales. According to the DCJ quarterly sales report, the median sales price for all dwellings (strata and non-strata) for Gwydir Shire indicate fluctuating housing prices for the Shire between the December 2020 quarter and the June 2023 quarter median sales prices, with a generally upward trend since March 2021. Further, industry data by Realestate.com.au (viewed 23 November 2023) indicates the median house price for Warialda is \$287,500, up 22.3% over the past 12 months, and the median house price for Bingara is \$317,500, up 25.7% over the past 12 months.

The Real Estate Institute of New South Wales (REINSW) monthly Rental Vacancy Reports indicate that the rental vacancy rate for the New England region was 1.8% in October 2023, which is a 2% decrease on the October 2016 vacancy rate. A vacancy rate of 3% is understood to represent a balance between supply and demand in the rental market, and 1.5% is the threshold signifying a critically low level of rental stock. Concurrent with the tightening vacancy rates, the region is also experiencing an escalating trend in median rental prices. According to the DCJ, *New England North West – What's Happening in the Housing Market?* report, anecdotally there

are stories of the difficulties tenants are facing finding and retaining housing, including strong competition for rental accommodation, rent bidding, significant rent increases, having to pay too much of their income in rent, facing eviction and potential homelessness.

Existing infrastructure – As outlined in the Gwydir HNA (2024), GSC has identified that the water supply in Bingara has significant capacity for growth and Warialda has capacity for some residential and business growth. Bingara and Warialda are seweraged with the current systems having significant capacity for growth. The water supplies in Gravesend and North Star are close to capacity, with very limited opportunity for growth.

Essential Energy advises that there are no limitations on energy supply to the area. Renewable energy generation is a potential opportunity for the Shire, and GSC is also proposing a bioenergy hub within the E4 General Industrial zoned land in Warialda.

The towns of Warialda and Bingara comprise the highest quantum of social infrastructure and services, including recreation areas, health facilities, childcare, and others. They also comprise important educational institutions and services to support a thriving local economy.

2.5 Housing demand and needs summary

2.5.1 Housing for a growing population

Government projections

According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) 2022 population projections (main growth scenario), by 2041, Gwydir Shire's population is expected to increase by 270 persons to a total of 5,576. To accommodate this growth, approximately 198 new dwellings are estimated to be required, averaging approximately 10 dwellings per year (rounded to the nearest whole number). Under the high growth scenario, some 322 additional dwellings (around 17 per year) would be needed to accommodate the projected population growth.

Key projects, tourism, and internal migration

As detailed in the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024), key projects such as the Inland Rail Project, Moree SAP, New England REZ, and Namoi RJP, have the potential to attract both temporary and long-term workers to the region, potentially increasing demand for new housing in Gwydir Shire. It is understood the DPE projections have accounted for projected growth resulting from these key projects. However, the extent to which they are accounted for within the Gwydir projections, or the percentage of the potential workforce attributed to the Shire, is unknown.

Local initiatives like the Gwydir Circular Economy Project and the Burundah Industrial Estate, have the potential to generate new jobs, adding further pressure on housing demand. The region's strong nature-based and outdoor tourism sector, coupled with efforts by the GSC to expand this industry, presents challenges in quantifying the impact on housing supply and demand. Increased tourism to the area may affect short and long-term rental properties and housing affordability.

Additionally, factors such as urbanisation, technological advancements for more flexible working options, and a desire for a 'tree-change' post-Covid-19 have led to an influx of residents from metropolitan areas to regional areas. New residents moving into the Shire may be one factor increasing demand for housing, contributing to increasing house and land sale prices and low rental vacancy rates.

2.5.2 Housing for changing demographics

An aging population

The age groups experiencing the most growth are 65 years and above. This supports the broader NSW trend of an aging population. By 2041, the over 65 population would comprise approximately 33% of the total population in Gwydir Shire, up from 28.4% in 2021.

This shift presents a challenge in ensuring that suitable housing options are available for individuals to age in place, especially considering the traditional detached housing type predominant across Gwydir Shire. Additionally, as this cohort continues to grow and age, there is an increased need for healthcare and social services to support these residents in maintaining a high quality of life.

Retaining and attracting younger people to the Shire

Younger age groups are experiencing the least growth, with persons aged between 20 and 34 years being the lowest represented age groups in Gwydir Shire by 2041, making up 12.5% of the total future population. The loss of young people can contribute to a smaller workforce, resulting in an unsupported older demographic, labour shortages, impacts to local businesses and a reduction in local economic activity.

Household composition and size

Gwydir Shire will experience a slight decrease in households comprising couples with families (-6), a modest increase in households with couples only (+33) and single-parent households (+18), and a more substantial increase in lone-person households (+123). An increase in non-family households, in particular lone person households, likely reflects an aging population and changing preferences. Further, the projections indicate a slight decrease in the average household size to 2.23 persons per household.

The current housing stock does not necessarily cater to the projected population, household composition and/or size, with most dwellings within Gwydir Shire being medium-sized (3-bedroom) detached houses, with limited options for other forms of housing. Growth in couple-only and lone-person households intensifies the need for a more diverse range of housing options within the Shire.

Household tenure

Most dwellings in Gwydir Shire are owned outright (51.2%), significantly higher than NSW. It is anticipated that home ownership (with or without a mortgage) will remain the primary tenure type in the Shire, however, this is dependent on changes in housing affordability.

In 2022, only 18.1% of dwellings across the Shire were rented, with higher percentages in Bingara, Warialda, and North Star, of 19.7%, 20.3% and 24.6%, respectively. The vacancy rate for the New England region was 1.8% in October 2023. Rental vacancies have declined across the region, and are hovering around the 1.5% threshold, reflecting a critically low level of rental stock. Concurrent with tightening vacancy rates, the region is also experiencing an escalating trend in median rental prices, impacting housing affordability.

2.5.3 Housing for specific needs and preferences

In addition to housing for a growing population, changing demographics, and household sizes, there is a need to deliver diverse housing across the Gwydir Shire to cater to varying needs and preferences.

Adaptable, accessible, and inclusive housing

Currently, there is a lack of appropriately provisioned homes to cater to people with disability, reduced mobility, and/or recovering from illness or disease. There is a need to promote housing options that can accommodate the evolving needs of all people. Liked aged-care or seniors living, these options need to be accessible, affordable, and encourage both independent and community style living.

Social and affordable housing

The demand for social housing within Gwydir Shire appears to be relatively low, with less than five general and five priority applicants on the waitlist for the Warialda allocation zone, and less than five general applicants on the waitlist for the Bingara allocation zone.

At the time of the 2021 ABS Census, the median rental price for Gwydir Shire remained affordable for very-low, low- and moderate- income households, however, it was not affordable for very-low, low-, and moderate-income individuals (or single income households). Most households (56.7%) within the Shire have rent payments less than or equal to 30% of household income. However, a total of 70.1% of very-low-income rental households and 30.1% of low-income rental households within the Shire were in housing stress according to the 2021 Census data.

In recent years rents have increased across the region, including for the towns of Warialda and Bingara, with an increase of \$70, or approximately 30.4%, and \$110, or 55%, respectively, when compared to the 2021 ABS Census data. More broadly, the RAI (November 2023) highlights that regional NSW RAI score has decreased by 7% since 2020, falling from acceptable to moderately unaffordable. Further, whilst most Gwydir Shire residents have historically made mortgage repayments of less than or equal to 30% of their income indicating housing affordability, monthly mortgage repayments have increased by \$130 (15%) since 2011. If residents cannot keep up with mortgage repayments this may push more into the rental market.

Combined with the increased cost of living, more households could be spending more than 30% of household income on housing and experiencing housing stress and increasing unaffordability.

Indigenous housing

The AHO's population projections and demand model has identified the projected demand for Indigenous households within Gwydir Shire is forecast to increase to 2031. Whilst delivering housing for Indigenous people's is predominantly the responsibility of the AHO, an ACHP, a CHP, and the DCJ, GSC can encourage the provision of indigenous housing through collaborations with these agencies, and identifying land that could accommodate such housing.

Seasonal and temporary worker accommodation

Agriculture is the primary land use and economic activity of the Gwydir Shire. Anecdotally, farming operations within the Shire are growing, and whilst technology is advancing, farming continues to be labour intensive. Therefore, there is a need to consider accommodation for temporary and permanent farm workers across the Shire. These workers typically require lower-cost but secure accommodation, which is often provided through a mix of on-farm accommodation and in-town accommodation. As outlined in the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024), it is understood that there is a particular need for additional worker accommodation within the northern grain growing area, in and around North Star. Further, there have been several applications relating to rural workers dwellings between 2016 and 2023. This indicates both demand for and promisingly, some supply of this type of residential accommodation.

In addition, the construction of major infrastructure projects across the north-west region contributes to a demand for temporary worker accommodation. This accommodation may include the construction of workers camps, private rentals and/ or cabins and caravans in tourist parks. For example, it is understood that workers on the Inland Rail project have utilised the North Star Tourist Park.

Community feedback

Engagement with the Shire's local community was conducted throughout November 2023 via survey, and detailed findings are provided in the Survey Outcomes Report (2023). For respondents looking to move, their preference is to move to a freestanding house, however, feedback indicated that what they are looking for is not readily available within the Shire. Reasons given for this included limited stock, the price of land and/or houses, no development type (such as Over-55s) within the Shire, or specific planning restrictions. The inability to build a dwelling on a small hobby farm was specifically listed as an issue.

The survey included questions relating to the delivery of new housing, to help GSC identify potential new locations for housing, preferred housing types and the barriers to housing delivery.

For the specific study areas (Warialda, Bingara, Gravesend, and North Star) some of the key findings included:

- Warialda is suited to a range of different housing, with people suggesting 'Freestanding house on lot size 450sqm-800sqm', 'Over-55s', 'Dual-occupancy detached dwelling' and 'Apartment/flats' are most suitable for the town.
- Bingara is suited to similar housing as Warialda, with the only difference in the top four responses being that respondents suggest 'Freestanding house on lot size 800sqm-2000sqm' are more suitable than 'Apartments/Flats'.
- People believe freestanding houses are the most suitable for North Star, but Rural (farm) workers' dwellings was the third highest response.
- Freestanding houses are seen as the most suitable for Gravesend, with the top three response all from that category.

The main reason people gave for providing different options for each location was the differing needs of each community. People suggested the size of the towns and villages meant their housing needs were different, while the land use of the areas surrounding the towns might also play a key role in determining the housing needs of the town/village.

2.6 Addressing the identified housing needs: opportunities and constraints

Multiple factors will influence the delivery of housing within Gwydir Shire to meet the identified needs of the current and future population. These include (but are not limited to) the desirability of an area; proximity to employment and local services; the capacity of the existing residential land to accommodate new housing; land ownership arrangements; and environmental considerations, such as flood prone land, bushfire prone land, and biodiversity.

Opportunities and constraints that may impact on the delivery of housing across the Shire and more specifically the selected localities of Warialda, Bingara, North Star, Gravesend, and Warialda Rail are summarised in Table 2.1. These opportunities and constraints have been informed by analysis undertaken to during the preparation of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) and this LHS. This analysis has been used to identify key opportunity sites and/or investigation areas for future housing.

Table 2.3 Addressing identified housing needs: opportunities and constraints analysis

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
Locality context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is centrally located within the Shire, midway between Inverell, to the east, and Moree, to the west. – Is serviced by daily NSW TrainLink coach services to Moree, Inverell, and Tamworth, which provide rail connections to Sydney and Brisbane. ▪ Bingara: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is located on the Gwydir River at the intersection of Fossickers Way and Natures Way. – Is serviced by daily NSW TrainLink coach services to Tamworth, Moree, and Inverell (via Warialda), which provide rail connections to Sydney and Brisbane. ▪ North Star: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Boggabila railway line is subject to upgrades as part of the Inland Rail project. 	North Star is becoming increasingly isolated due to the closure of key services and amenities.
Capacity of existing residential land		
Existing dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to 2021 Census data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – On the Census night there were 348 unoccupied private dwellings across the Shire. – Most dwellings within the Shire are owned outright. 	According to 2021 Census data, separate houses (detached dwellings) comprising 3 and 4 or more bedrooms are the predominant housing typology within Gwydir Shire. This indicates very limited housing diversity across the Shire.
Residential land use and development controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Gwydir LEP 2013: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Land within the town centres is zoned RU5 village. The RU5 Village zone provides for a wide range of residential uses, including dwelling houses, dual occupancies, multi-dwelling 	To utilise the Codes SEPP to its full potential requires a suitability accredited council or private certifier.

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
	<p>housing and residential flat buildings. This supports housing diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Permits the subdivision of land, with the minimum lot size (MLS) within the town centres (of all selected localities) being 550 square metres (sqm). Existing lot sizes exceed this, presenting the opportunity for increased subdivision within the established town centres. - Does not provide a maximum floor space ratio or maximum height of building for land within the Shire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Codes SEPP allows for certain development, in particular circumstances, to be undertaken as Exempt Development (without development approval) and Complying Development (a fast-track assessment by a council or an accredited certifier). Complying development allowed under the Codes SEPP includes residential dwellings, such as one and two storey detached dwellings, dual occupancies, manor houses and terraces. By providing an alternate approval pathway, this policy can help increase housing supply by making it easier and more cost-effective for landowners to undertake development. ▪ The Housing SEPP incentivises affordable rental housing. ▪ Secondary dwellings can support multi-generational housing and increase affordability. 	
<p>Unoccupied residential land</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The preliminary housing capacity assessment undertaken as part of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) identified some 579 unoccupied lots across the five study areas. Theoretically, if these lots were developed to accommodate a single dwelling, this could provide more than the predicated number of dwellings required within the Shire to 2041. ▪ It appears that some of the land within Bingara and Gravesend identified as unoccupied is subject to an existing paper subdivision. In Bingara the remaining blocks are a granted land claim, in Gravesend the land is Crown land that forms the Gravesend Common. ▪ The preliminary assessment indicates that the residential land within the study areas has some capacity to accommodate infill residential development. It is noted that the preliminary assessment does not consider land that is capable of subdivision, which would likely increase the theoretical capacity of the existing residential land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most of the unoccupied land is held in freehold title. This requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate the redevelopment, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. ▪ The development potential of identified unoccupied lots will vary based on several opportunities and constraints, including physical constraints such as lot size, flood prone land, and servicing as well as effective demand considerations, such as land ownership, the desirability of an area, and proximity to amenities and services. ▪ The preliminary assessment does not differentiate between lots zoned RU5 Village or R5 Large Lot Residential. Additional analysis could be undertaken to differentiate between infill development on existing RU5 zoned lots versus development of R5 zoned lots, including subdivision. ▪ The preliminary assessment does not consider the potential to subdivide either the occupied or unoccupied lots. Additional analysis could be undertaken to assess the potential to subdivide both the occupied and unoccupied lots.

Note: please refer to the assumptions and limitations for the preliminary housing capacity assessment outlined within Section 5.4 of the Gwydir Shire Housing Needs Assessment (2024).

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
Housing supply pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Between 1 January 2026 and 17 November 2023 an average of 14 development applications (rounded to the nearest whole number) relating to the development of new residential dwellings were received per annum. This exceeds the number required per annum to meet the projected dwelling target for the Shire by 2041. ▪ Only eight complying development applications were received within the same period. This is very low and presents the opportunity to increase the number of residential housing approvals utilising this pathway under the Codes SEPP. ▪ Most of the new housing is concentrated within Warialda and Bingara. This is likely due to the provision of existing infrastructure and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There has been limited applications received for the localities of North Star, Gravesend, and Warialda Rail. Applications within rural localities are largely limited to single dwellings or rural workers dwellings on land zoned RU1. ▪ Development in more rural localities may require subdivision of land, and provision of new infrastructure, which increases development complexity and associated costs.
Land ownership		
Council-owned land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Land, approximately 4 hectares (ha), bound by Arthur Wheatley Drive, East Street and Long Street (north-west of the town centre) is zoned RU5 Village and contains the Naroo Aged Care Hostel in the south-east corner of the site. The remainder of the site has been identified as unoccupied. Subject to further constraints analysis, the site presents the opportunity to develop an aged-care and seniors living precinct in conjunction with the Warialda Multipurpose Centre Hospital (MCH) adjacent. – Land at 5 Hope Street (Lot 1 in DP 834198), with potential future affordable housing project. – Land at 32-34 Plunket Street (Lot 1 in DP 158301 and Lot 19 in DP 759052), comprising an accommodation project, which is nearing completion. ▪ Bingara study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Land bound by Heber Street, Dinoga Street and Martyn Street. This land is zoned RU5 and largely unoccupied. This land has been identified for redevelopment under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. – GSC depot site within the town centre. This land is zoned RU5 and contains the existing GSC depot and car parking. This land has been identified for redevelopment under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. It is proposed to relocate the depot to a new industrial site and redevelop the site with medium-density housing (terraces, flats) for aged-care, seniors living and/or affordable housing. 	No council-owned land was mapped within the localities of North Star and Warialda Rail.

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
NSW Government-owned land	The Warialda MCH is located at the corner of Long Street and Arthur Wheatley Drive, Warialda. Subject to discussion with HNE Health there is the opportunity to intensify development around the hospital.	NSW government-owned land is limited across the localities. It supports critical infrastructure including the Warialda Police Station and the railway line.
Crown land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bingara study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land to the south of the town centre along Riddell Street and surrounding the Bingara Cemetery. This land is zoned RU5, appears to be largely unoccupied and unencumbered by environmental constraints. This presents the opportunity for residential development (subject to further analysis). ▪ Gravesend study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land to the north of Railway Avenue, known as 'Gravesend Common'. This land is zoned RU5 and RU1. The RU5 zoned land has an MLS of 550 sqm. This land appears to be subject to a paper subdivision, however, remains largely unoccupied. Some of this land is subject to an incomplete Aboriginal land claim(s). The land is unencumbered by bushfire or significant vegetation. - Land to the south of the railway line, in the eastern part of the locality, is zoned RU5 and appears to be subdivided and largely unoccupied, however, the lots closer to the railway corridor are subject to an incomplete Aboriginal land claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A significant portion of land within Warialda is Crown land. It contains critical infrastructure including (but not limited to) the Pioneer and Warialda Historic cemeteries; Warialda Caravan Park; and recreation areas, including Nicholson Oval and Warialda Golf Course. Further, a significant portion of the Crown land comprises highly vegetated land, including along Warialda Creek, and is subject to incomplete aboriginal land claims. ▪ Bingara study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A significant portion of land within the Study Area is Crown Land. It contains (but not limited to) the Bingara Racecourse, The Living Classroom, the Bingara Office and Depot of NSW National Parks, the Gwydir Oval, the Bingara Cemetery, the Gwydir River and adjoining riverfront land. ▪ Much of the Crown land identified within the localities is subject to incomplete Aboriginal land claims.
Freehold land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land to the north-west of the town centre (across Warialda Creek) bound by West Street, James Street, Riddell Street and Water Street to the north-west of the town centre (known as Poverty Flat), is zoned RU5 and appears to comprise some 37 unoccupied lots. This presents the opportunity for new infill housing development in this locality (subject to further analysis). - Land to the north of the town centre fronting Long Street and Warialda Creek, is zoned RU5 and appears to comprise some 14 unoccupied lots (subject to detailed analysis). This presents the opportunity for new infill housing development in this locality (subject to further analysis). ▪ Bingara study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land to the south of Martyn Street in the south of the town centre. This land is zoned RU5 and appears to be subject to a paper subdivision, however, has largely been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). Subject to further 	Most of the land across the localities is held in freehold title. This requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate the redevelopment, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing.

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
	<p>analysis, this land could support new housing. However, it is noted that some of this land is subject to a granted Aboriginal land claim.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots zoned RU5 surrounding Brigalow Street to the north of the town centre and the Gwydir River. It is noted that this land appears to be partially unoccupied, contains some vegetation, and some bushfire prone land. However, could support new housing (subject to detailed analysis). ▪ Warialda Rail study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land within the locality appears to be subject to a paper subdivision, creating regular lots of approximately 2,000 sqm. Approximately 41 lots have been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). This presents the opportunity for new infill housing development within this locality. 	

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, 2023

Note: please refer to the assumptions and limitations for landownership analysis outlined within Section 6.1 of the Gwydir Shire Housing Needs Assessment (2024).

Environmental considerations

Flood prone land

-

- Flood mapping (1% annual exceedance probability) indicates that land along the Gwydir River and Halls Creek within the Bingara Study Area is flood prone. A more significant amount of land to the south of the Gwydir River is impacted. This land is concentrated along Gwydir Terrace, to the west of West Street, and between Keera Street and Finch Street within the town centre. However, in the context of a changing climate it is necessary to consider the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) when assessing the suitability of land for different uses. Flood mapping up to the PMF was not available from GSC.
- Multiple other water courses, including Kellys Gully, and Warialda Creek, traverse the Shire. These watercourses may present flood risk to surrounding properties.
- Flood prone land does not necessarily preclude development. However, it does have implications for assessment requirements, development potential and/or yield, the design and materiality of dwellings, provision of infrastructure (for example, flood storage), limitations on the development of highly sensitive land uses (for example, schools and aged care) as well as the associated cost considerations.
- Additional analysis, including a detailed flood study, is recommended to determine the suitability of land along the river and creek corridors for additional residential development.

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
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Source: Gwydir Shire Council, 2023

Bushfire prone land

- Land within the established town centre grids of Wialalda and Bingara is not mapped as bushfire prone land.
- No land within the North Star, Gravesend or Wialalda Rail Study Areas is mapped as bushfire prone land.

- Wialalda study area:
 - A significant portion of the Study Area and the locality of Wialalda is mapped as bushfire prone land. Bushfire risk presents a constraint on development outside the town centre proper.
 - Bushfire prone land (Category 1 and vegetation buffer) is largely concentrated to the north of the town centre. Much of this land has also been mapped as containing significant vegetation.
 - Land along Fairford Road and Gragin Road (zoned R5 large-lot residential) is mapped as bushfire prone land (Category 1 and vegetation buffer).
 - Land around Long Street (zoned RU5 village) is mapped as bushfire prone land (Category 2 and vegetation buffer).
- Land identified as bushfire prone does not necessarily preclude development. However, determining the suitability of bushfire prone land for development requires additional assessment, that may result in the recommendation for the clearing of land, and/or buildings to be developed to higher specifications. This can impact the development potential and/or yield of the land, and/or increase the complexity of development, including cost.

Source: NSW Bush Fire Prone Land dataset, 2023

Biodiversity

No land within the Gravesend and Wialalda Rail study areas is mapped as containing significant vegetation.

- Wialalda study area:
 - A significant portion of land to the north and north-east of the town centre is mapped as containing dry sclerophyll forests (shrubby sub-formation) and grassy woodlands.
 - Land along the Wialalda Creek corridor is mapped as containing forested wetlands and biodiverse riparian land.
 - Vegetated land is largely Crown land or Freehold land and appears to be unoccupied. A small portion of the land to the north-east of the town centre is subject to incomplete aboriginal land claims.
 - Land surrounding the town centre is mapped as sensitive land under the Gwydir LEP 2023.
- Bingara study area:
 - Land containing dry sclerophyll forests (shrubby sub-formation) and grassy woodlands is dispersed throughout the Study Area. The largest concentration is in the north-east corner, to the north and south of the Gwydir River.

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land along the Gwydir River and Halls Creek corridors is mapped as containing forested wetlands and biodiverse riparian land. - Much of the land mapped as vegetated is identified as bushfire prone land. ▪ Land along Mobbindry Creek, Dry Creek, Bells Creek, and Kellys Gully is also mapped as biodiverse riparian land. ▪ There is a need to balance new development against the preservation of terrestrial biodiversity, including significant vegetation and habitats. Determining the suitability of vegetated land for development requires additional assessment, which increases the development complexity, including associated costs.
<p><i>Source: NSW State Vegetation Type Map, 2023. Biodiversity Values Map and Threshold Tool, 2023.</i></p>		
<p>History and heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The unique character and identity of the Gwydir Shire are influenced by its indigenous and post-colonial history and theory. ▪ Historic sites and buildings are key attractor for tourists and residents, contributing to the character of a place. ▪ It is important that historical sites and buildings are appropriately preserved, with new development being compatible and complimentary to these, and the character of the town centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development in the vicinity of heritage listed items must consider the potential impact on heritage. Determining the suitability of new development can require additional assessment, and design considerations. ▪ Many sites of Aboriginal significance are located on freehold land. There is a perception amongst some landowners that any identified sites within their property may lead to Aboriginal land claims. This presents a constraint on the identification and protection of Aboriginal sites.
<p><i>Source: Gwydir LEP 2013. Gwydir Shire Council, Thematic History Study, 2006.</i></p>		
<p>Aboriginal land claims</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are several incomplete Aboriginal land claims, and a limited number of granted land claims across the localities. Successful claims result in the transfer of land in freehold title to the claimant Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). ▪ Ownership of land by a LALC presents the opportunity to develop this land for indigenous housing and/or other services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are several incomplete Aboriginal land claims within the Study Area. These are generally concentrated along Warialda Creek, land at the eastern end of Crane Street and High Street, as well as to the south of Queen Street. - Most of the land surrounding the Study Area is subject to incomplete Aboriginal land claims. - It is noted that most of this land, within and outside the Study Area, is constrained by bushfire risk and significant vegetation. ▪ Bingara study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A limited number of land claims are concentrated to the north of the Gwydir River fronting Bassett Street, as well as south of Martyn Street in the south-west corner of the town centre. The land south of Martyn Street, a granted

Consideration	Opportunities	Constraints
		<p>Aboriginal land claim, appears to be subject to a paper subdivision and has largely been identified as unoccupied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gravesend study area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Incomplete Aboriginal land claims are located to the north of Railway Avenue. This land is zoned RU5 and RU1, and appears to be subject to a paper subdivision, however, remains largely unoccupied. – Incomplete Aboriginal land claims are located to the south of the railway line, in the eastern part of the Study Area. This land is zoned RU5 and appears to be subdivided and largely unoccupied.

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, 2023.

Infrastructure capacity		
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reticulated potable water is provided to Warialda, Bingara, North Star and Gravesend. ▪ The water supply in Warialda has some capacity for growth. ▪ The water supply in Bingara has significant capacity for growth. ▪ Warialda and Bingara are seweraged with the sewage systems having significant capacity for growth. ▪ Power across the Shire is provided by Essential Energy as part of the Inverell Supply area. Essential Energy advises that there are no limitations within the supply area. ▪ The NBN fixed wireless service is available across the Shire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warialda rail, and other rural localities, rely on tank water and bores. ▪ The water supply in North Star and Gravesend are close to capacity, with very limited opportunity for growth.
Social infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The towns of Warialda and Bingara comprise the highest quantum of social infrastructure and services, including recreation areas, health facilities, childcare and educational institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Star is becoming increasingly isolated due to the closure of key services and amenities. ▪ Survey respondents (November 2023) noted that some of the facilities lacking across the Shire include housing, childcare, health services, shopping, and entertainment options. Respondents noted that the provision of more housing, childcare and employment will attract new residents to the Shire.



CHAPTER 3

THE PRIORITIES

3 THE PRIORITIES

This chapter brings together the research undertaken in the preparation of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024), the Survey Outcomes Report (2023) and this LHS to provide a vision, objectives, and strategies to guide the delivery of housing in the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years.








3.1 Housing vision

The People of Gwydir Shire will have access to a diverse range of quality, accessible and affordable housing types, which reflect the changing needs and lifestyles of people living in the Shire, as well as help attract future residents to Gwydir Shire.

People will choose to live in Gwydir because they will want to live the “Gwydir Good Life”.

3.2 Housing objectives

This LHS is underpinned by seven key objectives.

	1 New housing	To support the delivery of new housing in the right locations to meet the needs of current and future Shire residents.
	2 Diverse housing	To support the delivery of a variety of housing options that cater to diverse households and their needs.
	3 Affordable housing	To increase the supply of social and affordable rental housing in the Shire.
	4 Adaptable, accessible, and inclusive housing	To ensure housing meets universal design principles.
	5 Resilient housing	To deliver housing that supports community and environmental resilience in the context of a changing climate.
	6 Supported housing	To ensure all new housing is adequately supported by appropriate infrastructure.
	7 A proactive council	To foster collaborative partnerships with government agencies, developers, and landowners; pursue funding; and deliver services and infrastructure to support a growing population.

3.3 Housing strategies

The following section outlines 13 strategies to support the delivery of housing within the Gwydir Shire over the next 20 years and to achieve the housing vision and objectives outlined in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 above. The strategies are organised into the following three categories:

- land use planning mechanisms within the current framework (refer to Section 3.3.1),
- land use planning mechanisms outside the current framework (refer to Section 3.3.2), and
- non-planning mechanisms (refer Section 3.3.3).

3.3.1 Land use planning mechanisms: within the current framework

As outlined within the Gwydir Shire LSPS, the Shire has an adequate supply of existing zoned residential land including RU5 Village and R5 Large Lot Residential land, with MLS ranging from 550 sqm to 10 ha. Smaller lots can accommodate residential living in proximity to the town centres and the infrastructure and services they provide. This contributes to more walkable, vibrant, and accessible town centres. Larger lots accommodate rural lifestyle allotments. The existing land use zones and associated permitted uses provide the flexibility to deliver a range of housing types, to meet the diverse needs of the Gwydir community.

The towns of Warialda and Bingara will be the primary localities for housing delivery, with the villages of North Star, Gravesend and Warialda Rail (subject to further analysis) secondary localities. Emphasis is on well-serviced, appropriate housing that contributes to the unique character of these towns and villages.

The following strategies support the development of existing land for housing within the parameters of the current planning framework applying to the Gwydir Shire. This includes the provisions of the Gwydir LEP 2013 and relevant SEPPs, including the Codes SEPP and Housing SEPP. These strategies aim to negate the need for the release of additional land for residential purposes, known as 'greenfield' development. Greenfield development often requires significant upfront investment to ensure the land is "development ready" and/or amendments to the planning framework, such as the development of new plans and policies, which require substantial council resources, including funding and staffing.

Strategy 1: Deliver new residential development on government-owned land

Supports: Objectives 1 to 7

Currently, the demand for residential properties within the Shire is not being met by the private sector, being individual landowners and/or developers. Therefore, the provision and development of government-owned land, including land owned by GSC, NSW government agencies, and the Crown, is considered essential for the supply of new and a more diverse range of residential dwellings within the Shire.

The provision and development of government-owned land provides the opportunity for a wide-range of residential development, including (but not limited to):

- Private residential dwellings, including detached dwellings, dual occupancy, and townhouses (see Strategy 4), following the divestment of land to developers and/or owners.
- Aged-care and/or seniors living, led by Council and/or developers (see Strategy 5).
- Affordable housing in partnership with community housing providers (CHPs).
- Housing for people with a disability in partnership with CHPs or LAHC (see Strategy 5).
- Social housing in partnership with the AHO and the LAHC (see Strategy 10).
- Low-cost housing, for example, prefabricated transportable/relocatable dwellings for use as emergency accommodation and/or respite care.

Preliminary opportunities and constraints analysis undertaken as part of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) and this LHS has been used to identify key opportunity sites that could provide additional housing within the Warialda (refer to Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1) and Bingara (refer to Figure 3.2 and Table 3.2) town centres.

It is acknowledged however that eventual development of land is subject to several factors, including land ownership arrangements, environmental considerations, development feasibility, highest and best use of a site as well as the personal motivation of individual landowners and/or developers.

Warialda

Preliminary analysis identified four opportunity sites within the Warialda town centre (refer to Figure 3.1):

1. Opportunity site A – Naroo Aged Hostel Precinct.
2. Opportunity site B – Gragin Road Waterfront.
3. Opportunity site C – 5 Hope Street.
4. Opportunity site D – 32-34 Plunket Street.

A summary of these sites including the relevant opportunities, constraints, and development priority and timeframe is provided in Table 3.1.

Bingara

Preliminary analysis identified six opportunity sites within Bingara town centre (refer to Figure 3.2):

1. Opportunity site A – GSC Depot.
2. Opportunity site B – Heber Street to Martyn Street.
3. Opportunity site C – Martyn Street and Moore Street.
4. Opportunity site D – Jacaranda Estate, Riddell Street.
5. Opportunity site E – Martyn Street to Riddell Street.
6. Opportunity site F - Riddell Street (south).

A summary of these sites including the relevant opportunities, constraints, and development priority and timeframe is provided in Table 3.2.

It is noted that many of these sites are located to the south of the town centre. GSC has been progressively developing and releasing land within this area. To do this GSC has acquired Crown land, constructed roads and services, and sold residential allotments as required. This includes Jacaranda Estate (Opportunity site D).

Other localities

In addition to the town centres of Warialda and Bingara, significant government land holdings were mapped within Gravesend. This includes land to the north of Railway Avenue, known as 'Gravesend Common'. This land is zoned RU5 and RU1 and is partially owned by the Crown. It appears to be subject to a paper subdivision, however, remains largely unoccupied. Some of this land is also subject to an incomplete Aboriginal land claim(s). The land is unencumbered by bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. However, it is noted that the water supply in Gravesend is close to capacity with limited opportunity for growth. Notwithstanding, subject to further analysis, the provision and development of this land may also form part of this strategy.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake detailed feasibility for opportunity sites to determine the development potential of the site.
- Prepare master plans or subdivision plans for identified opportunity sites found to have development potential.
- Prepare updated master plans for Warialda (Warialda Community Plan 2008) and Bingara (Bingara Town Strategy 2011) to create a housing vision specific to these town centres, and strategies to improve amenity and services.
- Investigate potential opportunities to acquire unused Crown Land Reserves for housing (subject to the progression of Aboriginal land claims).
- Continue to build relationships and collaborative partnerships with independent and/or government agencies.

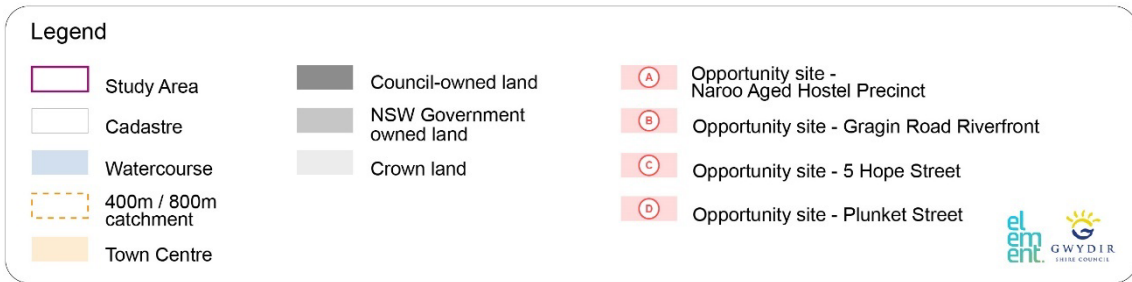
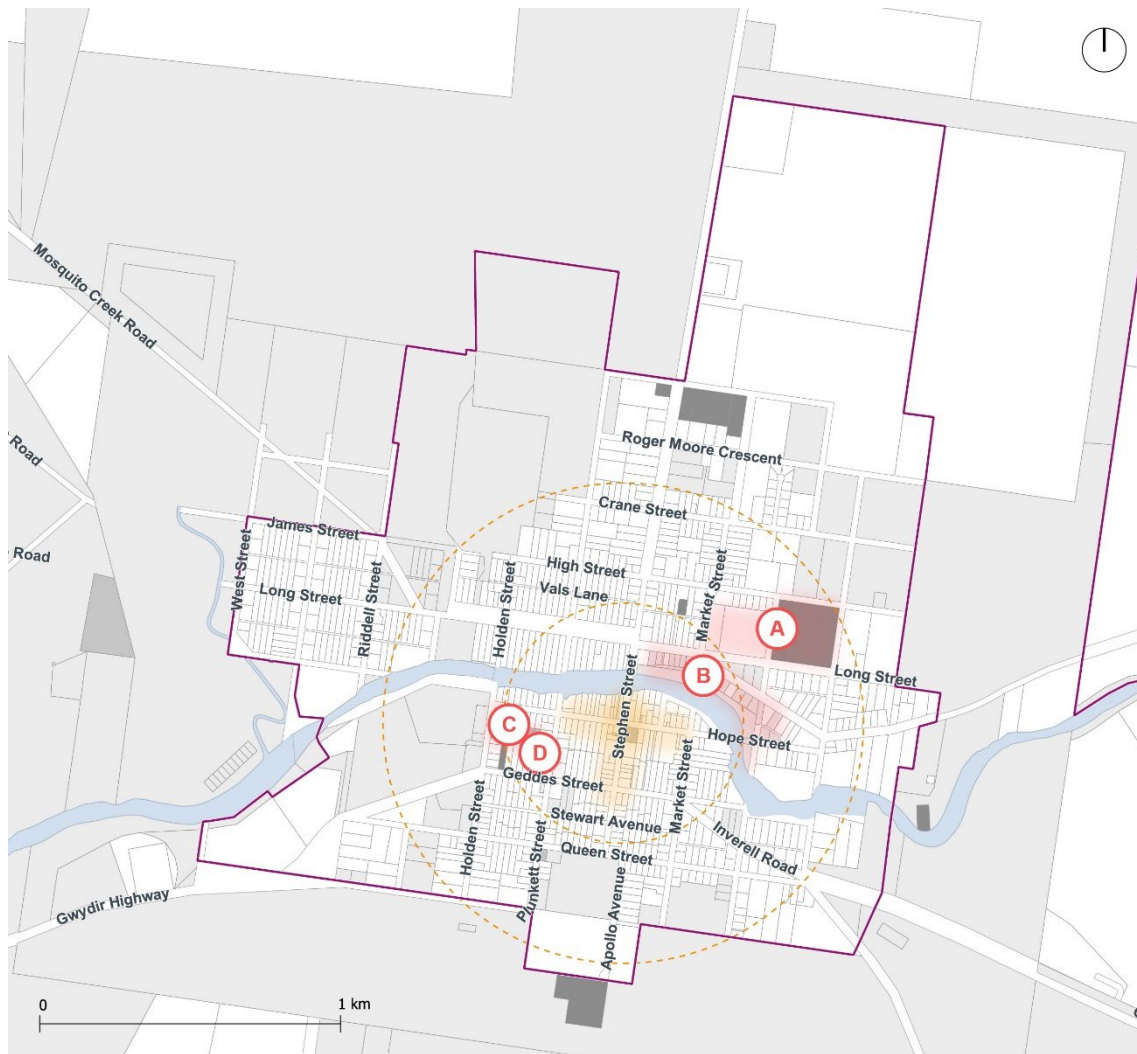


Figure 3.1 Government-owned opportunity site map, Warialda

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Table 3.1 Government-owned opportunity sites summary, Warialda

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Opportunity Site A – Naroo Aged Hostel Precinct				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land bound by Arthur Wheatley Drive, East Street and Long Street (north-west of the town centre). ▪ Lots 379 and 380 in DP 727877. ▪ Ownership: Gwydir Shire Council. ▪ Land size: 4.078 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: The Naroo Aged Care Hostel is in the south-east corner of the site fronting Long Street and Arthur Wheatley Drive. The remainder of the site has been identified as unoccupied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Located adjacent the Warialda MCH. ▪ The site is serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ Subject to further analysis, the site could be developed into an aged-care and seniors living precinct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Naroo Draft Master Plan and report were prepared in 2015. The master plan outlines a proposal for the expansion of the Naroo Aged Care Hostel with an additional 23-bedrooms, lounge, dining, and kitchen areas, as well as 32 independent living units. – The Housing SEPP provides for the development of seniors housing. – – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is mapped as containing dry sclerophyll forests (shrubby sub-formation). Most of the site contains dense eucalypt woodland with native white cypress pines further to the east. ▪ The site is mapped as bushfire prone land, with a BAL of 12.5 designated for the hostel additions completed in 2014. ▪ There is significant topographical change across the site. Sloping sites make access difficult. ▪ Funding constraints have limited the progression of the development. 	High	Medium
Opportunity Site B – Gragin Road Waterfront				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land fronting Long Street and Gragin Road to the north of the Warialda Creek. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Crown land. ▪ Land size: approximately 3.5 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Single detached dwellings and unoccupied waterfront open space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ The site is identified as ‘Riverfront Town House Integrated Site’, including an open space / recreation area, within the Warialda Community Plan 2008. ▪ Subject to further analysis, including land ownership arrangements, the site could be developed for housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is partially mapped as containing forested wetlands along the Warialda Creek corridor. ▪ The Warialda Creek corridor is mapped as biodiverse riparian land. ▪ The site is partially mapped as containing bushfire prone land (Vegetation Category 2 and Vegetation Buffer) ▪ The unoccupied lots are mapped as being subject to incomplete Aboriginal land claim(s). 	Low	Long

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Opportunity Site C – 5 Hope Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 Hope Street. ▪ Lot 1 in DP 834198. ▪ Ownership: Gwydir Shire Council. ▪ Land size: approximately 3,550 sqm. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Unoccupied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In proximity to local amenities and services within the town centre. – Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. – Not encumbered by flood prone land, bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. ▪ The site is currently subject to an early development proposal for affordable rental accommodation (subject to development approvals and funding). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GSC has agreed to partner with the DCJ and CHP Homes North Community Housing Co Ltd. – A Feasibility Study has been prepared for the site documenting three design options which meet the requirements of the Low-Rise Housing Diversity Guideline (under the Housing SEPP) and the Liveable Housing Design Guidelines (Silver level). – The preferred design option comprises eight single-storey 1 or 2-bedroom units. – Complements the existing emergency accommodation, respite care facilities, and aged-care units on Plunket Street. 	-	High	Short
Opportunity Site D – 32-34 Plunket Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 32-34 Plunket Street. ▪ Lot 1 in DP 158301 and Lot 19 in DP 759052. ▪ Ownership: Gwydir Shire Council. ▪ Land size: approximately 4,240 sqm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In proximity to local amenities and services within the town centre. 	-	High	Short

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Mechanical workshop, prefabricated modular dwellings for the purpose of emergency accommodation and respite care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. - Not encumbered by flood prone land, bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. ▪ The site is progressively being developed for a range of emergency accommodation and respite care, including a 3-bedroom dwelling and 2-bedroom dwelling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dwellings are portable so can be moved from the site if required, allowing ongoing development potential of the site. - When the accommodation isn't being used during crisis situations, for example natural disasters, the facility will be used as a respite centre, providing short-term breaks for adults and children with special needs. - Funded through the National Bushfire Recovery Fund program. ▪ Subject to further analysis and funding, there may be opportunities for further intensification of housing at this site. 			

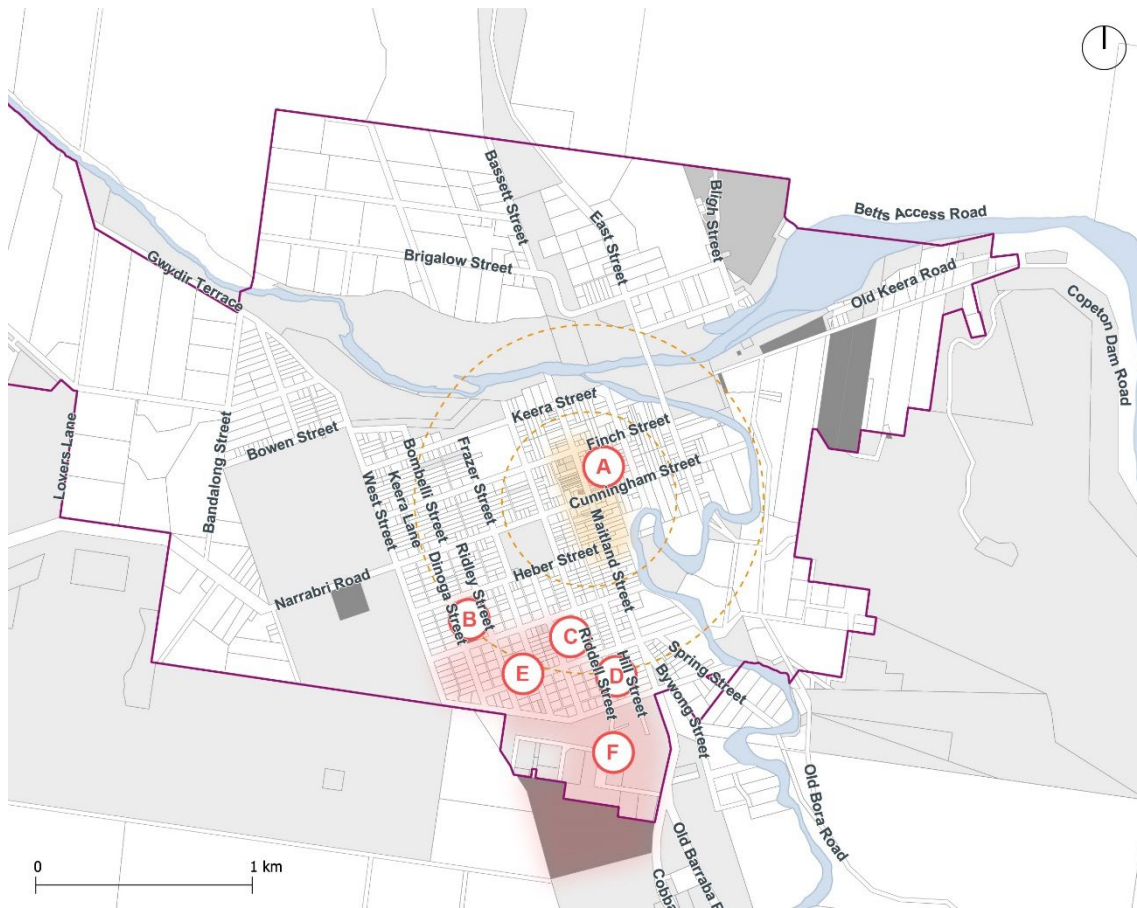


Figure 3.2 Government-owned opportunity site map, Bingara

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Table 3.2 Government-owned opportunity sites summary, Bingara

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Opportunity Site A – GSC Depot				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 35 Cunningham Street. ▪ Land bound by Finch Street, Cunningham Street, Junction Street and Maitland Street. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Gwydir Shire Council. ▪ Land size: approximately 1 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: GSC Bingara Depot, Northern Slopes Landcare Association, GSC Bingara Office (Soldiers Memorial Hall), Bingara Toy Library. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In proximity to local amenities and services within the town centre. – Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. – Not encumbered by flood prone land, bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. ▪ The site was earmarked for redevelopment under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. ▪ Relocation of GSC depot to industrial site. ▪ Identified for mixed medium-density housing up to 3-storeys to accommodate aged-care, seniors living and affordable housing. ▪ Opportunity for a through-site link / pedestrian walkway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Timing of the proposal for relocation of the existing GSC depot. ▪ Funding constraints. 	High	Medium
Opportunity Site B – Heber Street to Martyn Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land bound by Heber Street, Ridley Street, Martyn Street and Dinoga Street. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Land on the corner of Heber Street and Ridley Street mapped as Crown land (Office & Depot NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)). ▪ Land size: approximately 2.1 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Office & Depot NSW National Parks and Wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Within 800m of town centre. – Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ Existing subdivision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The blocks on council-owned land are approximately 2,000 sqm. This presents the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on smaller blocks, noting that the Gwydir LEP 2013 supports subdivision to a minimum lot size of 550 sqm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Varied ownership arrangement. Requirement for council to acquire the land in government ownership and freehold title. ▪ Existing location of the NPWS office and depot. Relocation of this facility would be required to develop the block in its entirety. ▪ Funding constraints. 	High	Medium

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The subdivision pattern provides for rear lane access. ▪ The site was earmarked for redevelopment under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. - Identified for mixed medium-density housing. For example, detached dwellings, dual occupancies, and townhouses. 			
Opportunity Site C – Martyn Street and Moore Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land at the corner of Martyn Street and Moore Street (to the south). ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Gwydir Shire Council. ▪ Land size: approximately 8,500 sqm. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Vilage. ▪ Uses: Unoccupied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within 800m of town centre. - Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ Existing subdivision provides for regular lots of approximately 800 sqm. ▪ The site was earmarked for development under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified for mixed medium-density housing. For example, detached dwellings, dual occupancies, and townhouses. However, the current subdivision pattern largely supports detached dwellings, with the potential for secondary dwellings. - Land was acquired by council from the Crown. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New power infrastructure has been built to service area. Will also need the road surface extended to the end of the street. Water and sewer connections will be connected as required. ▪ Proximity to existing service land on western corner of Martyn Street and Moore Street. Use and hazard to be determined. ▪ Funding constraints. 	High	Medium
Opportunity Site D – Jacaranda Estate, Riddell Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land fronting Riddell Street to the south of the town centre. ▪ Eight lots – Lots 21-28 In DP 1239214. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title, all eight lots have been sold ▪ Land size: approximately 6,400 sqm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Just over 800m of the town centre. - Serviced by critical utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. 	-	High	Short

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use zone: RU5 Village. Uses: Unoccupied, construction has not commenced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivision pattern provides for medium sized lots with rear or side lane access. The site was earmarked for development under the Bingara Town Strategy 2011. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified for mixed medium-density housing. For example, detached dwellings, dual occupancies, and townhouses. However, the current subdivision pattern largely supports detached dwellings, with the potential for secondary dwellings. The site was historically acquired from the Crown and has since been sold as freehold title. 			

Opportunity Site E – Martyn Street to Riddell Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land to the south of Martyn Street. Multiple lots in DP 758111. Ownership: freehold title with four lots owned by the Crown (three lots are vacant land and a double lot is the soil con site) Land size: approximately 20 ha. Land use zone: RU5 Village. Uses: Unoccupied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the established town centre boundary and is near essential amenities and services. Capable of being serviced by critical infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewage. Not encumbered by flood prone land, bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. The site is subject to an existing subdivision. Lots vary between approximately 1,000 sqm and 2,000 sqm. The larger lots present the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on smaller blocks, noting that the Gwydir LEP 2013 supports subdivision to a minimum lot size of 550 sqm. The site has been identified by GSC as being essential for the residential expansion of Bingara. GSC has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is mapped as subject to Aboriginal land claims. Development of the site would require the construction of roads and essential utility infrastructure. This would be at the expense of GSC or a developer. Funding constraints. 	High	Medium-long

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
	<p>earmarked the site for a potential aged-care and/or seniors living development.</p>			
Opportunity Site F – Riddell Street (south)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land extending south from Riddell Street long Cobbadah Road. ▪ Multiple lots in DP 727843, DP 822887, and DP 1277587. ▪ Ownership: Crown and Gwydir Shire Council (Lot 1 in DP 1277587). ▪ Land size: approximately 28 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village and RU1 Primary Production (GSC land). ▪ Uses: Largely unoccupied, rural uses (old saleyards), vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subject to further analysis, the site presents the opportunity for larger-lot development. This may require rezoning of the RU1 zoned land to R5 to accommodate additional rural dwellings. ▪ Land to the south fronting Cobbadah Road was subject to a refused Aboriginal land claim(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council-owned land is partially mapped as containing grassy woodland vegetation. ▪ The site is partially identified as bushfire prone land (Vegetation Category 1 and Vegetation Buffer). ▪ Development of the entire site would require the acquisition of land from the Crown and/or GSC. ▪ Development of the site would require the construction of roads and essential utility infrastructure. This would be at the expense of GSC or a developer. ▪ Land adjoins Bingara Cemetery to the west. Note potential expansion of the cemetery may be required in the future. 	Low	Long

Strategy 2: Support the delivery of residential infill development

Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7

In addition to the provision and development of government-owned land (see Strategy 1), the private sector plays a significant role in the delivery of new housing on existing residential land. This can include private residential dwellings, such as detached dwellings, dual occupancy, townhouses, and secondary dwellings, as well as aged-care and seniors living.

Preliminary opportunities and constraints analysis undertaken as part of the Gwydir Shire HNA (2024) and this LHS has been used to identify investigation areas that could support residential infill development within the Warialda (refer Figure 3.3 and Table 3.3) and Bingara (refer to Figure 3.4 and Table 3.4) town centres. Land within these investigation areas has been identified as comprising larger lot sizes, unoccupied lots (subject to detailed analysis), and generally free of significant environmental constraints. Further, land within these investigation areas may be capable of subdivision (see Strategy 3).

In conjunction with other land use planning and non-planning mechanisms, GSC can encourage and support additional residential development within these investigation areas. However, the eventual development of land is subject to several factors, including land ownership arrangements, environmental considerations, development feasibility, highest and best use of a site as well as the personal motivation of individual landowners and/or developers.

Warialda

Preliminary analysis identified three investigation areas within Warialda (refer to Figure 3.3):

1. Investigation area 1 – Long Street (west) 'Poverty Flat'.
2. Investigation area 2 – Long Street Waterfront.
3. Investigation area 3 – Town Centre Waterfront.

A summary of these sites including the relevant opportunities, constraints, and development priority and timeframe is provided in Table 3.3.

Bingara

Preliminary analysis identified four investigation areas within Bingara (refer to Figure 3.4):

1. Investigation area 1 – Brigalow Street (north-west).
2. Investigation area 2 – White Street to Gwydir Street.
3. Investigation area 3 – Market Site.
4. Investigation area 4 – Herbert Street.

A summary of these sites including the relevant opportunities, constraints, and development priority and timeframe is provided in Table 3.4.

Other localities

In addition to land within Warialda and Gravesend, preliminary analysis identified multiple freehold title lots within Warialda Rail that could support infill development. The existing subdivision pattern provides for regular lots of approximately 2,000 sqm. Many of these lots appear to be unoccupied and unencumbered by flood prone land, bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. Subject to further analysis, these lots could form part of this strategy.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertaken further planning and analysis of potential investigation sites.
- Promote redevelopment of sites found to be appropriate for new housing.
- Actively assist landowners and/or developers progress the planning and development of their land.
- Investigate incentives for landowners to redevelop their land.

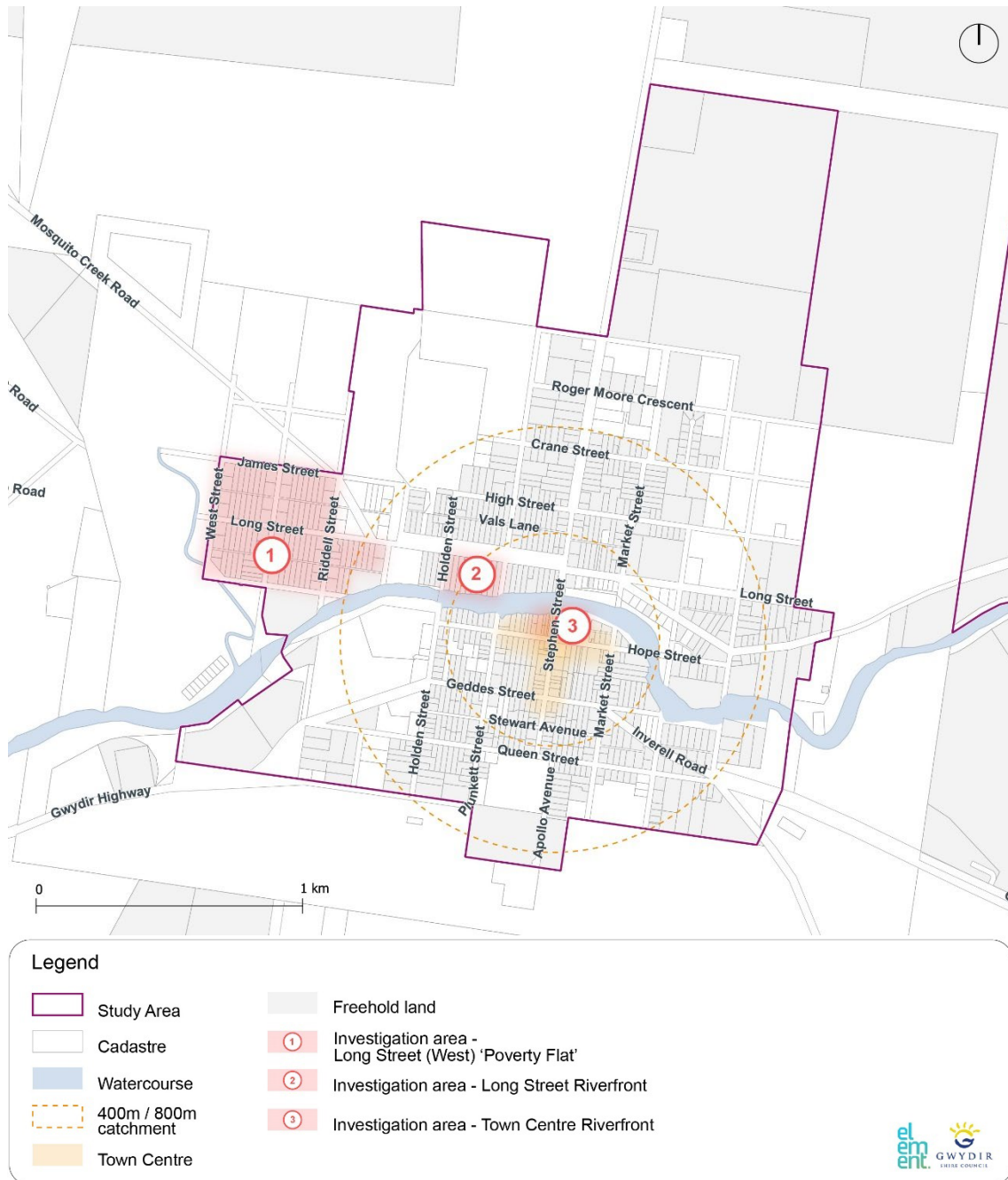


Figure 3.3 Potential investigation areas map, Warialda

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Table 3.3 Potential investigation areas summary, Warialda

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Investigation Area 1 – Long Street (West) ‘Poverty Flat’				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land within the blocks to the north and south of Long Street to the north-west of the town centre. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: predominantly freehold title. ▪ Land size: Approximately 22 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Residential dwellings and associated buildings, unoccupied land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Poverty Flat’ has a long history in Warialda, having been known as a lower socio-economic area. GSC understands that residents would be open to change and that there are opportunities for redevelopment in this location. ▪ The area benefits from existing utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ Some 23 lots within the investigation area have been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). ▪ The existing lots are approximately 2,000 sqm in size. Larger lots present the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on smaller blocks. ▪ The subdivision provides for rear lanes, which can assist with access and subdivision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most of the unoccupied land is held in freehold title. This requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate the redevelopment, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. ▪ Located further from the town centre, to the north-west of Warialda Creek. This raises potential access and transport constraints. ▪ The area contains land partially mapped as containing bushfire prone land (Vegetated Category 2 and Vegetation Buffer). ▪ Adjoins land mapped as containing incomplete Aboriginal land claim(s) (along the creek front). ▪ The area fronts Warialda Creek. Potential flood impacts are unknown. 	Medium	Long
Investigation Area 2 – Long Street Waterfront				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land fronting Long Street and Warialda Creek. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title. ▪ Land size: approximately 2.4 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Unoccupied (vegetated). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area benefits from existing utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ The area has been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). ▪ Existing lots are regular in shape and approximately 2,600 sqm. ▪ The area is not encumbered by bushfire prone land or significant vegetation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of this area requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate construction, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. ▪ The topography slopes down to the creek. This may limit development to the south of the blocks. ▪ The area fronts Warialda Creek. Potential flood impacts are unknown. 	Low	Long

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Investigation Area 3 – Town Centre Waterfront				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land fronting Hope Street and Warialda Creek to the east and west of Stephen Street. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title for the land fronting the creek. Council own the waterway and the parks. ▪ Land size: approximately 1.5 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: multiple town centre uses, including Gwydir Shire Council Warialda Office, RFS Warialda Station, Warialda Library, and public toilets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area is located within the heart of the Warialda town centre and benefits from access to critical amenities and services. ▪ The area benefits from existing utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ The area was identified within the Warialda Community Plan 2008 as 'Riverfront Town Centre Site'. The plan identifies the opportunity for tourist and visitor accommodation and shop top housing. Development such as flats and seniors accommodation should also be prioritised as part of the broader Town Centre Precinct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of this area will require the cooperation of multiple landowners and consideration of existing uses. ▪ The area fronts Warialda Creek. Potential flood impacts are unknown. 	Low	Long

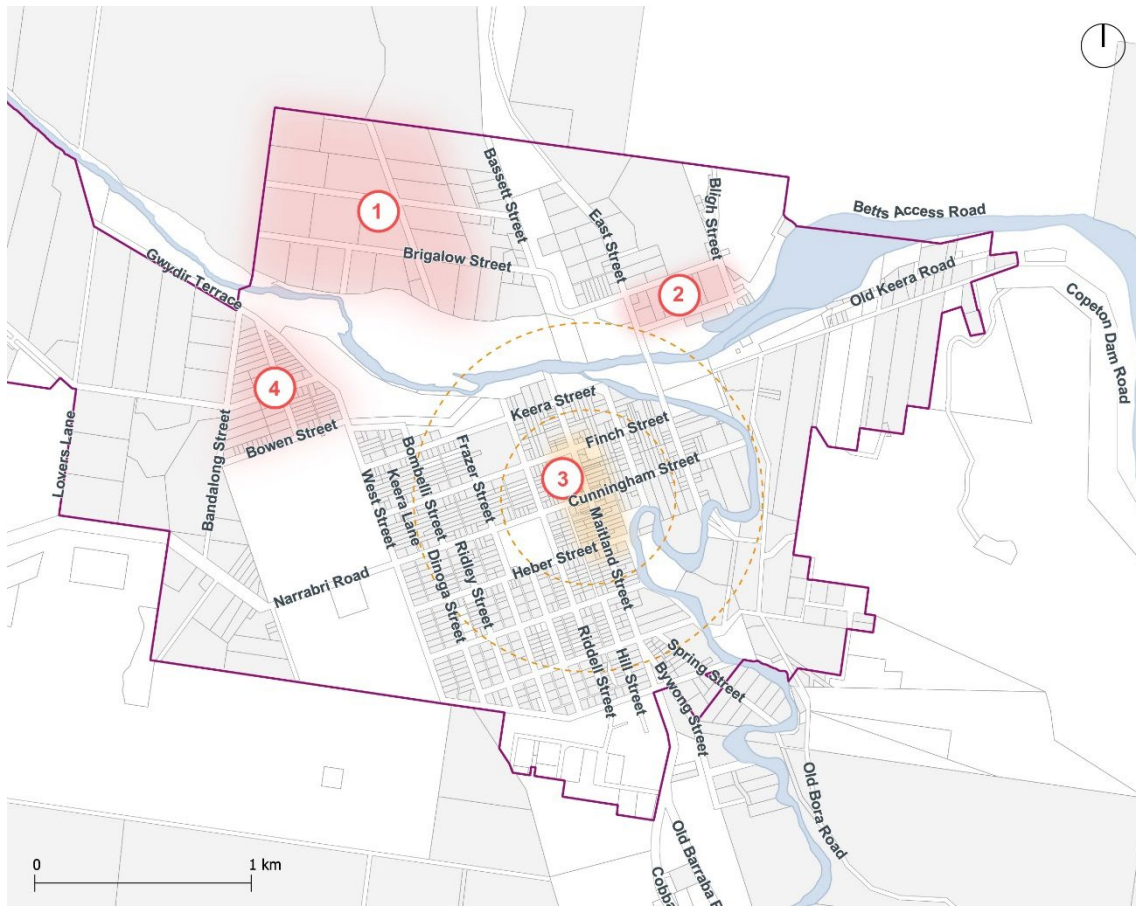


Figure 3.4 Potential investigation areas map, Bingara

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Table 3.4 Potential investigation areas summary, Bingara

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Investigation Area 1 – Brigalow Street (north-west)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land surrounding Brigalow Street and Salter Street to the north-west of the town centre and north of the Gwydir River. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title. ▪ Land size: greater than 70 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: Residential dwellings, unoccupied land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing subdivision pattern supports a range of lot sizes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity to cater to residents preferring to live on larger block sizes. – Larger lots (approximately 4 ha) present the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on smaller blocks, noting that the Gwydir LEP 2013 supports subdivision to a minimum lot size of 550 sqm. ▪ A number of lots have been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). ▪ The area is largely unencumbered by environmental constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of this area requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate construction, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. ▪ Located further from the town centre to the north of the Gwydir River. This raises potential access and transport constraints. ▪ The area is partially mapped as bushfire prone land (Vegetation Category 2 and Vegetation Buffer). ▪ The area is partially mapped as containing land with grassy woodlands and forested wetlands (along the Gwydir River corridor). ▪ The area is partially mapped as flood prone land (1% AEP) due to its proximity to the Gwydir River. 	Medium	Medium
Investigation Area 2 – White Street to Gwydir Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land bound by White Street, East Street and Gwydir Street to the north-east of the town centre. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title. ▪ Land size: approximately 6.5 ha. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: residential dwellings and associated buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing subdivision pattern supports a range of lot sizes. Larger lots present the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on smaller blocks, noting that the Gwydir LEP 2013 supports subdivision to a minimum lot size of 550 sqm. ▪ The area is unencumbered by environmental constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area contains existing residential dwellings. Future redevelopment of this area requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate construction, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. ▪ Located further from the town centre to the north of the Gwydir River. This raises potential access and transport constraints. ▪ It is noted that this area is likely a long-term solution for housing delivery. ▪ 	Low	Long

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
Investigation Area 3 – Market Site				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land in the block bound by Finch Street, Maitland Street, Cunningham Street and Riddell Street, within the town centre. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title, Crown land. ▪ Land size: TBD. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: multiple town centre uses, including shopfronts, Bingara SES, Bingara Police Station, Bingara Library, car parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area is located within the heart of the Bingara town centre and benefits from access to critical amenities and services. ▪ The area benefits from existing utility infrastructure, including water and sewage. ▪ The existing land parcels could be better utilised. ▪ Historic features and existing vegetation. ▪ Unencumbered by environmental constraints. ▪ The area is identified within the Bingara Town Strategy 2011 as the 'Market/ Parking Integrated Site'. Under the strategy, the area is proposed for mixed use redevelopment, comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved car parking layout. – Market square that can be used for events, such as a farmer's market. – Commercial development with shop-top style housing. – Relocation of the SES buildings to an alternative site. ▪ There is the potential for a shared arrangement between the landowner(s) and GSC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of this area will require to cooperation of multiple landowners, and consideration of existing uses. ▪ Funding constraints. 	Medium	Medium
Investigation Area 4 – Herbert Street				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land bound by Bandalong Street, Gwydir Terrace, and Bowen Street to the north-west of the town centre. ▪ Multiple lots. ▪ Ownership: Freehold title. ▪ Land use zone: RU5 Village. ▪ Uses: residential dwellings and associated buildings, unoccupied land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing subdivision pattern supports a range of lot sizes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunity to cater to residents preferring to live on larger block sizes. – Larger lots present the opportunity for further subdivision to provide additional dwellings on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area contains existing residential dwellings. Future redevelopment of this area requires the cooperation of individual landholders to facilitate construction, subdivision and/or sale of land for housing. 	Low	Long

Description	Opportunities	Constraints	Priority	Timeframe
	<p>smaller blocks, noting that the Gwydir LEP 2013 supports subdivision to a minimum lot size of 550 sqm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several lots have been identified as unoccupied (subject to detailed analysis). ▪ The area is largely unencumbered by environmental constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The area is partially mapped as flood prone land (1% AEP) due to its location on the Gwydir River. ▪ Located further from the town centre. This raises potential access and transport constraints. ▪ Road infrastructure would require upgrades if the area was to support additional housing development (and associated vehicle traffic). 		

Strategy 3: Support Torrens title subdivision and infill development within town centres

Objectives 1 to 7

The Gwydir LEP 2013 permits the subdivision of land to the minimum lot size (MLS) mapped for that land. The predominant MLS within the town centres (of all selected localities) is 550 sqm. However, the existing subdivision pattern comprises larger lots often around or in exceedance of 2,000 sqm. This is typical of regional towns and has historically supported larger detached dwellings. However, these conditions present the opportunity for the creation of additional, smaller lots through Torrens title subdivision. Torrens title subdivision results in each lot or parcel of land having its own individual and distinct title (and title deed).

This strategy aims to address the lack of available residential land, which was raised as an issue by survey participants and a desire for lot sizes between 450-800 sqm (Survey Outcomes Report 2023) through the delivery of diverse and accessible housing in town centres that is supported by existing infrastructure and services. A compact growth strategy reduces the complexity and demands on the provision of additional infrastructure, including roads, utilities, lighting, and rubbish collection that is required to support the release and development of residential land on the periphery of town centres. Smaller lots can accommodate a variety of housing typologies (see Strategy 4), such as detached and dual-occupancy dwellings like those on Olive Pryke Terrace in Warialda.

Preliminary analysis has been undertaken to identify land with the theoretical potential for Torrens title subdivision within the Warialda and Bingara town centres (refer to Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6). A refined investigation area was devised to identify existing land, zoned RU5 Village, with an MLS of 550 sqm, that is serviced and close to town centre amenities. Land capable of subdivision has been categorised into two groups – land capable of accommodating two lots, or land capable of accommodating three or more lots. Subdivision of existing lots within Warialda and Bingara town centres could theoretically deliver upwards of 1,500 additional lots.

It is noted, however, that this analysis presents theoretical potential for Torrens title subdivision only. Land containing critical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals or recreation areas has been generally excluded from the analysis, however, land for commercial and industrial uses has not been excluded. Strata subdivision has also not been considered. The real potential to subdivide and develop land will vary based on several factors including, land ownership, land uses, environmental constraints and design requirements including road frontage and access provisions. There is also a need to balance a more fine-grain subdivision and development pattern with preserving the unique local character and amenity of the town centres.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Refine analysis to identify areas with real subdivision potential based on land ownership, uses, environmental constraints and design requirements.
- Expand the analysis to include subdivision of existing lots on the periphery of the town centres to test their capacity to accommodate larger lot sizes of approximately 25,000 sqm.
- Investigate incentives for landowners to subdivide their land. This may include a fast-tracked development assessment pathway.
- Actively assist landowners and/or developers progress the subdivision of land.

Warialda

A total of 804 lots were identified within the Warialda investigation area. Of these lots, 62% are greater than 1,100 sqm and are theoretically capable of being subdivided into two or more lots. As shown in Figure 3.5, there is a significant amount of land within the town centre that is theoretically capable of accommodating two lots, being between 1,100 and 1,650 sqm in area (36.3% of subdividable lots), or three or more lots, being greater than 1,650 sqm in area (63.7% of subdividable lots).

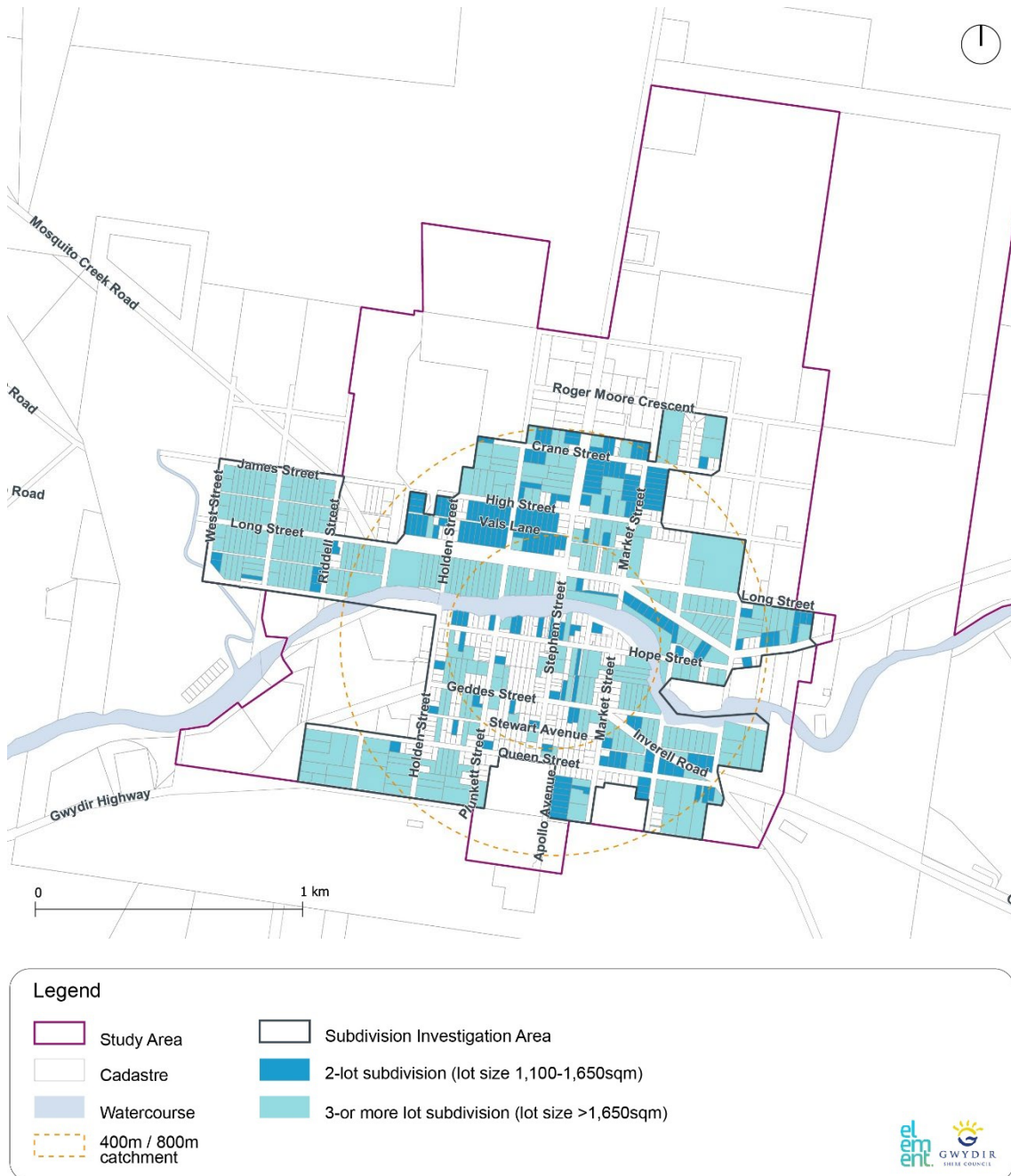


Figure 3.5 Land capable of subdivision, Warialda

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Bingara

A total of 788 lots were identified within the Bingara investigation area. Of these lots, 52% are greater than 1,100 sqm and are theoretically capable of being subdivided into two or more lots. As shown in Figure 3.6, there is a significant amount of land within the town centre that is theoretically capable of accommodating two lots, being between 1,100 and 1,650 sqm in area (23.5% of subdividable lots), or three or more lots, being greater than 1,650 sqm in area (76.5% of subdividable lots).

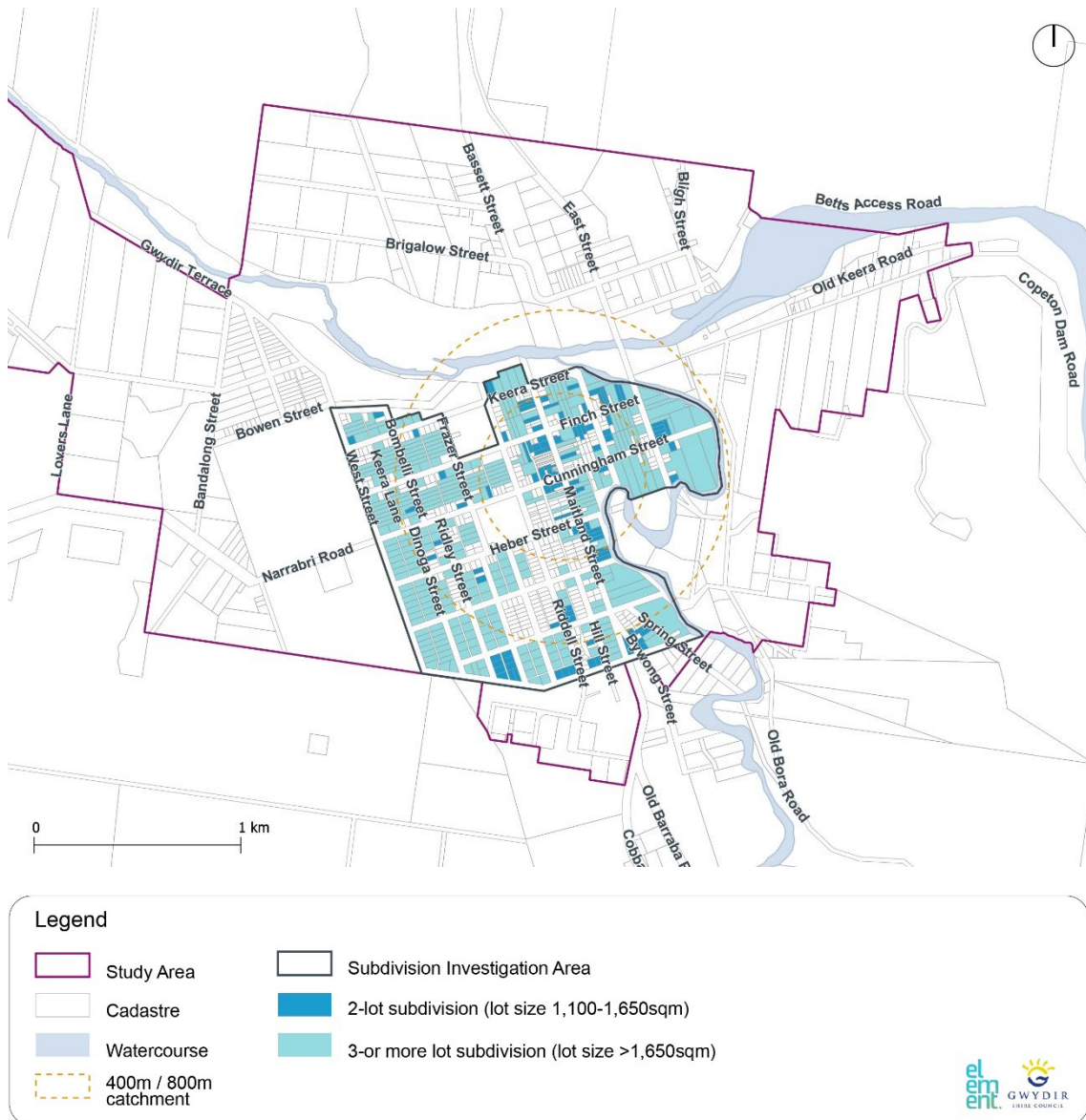


Figure 3.6 Land capable of subdivision, Bingara

Source: Gwydir Shire Council, edited by Element, December 2023.

Strategy 4: Promote the delivery of diverse low-rise housing within town centres

Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7

The predominant housing typology within the Gwydir Shire is separate houses (detached dwellings) comprising 3 or more bedrooms. Whilst this housing typology will remain the preference of many current and future residents within the Shire (refer to the Survey Outcomes Report 2023), there is an identified need for greater diversity of housing particularly in the town centres. Diverse housing is required to meet the housing needs of a diverse community, including younger and older age groups, people with disability, and temporary and key workers. Low-rise typologies help deliver diversity whilst remaining compatible with the established character of the town centres.

The delivery of diverse low-rise housing typologies, such as dual occupancies, multi-dwelling housing and secondary dwellings, is supported by the Gwydir LEP 2013 and SEPPs, including the Codes SEPP and Housing SEPP. The Codes SEPP includes the Part 3A Rural Housing Code, Part 3B Low-Rise Housing Diversity Code, and Part 3D Inland Code. Provisions within Part 3B are supported by DPE's *Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide for complying development 2020* (LRHDG), which provides consistent planning and design standards for a range of low-rise housing typologies. These planning and design standards must be met if a development is to receive a complying development certificate (CDC) under Part 3B of the Codes SEPP.

Council could consider incentive mechanisms such as waiving application fees for housing developments and subdivisions comprising two or more dwellings or lots, as a way to further promote a more diverse range of housing options.

This strategy supports the promotion and delivery of diverse low-rise housing typologies within the town centres on land zoned RU5 village. It also supports the use of the Codes SEPP, and CDCs, as a fast-tracked planning approval pathway. Examples of low-rise housing typologies are shown in Figure 3.7, and described in Table 3.5.



Figure 3.7 Examples of low-rise housing typologies

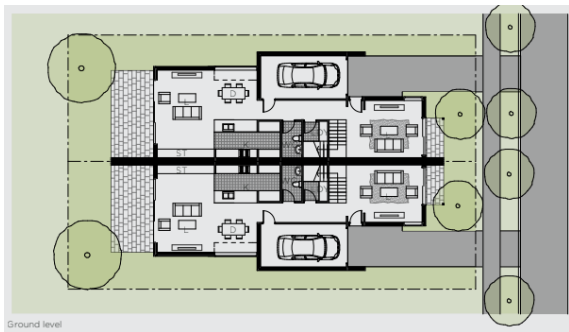
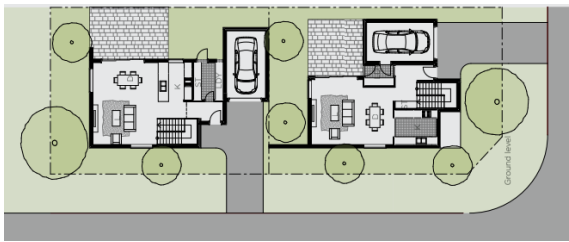
Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, *Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020*, p.3.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Promote medium density housing typologies and particularly the use of Part 3B and CDC approval pathway. This may require the preparation of consultation materials and/or the need for additional council resources and/or upskilling of council staff to manage these applications.
- Develop development controls for a range of housing types for the Gwydir Shire or specific to the town centres (within a DCP or as a standalone design document) or adopt DPE’s *Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide for development applications* (2020).
- Actively assist landowners and/or developers to progress development of their land. This includes assisting applicants to navigate the NSW planning framework.
- Employ or train a council certifier to issue CDCs for medium density housing types under the Part 3B Low-Rise Housing Diversity Code of the Codes SEPP.
- Council to consider incentive mechanisms to promote more housing diversity.

Table 3.5 Description of common low-rise housing typologies

Housing Typology	Description
Dual occupancy	
 <p>Figure 3.8 Attached dual occupancy – example ground floor plan <i>Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020, p.13.</i></p>	<p>Dual occupancies are two homes built on one lot of land. Dual occupancies are often referred to as semis or duplexes. The homes can be attached or detached, and the arrangement will often depend on the size and configuration of the lot of land. Dwellings can be side by side or one top of one another. Dual occupancies are often carried out as Torrens title subdivision subject to meeting the MLS in the LEP.</p> <p>Attached dual occupancies adjoin each other and share a common wall. Dwellings typically front the street and tend to be symmetrical in layout and design. This typology is best suited to wider lots.</p>
 <p>Figure 3.9 Detached dual occupancy – example ground floor plan <i>Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020, p.13.</i></p>	<p>Detached dual occupancies do not adjoin each other. Dwellings are typically located behind one another. This typology is best suited to long and narrow lots or corner lots.</p>

Housing Typology

Description

Multi-dwelling housing

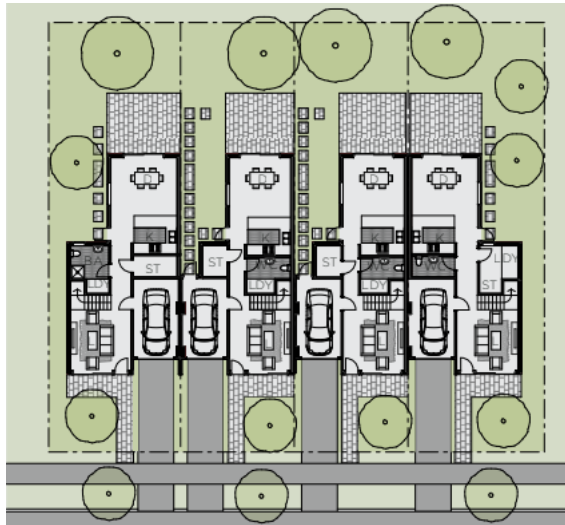


Figure 3.10 Terrace housing – example ground floor plan

Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, *Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020*, p.16.

Multi-dwelling housing is a term used to describe developments that have three or more dwellings, built on a single lot, with each dwelling having access at ground level. This typology includes townhouses, villas, and terraces, that are typically 2-storeys in height.

Multi-dwelling housing often comprises dwellings orientated around an internalised street or land network. This could be a private development for example over 55's village. Dwelling entries are often internally facing. Two-storey dwellings are known as townhouses and single-storey dwellings are known as villas. This typology is best suited to wide or amalgamated lots.

Terrace housing is a type of multi-dwelling housing characterised by a row of attached dwellings, orientated the same direction, typically facing a street frontage. Car parking can be provided from the street, a rear land or basement car park. Courtyards can provide light to the middle of the dwelling. This typology is best suited to wide shallow lots.

Manor houses

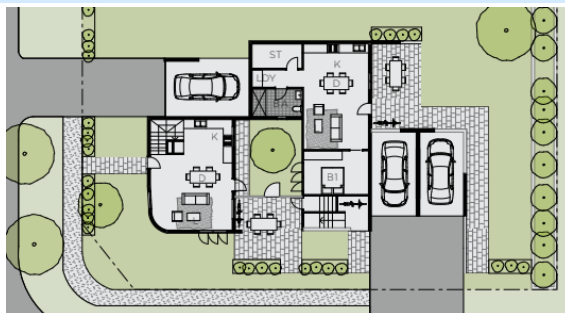


Figure 3.11 Manor house – example ground floor plan

Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, *Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020*, p.16.

A **manor house** is a 2-storey building that has three or four dwellings that are attached to each other by a common wall or floor, and where at least one dwelling is partially or wholly located above another dwelling. Because a dwelling can be located above another, manor houses can accommodate a higher density whilst maintaining a similar scale to a large two-storey detached home. They often have a common entry (lobby).

Source: Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 'Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide 2020'.
Department of Planning and Environment, 'Unpacking low-rise housing fact sheet', 2023.

Strategy 5: Support the delivery of aged-care and seniors housing, and housing for people with disability

Objectives 1 to 7

By 2041, the over 65 population is anticipated to comprise approximately 33% of the total population in Gwydir Shire. To address the needs of an aging population a more diverse range of housing must be delivered in the right locations. Housing for seniors should address the following requirements:

- **Accessibility** – Housing should be designed to incorporate universal design principles and be in accessible locations close to shops, services, and transport.
- **Affordability** – Housing should be affordable for seniors on fixed incomes to reduce financial strain.
- **Community style housing** – Housing should encourage shared or communal living arrangements to address social isolation and provide a support network for seniors.

GSC currently operates a portfolio of aged-care services, which will need to be expanded over the next few decades. This includes the expansion of existing aged-care facilities such as the Naroo Aged Care Hostel, and the development of new facilities.

It is noted that the Housing SEPP plays a crucial role in supporting the delivery of aged-care and seniors living accommodation types, including independent living units, hostels and residential care facilities. These accommodation types collectively contribute to offering a broad spectrum of living arrangements, ranging from independent to supported living for seniors and people with disability. Additionally, the definition for seniors housing and the Housing SEPP provisions provide flexibility in terms of built form. Therefore, this flexibility enables a diverse range of housing typologies to be used for the purposes of seniors housing, such as villas, townhouses, apartments, and detached dwelling houses.

The Housing SEPP designates permissible land uses and development standards, and prescribes location and site-related requirements, all to ensure the delivery of this type of housing is available in suitable locations, with appropriate infrastructure. Further, the SEPP includes design guidelines for each individual accommodation type to ensure housing is adaptable, accessible, and inclusive.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Pursue collaborative partnerships and/or funding to progress the Naroo Master Plan, including the expansion of the hostel and development of seniors independent living units.
- Identify land capable of supporting aged-care, seniors living developments and/or housing for people with disability.
- Support the provision of additional infrastructure and services.

3.3.2 Land use planning mechanisms: outside the current framework

The following strategies support the development of existing land for housing through amendments to the current planning framework applying to the Gwydir Shire. Namely, the strategies promote the amendment of existing plans and policies, the development of new plans and policies, and the rezoning of additional land for residential purposes. These strategies require additional research and analysis, a significant investment by GSC and are therefore considered longer-term strategies that can be explored to respond to social, economic and/or environmental changes experienced in the Shire over the next 20 years.

Strategy 6: Prepare the Gwydir Shire Development Control Plan or similar guideline(s)

Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7

The Gwydir Shire LSPS identifies the need to develop appropriate planning policies for the Shire, including the preparation of a DCP “to guide and support appropriate future growth” as a key action. The successful implementation of many of the strategies outlined in this LHS would benefit from the preparation of a DCP or similar guideline(s). The DCP and/or guideline(s) could apply to the entirety of the Shire or specific localities only, such as the Warialda and Bingara town centres.

The DCP and/or guideline(s) could address the following:

- Diverse housing, including low-rise, multi-dwelling housing.
- Accessible and/or adaptable housing provisions (Adaptable Housing Guidelines).
- Affordable housing.
- Emergency or temporary housing.
- Communal settlements.
- Heritage and local character.
- Environmental performance of new dwellings.
- Water security.

Actions:

It is noted that the development of a DCP and/or guideline(s) is a resource intensive process. Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake additional environmental and/or technical studies, including economic and feasibility analysis, design studies, and local character studies.
- Engage with stakeholders, including the community and relevant government agencies.

Strategy 7: Review opportunities for the provision of worker's accommodation

Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 7

The NSW Government is in the process of refining the Temporary and Seasonal Workers' Accommodation Toolkit (the toolkit) following public exhibition. The final toolkit is expected to be released in 2024. The toolkit aims to introduce standard planning pathways and provide clear and practical guidance to councils for the planning and delivery of worker accommodation, including temporary and/or seasonal workers' dwellings, rural workers' dwellings, and construction workers' dwellings.

The toolkit comprises the following documents and guides:

- a definition of temporary workers' accommodation in the Standard Instrument—Principal Local Environmental Plan
- a local provision for councils that would like to adopt provisions for rural workers' dwellings and/or temporary workers' accommodation in their local environmental plans
- for councils that choose to adopt one or both local provisions: guidance on locational and zoning considerations
- guidance on local complying development provisions for rural workers' dwellings for councils adopting a local provision.

There is the opportunity to review the Gwydir LEP 2013 and other council plans and policies (where relevant) to further support the provision of workers' accommodation. It is noted that the Gwydir LEP 2013 currently includes provisions relating to rural workers' dwellings within the RU1 Primary Production zone. The NSW Government toolkit includes recommendations relating to standard land use definitions, local provisions and development standards that warrant further consideration for the Gwydir Shire.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Review the draft Temporary and Seasonal Workers' Accommodation Toolkit, including the Explanation of Intended Effect (EIE) and draft Guideline.
- Undertake additional research, including stakeholder consultation, to understand the demand for workers' accommodation within the Shire.
- Work with the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (as required) following release of the final toolkit. The EIE notes that the Department intends to carry out the proposed amendments through a SEPP, which will be repealed once relevant changes are made to specific LEPs. Should councils elect not to update the land-use table or introduce/amend local provisions via this pathway, a separate planning proposal would be required.

Strategy 8: Review the provision of residential dwellings on rural and semi-rural land outside town and village centres

Objectives 1, 2 & 7

The NSW Government has a variety of plans and policies, including the Ministerial Direction 9.2, the SEPP (Primary Production) 2021, and the NSW Right to Farm Policy, that aim to protect the agricultural production value of rural land across the state. These, in conjunction with local plans and policies, such as LEP subdivision controls, seek to avoid fragmentation of productive agricultural land, and minimise potential conflicts between agricultural and other land uses, including residential uses. Agriculture is the primary land use and economic activity of the Gwydir Shire, with the Shire being one of the most productive agricultural areas in Australia. There is, therefore, an evident need to protect agricultural land.

Notwithstanding, survey respondents noted that the inability to build a dwelling on a small hobby farm was an issue (Survey Outcomes Report 2023), the desire for smaller semi-rural lots in proximity of a town or village centre. Comments included:

- *“A rural block between 40-100 acres in size with a house with a least three bedrooms located within 10 minutes to town” (Survey Outcomes Report 2023, p.4).*
- *“Very little option for smaller rural blocks and usually highly priced due to small number of blocks available. By the time you cost in a house for the block it generally overcapitalises the property. We are a young family which would like to get a small block but most options for the area are huge land size or town blocks.”*
- *“Few blocks available between 2-5 acres.” (Survey Outcomes Report 2023, p.5).*

Further, the Gwydir Shire LSPS includes an action to “ensure that land use standards for minimum subdivisions sizes in the LEP reflect trends and enable a productive agricultural sector”. MLS controls are not standardised across the state. Councils have the authority to set their own MLS within the parameters outlined by the state plans and policies, and in response to local context. This presents the opportunity to review local controls, including the MLS, to support the considered delivery of residential dwellings on rural and semi-rural land in very specific locations across the Shire.

Review minimum lot sizes for rural and semi-rural land

Under the Gwydir LEP 2013:

- Clause 4.1 permits the subdivision of land to the MLS identified for that land. The MLS for land outside of the town and village centres is 10 ha or 200 ha. The 10 ha MLS aligns with land zoned R5 large-lot residential and the 200 ha MLS aligns with land zoned RU1 primary production.
- Clause 4.1AA permits the subdivision of land for community title schemes, however, only to the MLS so not to result in subdivisions that would create additional dwelling entitlements.
- Clause 4.2 aims to provide flexibility in the application of the MLS in rural zones, however, only for the purposes of primary production and not to contain existing or new residential dwelling(s).
- Clause 4.2A enables the subdivision of land to an appropriate size to meet the needs of permissible uses other than for the purpose of dwelling houses or dual occupancies.
- Clause 4.2B permits the construction of dwelling houses on rural land subject to the lot meeting the MLS.
- Clause 4.2C enables strata subdivision, however, only to the MLS so not to result in subdivisions that would create additional dwelling entitlements.

The MLS control for rural land, zoned RU1, currently limits residential dwellings to lots no less than 200 ha. The current controls take a blanket approach, however, there is the potential to

distinguish between different locations, based on agricultural uses, proximity to existing town centres, as well as services and infrastructure availability, in the application of an MLS for a dwelling. This could result in the introduction of varied MLS for the RU1 zone, or provisions which dictate circumstances where the MLS can be varied to achieve additional housing. Smaller MLS could range between 20 ha to 100 ha at the periphery of the town centres. However, the appropriateness of this strategy for the Gwydir Shire requires further analysis.

Actions:

It is noted that the review of the LEP controls is a resource intensive process. Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake a rural and residential lands study, which:
 - Reviews the appropriateness of the current MLS for RU1 zoned land in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies, including Ministerial Direction 9.2.
 - Reviews the appropriateness of the current RU1 zoning in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies.
 - Undertakes opportunities and constraints mapping for rural land, including (but not limited to) a review of the Important Agricultural Land Mapping (which is being prepared by the Department of Primary Industries), ownership, flood prone land mapping, bushfire prone land mapping, to identify land which may support a smaller MLS.
 - Establishes criteria to support amendments to MLS of rural land.
 - Includes economic and feasibility analysis.
 - Includes recommended planning and design provisions.
 - Forms a position on the appropriateness of amendments to the MLS for RU1 land.
- Prepare a Planning Proposal to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (if required).

Strategy 9: Identify land for rezoning around town centres

Objectives 1 & 2

The Gwydir Shire LSPS notes that “Gwydir has an adequate supply of existing zoned residential land...”. Notwithstanding, changes in social, economic and/or environmental conditions within the Shire over the next 20 years, including population growth, and the housing needs and preferences of current and future residents, may support the rezoning of land at the periphery of existing town and village centres.

Land zoned RU5 Village within the Warialda and Bingara town centres has the capacity to accommodate enough additional dwellings to meet the projected dwelling demand to 2041. Development within these established centres aims to deliver diverse housing on smaller lots, supported by existing infrastructure and services. However, the Survey Outcomes Report (2023) reveals a preference for larger-lot semi-rural properties in proximity to existing town and village centres, and a limited availability of this type of property within the Shire. There is a need to balance development in and around the town centres to address varying housing preferences.

Except for some land zoned R5 Large Lot Residential around Warialda and Bingara, land outside a town or village centre is zoned RU1 Primary Production. The primary aim of the RU1 zone is to protect productive agricultural land. In this zone, a residential dwelling is only permissible on lots with an MLS of 200 ha. In addition to reviewing the MLS for RU1 zoned land around town and village centres (see Strategy 8), there is also the option of rezoning RU1 zoned land to R5, or RU4 Primary Production Small Lots (a new use in the Gwydir LEP 2013). The purpose of the R5 zone is for residential housing in a rural setting, whereas the RU4 zone is for small lot agricultural production with ancillary residential housing. By their nature, these zones have a smaller MLS.

However, like a review of the MLS, the main challenges for councils include:

- Ensuring the ongoing productivity of agricultural land, including avoiding fragmentation of land and managing potential land use conflicts.
- Meeting residents' expectations in terms of utility and service delivery, noting that many of these rural and semi-rural areas are not serviced by reticulated potable water, or sewerage systems. The funding of critical infrastructure is often a barrier to 'greenfield' development.
- Resolving site specific constraints, such as land ownership, flood prone land, bushfire prone land and biodiversity considerations.

However, the appropriateness of this strategy for the Gwydir Shire, and the location of potential future R5 (and/ or RU4) land requires further consideration.

Actions:

It is noted that the review of the LEP controls is a resource intensive process. Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake a rural and residential lands study, which:
 - Reviews the appropriateness of the current RU1 and R5 zoned land in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies, including Ministerial Direction 9.2.
 - Undertakes opportunities and constraints mapping for rural land, including (but not limited to) a review of the Important Agricultural Land Mapping (which is being prepared by the Department of Primary Industries), ownership, flood prone land mapping, bushfire prone land mapping, to identify land which may support a change of zoning.
 - Establishes criteria to support changes to land zoning surrounding the towns.
 - Includes economic and feasibility analysis.
 - Includes recommended planning and design provisions.
 - Forms a position on the appropriateness of amendments to change RU1 land to R5 or RU4.
- Prepare a Planning Proposal to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (if required).



Figure 3.12 Example of large-lot residential dwelling in Burundah Mountain, Warialda

Source: Element, October 2023.

3.3.3 Non-planning mechanisms

In addition to land use planning mechanisms, there are multiple strategies centred around leadership, advocacy and collaboration that can contribute to the successful delivery of housing within the Shire.

Strategy 10: Build relationships and collaborative partnerships with independent and/or Government agencies

Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 7

As noted above, the need for more affordable housing options is likely to increase as rents and house prices continue to rise. Council could consult with local Community Housing Providers (CHP) and other community service providers to identify potential initiatives or opportunities for the Council to intervene in the market to deliver more affordable housing in the Shire. Council should explore the option of partnering with CHPs to construct suitable affordable rental dwellings on land owned by the Council.

Council to consider establishing collaborative relationships with government agencies to jointly identify suitable sites for the delivery of social and affordable housing for people in need. There is also opportunity for Council to play an active role in the provision of services and support for disability clients through a partnership with an approved NDIS provider that provides specialist disability accommodation options.

Through these collaborative partnerships, Council can actively participate in delivering social housing and affordable housing projects and housing for people with disability, expanding the Shire's offering of contemporary, resilient, and well-designed housing solutions.

A current example of an existing partnership between GSC and government agencies is the recent work between GSC, Department of Communities and Justice, Homes NSW and Homes North (CHP) on the Hope Street project, which seeks to deliver new affordable housing in Warialda (refer to the case study below).

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Using the findings in this LHS as a base, consider opportunities for potential future delivery of affordable housing projects on Council owned and other government land to identify opportunities for housing developments for people in need.
- Review development contribution levies and consider reductions or exemptions for affordable housing projects.
- Contact the regional office of LAHC/AHO to discuss options for collaboration on projects to deliver of social or indigenous housing on government or Council owned land.
- Research local CHPs and explore opportunities for partnering to deliver housing for people with disability
- Research local NDIS providers and explore opportunities for partnering to deliver housing for people with disability.



Case study: Affordable Housing Project, 5 Hope Street, Warialda

In response to the affordable housing and rental shortage in the Gwydir Shire, council's planning team have been working to identify suitable partnership opportunities with government and non-government agencies to increase the availability and diversity of housing stock. The planning and building team have been working with the Department of Communities and Justice and Homes North Community Housing Co. Ltd. to develop a low-rise medium density housing project that will deliver affordable rental accommodation for low-income earners that is close to social infrastructure and can house a variety of household types, including single people, families, essential workers, people with disabilities and the elderly.

After exploring several sites for the project, 5 Hope Street, Warialda has been selected as the most suitable location due to its proximity to community facilities and other community housing including aged care units and respite care facilities in Plunket Street. The affordable housing project complements the temporary medical accommodation, respite care facilities, and aged care units already located on Plunkett Street.

The Department of Communities and Justice have funded the site feasibility study and are seeking grant funding for the construction of the houses in partnership with Council and Homes North Community Housing Co. Ltd. Council's contribution to the project would be the gifting of the lot: DP: 834198, 5 Hope Street Warialda, zoned R5, the legalities of which will be subject to a further report and dependent on the securing of funding to progress the project to construction.

Homes North Community Housing Co. Ltd. contribution would be the ongoing management of the properties and tenancies. The council will have input into the priority groups for the affordable housing project. The council would have no-ongoing costs associated with the development or management of tenancies.

Strategy 11: Assist landowners and applicants navigate the planning framework

Objectives 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7

Navigating the NSW planning framework can be complex for landowners. In addition to the timing and considered assessment of lodged development applications, Council can also play an important role in assisting landowners and applicants in understanding what developments can occur on their land and guiding them through the process of obtaining approvals for new housing and residential subdivisions.

A review of the Gwydir Shire Council's webpage indicates limited information is available online for landowners and developers to understand what types of developments may be permissible on their land, the development controls and approval process. To support and promote the delivery of new housing and residential subdivision, Council could provide clear and easy to understand guidance to landowners and applicants about different types of residential development that can be undertaken on their land and the approval pathways available. Information sheets could be prepared to outline the following:

Types of development – Information sheet that explain the zoning regulations and land use guidelines that apply to different areas and clearly outlines the types of residential development that people can do on their land. This information helps landowners understand what types of development are permitted in specific zones.

Development controls – Provide information on the LEP provisions and development controls that guide development of relevant residential uses. This could include setback requirements, maximum building heights, and any other relevant development standards and how Council will assess applications against the controls. Highlight key state policies that applicants need to be aware of and comply with and provide links to state government information sheets and webpages.

Development process – Provide a step-by-step overview of the development process and fees so applicants know what to expect. This could include stages like pre-application, lodging a development application, assessment, community consultation (if applicable), approval and construction.

Documents required – Clearly list the documents and information required for a development application. This might include site plans, architectural drawings, environmental impact assessments, and any other relevant documentation. Outline when an assessment of environmental impacts is necessary and what needs to be addressed in the assessment report.

Infrastructure and Services – Outline the considerations related to infrastructure and services. This includes information on connections to water, sewerage, electricity, and roads, as well as any contributions or requirements for providing essential services to the new development.

Contacts and Resources – Include contact information for relevant council departments or officers who can assist with queries. Provide links to online resources, application forms, and any other useful documents.

In addition to the development application process, the NSW State Government provides substantial information and fact sheets on complying development for dwelling houses, dual occupancies, terraces and manor homes that could also be promoted on Council's website (Strategy 4). Refer to links below:

- Dwelling houses as complying development: [Inland code | Planning \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/inland-code-planning)
- Medium density housing as complying development: [Low-Rise Housing Diversity Code | Planning \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/low-rise-housing-diversity-code-planning)

Establishing and promoting a building and planning advice service at Council could assist landowners and may encourage greater uptake of housing projects by developers.

Hosting information sessions with landowners and developers – By hosting information sessions tailored to landowners and developers, the Council can introduce the range of development options available on vacant lots or larger lots within Bingara and Warialda, and outline the development and subdivision process. These sessions will serve an important opportunity for promoting the types of development Council would like to see in the towns and be a chance to address queries, and foster a collaborative understanding between Council landowners, and developers.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Prepare fact sheets, checklists and other information sources on residential development and subdivision opportunities and processes to assist applicants and developers.
- Establish and promote a building and planning advice service.
- Host information sessions for landowners and developers.

Strategy 12: Actively pursue grants and funding to support the delivery of housing and supporting infrastructure and community services

Objectives 1 to 7

Government grants and funding for regional councils offer numerous benefits that contribute to the overall development, improvement, and sustainability of regional areas. Grants and funding enable Council to deliver new infrastructure, utilities and community services to support housing and population growth, emergency services and disaster preparedness. Financial support may also be available for master planning, consultation, design and business cases to facilitate development within the Shire.

Some potential grant and funding options for consideration by Council are outlined below:

Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program – the Australian Government’s regional Precincts and Partnerships Program has been allocated \$400 million over three years from 2023-24. The program is an open, non-competitive (ie always open) grants process that will support both the development and delivery of precincts across regional, rural and remote Australia. [Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)

Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program – the Australian Government’s Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program seeks to support transformative investment in urban Australia based on the principles of unifying urban places, growing economies and serving communities. The Government has committed \$150 million over three years, commencing in 2024–25. Information on program guidelines, eligibility criteria and the application process will be provided in due course. [Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)

Thriving Suburbs Program – the Australian Government’s Thriving Suburbs Program seeks to deliver investment in locally-driven urban and suburban infrastructure and community projects. The Government has committed \$200 million over two years, commencing in 2024-25. Information on program guidelines, eligibility criteria and the application process will be provided in due course. [Thriving Suburbs Program | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)



Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund – the State Government's Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund is a \$12 million competitive grants program that aims to enable and accelerate the delivery of strategic planning projects, technical studies, and policies that support increased housing supply, affordability, diversity, and resilience in regional NSW. Applications have closed for the latest round of funding, however the DPE website states: “June 2024 - 2026: Further expansion of the Urban Development Program to more high-growth regional areas and annual rounds of Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund. [Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund | Planning \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Stronger Communities Programme – the Australia Government's Stronger Communities Programme provides grants of between \$2,500 and \$20,000 to community organisations and local governments for small capital projects that deliver social benefits for local communities. Examples of projects include upgrades to community halls and clubhouses, equipment for both aged care and day care facilities, men's sheds, inflatable rescue boats and disaster recovery generators. Applications have closed for the latest round of grants, however there may be opportunities in the future once applications for grants open again. [Stronger Communities Programme | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#)

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Using the list provided above as a starting point, research additional grants and funding opportunities to support delivery of housing.
- Keep track of key dates for funding opportunities and submit applications within timeframes.

Strategy 13: Deliver new infrastructure to support the growing and changing population

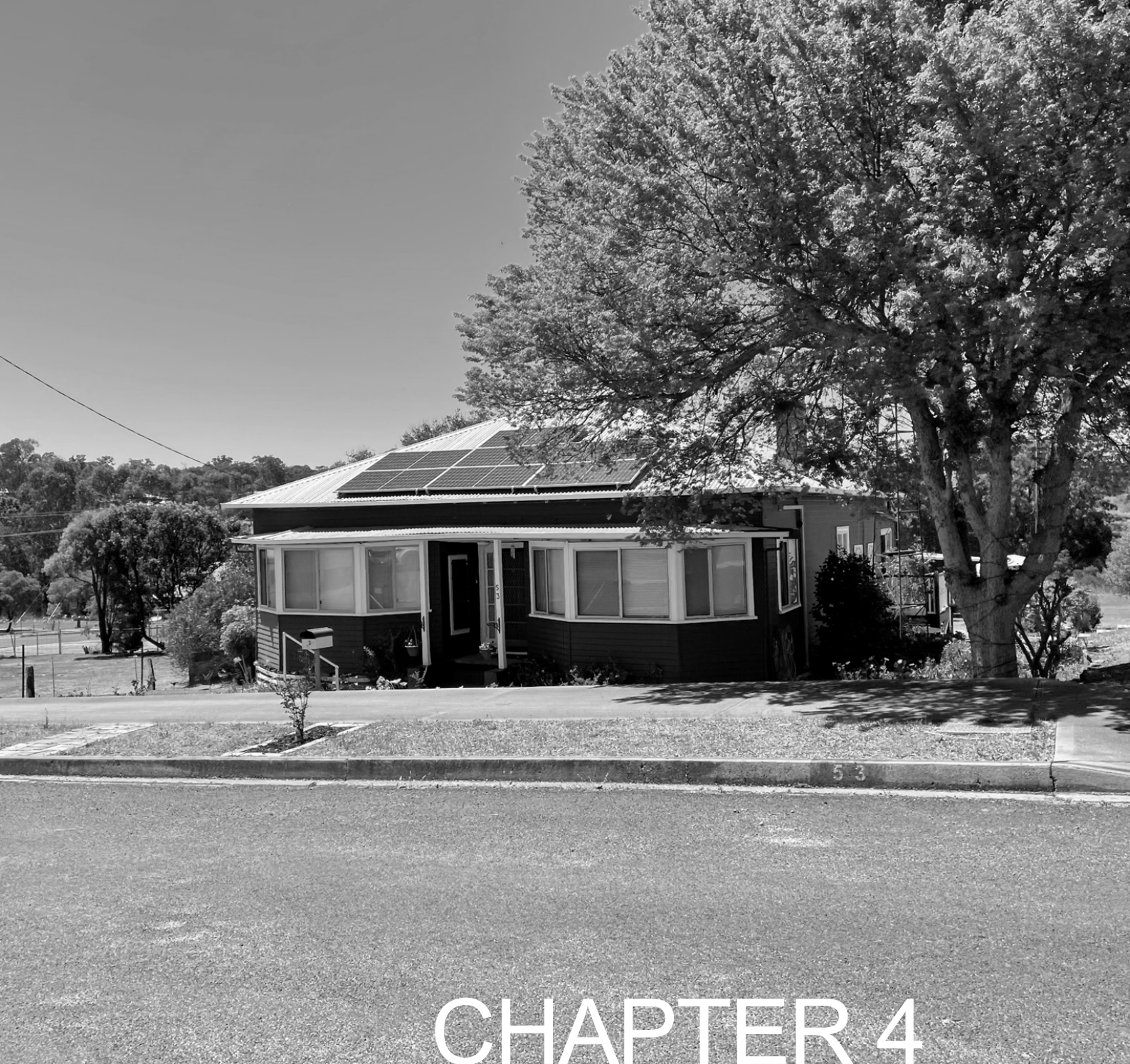
Objectives 6 & 7

Services and infrastructure are key factors when considering new developments and increasing densities. As detailed above, Bingara and Warialda have services in place including water, sewer, roads, pathways/cycleways, drainage and open space, and community services such as schools, child care and medical facilities. However, there is limited funding to maintain and/or expand this network, as Council is dependant on itself to generate funds or through grants. Any new development may place additional pressure and strain on the existing services. It is important to consider the impact on existing services and infrastructure from not only residential developments, but also new industrial and business development proposed in the towns. Council will need to identify existing networks and services along with any proposed new infrastructure that would be required to support new housing and changing demographics.

Actions:

Key actions recommended to progress this strategy include (but are not limited to):

- Undertake an assessment of existing infrastructure and utilities to determine location and capacity and prioritise delivery of new housing in appropriate areas.
- Prepare a Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment to determine need, capacity and shortfalls.



CHAPTER 4

ACTIONS

4 ACTIONS

This chapter outlines a plan for the implementation of the housing strategies, and the delivery of new housing, as well as the monitoring and reporting process for the LHS.

4.1 Implementation and delivery plan

Table 4.1 sets out a plan for how GSC will implement the strategies outlined within this LHS. The strategies are categorised into low, medium, or high priority and short, medium, long-term, or ongoing timeframes.

High priority strategies will be proactively planned for and advanced through GSC's delivery program and annual operational plans. Steps will be taken to find opportunities for and progress medium priority strategies as resources become available. Low priority strategies will progress subject to further research and available resources.

Timeframes provided are an estimate of when a strategy will be substantially progressed, for example, commitments for collaborative agreements, planning approvals and/or funding in place. Short-term is 0-3 years, medium-term if 3 to 6 years and long-term is 6 years or longer.

Table 4.1 Local housing strategy action plan

Strategy	Associated actions	Priority	Timeframe
Land use planning mechanisms: within the current framework			
Strategy 1: Deliver new residential development on government-owned land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake detailed feasibility for opportunity sites to determine the development potential of the site. ▪ Prepare master plans or subdivision plans for identified opportunity sites found to have development potential. ▪ Prepare updated master plans for Warialda (Warialda Community Plan 2008) and Bingara (Bingara Town Strategy 2011) to create a housing vision specific to these town centres, and strategies to improve amenity and services. ▪ Investigate potential opportunities to acquire unused Crown Land Reserves for housing (subject to the progression of Aboriginal land claims). 	High	Medium
Strategy 2: Support the delivery of residential infill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertaken further planning and analysis of potential investigation sites. ▪ Promote redevelopment of sites found to be appropriate for new housing. ▪ Actively assist landowners and/or developers progress the subdivision of land. ▪ Investigate incentives for landowners to redevelop their land. 	High	Short

Strategy	Associated actions	Priority	Timeframe
Strategy 3: Support Torrens title subdivision and infill development within town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refine analysis to identify areas with real subdivision potential based on land ownership, uses, environmental constraints and design requirements. ▪ Expand the analysis to include subdivision of existing lots on the periphery of the town centres to test their capacity to accommodate larger lot sizes of approximately 25,000 sqm. ▪ Investigate incentives for landowners to subdivide their land. This may include a fast-tracked development assessment pathway. ▪ Actively assist landowners and/or developers progress the subdivision of land. 	Medium	Medium
Strategy 4: Promote the delivery of diverse low-rise housing within town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote medium density housing typologies and particularly the use of Part 3B and CDC approval pathway. This may require the preparation of consultation materials and/or the need for additional council resources and/or upskilling of council staff to manage these applications. ▪ Develop development controls for a range of housing types for the Gwydir Shire or specific to the town centres (within a DCP or as a standalone design document) or adopt DPE's Low-Rise Housing Diversity Design Guide for development applications (2020). ▪ Actively assist landowners and/or developers to progress development of their land. This includes assisting applicants to navigate the NSW planning framework. ▪ Employ or train a council certifier to issue CDCs for medium density housing types under the Part 3B Low-Rise Housing Diversity Code of the Codes SEPP. ▪ Council to consider incentive mechanisms to promote more housing diversity. 	Medium	Medium
Strategy 5: Support the delivery of aged-care and seniors housing, and housing for people with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pursue collaborative partnerships and/or funding to progress the Naroo Master Plan, including the expansion of the hostel and development of seniors independent living units. ▪ Identify land capable of supporting aged-care and/or seniors living developments or housing for people with disability. ▪ Support the provision of additional infrastructure and services. 	High	Medium

Strategy	Associated actions	Priority	Timeframe
Land use planning mechanisms: outside the current framework			
Strategy 6: Prepare the Gwydir Shire Development Control Plan or similar guideline(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake additional environmental and/or technical studies, including economic and feasibility analysis, design studies, and local character studies. ▪ Engage with stakeholders, including the community and relevant government agencies. ▪ Prepare documents in accordance with relevant standards and formats. 	Medium	Medium
Strategy 7: Review opportunities for the provision of worker's accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the draft Temporary and Seasonal Workers' Accommodation Toolkit, including the Explanation of Intended Effect (EIE) and draft Guideline. ▪ Undertake additional research, including stakeholder consultation, to understand the demand for workers' accommodation within the Shire. ▪ Work with the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (as required) following release of the final toolkit. The EIE notes that the Department intends to carry out the proposed amendments through a SEPP, which will be repealed once relevant changes are made to specific LEPs. Should councils elect not to update the land-use table or introduce/amend local provisions via this pathway, a separate planning proposal would be required. 	Medium	Medium
Strategy 8: Review the provision of residential dwellings on rural and semi-rural land outside town and village centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a rural and residential lands study, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviews the appropriateness of the current MLS for RU1 zoned land in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies, including Ministerial Direction 9.2. - Reviews the appropriateness of the current RU1 zoning in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies. - Undertakes opportunities and constraints mapping for rural land, including (but not limited to) a review of the Important Agricultural Land Mapping (which is being prepared by the Department of Primary Industries), ownership, flood prone land mapping, bushfire prone land mapping, to identify land which may support a smaller MLS. - Establishes criteria to support amendments to MLS of rural land. - Includes economic and feasibility analysis. - Includes recommended planning and design provisions. - Forms a position on the appropriateness of amendments to the MLS for RU1 land. ▪ Prepare a Planning Proposal to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (if required). 	Medium	Medium

Strategy	Associated actions	Priority	Timeframe
Strategy 9: Identify land for rezoning around town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake a rural and residential lands study, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviews the appropriateness of the current RU1 and R5 zoned land in relation to relevant State and local plans and policies, including Ministerial Direction 9.2. - Undertakes opportunities and constraints mapping for rural land, including (but not limited to) a review of the Important Agricultural Land Mapping (which is being prepared by the Department of Primary Industries), ownership, flood prone land mapping, bushfire prone land mapping, to identify land which may support a change of zoning. - Establishes criteria to support changes to land zoning surrounding the towns. - Includes economic and feasibility analysis. - Includes recommended planning and design provisions. - Forms a position on the appropriateness of amendments to change RU1 land to R5 or RU4. ▪ Prepare a Planning Proposal to amend the Gwydir LEP 2013 (if required). 	High	Medium

Non-planning mechanisms

Strategy 10: Build relationships and collaborative partnerships with independent and/or Government agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the findings in this LHS as a base, consider opportunities for potential future delivery of affordable housing projects on Council owned and other government land to identify opportunities for housing developments for people in need. ▪ Review development contribution levies and consider reductions or exemptions for affordable housing projects. ▪ Contact the regional office of LAHC/AHO to discuss options for collaboration on projects to deliver of social or indigenous housing on government or Council owned land. ▪ Research local CHPs and explore opportunities for partnering to deliver housing for people with disability. ▪ Research local NDIS providers and explore opportunities for partnering to deliver housing for people with disability. 	High	Medium
Strategy 11: Assist landowners and applicants navigate the planning framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare fact sheets, checklists and other information sources on residential development and subdivision opportunities, and approval processes to assist applicants and developers. ▪ Establish and promote a building and planning advice service. ▪ Host information sessions for landowners and developers. 	High	Short

Strategy	Associated actions	Priority	Timeframe
Strategy 12: Actively pursue grants and funding to support the delivery of housing and supporting infrastructure and community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using the list provided above as a starting point, research additional grants and funding opportunities to support delivery of housing. ▪ Keep track of key dates for funding opportunities and submit applications within timeframes. 	High	Short
Strategy 13: Deliver new infrastructure to support the growing and changing population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertake an assessment of existing infrastructure and utilities to determine location and capacity and prioritise delivery of new housing in appropriate areas. ▪ Prepare a Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment to determine need, capacity and shortfalls. 	High	Short

4.2 Monitoring and review

GSC will monitor, review and report on this LHS as follows:

- Annual reviews in accordance with the existing Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework under the *Local Government Act 1993*, of the progress of the strategies, and the implementation and delivery plan.
- Five-yearly reviews of the evidence base and housing supply and demand in the context of local and state strategic planning frameworks, including the Gwydir Shire LSPS and the New England North West Regional Plan 2041.
- Ten-year review of the LHS to ensure the 20-year vision statement, objectives and strategies remain relevant.

