



Figure 1: Mural on Theatre Royal at Balranald in Market Street.

Figure 2: Mural on Theatre Royal at Balranald in Market Street.

SETTLEMENT STRATEGY



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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This Settlement Strategy has been prepared with the aim of encouraging discussion around required upgrades & growth opportunities that can create long-term sustainable growth for each settlement and the Shire as a whole.

A range of ideas have been collated & presented that do NOT necessarily reflect the position of Council and may NOT have the funding support for all to be achieved. The aim is to prioritise the community and council ideas so that the available funding is best directed.

## 1. Settlement Strategy

This Settlement Strategy ('Strategy') seeks to review the two (2) key settlements in the Shire of Balranald - the Town of Balranald & the Village of Euston - to briefly consider their growth potential & opportunities for urban enhancements. This seeks to build upon the findings of Habitat Planning (2006) *Balranald Shire – Strategic Framework Plan* ('2006 Strategy') & other more recent studies.

Balranald & Euston have the more significant growth pressures & demands for urban amenity in the Shire (though other villages may also be experiencing development pressures). The other settlements are of a smaller size & will be addressed through other plans & strategies.

This Settlement Strategy acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout the Shire of Balranald & their continuing connection to their Country & communities. We pay respect to them, their cultures, & to elders past, present & emerging.

Figure 3: Map of NSW showing location of Balranald Shire.



## 2. Broad Objectives

Some broad objectives for sustainable growth & settlement enhancement that influence this Strategy (but may not involve specific works) are to:

- Continue to leverage the unique position & identity of Balranald Shire at the edge of river floodplains & outback ecologies (like Mildura);
- Build on each settlement's strengths in presentation, attractions, & amenity for residents & visitors;
- Facilitate targeted grant funding opportunities supported by strategic plans & costings & community/stakeholder engagement;

- Continue to upgrade the [www.visitbalranald.com.au](http://www.visitbalranald.com.au) website with improved social media integration & targeted campaigns in line with key themes;
- Engage & work with local community groups to leverage new opportunities & resources & promote a greater sense of ownership & maintenance of facilities & attractions;
- Engage & work with local Aboriginal groups to protect, recognise & celebrate the area's indigenous culture & heritage, understanding of the local ecology, & enhance cultural education, engagement & management opportunities;
- Continue to leverage the region's agricultural strengths with value-add & processing, new technology & possibly local training/education;
- Leverage key infrastructure including road & airport connections & protect these from sensitive uses / with suitable buffers;
- Leverage & grow key health & education facilities with supporting medical, aged care, child care, & recreational facilities to promote a diverse community & reduce the impact of an ageing population;
- Work with adjacent Councils to determine key freight & visitor routes & provide supporting signage, information & 24-hour facilities in line with an updated Economic and/or Tourism & Marketing Strategy;
- Continue to monitor & adjust to new mining & extractive industry opportunities with potential for some local industrial growth, a ring-road at Balranald for improved safety & truck servicing facilities;
- Build on recreational & lifestyle opportunities to maintain a healthy population & attract needed professions & skills;
- Review environmental opportunities in & around the town (particularly the Commons & river-front) to protect, restore, & enhance flora, fauna & ecological linkages & enable appropriate visitation;
- Continue to review water security options as well as environmental flows of key watercourses & implement water re-use strategies;
- Avoid, minimise or mitigate risks & impacts from natural hazards, particularly for new developments & investments (and to protect key freight routes);
- Ensure appropriate capture of contributions for state significant & high-impact development proposals in the Shire & adjacent LGAs & leverage temporary & permanent employment growth opportunities through dedicated facilities such as the temporary workers facility. Establish Community Trust Fund(s) to benefit the community in perpetuity;
- Protect & leverage the town's attraction as a caring community with strong community spirit & low-crime levels.

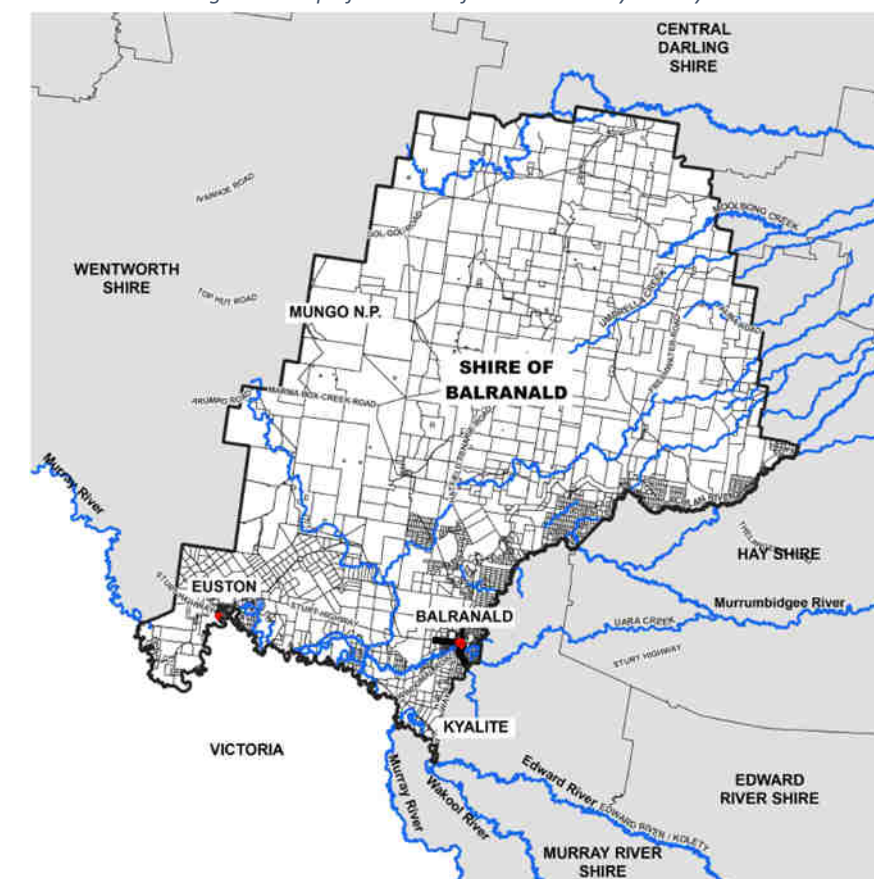
Please see Council's *Community Strategy Plan 2027* for more details.

## 3. Shire of Balranald

The Shire has an area of ~21,699km<sup>2</sup>, a population (in 2016) of 2,287 people, a median age of 41, & a median weekly personal income of \$624. The largest areas of employment are agriculture (grape growing, sheep/cattle farming, grain growing), health care & local government.

*Note: This data will be updated in mid-2022 by the 2021 Census.*

Figure 4: Map of the Shire of Balranald & key river systems.



## 4. Settlement Overviews

### 4.1. Location & Road Distances

The Town of Balranald is located in the south-eastern corner of the Shire along the Murrumbidgee River. Driving distances are approximately:

- 35km (20-25 mins) to Kyalite (via Yanga Way);
- 50km (30-35 mins) to Tooleybuc/VIC border (via Yanga Way);
- 78km (45-50 mins) to Euston (via Sturt Hwy);
- 92km (1 hour) to Swan Hill (VIC) (via Yanga Way/Stony Crossing Rd) (nearest major retail/service centre);
- 130km (1 hour 20 mins) to Hay (via Sturt Hwy);
- 160km (1 hour 50 mins) to Mildura (VIC) (via Sturt Hwy);
- 275km (2 hour 45 mins) to Griffith (via Sturt Hwy & Warrawidgee);
- 396km (4 hour) to Wagga Wagga (via Sturt Hwy);
- 430km (4 hour 40 mins) to Melbourne (via Swan Hill);
- 530km (5 hour 50 mins) to Adelaide (SA) via Tooleybuc/Tailem Bend).

The Village of Euston is located in the south-western corner of the Shire on the Murray River, opposite the Town of Robinvale (VIC). Driving distances are approximately:

- 6km (5-7 mins) to Robinvale (via Sturt Hwy/ Murray Valley Hwy B400);
- 78km (45-50 mins) to Balranald (via Sturt Hwy);
- 80km (50-55 mins) to Mildura (via Sturt Hwy) (nearest major centre);
- 138km (1hr 30 mins) to Swan Hill (VIC) (via Murray Valley Hwy);
- 470km (5 hours) to Adelaide (SA) (via Sturt Hwy);
- 470km (5 hours) to Melbourne (VIC) (via Robinvale Seal Lake Rd).



## 4.2. History & Context

A comprehensive history, ecology & economics of Balranald & Euston is not part of the scope of these works though this is covered in part in the 2006 Strategy. It is important to recognise the distinct location near the junction of the five (5) largest inland NSW river systems that would have supported a long & vibrant history of Aboriginal peoples, the diversity of ecological & climatic regions across the Shire, the importance of the floodplains to ecology & agriculture, the development of a mix of intensive & extensive agriculture, the use of the rivers as a key transport route, & now the growth of mineral sands & renewable energy.

It is important that Council build on an accurate collation of each settlement's history & context when deciding on works as part of the Settlement Strategy (including signage, public art, heritage & landscape / master planning / street upgrades). See Section 8.3 – Heritage & Culture below for more details.

## 4.3. Transport - Rail, Road & River

Balranald is located on the Murrumbidgee River, just upstream from its connection to the Murray River to the south-west. The river & its floodplain extend back across the Hay Plain. Euston is located directly on the Murray River. The settlements originally relied heavily on the rivers for transport but over time this has been replaced by road transport.

As with many towns in proximity to the Murray River, Balranald & Euston were historically connected more with Victoria than Sydney. Their associated railway lines were run in-part by the Victorian rail authorities (see Figure showing rail lines below).

Balranald has a disused rail siding to the south-east of town that used to connect down to Moulamein/ Barnes/Echuca. Euston had a connection over the Murray River to Robinvale & then south-east to Bendigo. Neither line is currently active or likely to be reused in the foreseeable future.

Figure 5: Excerpt Victorian Railway Lines Map March 1999 ([www.victorianrailways.net](http://www.victorianrailways.net)).



Roads have now become the major transport links. Both Balranald & Euston are located on Sturt Highway (A20) that connects the Hume Highway east of Wagga Wagga with Mildura (VIC) & Adelaide (SA). It is a

vital heavy freight/agricultural route. It passes through the main street of Balranald & to the edge of the village centre of Euston.

Euston has the added benefit of also connecting to the Murray Valley Highway (B400) through Robinvale to Swan Hill, Kerang, Echuca, Rutherglen, across to NSW/Mt Kosciusko.

For Balranald, Yanga Way to the South is becoming increasingly important for transport, particularly as it is a slightly faster route to Adelaide via Tooleybuc/Ouyen & a growing renewable energy catchment.

Ivanhoe Rd to the North of Balranald provides an important connection to the north of the Shire & to Mungo National Park.

## 4.4. Electricity & Renewable Energy Zone

Figure 6: South-West REZ Draft Declaration Indicative Location ([www.energy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au)).



As part of the NSW Government's Electricity Strategy, five (5) Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) were recently identified including one in the South West of NSW overlapping parts of the Balranald Shire (Figure above).

Figure 7: Location map of EnergyConnect high-voltage electricity lines NSW/SA/Vic (Fact Sheets Sept 2021).



The South-West REZ draft declaration is on exhibition in early 2022. The South-West REZ will have capacity for up to 2.5 GW of electricity (an increase of 1.2GW). The South-West REZ is based in part on the construction of a new electricity interconnector between Wagga Wagga in NSW & Robertstown in SA with a smaller connection to Victoria called 'EnergyConnect'.

This aims to increase reliability/security of the grid between states – but also to provide additional capacity for renewable energy generation (wind & solar) to connect to the grid (see below). It will also upgrade the 330kV transmission line to 500kV between Wagga Wagga & Dinawan.

Balranald Shire has two of the largest solar farm projects in the southern hemisphere currently under construction including:

- Sunraysia: 255 MW, \$350 million construction;
- Limondale: 349 MW, \$650 million construction.

Windlab Burrawong Wind Farm with up to 107 turbines is also in the early stages of approval with a recent Environmental Impact Statement. It is expected to require up to 150 Full Time Employees (each needing 1 bedroom accommodation) with 12-24 month construction period (earliest start 2024) plus ancillary/support/executive accommodation.

In addition, there are a number of large renewable projects in neighbouring LGAs that may have flow-on impacts/benefits for Balranald Shire (e.g., Keri Keri Acciona Project (Murray River Shire/80km west of Hay) 1GW wind with 176 turbines adjacent to Sturt Highway/ 400MW Solar & battery energy storage – up to \$2.3B/ commencing est. 2024).

All of the above projects are expected to result in significant increases in employment with Balranald potentially providing a Temporary Workers Camp for several of these projects. This camp has an extension on its current approval.

The Rental Market paper suggests that 350 workers will be housed in the worker accommodation village & a further 150 will be required for the Windfarm Development again in the 3-5 year timeframe. Up to 500 casual workers would require accommodation for the next decade.

## 4.5. Mineral Potential

The Figure below from the Common Ground website notes that there are a number of titles for mineral exploration for mineral sands (zircon & titanium dioxide minerals in the form of rutile, ilmenite & leucoxene) north of Balranald connecting via the Ivanhoe Road.

Some key investors include the Iluka Resources Ltd (Balranald Project & Nepean deposits), Tronox Mining Aust. Ltd (Atlas-Campaspe) & Murray Basin Titanium Pty Ltd. Multiple projects are currently being investigated & construction has commenced.

Whilst most minerals may be trucked to Ivanhoe to access rail – much of the construction equipment, support & possibly employment may come from Balranald & the surrounding areas. This may place pressure on Ivanhoe Rd & may result in the need for improved truck routes bypassing local streets in Balranald (see discussion below). The Draft IWCM (March 2020) suggests that:

*Iluka Ltd has agreed to base approximately 150 workers in Balranald (using the existing worker accommodation village) during the extraction test phase of its project, which would increase once full production commences. Tronox Ltd is located further afield & will house most of its workforce on site, although as many as 50 people are expected to live in the town & commute to the project.*



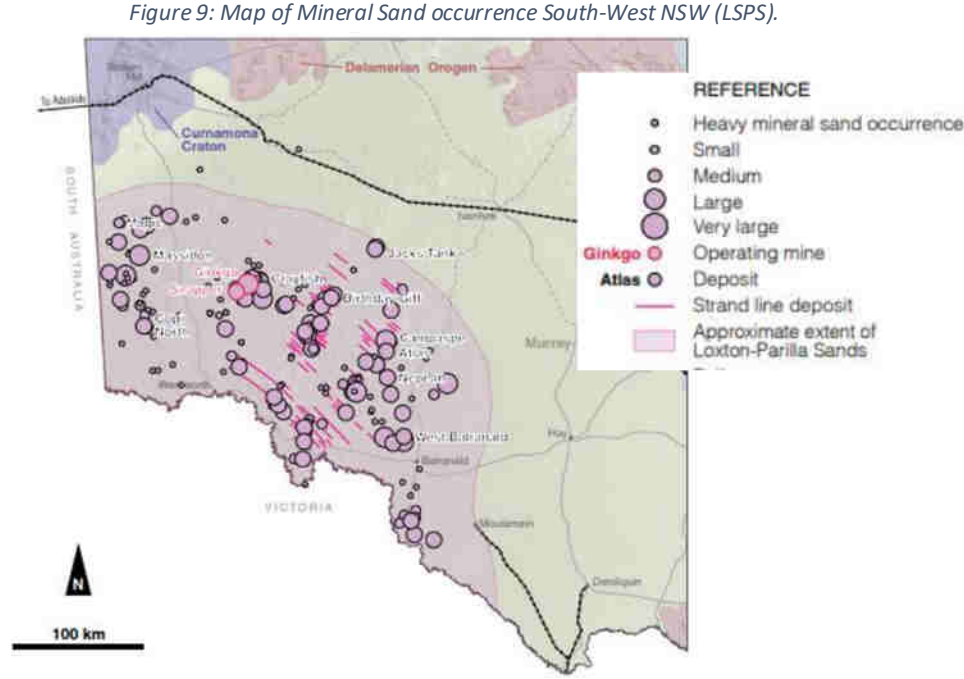
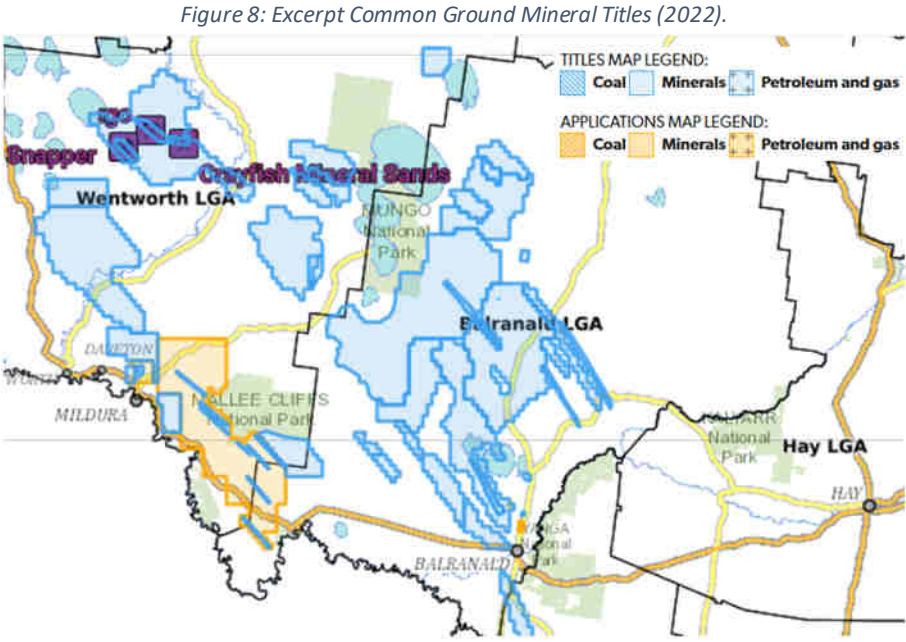


Figure 10: Summary of Key Regional Statistics for the Murray Region (including Balranald Shire) (RDA)

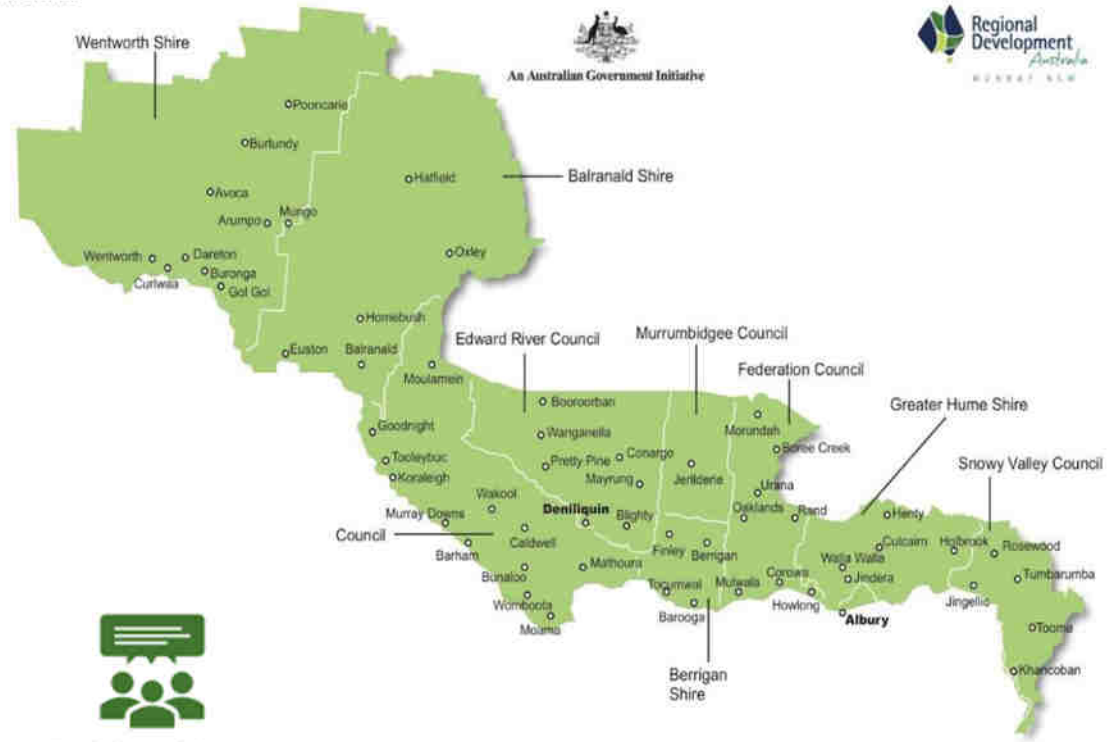
## OUR REGION

### Key regional statistics



\*Ranking: 1 is best, 10 is poor.

Ref: Regional Australia Institute and ABS Census 2016, Accessed June 2019





## 4.6. Agriculture

Agriculture continues to be one of the main economic drivers for the Shire. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural & Resource Economics & Sciences (ABARES) website provides data at the regional scale for the MURRAY region as shown in the figures below. As this is an urban study, we have not spent time on detailed analysis of agricultural data – other than to summarise its significance to the Shire & the region (see the ABARES figures below) in terms of employment & economic growth.

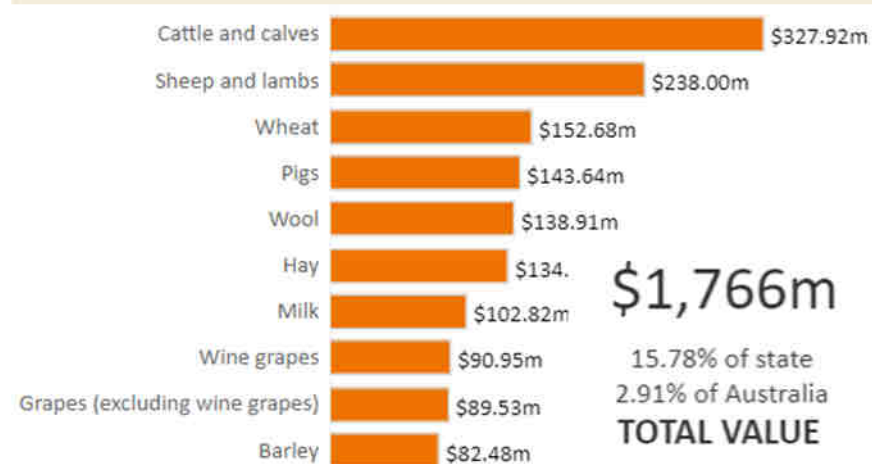
Figure 11: Agricultural figures for Murray Region SA4 (ABARES Website 2022)

This dashboard shows the latest data for agriculture, forestry and fisheries by SA4 and Greater Capital Cities regions

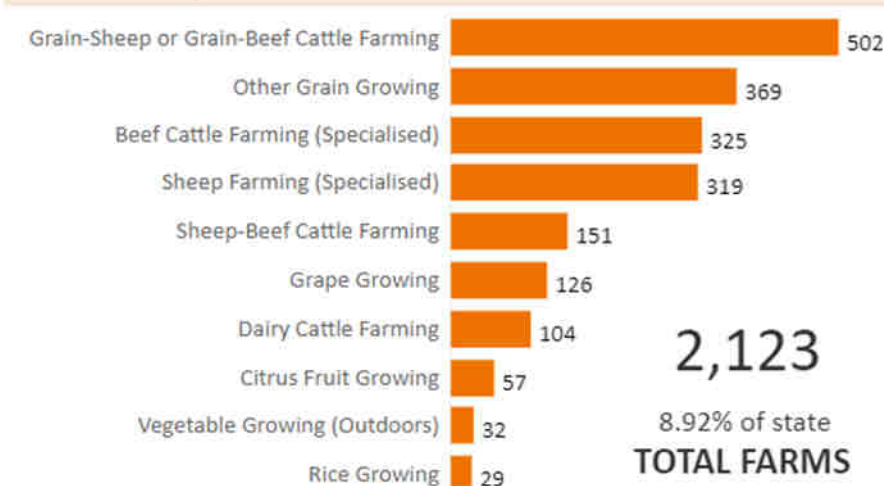
Published: Mar 17, 2022 Updated: Apr 8, 2022

### Agriculture sector

#### Top commodities by value



#### Number and type of farms



### Employment in agriculture

Cropping	821
Livestock	3,025
Horticulture	559
Other agriculture	811
<b>Total employed in agriculture</b>	<b>5,216</b>

### Employment profile

Health Care and Social Assistance	9,234
Retail Trade	6,271
Construction	5,995
Other Services	4,424
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	4,319
Education and Training	4,213
Manufacturing	4,150
Public Administration and Safety	4,002
Accommodation and Food Services	3,616
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	3,392
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2,508
Wholesale Trade	1,866
Financial and Insurance Services	1,290
Administrative and Support Services	1,060
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	990
Information Media and Telecommunications	649
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	557
Mining	317
Arts and Recreation Services	120

### Land use

Total area of region: 9,779,488 ha		
Agriculture	Grazing native vegetation	50.03%
	Modified pastures	13.94%
	Cropping	16.48%
	Horticulture	0.23%
Not agriculture	Nature conservation and minimal use	11.20%
	Production native forests	0.28%
	Plantation forests (commercial and other)	0.36%
	Intensive uses	0.66%
	Water	6.82%

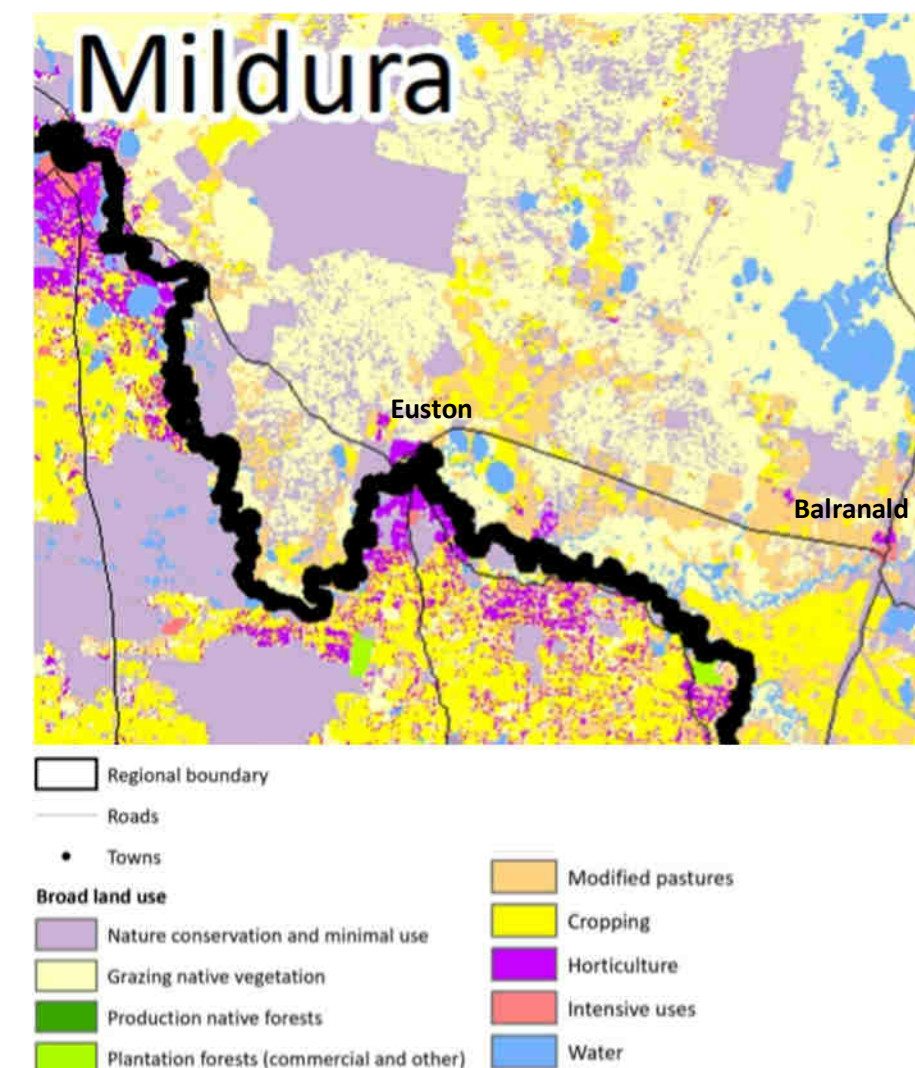
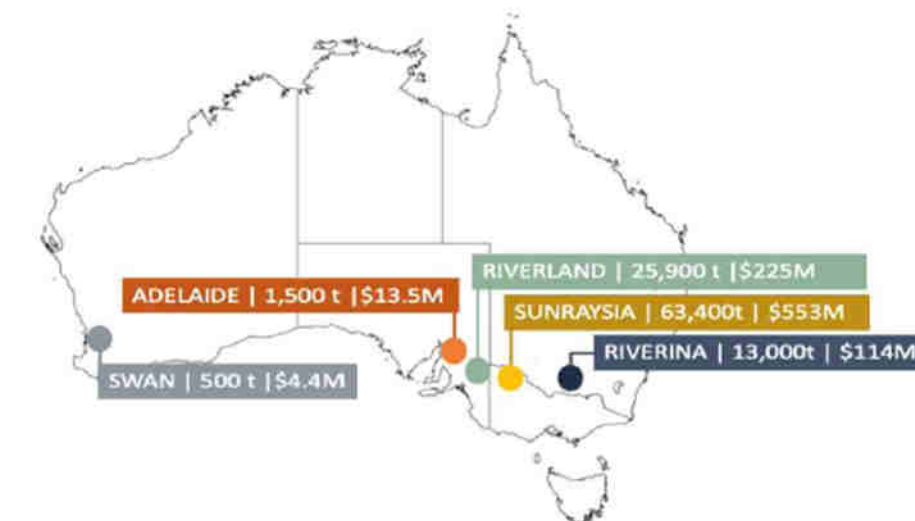


Figure 12: Almond production in Australia 2019/2020 (RMCG 2021).





Almond growing is a significant growth area in the Sunraysia area & Balranald Shire (RMCG 2021). Text in italics is taken from population projections in the Draft IWCM (March 2020).

*The last census occurred before the current wide-scale conversion of former pastoral & cropping land to intensive agriculture (primarily almonds & pistachios, with some viticulture). This has generated an estimated 300 temporary jobs which are expected to remain for several years into the future as more land in the southern parts of the Shire is transitioned to higher value production.*

*Of greater long-term significance is that the main orchard operator (Australian Farming Services) is planning to create about 200 permanent operational jobs within the next 3 years, primarily white- & grey-collar roles, of which Balranald is hoping to secure at least half as permanent residents. Assuming an average household size of 4 would add 400 permanent residents long-term on top of an unknown number of short-term casuals.*

Almond growing is becoming increasingly consolidated with larger farms. 8000ha of almonds have been planted in the Balranald district with over 6000ha nearing production in the next 1-2 years. The Almond Production paper references the Australian statistics of 53000Ha producing 9560 jobs at 0.18jobs /Ha. Utilising the same production rates would result in 476 direct jobs in the Balranald District. The ratio of direct jobs to indirect jobs (Ancillary services) varies considerably but could be anywhere between 46% to 67%. This is expected to result in significant job growth, particularly during harvest time (Feb-April).

*In addition, the almond industry is facing a looming shortage of processing capacity in the Murray Valley region with several new plants required to be built within the next 3-5 years.*

#### 4.7. Other Projects/ Ancillary Growth

The Draft IWCM (March 2020) suggests several flow-on-effects from the projects listed above, including, but not limited to:

*Applying a very modest multiplier of 1.25:1 we could expect another 100 permanent jobs to be created to service the 400 permanent jobs described above. Some casual/temporary jobs would also be created to service the equivalent temporary workforce.*

*Longer term, the completion of the Wool Track arterial road from western Queensland to western Victoria (via Bourke, Cobar & Balranald ....) will generate increased north-south transport & logistics demands which will intersect with existing east-west heavy vehicle corridors (Sturt & Mallee Highways) at Balranald. Council sees Balranald as ideally placed to be the major transportation hub of southwest NSW in the 10-20 year timeframe, providing permanent jobs to replace some of the shorter-term jobs referred to above.*

**Note:** In 2019 the TfNSW review suggested the existing Tooleybuc Bridge will be upgraded (not replaced). Work on the bridge commenced in June 2022 (<https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/tooleybuc-bridge>).

#### 4.8. Summary of Challenges/Threats

However, there are also a number of threats to economic & population growth in the Shire that include, but are not limited to:

- Climate change & impacts on agriculture & sustainability;
- Water security for agriculture & potable water supplies;
- High dependence on agriculture which can be cyclical;
- Value capture by other LGAs, including larger settlements such as Swan Hill & Mildura that may have higher level services/infrastructure to attract industrial/business/retail growth;
- Long travel distances & limitations to existing infrastructure including transport & communication;
- An ageing population;
- Lack of access to higher education & training (Vic TAFE Swan Hill 95km; Mildura 150km; NSW TAFE Deniliquin 205km; Wagga Wagga 400km) that may partly result in loss of young/educated workers;
- Lack of skilled (local) labour makes it difficult to capture new employment opportunities & exacerbates use of temporary workforces (FIFO/DIDO) for major projects;
- Lack of available & suitable housing (both to buy & rental) is exacerbating the difficulties faced with attracting skilled workers to fill local positions & for major projects;

### 5. Sustainable Development

The aim is always to maximise local employment & economic opportunities to support & grow the community. With pressures on regional towns & villages, there needs to be clear strategies to support local business, keep local shops open, maintain strong main street character & landscape/amenity, & promote tourism.

Support for these businesses should form part of a broader **Tourism & Economic Study** (the local **Destination Management Plan** is currently being prepared).

Whilst this Settlement Strategy is primarily about areas for urban growth, street upgrades & urban design enhancements – the ratepayers' money needs to be spent wisely to create desirable environments for people to live, work & play & leverage greater economic activity. Investments should always be supported by a good business case, sustainable long-term use, ease-of-maintenance, & strong support & ownership from the community.



6. Population & Demographics

Note the scope of this Strategy does not include a full demographic review & the 2021 Census figures are expected out in the next few months. This also builds on the review in the 2006 Strategy.

6.1. Local Government Area Historic Population

The Graphs opposite show, like many regional Local Government Areas (LGAs), the LGA population has varied slightly over the last 40 years with increases up until the mid-1990s & then slow decline. There was some stabilisation at the last census with an LGA population of ~2,287 people.

6.2. Balranald Snapshot & Historic Population

At the 2016 Census, Balranald (Urban Centres/Localities UCL115004) had a population of 1,159 people (static since 2011) with 615 private dwellings, a median age of 46 with 21.3% over the age of 65 years, & 13.3% were Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islanders. Council disputes the population figure & suggests they have a stable transient population not counted plus recent growth.

Like the Shire population, the measured population of Balranald has varied over time but declined slightly in the last 16-20 years & recently stabilised. It still retains a core population that is large enough to support local services with a catchment for a wider area of the Shire.

Note: The UCL Area (see Census website) only includes part of the Zone RU5 area & misses some of the population around the perimeter & along Malcolm St so the actual population may be slightly higher.

6.3. Euston Snapshot & Historic Population

At the 2016 Census, Euston (Urban Centres/Localities UCL121039) had a population of 510 people (up from 440 in 2011) with 214 private dwellings, a median age of 36 with only 12% over the age of 65 years, with a mix of mostly European ancestry & 7.2% were Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islanders.

Note: It is important to note that the Euston UCL catchment area only includes the Zone RU5 Village area, yet there are a significant number of dwellings in the adjacent

Euston has exhibited fairly consistent population growth over the last 20 years with a positive trendline. Changes in climate & resulting agricultural production are more likely to affect smaller populations where agriculture is the dominant employment.

6.4. Population Growth & Projections

The significant number of key growth drivers & major projects that have commenced or are planned for the sub-region are expected to have major flow-on growth effects for the Shire.

The 2019 Population Projections by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (DPIE) opposite (that occurred prior to many of these projects been announced or evaluated) suggest that the LGA is projected to increase its population at an average annual growth rate of 1.2% over 2016-2041.

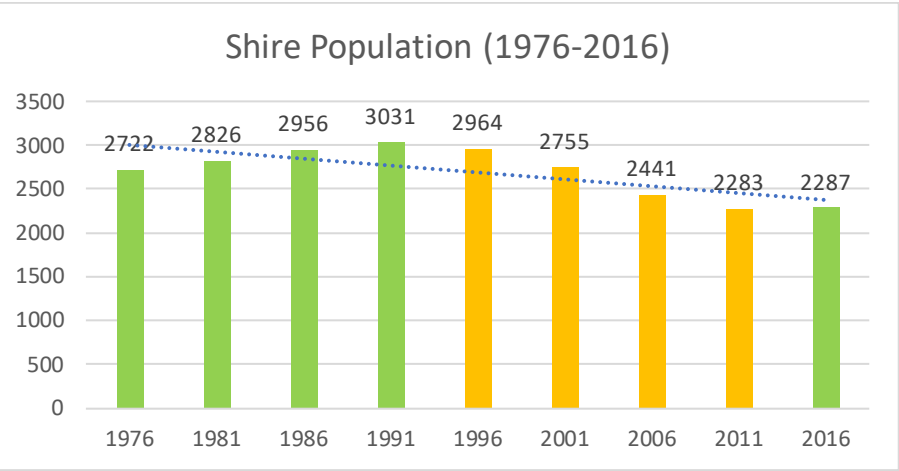


Figure 13: Graph of Balranald Shire Population 1976-2016 (Census data).

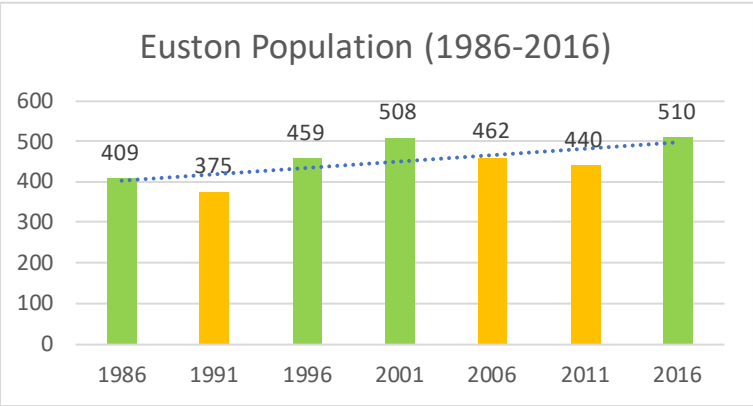
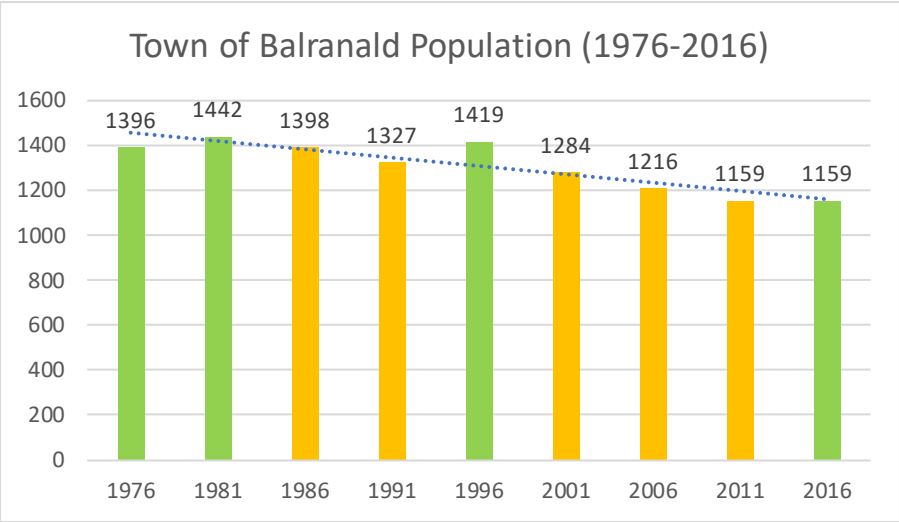


Figure 14: Age difference table between Balranald Shire & NSW (LSPS).

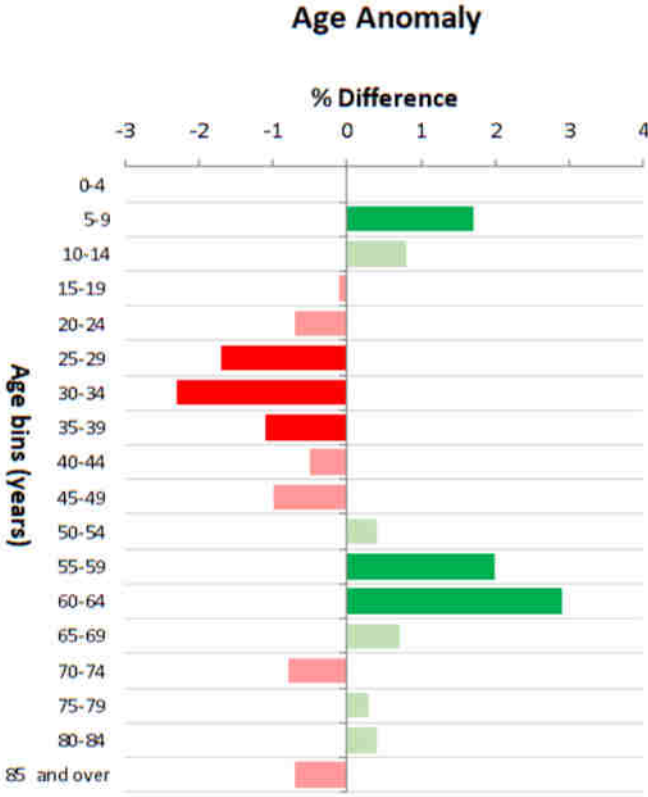


Figure 4: Age difference table  
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics





Figure 17: NSW Government (2019) Population Projection for Balranald Shire 2016-2041.

	2016-2021	2021-2026	2026-2031	2031-2036	2036-2041	2016-2041 (25 Years)
Population Change	100	100	200	200	250	850
Av. Annual Growth Rate	0.80%	0.80%	1.50%	1.40%	1.60%	1.20%
Births	200	200	200	200	250	1050
Deaths	100	100	100	150	150	600
Natural Change	100	100	100	50	100	450
Net Migration	0	0	100	100	100	300

Council has recently updated its own population projection for the Town of Balranald based on the employment requirements & flow on affects that are currently informing the Draft IWCM (March 2020) (text in italics below & table opposite). It suggests a permanent additional population of 600 people & 430-880 temporary population (total of 1130-1480 additional people above the 2019 projections at peak population).

*Assuming that most of the mineral sand jobs & half the ancillary services jobs are held by single person households & the rest by a 4-person household, the underlying permanent population growth would be in the range 1200-1500 on top of which there could realistically be a demand for up to 1000 temporary residents at peak times.*

*The temporary residents would be required primarily between November to April with some overlap during construction & planting phases for the full 12 months, say 200 for 12 months & 800 during the summer /Autumn seasons, for the next 10 to 15 years.*

## 6.5. Dwellings & Housing Types

See Figures opposite for details.

**Dwelling Growth:** Both Balranald & Euston have had a steady growth in private dwellings over the last 40 years. Dwelling growth is somewhat correlated to population growth but is also likely to be generated by decreasing household sizes.

An anomaly for Balranald is the reduction in 2011 but this may have been due to the census area changing. An anomaly for Euston is the slight reduction since 2001 but this may have been due to the census area changing or more dwellings in the adjacent rural residential area (not counted).

The core issue is the projected under-supply when the total demand for dwelling increases substantially over the next 5-10 years for a number of local & state-significant projects.

**Unoccupied Dwellings:** There has been some increase in unoccupied dwellings over the last 40 years in Balranald & Euston. There is some potential for take-up of these unoccupied dwellings for population growth assuming there are no other reasons these dwellings are unoccupied.

Figure 18: NSW Government (2019) Population Projections for Balranald Shire 2016-2041.

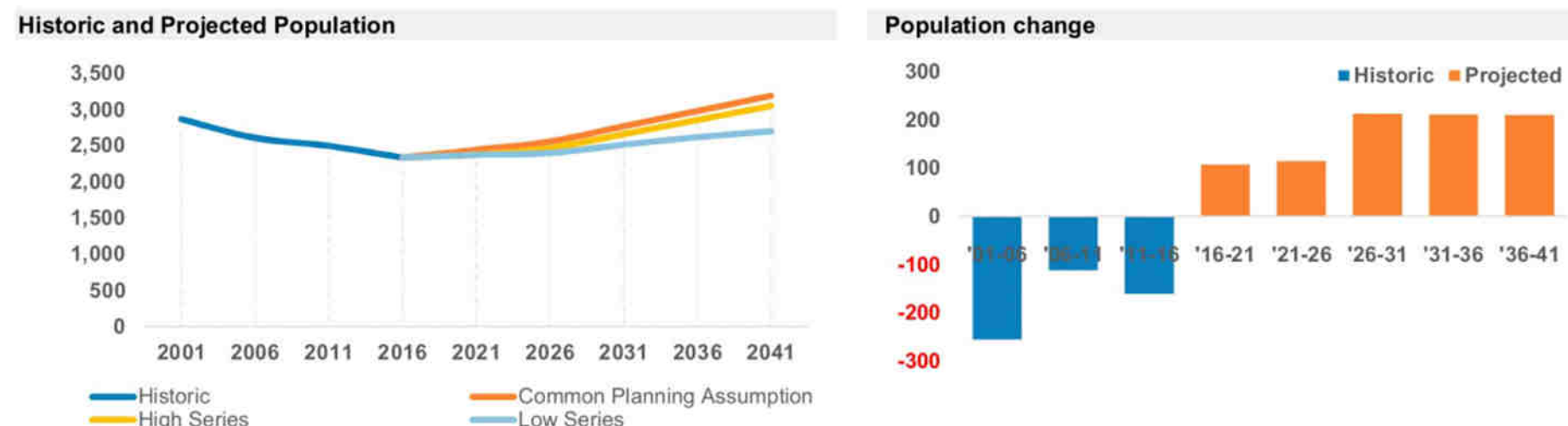


Figure 19: Council's (2022) Population Projection for the Town of Balranald 2021-2051 (Draft IWCM).

Population group	Population present	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	2046	2051
Permanent population (DPE 2019)	All year	1,141	1,224	1,365	1,503	1,639	1,774	1,903
Almond full time management population	All year	0	230	230	230	230	230	230
Renewable energy management population	All year	0	70	70	70	70	70	70
Mineral sands management population	All year	0	70	70	70	70	70	70
Ancillary population as result of above	All year	0	230	230	230	230	230	230
<b>Total Permanent population</b>		<b>1,141</b>	<b>1,824</b>	<b>1,965</b>	<b>2,103</b>	<b>2,239</b>	<b>2,374</b>	<b>2,503</b>
Almond Itinerant workers summer peak	Jan – Apr [1]	0	200	200	200	200	200	200
Future almond processing population	Jan – Apr	0	0	230	230	230	230	230
Renewable energy construction workers	All year	0	350	350	350	350	350	0
Mineral sands workforce	All year	0	100	100	100	100	0	0
<b>Total Temporary population</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>430</b>
<b>Peak Population</b>		<b>1,141</b>	<b>2,474</b>	<b>2,845</b>	<b>2,983</b>	<b>3,119</b>	<b>3,154</b>	<b>2,933</b>



**Housing Types:** Like many regional towns, in 2016 the dwelling stock is dominated by a large proportion (nearly 90%) as detached separate dwelling houses.

**Household Types:** Families & group households (larger household sizes) only make up around 60-66% & the rate of single or lone person households has continued to increase from ~28% to 34.5% (2001-2016).

As a result, the supplied dwelling types (mostly large single dwellings) may not always match the changing household sizes & dwelling needs. For example, with an ageing population there may be demand for smaller dwellings with smaller yards for lower maintenance. Larger dwellings may have a higher cost & impact on the affordability for people to get into the market or suitably downsize. This may be slightly less of an issue for Euston’s slightly younger population.

However, Council should further investigate ways to encourage development of a mix of housing types, & develop the business case for smaller dwellings on smaller lots in locations with good access to services & facilities.

**Supported Seniors Living:** There are also opportunities to avoid loss of older citizens to larger centres by provision of appropriately serviced housing. Council owns & operates the Bidgee Haven Retirement Hostel (15 beds/low care/based on need) & Balranald Manor Units.

Council currently has a grant to add some limited units. However, it should update its business case to ensure the sustainability of its current model or look at alternate models to it is not a liability on Council funds.

If the market can respond with some smaller, easier-to-maintain housing types in appropriate locations it may encourage older citizens (or those with smaller household sizes) to free up larger/ higher- maintenance properties for smaller families. In-home support is also critical to enable people to age-in-place in high quality retirement living.

**Rental Market:** At the 2016 Census, the percentage of occupied private dwellings rented was 32.7% in Euston & 33.5% in Balranald. This can be compared to the NSW rental rate of 31.8% so it is slightly higher than average & a significant portion of the total housing stock.

We do not have the scope or data to ascertain rental availability or affordability in Balranald & Euston. However, the *Housing Report (Rental Housing Needs)* by Jennifer Bax Alvarado – Golden Rivers Real Estate) suggests there are very few rental houses available & insufficient to cater for projected local demand.

In addition to the major projects there may be a lack of housing for support services including NSW Police, NSW Ambulance Service; attracting another doctor, Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Services, Aboriginal Public Housing & Crisis Accommodation.

However, it is likely that similar pressures across regional NSW are occurring whereby there is a lack of suitable rental housing to meet demand. In addition to the reasons for new housing stock not been provided, there may be a variety of factors including, but not limited to: lack of supply during peak demands (peak employment projects);

increasing rents becoming unaffordable for local employees; lack of suitable rentals for families & single/lone households, etc.).

This would be best investigated as part of a comprehensive **Housing Strategy** for the Shire, but in the meantime this Strategy can facilitate some short-term solutions.

Figure 20: Balranald growth in private dwellings (occupied/unoccupied) 1976-2016 (Census).

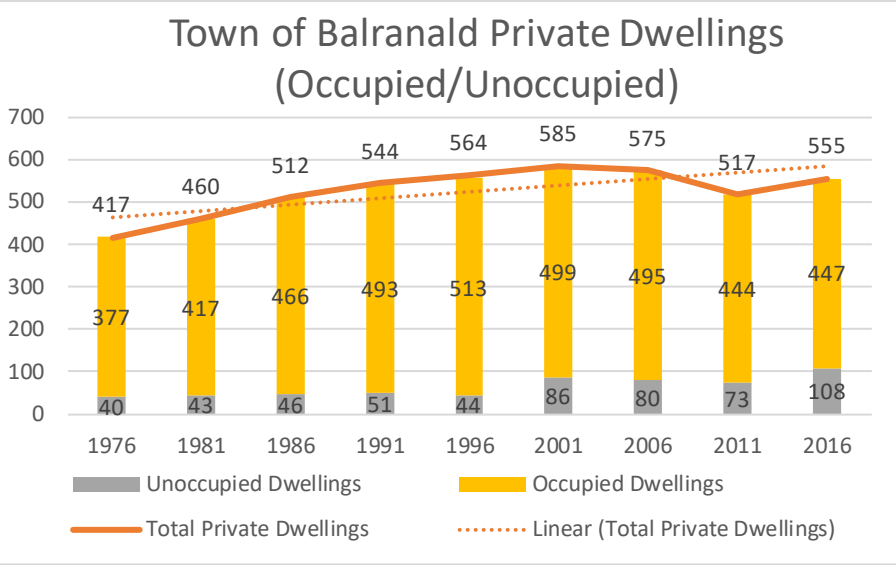


Figure 21: Balranald Household Size/Type (2001-2016 Census).

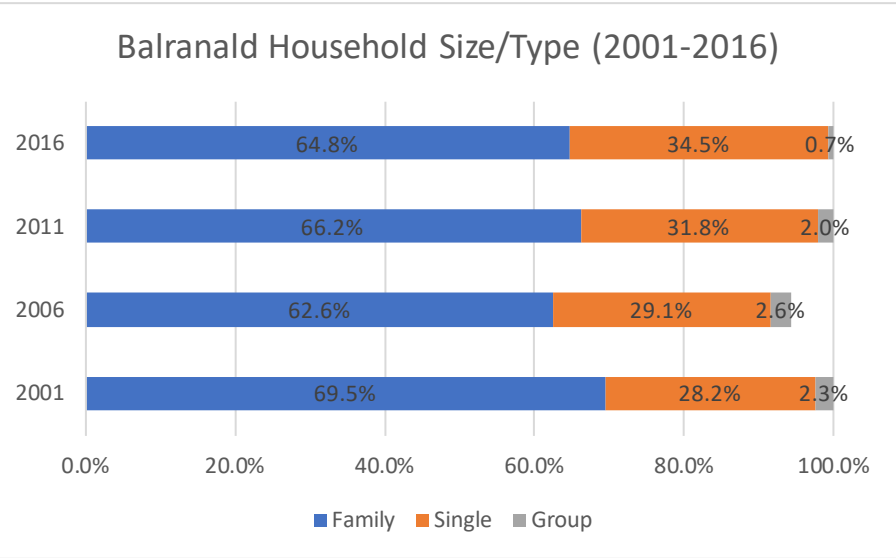


Figure 22: Balranald & Euston Dwelling Types/Structure (2016 Census).

	BALRANALD		EUSTON	
	No.	%	No.	%
Separate House	402	89.9%	148	88.6%
Semi-Detached, Row or Terrace House	13	2.9%	7	4.2%
Flat or Apartment	25	5.6%	5	3.0%
Other Dwelling	7	1.6%	7	4.2%
Occupied Priv. Dwell.	447		167	

Figure 23: Euston growth in private dwellings (occupied/unoccupied) 1986-2016 (Census).

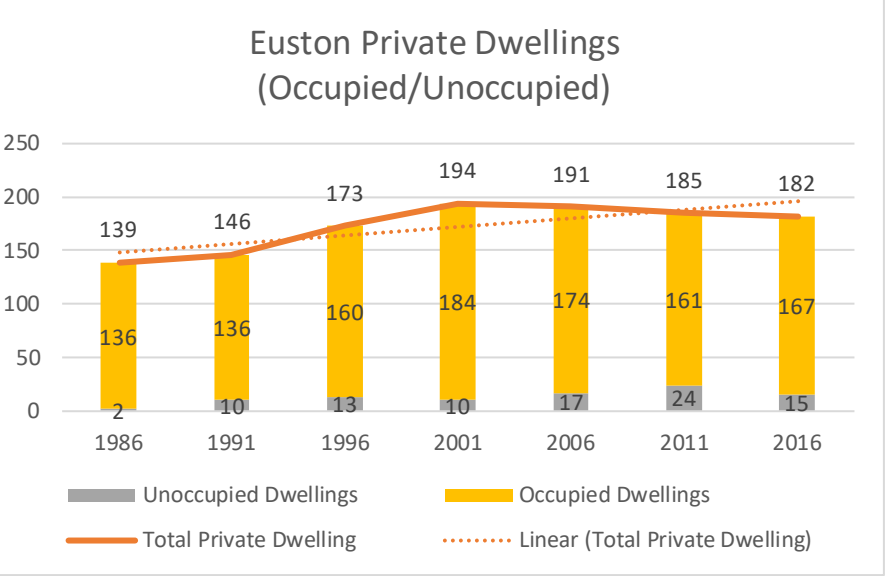


Figure 24: Euston Household Size/Type (2001-2016 Census).

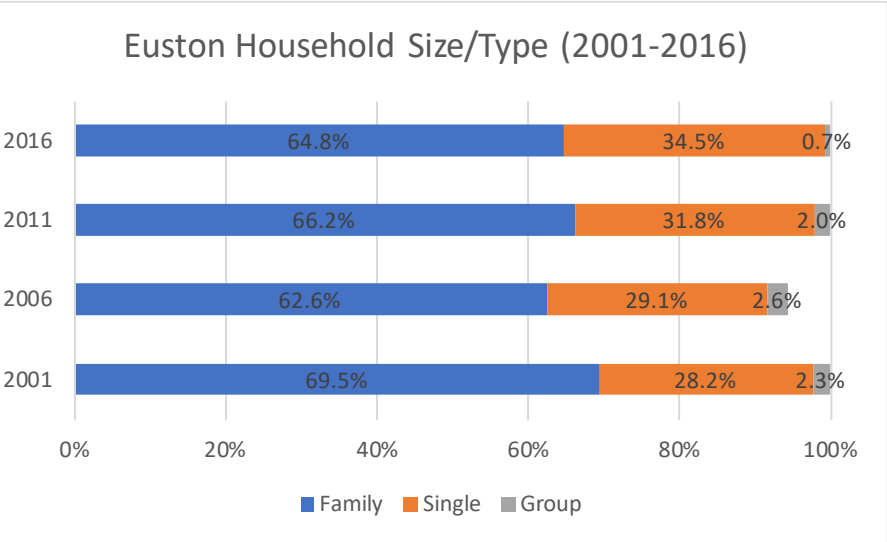


Figure 25: Balranald & Euston Numbers of Bedrooms per Dwelling (2016 Census).

	BALRANALD		EUSTON	
	No.	%	No.	%
No dedicated bedroom	3	0.7%	0	0.0%
1 Bedroom	29	6.5%	4	2.6%
2 Bedroom	77	17.3%	25	16.0%
3 Bedroom	202	45.3%	98	62.8%
4 or more Bedrooms	119	26.7%	25	16.0%
Not stated	16	3.6%	4	2.6%
Total	446		156	
Av. No. of Bedrooms per Dwelling	3		2.9	
Av. People per Household	2.3		2.7	



## 7. Utilities

Council is in the process of preparing an Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Strategy (including Options Assessment April 2021) with NSW Public Works & the information in this Strategy seeks to briefly summarise some key findings – noting that the outcomes in that report may change as it is finalised. This Strategy needs to align with the servicing opportunities & challenges in the IWCM & these works should have high priority as part of any funding to enable the projected growth.

### 7.1. Water - Balranald

Council operates potable & non-potable water supply schemes at Balranald. Raw water is extracted from the Murrumbidgee River for both schemes. Water is supplied to most of the Zone RU5 area as well as Malcolm St to the south-east of town & Endeavour Drive to the west.

Balranald has a Water Treatment Plant (WTP) located adjacent to the river & just east of the Sturt Highway bridge with access off Court St near the hospital. It was built in 1988 with a design capacity of 1.1 ML/day. The water towers are located in Greenham Park near the swimming pool.

The IWCM notes that based on projected growth rates the Balranald WTP peak day demand may exceed the headworks capacity in the short term (1-5 years) for the filtered water supply system & the current raw water peak day demand already exceeds supply. There is also security of supply issues & the existing assets do not have the capacity to meet the 30-year (2049) demands (both DPIE & Council projections).

The aim is to achieve a short-term capacity of 1.7ML/day for the DPIE growth projection & allow it to be modified for future capacity of 2.0 ML/day to meet Council's projection.

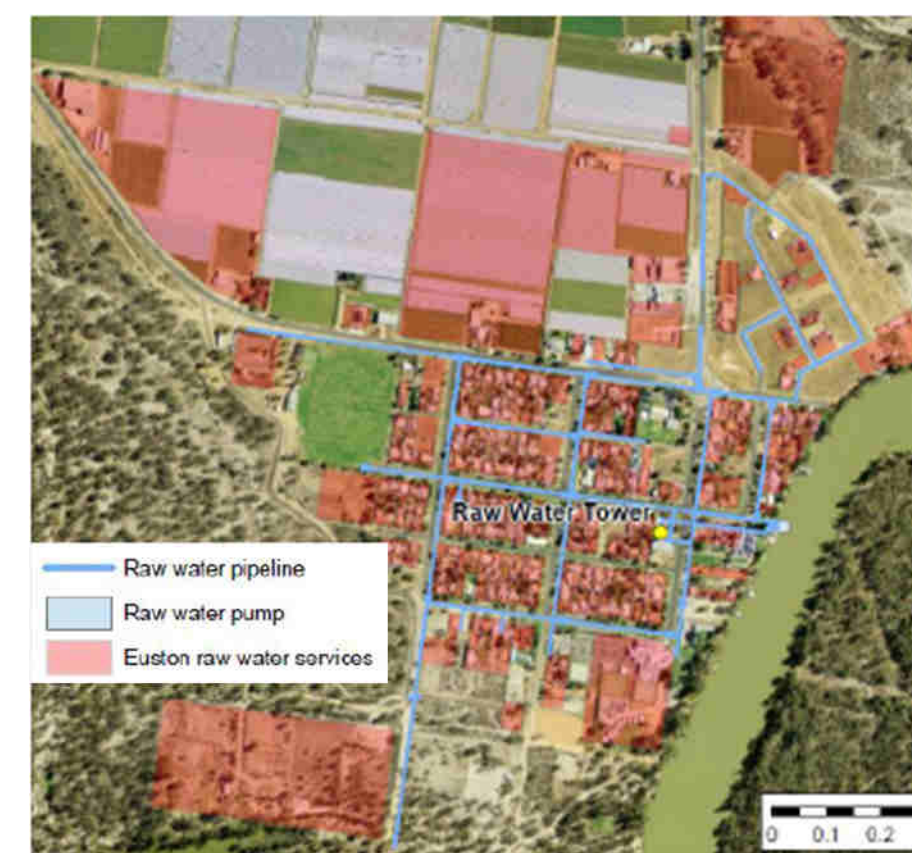
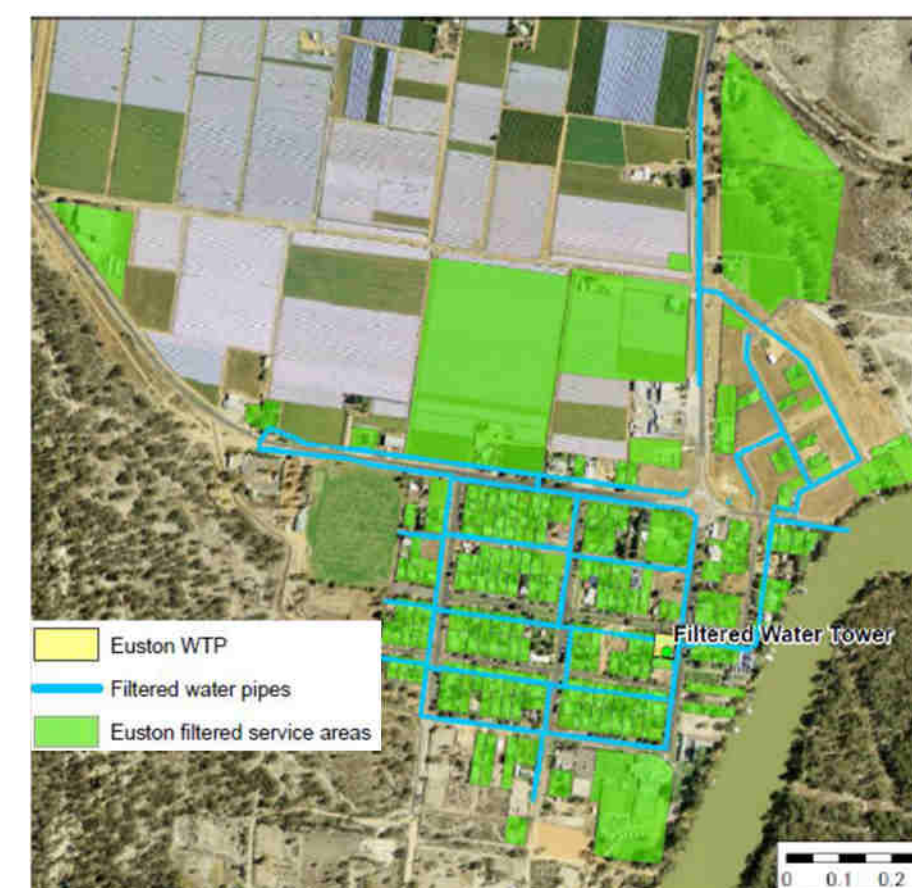
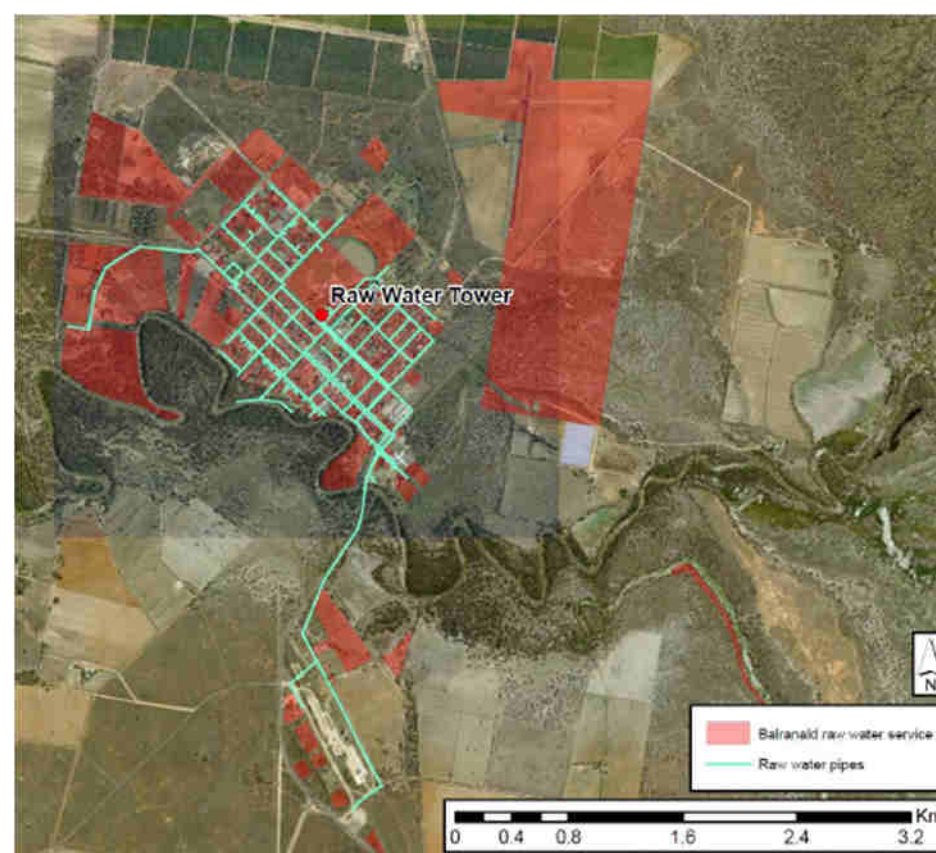
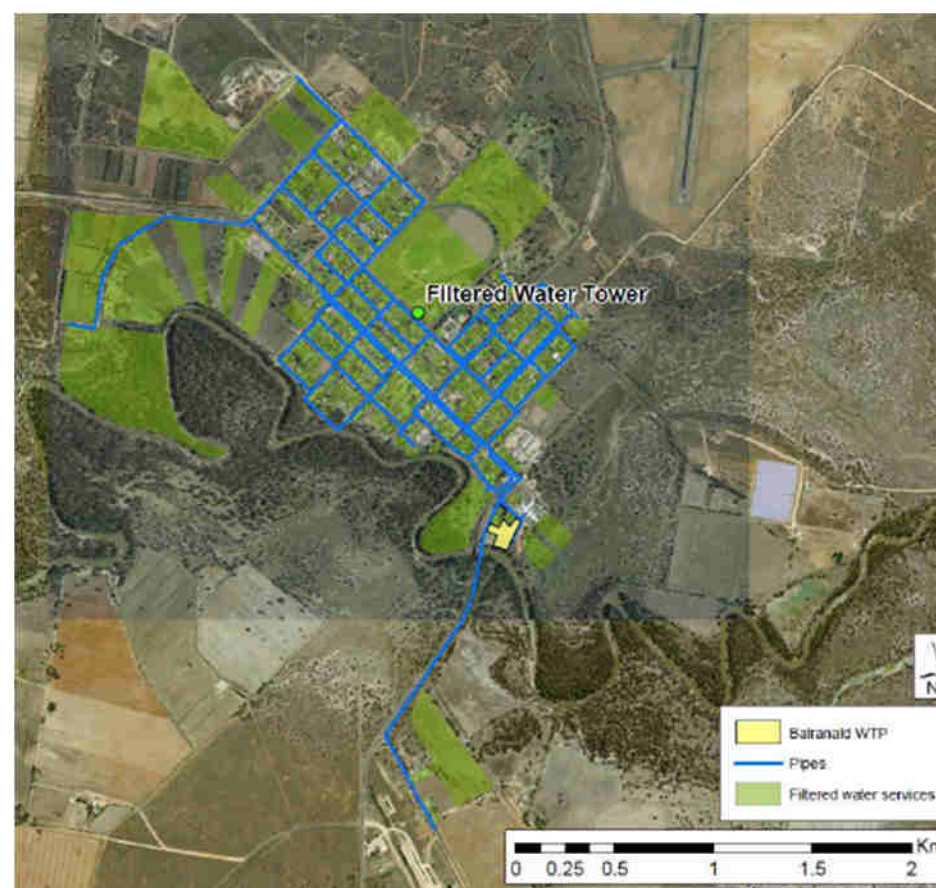
Council has approved grant funding & is assessing whether to construct a new plant (more likely) or refurbish the existing plant with a new processing train/plant to provide additional capacity.

### 7.2. Water - Euston

Council operates potable & non-potable water supply schemes at Euston. Raw water is extracted from the Murray River for both schemes. Water is supplied to the Zone RU5 area as well as some land to the north-east.

The Euston WTP has a capacity of 0.4 ML/day which is the current peak & is currently affecting pressure & a forecasted peak demand of 0.9 ML/day which it cannot meet requiring augmentation of capacity.

The IWCM notes that based on projected growth rates the Euston WTP peak day demand will exceed the headworks capacity in the short term (1-5 years) for the filtered water supply system & the raw water peak day demand may be exceeded depending on the growth rate. There is also security of supply issues & the existing assets do not have the capacity to meet the growth demands. It is currently being investigated whether additional water storage may improve the head pressure & supply.





7.3. Sewer - Balranald

Balranald has a Sewerage Treatment Plan (STP) located to the north of the town with access from Ivanhoe Road. The STP has a hydraulic capacity of 2,500 EP (2,000 EP @240L/EP/day).

The IWCN notes that based on Council projected growth rates the Balranald STP may exceed its hydraulic design capacity in the short term (1-5 years) & BOD capacity in the medium to long term – though under DPE growth rates there is capacity until after 2049.

7.4. Sewer - Euston

Euston has a STP located to the north-west of town. The STP is assessed to have a hydraulic capacity of 1,360 EP (1,100 EP @240L/EP/day).

The IWCN notes that based on projected growth rates the Euston STP may exceed its hydraulic design capacity in the medium to long term (by 2041). There are some suggestions the BOD capacity may be exceeded in the short term but there may not be a long-term issue.

Therefore, subject to growth rate, the current STP is not a major constraint to growth in the short term but planning is required for duplication of the oxidation pond/evaporation ponds in the longer term.

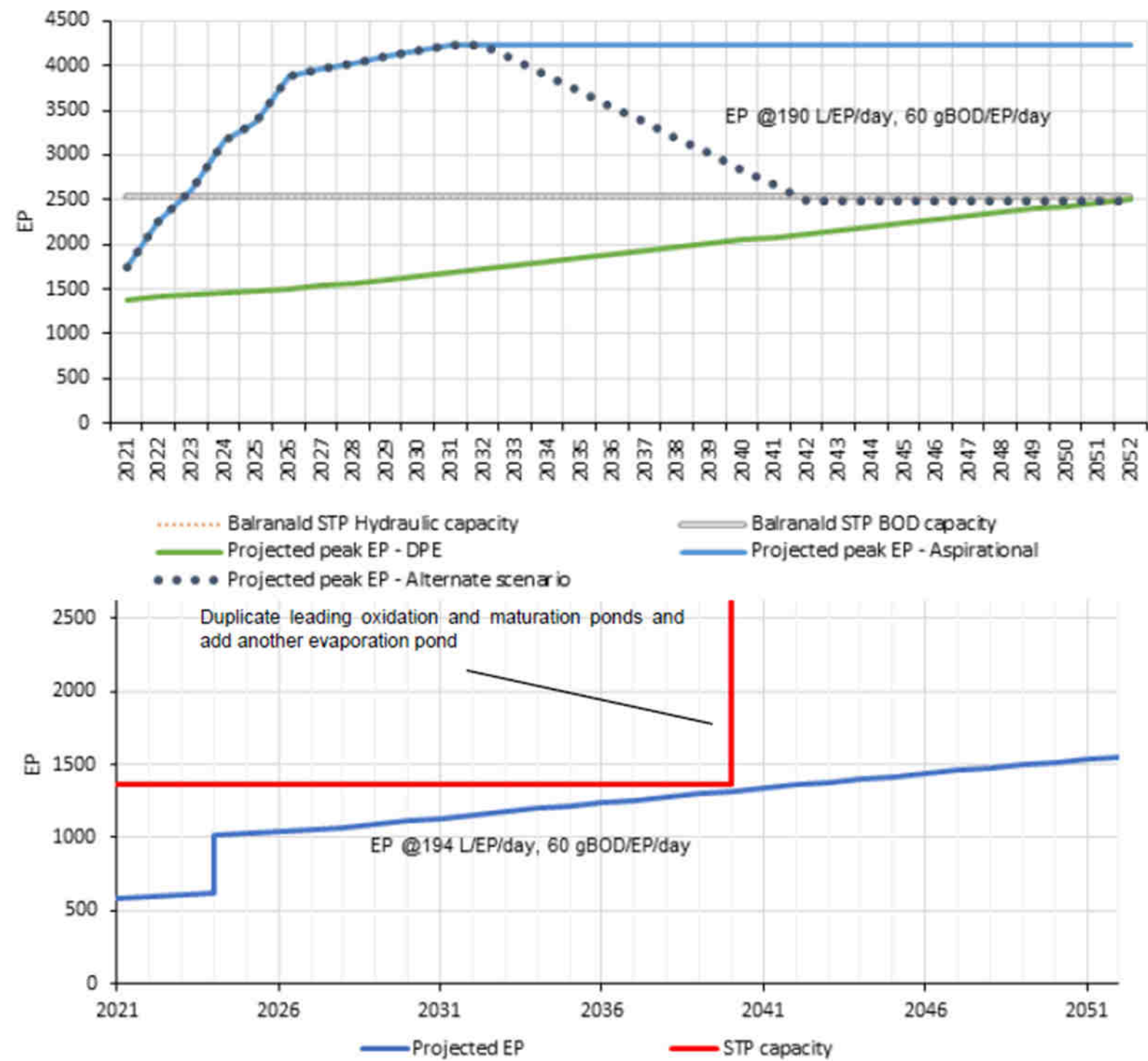
7.5. Water Re-Use

Whilst it may be a longer-term plan – considering the harsh summers & lack of water security, Balranald & Euston could position itself to recycle as much water as possible & reticulate it to most major parks & recreation grounds for irrigation purposes. At this current time there is no recycling of sewage as water costs do not currently make this viable. But this may change as water prices increase.

7.6. Stormwater/ Kerb & Gutter

Generally, Balranald & Euston have kerb & gutter along most major streets in each urban core but less so towards the edges & near the river. This was not reviewed in detail but was not identified as a major issue except where there is standing water after heavy rainfall. Kerb & gutter extensions should primarily be driven by drainage issues but in the longer term could be added to remaining urban streets to improve street appearance (not costed/ subject to detailed review).

Figure 26: Balranald STP capacity under predicated growth (IWCN Figure 7-3).





## 8. Existing Planning Controls

### 8.1. Zoning (Land Use)

The key planning controls are in *Balranald Local Environmental Plan 2010* (LEP) that applies Zone RU5 Village to the core urban area of both Balranald & Euston settlements.

A Village Zone is a suitable category at this time. Balranald is of sufficient size that it could potentially support individual residential, business & industrial zones to minimise land use conflict if this was an issue.

At this time there does not appear to be any need to separate business & residential land uses in Balranald or Euston. ***The use of industrial zoning may be considered if it would both highlight them for future development & protect certain them from residential encroachment.***

Interestingly, there has not been any use of *Zone R5 Large Lot Residential* in & around Balranald & Euston to provide these larger residential (lifestyle) lots. In part, this is supported as Zone R5 uses consume significant (often agriculturally important) land. Due to limitation in expansion of urban areas around Balranald & Euston, the use of Zone R5 Large Lot Residential may be a tool to consider for identifying area outside these settlements for growth (not part of this urban strategy).

***The LEP Review could also consider use of Zone SP2 Infrastructure to identify & protect key infrastructure such as Sturt Highway, the Balranald aerodrome, waste depots, cemeteries & water/sewage treatment plants (currently in background/adjacent zone).***

Euston also has a Zone RU4 Rural Small Holdings area located to the north of the village. This is a mixed-use zone that has intensive horticulture/viticulture but each lot can also support a dwelling application. This is a highly productive area & it is largely due to high agricultural land values that prevent higher take-up for dwellings. However, this should also be considered a quasi-residential zone (This area is not captured in the Census Urban Locality data).

### 8.2. Lot Size (for Subdivision)

Balranald & Euston Zone R5 areas have a minimum lot size of mostly 600m<sup>2</sup> for subdivision as it is serviced by sewer & water (see Utilities below).

***In Balranald there is a small pocket of 4,000m<sup>2</sup> lot size land on Moa St north of the Cemetery in Zone RU5. Unless there is a good reason for this anomaly, this should be corrected to 600m<sup>2</sup>.***

Likewise, in Euston, there is a larger area of 4,000m<sup>2</sup> lot size land in the north-eastern section of the Zone RU5 area between the Sturt Highway & Cary St. This area is currently used for horticulture/viticulture but is probably intended to have large lots with the potential for a buffer to the intensive agriculture in Zone RU4 to the north & north-west.

***In order to facilitate urban growth in Euston as master plan should be prepared for the current intensive agricultural areas within Zone RU5 Village. This may justify a reduction in the 4,000m<sup>2</sup> minimum lot size area where land use conflict can be managed.***

In Euston the Zone RU4 Rural Small Holdings area has a Minimum Lot Size (MLS) of 10ha & is already largely fragmented for intensive agriculture. Each existing lot has the potential to support a dwelling.

***There should be a review of dwelling potential & impacts on agriculture to determine if additional planning controls are required to govern dwelling growth in Zone RU4 around Euston.***

Both settlements are surrounded by Zone RU1 Primary Production land (& also Zone RU3 Forestry land around Euston that covers the Euston Regional Park) that has a 40ha minimum lot size. ***The Euston Regional Park could potentially consider a Conservation Zone (instead of Zone RU3 Forestry) if this aligned with its objectives for protection & use.***

This Strategy does not review rural minimum lot size – so any future changes in subdivision potential should be supported by a rural lands (agricultural) strategy.

### 8.3. Heritage & Culture

The Shire of Balranald has only eight (8) listed heritage items (seven are local & one is international/state listed- Willandra Lakes).

Of these, four (4) listed heritage items are in or around Balranald of which three (3) appear to be Aboriginal cultural items/places & there is only one (1) building in Balranald listed, as follows:

- 1) Aboriginal Cemetery – Island Road
- 2) Diplo Ceremonial Ground – East Balranald
- 3) Fire Station – 123 Market St
- 4) Fish Traps – Murrumbidgee River (downstream).

Of these two (2) listed heritage items are in or around Euston including:

- 1) Lock & Weir 15, Murray River – downstream of Euston; and
- 2) Courthouse, 43 Murray Terrace.

This Settlement Strategy recognises that heritage listing has both its opportunities & constraints as a planning tool. However, it is important that the constraints do not prevent appropriate protections for important historic buildings, sites & archaeology. Whilst growth has been limited, risk may have been lower, but this could change over time.

The first step in building on heritage is a community-led review of its history and artefacts and appropriate recognition of people, places & items. The Heritage Museum in the Discovery Precinct in Balranald may need assistance to curate, display, interpret & protect the wealth of information and combine it with the visitor experience.

***Expanded heritage listing should be investigated as part of any review of the Local Environmental Plan to determine if the benefits (protections, public education, heritage grant funding & flexible adaptive re-use) outweigh any perceived constraints from lost development flexibility. Even if key items were identified in a DCP some level of protection may be important. Promoting appropriate adaptive re-use of historic buildings is encouraged by Council.***

We have not investigated Aboriginal history & cultural heritage in this area in detail though the area along the Murrumbidgee River & Murray River is

of key cultural & archaeological significance. Recognition, respect, protection & interpretation of known or likely places should be encouraged in all future works under this Strategy.

***Council & the community should continue to work with the Aboriginal elders & Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to determine the best way to protect, enhance & manage key sites & environmental & cultural education & tourism in the area. This could inform signage, public art, & tourism strategies.***

### 8.4. Topography, Watercourses & Flooding

Flood studies have been prepared along the Murray & Murrumbidgee Rivers. However, some of the study information is becoming dated & may not take into account changes in the flood plain.

Balranald is fortunate in that most of the urban area is above the Flood Planning Level (1% AEP plus 500mm freeboard) to support residential development & only a limited levee bank is required. However, it still limits growth to the south & east of the town.

***Flood studies (particularly around Balranald & Euston) should be updated as funding becomes available & ideally updated to a 'Floodplain Risk Management Plan & Study (FRMP&S)' in accordance with the current guidelines.***

Flooding impacts on growth are addressed in more detail in the chapters below.

### 8.5. Vegetation, Ecology & Bushfire

The Biodiversity Maps in the *Local Environmental Plan* (LEP) highlight known sensitive areas along the key watercourses around Balranald. However, some of the mapping is fairly 'broad-brush' & could be refined so it is a more useful planning tool (particularly in the key urban areas).

The Commons encircles Balranald & is both a constraint to town growth & an opportunity. There may also be *opportunities to enhance native plantings on Crown land & the Commons for improved connectivity & integrity where it does not exacerbate bushfire risk.*

There is already some *visitor information & signage on fauna & bird spotting locations. However, some of these are understated & with funding could be upgraded to provide more local information & link to fauna/bird trails across the LGA & into adjacent LGAs.* Social media may be an increasing tool to engage visitors & local to locate & identify threatened /endangered & colourful species to improve awareness & protection.

Bushfire prone land mapping suggests there are risks to the north & west of the town linking along the rivers. This may become more of a constraint during extended droughts & climate change.





BALRANALD

Figure 1: Balranald entrance sign on Sturt Highway to west of town.

Please note that this Strategy seeks to build on the feedback received from discussions with Council officers during the March/April 2022 site visit & any meetings with community groups but still requires further review & feedback.



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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This Settlement Strategy has been prepared with the aim of encouraging discussion around required upgrades & growth opportunities that can create long-term sustainable growth for each settlement and the Shire as a whole.

A range of ideas have been collated & presented that do NOT necessarily reflect the position of Council and may NOT have the funding support for all to be achieved. The aim is to prioritise the community and council ideas so that the available funding is best directed.

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## 1. Overall Presentation

It is important to start this section of the Strategy by recognising that The Town of Balranald has a number of features, attractions & urban design that makes it an attractive place to live, work & visit.

A brief time in Balranald (& a comparison to other regional settlements of similar size) suggests that the town already capitalises on its natural & heritage assets, unique character & amenity.

Therefore, any suggestions in this Strategy do not seek to criticise the extensive work already achieved but to build on these qualities & opportunities.

## 2. Key Facilities & Events

Balranald is the largest settlement in the Balranald Shire & this is reflected in the range of local facilities. Key services include, but are not limited to:

- a) Hospital / Multi-Purpose Service / Emergency/ Dentist/ Doctor / Allied Health with limited residential aged care & respite services;
- b) Community Health Centre / Mallee Family Care / Centrelink;
- c) Central School (K-12) / St Joseph Primary School (K-6);
- d) Early Learning Centre & two (2) playgroups;
- e) Balranald Shire Council offices / Service NSW offices;
- f) Public facilities including Library & Theatre Royal;
- g) Full range of emergency services;
- h) Supermarkets (IGA/Foodland) & mix of retail stores;
- i) Balranald Discovery (Tourist Information) Centre & historic precinct;
- j) Swimming Pool, Greenham Park sporting facilities & other parks;
- k) Caravan Park & camping ground(s);
- l) Bidgee Have Retirement Hostel (15 beds)
- m) Aerodrome.

However, there is still a need to access higher-level services at larger settlements such as Swan Hill & beyond.

This Strategy does not go into detail on the full range of businesses & industries present but there is an industrial presence on McCabe St (South-East gateway) & to a lesser extent light industry near Piper St (West gateway). The old GrainCorp/rail terminal & stock yards are located to the south-east of town adjacent to Malcolm/Duryea Streets with a collection of quasi-industrial uses.

Balranald is fortunate to have developed the Balranald Discovery Centre (see photo below). This unique facility is well-located on the main street/ highway near the centre of town. It integrates a range of attractions including a visitor information centre, interpretative pavilion, café, toilets & showers, museum, historic buildings, community ‘men’s’ shed, playground & 24-hour RV parking area.

There are also a range of accommodation options with motels, hotels/pubs, & a range of camping opportunities both within the town & in the nearby National Parks & along the river.

In addition to the River, Balranald is close to a number of key natural & historic attractions of the region including Yanga National Park which encompasses Yanga Lake/Regatta Beach picnic area, the historic Yanga Homestead & Woolshed and camping areas, all in close proximity to the township of Balranald. Mungo National Park, 150km to the north, is within the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area and the site of the world’s oldest recorded Aboriginal burials.

There are a number of community/tourist events throughout the year listed at [www.visitbalranald.com.au](http://www.visitbalranald.com.au) culminating in the 5 Rivers Outback Festival in Balranald (October). There may be opportunities to continue to work on regional trails linked with events in other LGAs & further recognise & celebrate the area’s indigenous culture & heritage, its nature & national parks, key sporting events, & its food & community spirit.

Figure 2: The Murrumbidgee River & associated recreation areas are a major attraction.

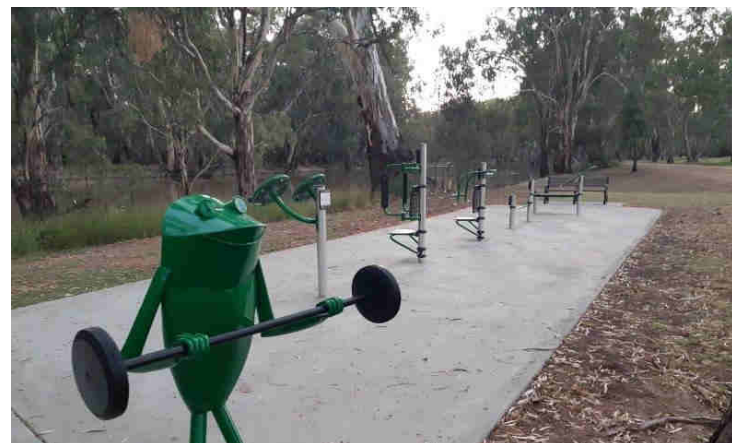
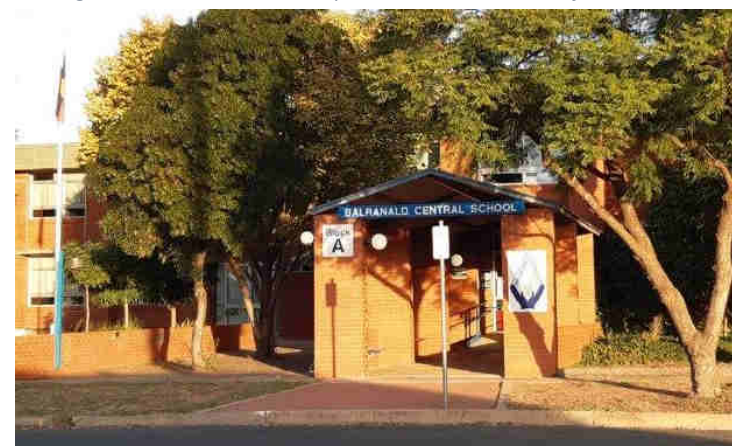


Figure 3: The hospital services the Shire & surrounds.



Figure 4: The Central School provides K-12 education for the Shire.



## 3. Entrance Design & Signage

### 3.1. Signage Strategy

As with many towns, signage has been progressively added & updated over time with different influences addressing tourist, business & navigation needs. Largely, the existing signage is suitable in its current form.

However, cumulatively there is a degree of signage ‘clutter’ – particularly at town entrances & key intersections (e.g., Highway/Mayall St) that could reduce the visual amenity of these important spaces.

Figure 5: The intersection of the highway & Mayall St needs a signage review.



Whilst this Strategy seeks to suggest some potential modifications to town signage, for a town of Balranald’s size there is a complex range of factors that go into determining appropriate signage.

**A Signage Strategy** should be prepared by a suitably qualified person that comprehensively looks at navigation, facilities, information, & history/heritage signage to ensure a comprehensive solution – focussing particularly on the key entrances, gateways & main street(s).

Where possible this Signage Strategy should seek to minimise/consolidate signage to avoid signage clutter & focus on critical intersection & entrances.

It should also investigate the use of & funding for Tourist Trail Signage (White on Brown) in accordance with the TfNSW guidelines e.g., Yanga to Mungo National Park, river or bird-watching trails.

**Note:** Costings for sign removal/updates/replacement are not currently included in this Strategy & are subject to the Signage Strategy findings.



3.2. Shire Boundary Signage

As stated above, Balranald benefits from being on the Sturt Highway from Hay to Mildura with limited other key regional roads so navigation to Balranald is fairly clear.

The Shire boundary to the Murray River Shire starts just to the south-east of the town near Yanga Lake & has a small ‘Balranald Shire’ road sign with the logo that may be lost in amongst other road signage & wide views.

**Shire Boundary Signage (as part of Signage Strategy):**

One opportunity would be to upgrade the existing sign at or near the actual LGA boundary. This could build on the themes of the Shire including the catchphrase ‘Where the wetlands meet the outback’, recognition of the Aboriginal groups whose land is in the Shire, & updating the colour & styling to match the Shire’s themes.

An alternative approach, due to the LGA boundary proximity to the south of Balranald, is to combine the LGA signage with a new entrance feature for Balranald closer to town.

Figure 6: Balranald Shire boundary signage on Sturt Highway to south-east of Balranald compared to Cowra Shire signage ([www.danthonia.com.au](http://www.danthonia.com.au)).

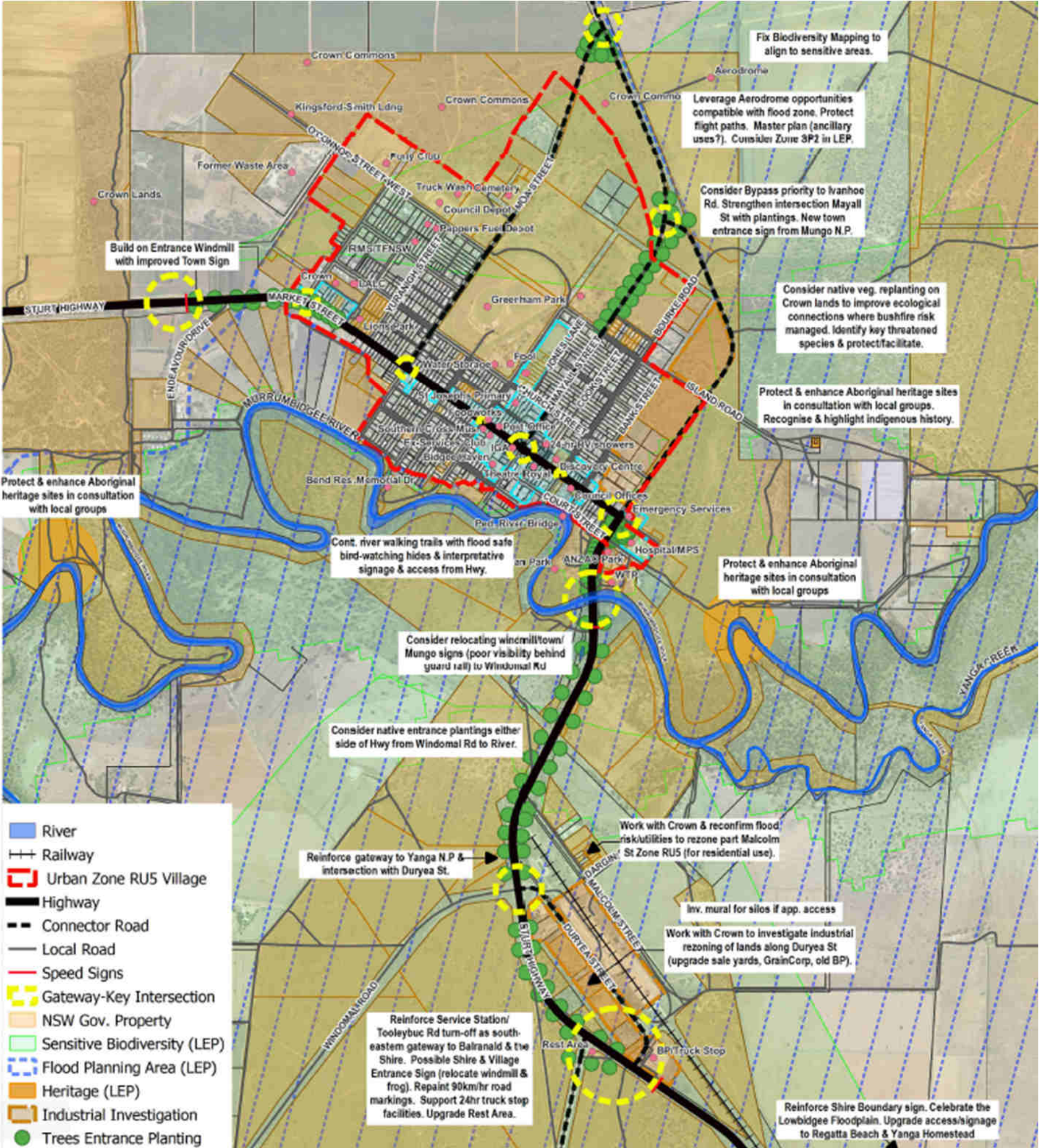


Figure 7: (opposite) Proposed upgrades to the key entrances & edges of the Town of Balranald.

3.3. Gateways

Clear entrances or gateways to towns are important not just in signalling arrival, but in slowing traffic speeds, identifying local services that may warrant stopping in the town, providing some key navigational signage, & integrating with the theme of the shire or town.

**Note:** The map opposite may not show the latest NSW Government Property ownership (i.e., Crown land). We hope to update this once an updated mapping layer is available).





### 3.3.1. South-East Outer Gateway

After a significant distance crossing the Hay Plain, on the south-east approach to Balranald, the first visual cue of arrival is the transition from 110km/hr to 90km/hr & the BP Service Station which is a key 24-hour truck stop & the access to Duryea St (a quasi-industrial area).

The BP is close to a major intersection with Balranald-Tooleybuc Road which is the key route to Swan Hill & Victoria, alternative route to Adelaide via Tooleybuc, Rest Area & is a key gateway.

Currently, the 'Welcome to Balranald' sign, windmill & frog sculpture are located close to the Murrumbidgee River but are small, hidden behind the relatively new guard-rail, with a backdrop of trees, & visibility is poor.

**South-East Outer Gateway:** Work with TfNSW to improve following:

- The 90km/hr sign needs to be repainted on the asphalt (TfNSW).
- Council may contribute to some street tree planting & road lighting.
- Upgrade Rest Area to capture people on way to Adelaide & promote people stopping in town. Consider 24-hour facilities at the truck rest stop (TfNSW).
- Investigate a new town entrance sign/feature just either just north or just south of Balranald-Tooleybuc Rd intersection with Sturt Hwy (possibly in the Rest Area).
- Feature tree planting along Sturt Highway in towards River.
- Current windmill/frog sculpture could be relocated to integrate into a new larger entrance feature (subject to funding).
- Entrance feature to consolidate some of the 'clutter' of signs along this entrance point to the river including 'Gateway to Mungo' signage, any regional trail navigation signage, the 'RV Friendly' sign, a white on blue summary sign of services in the town (fuel, food, toilets, park etc). Ideally, the sign would be lit at night.

As the images below show, Condobolin offers an example of a high-quality entrance sign that links to their theme. Balranald should continue to highlight their windmill & frog theme but improve the 'Balranald' sign.



Example entrance feature/sign to Condobolin (Henry Parkes Way).

#### South-East Outer Gateway



Rest Area Sign Sturt Highway SE before BP Service Station



90km/hr signs at BP Service Station.



Option 1 New Gateway - Rest Area south of Balranald-Tooleybuc Rd.



Option 2 New Gateway – North of Balranald-Tooleybuc Rd.



'Gateway to Mungo' & Caravan Park Sign-integrate into entrance feature.



New guard rail & mixed navigational signage.



Windomal Rd/Duryea St intersection (to Yanga N.P.).



Existing 'Welcome' sign/windmill/sculpture not clearly visible.



### 3.3.2. South-East Inner Gateway(s)

The bridge crossing of the Murrumbidgee River forms the next major south-east inner gateway to town & in an elevated vehicle offers views along the river, a sense of arrival, & invitation for people to stop. Highway lighting assists at night. The adjacent Caravan Park is in a landscaped setting & has reasonable signage.

However, after crossing the bridge – the intersection of the highway as it turns into Market St has no sense of arrival, is largely hardstand & appears desolate & unloved, & gives no reason for visitors to consider stopping in Balranald. This gateway should be the first priority for the enhancement of the town.

#### **South-East Inner Gateway: Work with TfNSW to improve following:**

- Encourage use of McCabe St as a key heavy vehicle route to/from Ivanhoe (minimising impacts on the town centre) (TfNSW).
- Ensure signage & street (Give Way) signs give clear order of priority for highway vehicle movements at this intersection (TfNSW).
- Review if a zebra crossing (or widened pedestrian blisters) can connect to the triangular blister & across to the hospital (TfNSW).
- Staged replacement of the heavily pruned eucalyptus trees (some of which are dead or dying) with suitable decorative species.
- Large under-utilised area in front of the hospital with views of service areas/backs of buildings – this could have additional plantings along the street edge & rear of buildings, irrigated grassed areas, & possibly be used for a temporary sculpture park or similar.
- The blister strips & pedestrian triangle appear worn/cracked & create large areas of hardstand – subject to not impeding vehicle movements these could have small areas of hardy low landscape that doesn't block signage or sight-lines for safety.
- The lots on the south-west corner are partly vacant, the building appears unused, the yard needs maintenance, & the building is set back from the street with a gravel parking area so overall there is poor appearance – Council should work with the owner to clean-up the yards, landscape the frontage & perhaps add a mural to the shop-front (subject to owner's consent & support).
- The view up McCabe St is to a quasi-industrial area with poor visual amenity. The central blister needs upgrading/landscaping & possibly kerb & gutter extended. Consider mural on the emergency services building at north-east corner.
- Looking down the main street from this entrance there is limited features defining the street & the town retail core & strong built-form/ landscape is too far away to be visible. Power poles dominate the street & street trees are weak. Suitable height & spacing of street trees should be extended along Market St to the town centre, taking into account visual distances for heavy vehicles.

#### South-East Inner Gateway



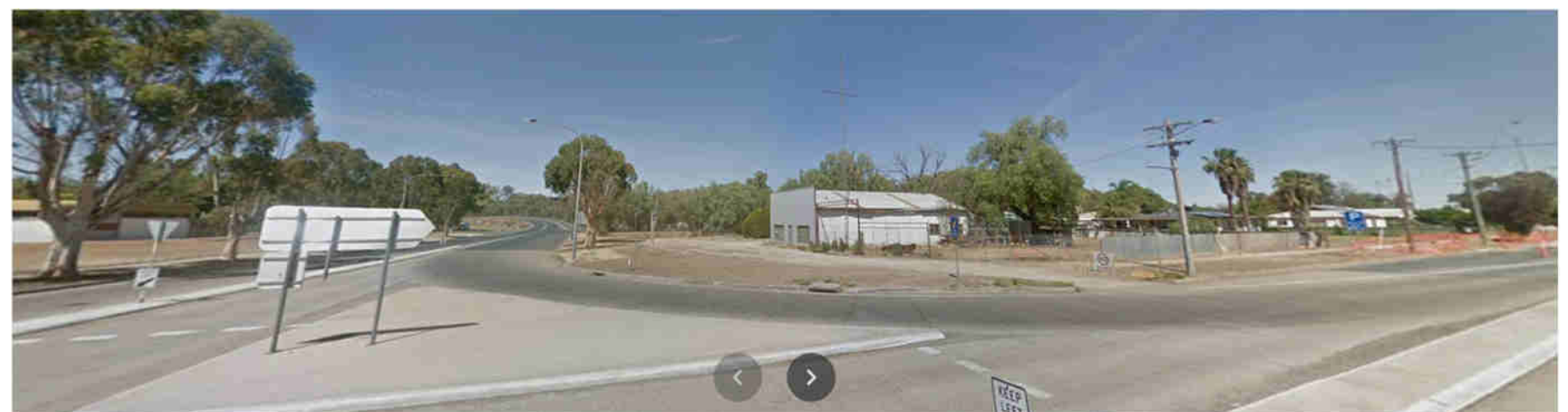
*South-east inner gateway over Murrumbidgee River (sense of arrival).*



*Intersection Sturt Hwy & Market St lacks any sense of arrival.*



*Under-utilised area in-front of hospital/not irrigated/views of service areas.*



*Corner sites are vacant, poorly maintained & lack landscape.*



*Corner building no longer active, needs maintenance, landscape.*



*Little soft landscape or views to items of interest at intersection.*



*View up McCabe St unattractive/industrial/road & landscape upgrades.*



### 3.3.3. Western Outer Gateway

The other primary gateway to Balranald is on the Sturt Hwy to the west of town. This is a long straight road that only bends on arrival at Balranald.

Just near the transition from 110km/hr to 50km/hr speed signs, there is currently a 'Welcome to Balranald' sign / windmill/ small frog sculpture on the southern side of the highway at a good location just out of town & this is reasonably visible.

**Western Outer Gateway:** Work with TfNSW to improve following:

- A larger feature entrance sign for Balranald (same as south-east).
- A larger frog sculpture as it is currently barely visible at traffic speeds.
- Lighting of the sign & up-lighting of the windmill.
- Consolidation of some of the multiple signs along the western entrance into one information sign.

### 3.3.4. Western Inner Gateway

The inner gateway to town is at the edge of the urban area where the Sturt Highway turns slightly into Market St, near the intersection with Piper St.

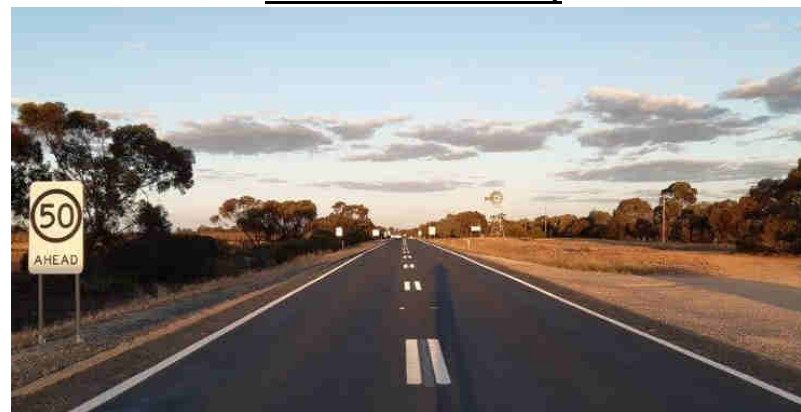
As with many towns this location is favoured by highway-related businesses such as automotive repairs, a motel, & service station – but these development types don't contribute much to a sense of arrival with set-back buildings, large hardstand/parking areas, & some signage clutter.

**Western Inner Gateway:** Work with TfNSW to improve the Western Inner Gateway by strengthening with some additional landscape / street trees extended from the 50km/hr speed signs along the highway as far as Lions Park/Sydney Street.

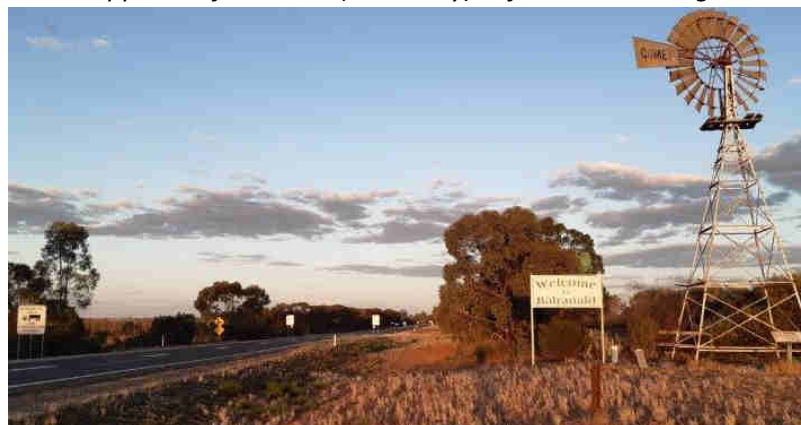
### 3.3.5. Other Important Intersections

The Gateway Diagrams also suggest there are key gateways/intersections at Mayall St (connecting up to Ivanhoe Rd towards Mungo National Park), Moa St (also connecting to Ivanhoe Rd), & Piper St – all key north-south linkages. These are addressed in more detail in the Main St Section below.

#### Western Outer Gateway



Approach from west (Sturt Hwy) before entrance sign.



'Welcome to Balranald' sign, windmill & frog sculpture.



110km/hr to 50km/hr speed signage just past entrance sign.

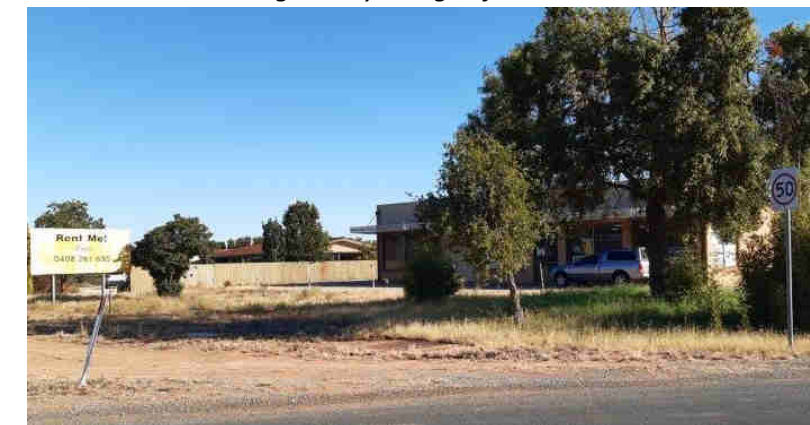


Standard 'Balranald' sign & some visual clutter along western entrance.

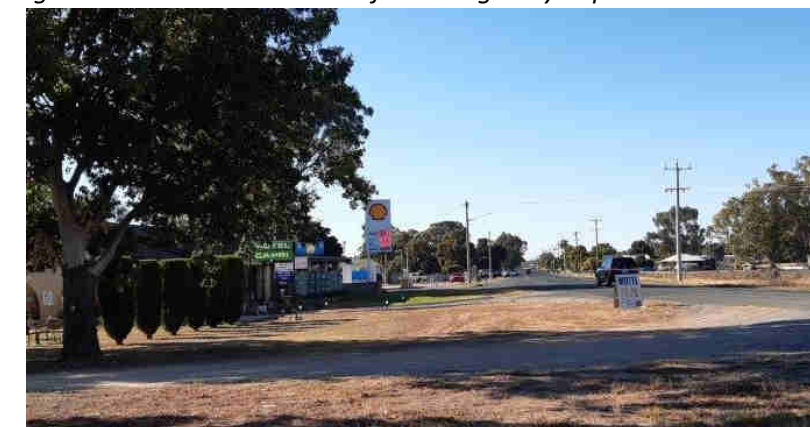
#### Western Inner Gateway



Western 'inner' gateway – edge of Balranald urban area.



Light-industrial uses setback of Sturt Highway impact visual amenity.



View down Market (main) St at western inner gateway.



4. Heavy Vehicle Bypass Investigations

It is noted above that an increase in potential for mineral sand mining north of Balranald may increase heavy vehicle movements on the Ivanhoe Road (even if minerals go to Ivanhoe for regional transport).

If trucks come from Hay, then McCabe St currently provides the most direct bypass route to connect up to Ivanhoe Road (some may use Mayall St). This is also an 80km/hr route with limited cross-streets or residential uses – so it is an excellent eastern bypass route except for the intersection with Mayall St where it does not have priority. It would also reinforce the growth of industrial & employment uses along the western side of McCabe St (see Growth Section for details).

However, it is expected that a significant number of heavy vehicles will also come from Mildura/Adelaide. Anecdotal evidence suggests trucks tend to short-cut up Moa St (past the cemetery) as the quickest route (& also the shortest route to the truck wash) or via Mayall St – with local impacts.

If this is likely to be a longer-term issue, then Balranald may need to investigate a western bypass route connecting the Sturt Highway to Ivanhoe Rd &/or mechanisms to prevent trucks using Moa/Mayall Streets.

**Short-Term (Testing/Options):** Council should discuss the preferred routes & loads/impacts with the proponents of any projects likely to significantly increase heavy vehicle movement. Council should also validate some of these impacts with traffic counts along key streets & build a business-case / options study for any proposed solutions.

**Short-Term:** We believe there may already be heavy vehicle limits on use of Moa & Mayall Streets but the Main Road status of Mayall St may need to be relocated to McCabe St. This could be reinforced by widening the blisters to narrow the streets where Moa St & Mayall St meet the Sturt Highway/main street (whilst still allowing caravans etc.). Encourage trucks to use McCabe St & avoid local streets (especially arrival from west).

**Medium Term:** Council may redesign key intersections with McCabe St & Mayall St so trucks have a through-route (priority) whilst still directing visitor traffic down Mayall St. Council may investigate alternative sites for the truck wash that would be easily accessible to trucks & attract them to use the McCabe St route or this may be taken up by a future private highway service centre on the new bypass route.

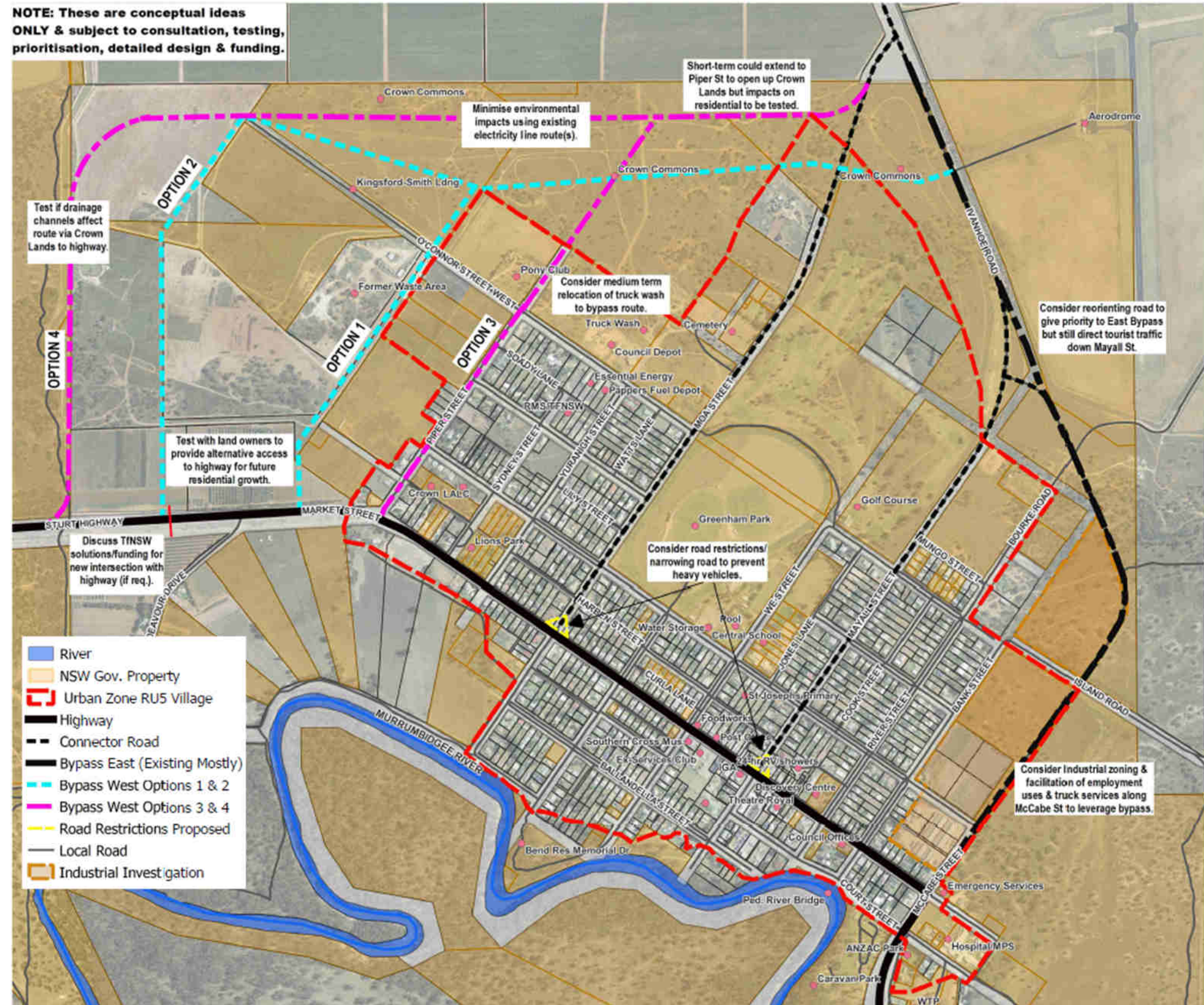
**Longer Term:** Council should work with Crown to investigate the construction of a western bypass to the town through the Crown Commons to the north. A shorter-term solution could involve a link to the end of Piper St (Option 3) as one possible bypass route that would avoid the need for a new intersection with the Sturt Highway (but there are still residential impacts). Alternative routes that connect to the Sturt Highway either close to Endeavour Drive or west of Endeavour Drive through Crown Lands should also be investigated (see Options 1, 2 & 4).

As of 2022, Council has indicated a long-term preference for Option 4 that would bypass at the western edge of town but this would require substantial funding from TfNSW.

The locations of any western bypass may modify the Gateway solutions & location of speed signs mentioned in the Section above, particularly at the western approach on the Sturt Highway. Also note that the Growth Section suggests residential growth to the West that could be assisted by improved access but hampered by heavy vehicle traffic.

Note: The map below may not show the latest NSW Government Property ownership (i.e., Crown land). We hope to update this once an updated mapping layer is available).

Figure 8: Indicative Balranald Bypass Route Investigations for discussion.





## 5. Town Perimeter Upgrades

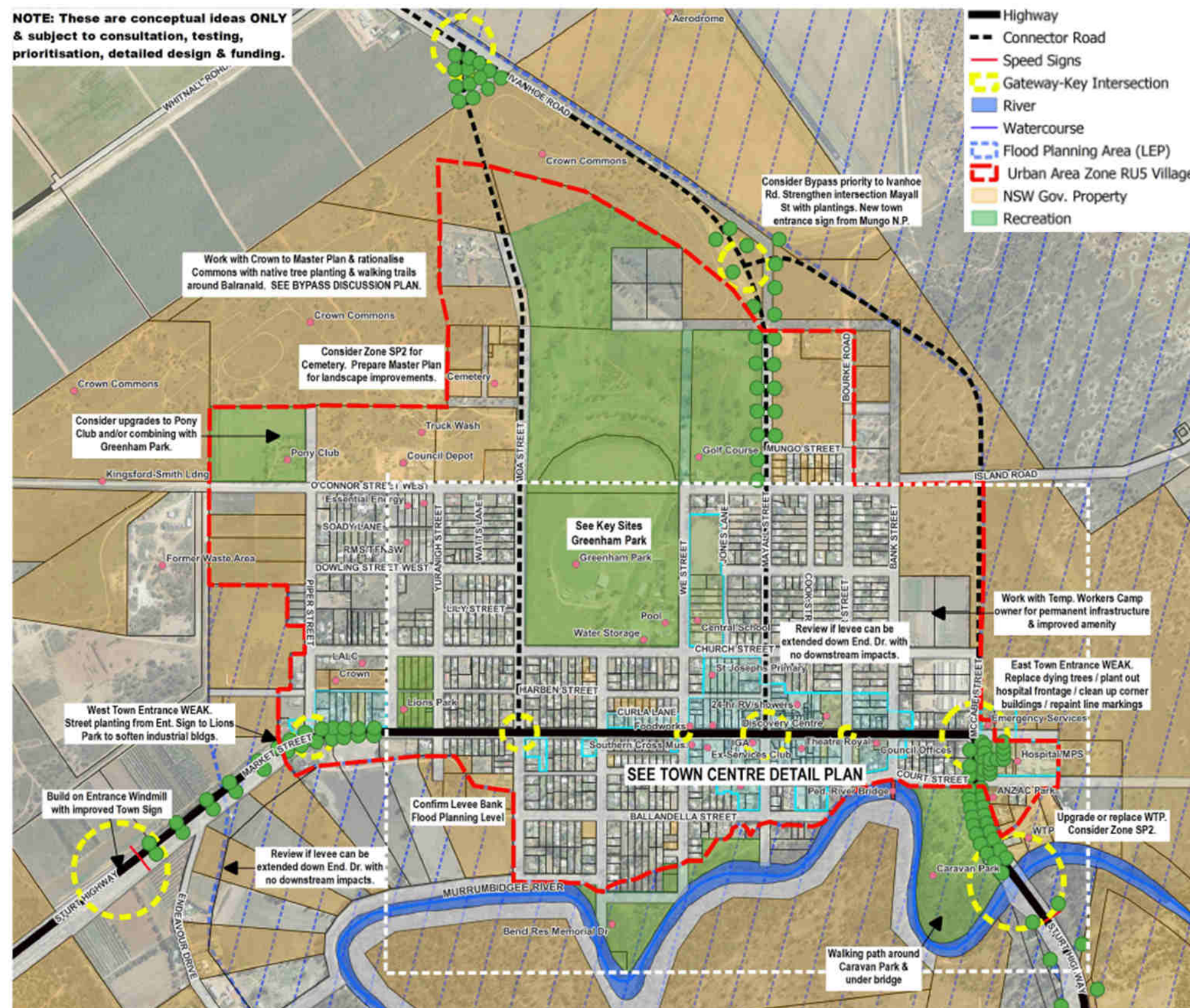
This Section relates mostly to areas of the Town outside the core inner area/ main street but excluding the Entrances & Bypass options addressed above (i.e., some projects shown on the plan are addressed in other Sections of this Strategy).

**Town Perimeter:** Some key upgrade projects around the perimeter of the town may include:

- **Levee:** Review if the levee south of Market St / west of Moa St can be extended along the eastern side of Endeavour Drive to remove flood prone land both west of Piper St & provide additional housing opportunity along Endeavour Drive (without exacerbating downstream flooding). See Growth Opportunities Section.
- **Commons:** Work with Crown & local Aboriginal groups to master plan the Commons to the north of Balranald to use this land more effectively for the community. This may include native tree planting (where bushfire risk is not significantly increased), walking & bicycle trails, & bird watching opportunities.
- **Pony Club:** Work with the Balranald Pony Club to determine opportunities for upgrades and/or to consolidate horse-related activities at Greenham Park (or other areas with existing facilities) with better facilities to attract regional events. Long-term construct an outdoor horse event arena.
- **Cemetery:** Ensure that Balranald Cemetery has sufficient land to grow for 20-40 years. Prepare a master plan to guide staged landscape upgrades & improvements.
- **Gateway(s):** Work with owners at key 'gateways' to the town to promote beautification & appropriate activities/signage for an improved visitor & local experience.
- **River Path:** Consider whether a public walking path can be extended around the river frontage of the Caravan Park & connect under the bridge & up to Anzac Park (may require an extended levee).
- **Active Travel Plan (Perimeter):** Consider other pedestrian & cycle connections as part of an **Active Travel Plan** that may include improved walks, bird-trails & ecological opportunities.

**Note:** The map opposite may not show the latest NSW Government Property ownership (i.e., Crown land). We hope to update this once an updated mapping layer is available).

Figure 9: Proposed upgrades to Balranald & immediate surrounds.





## 6. Town Centre & Main Street Upgrades

This Section relates to upgrades within the Town Centre (largely bounded by Moa St to the west & McCabe St to the East up to Church St in the north & the river to the South – EXCLUDING the Town CBD Core of 4 key blocks).

### 6.1. Street Tree Master Plan / Electricity

Balranald already has a relatively strong pattern of street tree plantings & street landscape design that (particularly after the largely treeless Hay Plain) provide an ‘oasis’, a strong identity/character to the town, & shade & ecological connectivity down to the river.

Balranald takes advantage of its wide local street to often provide central median strip plantings in addition to footpath plantings but this can’t be achieved on the highway/main street.

However, largely thick concrete electricity poles with both high & low voltage wires dominate the streets (particularly Market St) & limit street tree plantings or result in heavy pruning & poor visual character (noting that poles may still be required for street lighting).

There is an opportunity to build on the existing plantings & strengthen ‘green linkages’ – particularly between the river & key recreation areas or along key pedestrian links. The Town Centre Graphic suggests links could be further enhanced along north-south streets such as Mayall St; We St; Cally St & Moa St or east-west streets such as Church St & Court St.

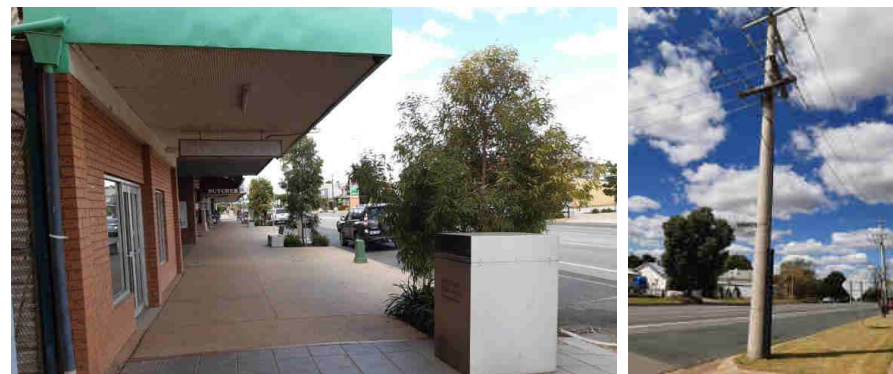
Market St (the main street) has had a recent program of street tree plantings, particularly between We St & River St in the CBD Core. Whilst the eucalypt species add great character now while they are small, they will unfortunately likely conflict with overhead powerlines & buildings in the future.

The main street also needs (in the shorter term) to extend consistent street planting out to the eastern & western inner gateways (see photos below) to the town to enhance the sense of arrival.

Figure 10: View along Highway/ Market (main) St (first) west near McCabe St, (second) east near Lions Park, & (third) east near We St showing lack of consistent street tree planting & dominance of electricity poles (Google Street View 2019).



Figure 11: Market (main) St eucalyptus street trees currently look good will likely conflict with overhead lines, awnings, footpaths & drop limbs as photos below suggest.



A **Street Tree Master Plan** (prepared by a suitably qualified person) should be prepared for Balranald Town Centre (as well as the Entrances noted above).

**Note:** Costings for plantings/irrigation/maintenance are not currently included in this Strategy & are subject to the Street Tree Master Plan. This should be considered at the same time as determining whether overhead electricity lines can be placed underground along (at least) the main (Market) street and/or appropriate species selection occurs under overhead lines though there are a number of funding barriers to this.

A **Street Tree Master Plan** would have several benefits including, but not limited to:

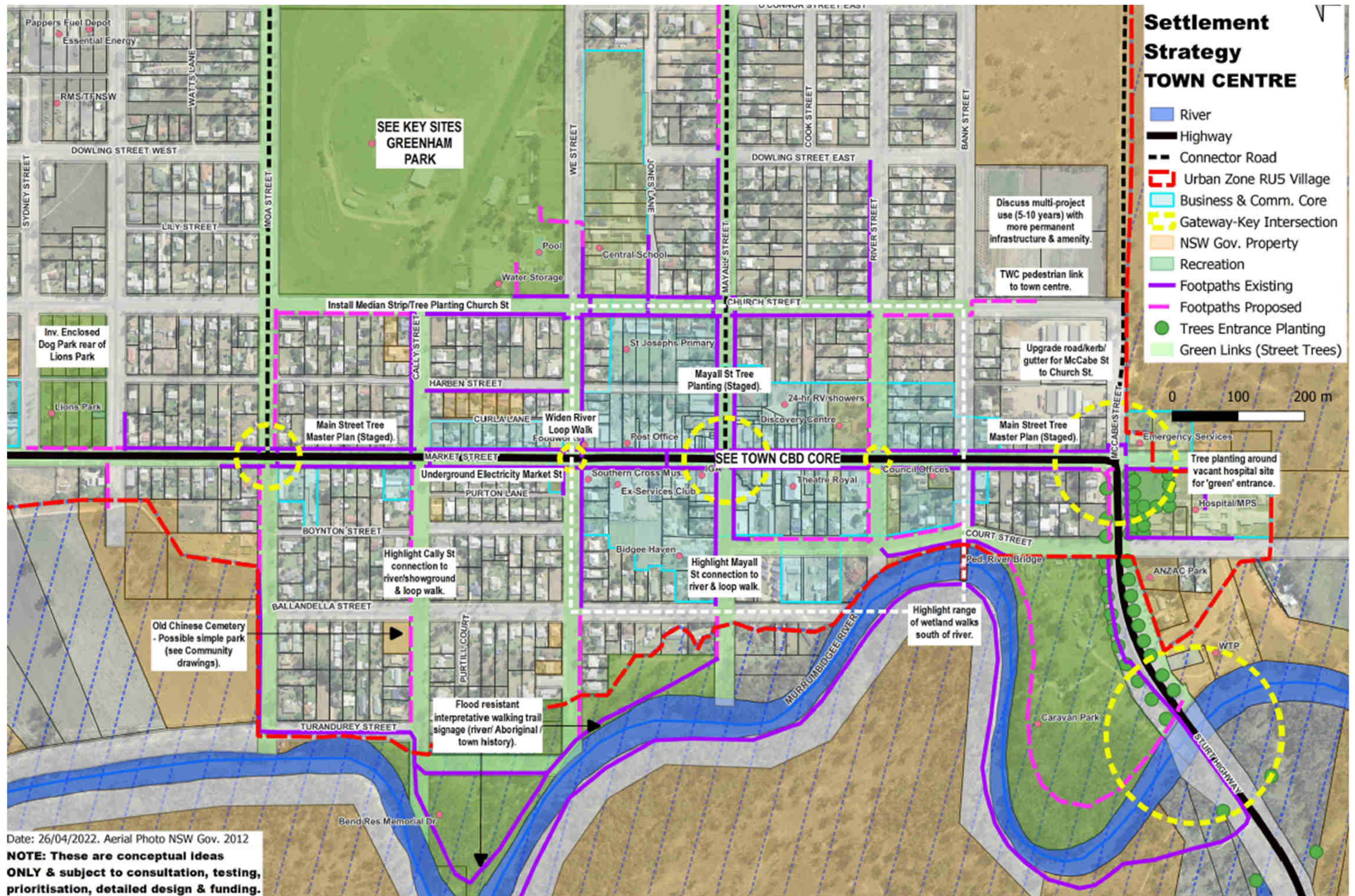
- Potentially removing the visual clutter & limitation of overhead electricity cables to street tree growth & minimising tree pruning.
- Reviewing the suitability, longevity, & safety of existing street trees (by an arborist) so they can be integrated into the plan or progressively replaced with a suitable Staged Replacement Strategy.
- Ensuring appropriate species selection that can coexist with infrastructure & adjacent buildings with minimal impact & are suited to the climate to minimise watering & maintenance/cleaning.
- Creating clear themes/mix of species to highlight key streets/intersections, create green ecological linkages between the river & key recreation areas, provide shade during summer months on key pedestrian routes & in large hardstand area (to reduce urban heat load), & colour/variety to enhance the character of the town.
- Ensure that traffic/pedestrian safety & casual surveillance/crime prevention has been considered in the strategy.
- Consider where expansion of median-strip planting may be suitable to add to foot path plantings, take advantage of wide street, less conflict with infrastructure, & potential for larger tree species.
- Ensuring consistency in decision-making over extended periods of time to get the best longevity & tree growth, avoid duplicating expenditure & poor visual outcomes to correct mistakes, & ensuring appropriate irrigation infrastructure is progressively implemented.
- Providing guidance to community groups & land owners as to suitable species selections & locations (including private plantings).

Species sizing may include the following:

- Large Shade Trees (+10m)** for use around sports ovals & in parks such as Plane Trees; English Oak; Pin Oak; English Elm; Poplar; & Ficus (Fig);
- Medium Sized Trees (<10m)** for streetscapes where they are NOT restricted by power lines such as Claret Ash; Jacaranda; Golden Elm; Manchurian Pear; & Chinese Elm;
- Small Trees (<5m)** for streetscapes under powerlines such as Prunus; Bechtel's Crab Apple; & Crepe Myrtle.

Figure 12: (next page) Proposed upgrades to Balranald Town Centre.







6.2. Footpaths & Kerb Ramps

All upgrades to footpaths & bicycle paths should ideally be supported by an **Active Travel Plan** that reviews existing footpath condition in detail & offers design guidelines for upgrades & extension to maximise use & longevity.

However, until such time as funding is available for an **Active Travel Plan**, this Strategy suggests some initial areas for consideration seeking to link key services & attractions & to create pedestrian & cycle loops that promote active living.

Generally, kerb ramps are provided at key intersections & pedestrian crossing & should be added for any footpath extensions. However, we note that **some kerb ramps are narrow, have broken pavers, & need repair** (to be determined as part of a footpath review). With an ageing population & likely increased use of mobility aids kerb ramp design should be compliant where possible.

There is some diversity in footpath types throughout the town centre with concrete, pebble-crete & pavers. The preferred option for key parts of the town centre should be identified & progressively older sections changed to match.

6.3. Cycle Paths & Facilities

In the short-term on-road cycling would appear to be appropriate on the wide road reserves if it can largely avoid or connect through appropriate crossings of the highway. However, shared paths may need to be signposted through recreation & river-side areas.

As cycling increases, it is worth testing appropriate locations for bicycle racks at key public, shopping & recreation areas.

There has been discussion around the potential for adaptive re-use of the railway line as a ‘rail-trail’ – potentially connecting the town to Yanga Homestead, with additional bike trails to Yanga Woolshed and Homebush Hotel.

Cycling routes should be investigated as part of an **Active Travel Plan** for each settlement once funding is available.

6.4. Parking

In the limited time of our visit there was no evidence that current street & public parking was not working efficiently. Key events may place increased pressure on public parking but only for limited times & this is often accommodated at recreation grounds etc.

If, in the longer-term parking becomes an issue – then the Council could consider 45-degree (rear to kerb) angle parking in the CBD Core as there is sufficient road width without having to change road alignments. This may also allow additional planting blisters & landscape to reduce the hardscape & slow traffic but is not costed at this time.

Figure 13: Market (main) Street with under-utilised road width & parallel parking.



6.5. Main Street Buildings & Landscape

Council should continue to work with land owners along the main street, particularly businesses, to ensure that building & advertising sign presentation enhances, rather than detracts, from street & town presentation.

Some examples of sites that may detract from the town character include:

- a) Large hardstand or gravel parking areas with limited landscape;
- b) Large blank walls with little articulation;
- c) Building facades that are dilapidated or in need of a repaint;
- d) Street awnings & lighting that is poor;
- e) Signage that dominates the building & street & may distract drivers, etc.

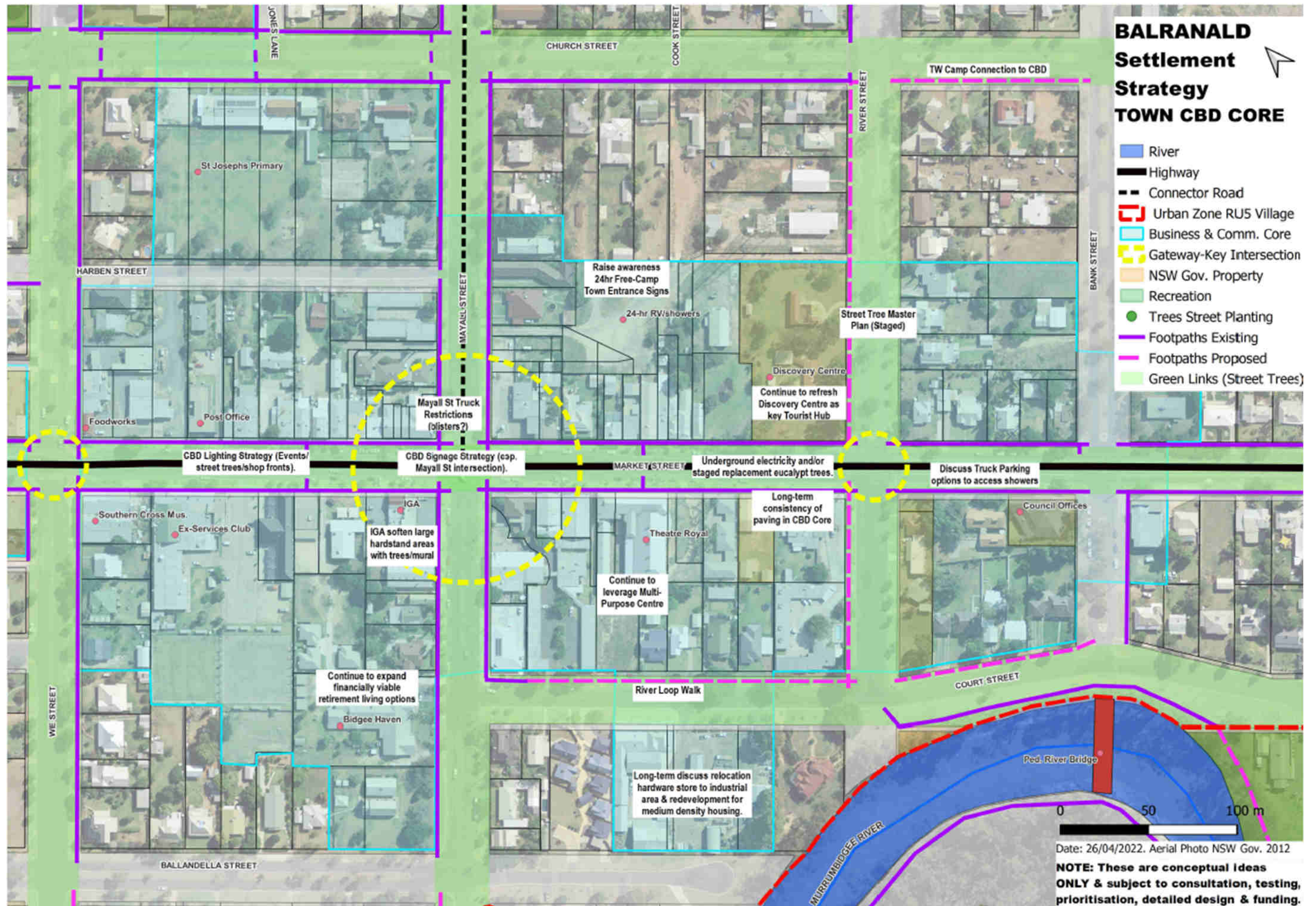
Potentially, listing a larger number of heritage items may increase access to heritage grants for upgrades. Other grant funding may occasionally be available for provision of supplies for minor building works, particularly relating to front facades & for murals on blank walls. Awards for businesses for best presentation & front window activity may raise awareness/encourage improvements. For more derelict buildings, Council may seek to demolish these to improve presentation.

- **Active Travel Plan (Town Centre):** prepared to recommend appropriate footpath & kerb ramp upgrades; cycle paths & facilities, & any additional off-street parking opportunities required. Review opportunities to improve River Loop Walk. Upgrade connections to Temporary Workers Camp.
- **Facades/Signage:** Council should continue to work with land owners along the main street, particularly businesses, to ensure that building & advertising sign presentation enhances, rather than detracts, from street & town presentation & determine what grant funding may be available for upgrades. This may include paving & landscaping larger off-street parking areas & adding murals.
- **Lighting Strategy:** prepared for the main street for events, streets trees, & key buildings & shop-fronts to provide night-time presentation & activation.
- **Main Street Paving:** Seek to improve long-term consistency, durability & low-maintenance paving along main-street.
- **Discovery Centre:** Continue to refresh Centre as key tourist hub. Raise awareness of 24-hr RV Camping at town entrance signs & online. Potentially relocate skate park to Greenham Park.

Encourage truck services at defined rest areas to avoid trucks parking in the main street.

Figure 14 (next page): Proposed upgrades to Balranald Town Centre Core.







## 7. Town Centre Signage & Art

In addition to the issues discussed in the *Entrances & Signage* Section above, there is a need to review Signage along the Main Street.

### 7.1. Community, Tourist & Heritage Signs

Balranald does a great job at recognising & educating others about its history, including:

- Navigation maps & tourist signage, esp. around the Discovery Centre.
- The Balranald & District Military Heritage Walk from the Ex-Services Club to ANZAC Park with 45 individual storey boards on ex-service people & relevance to Balranald;
- Historic building signage that tells the storey of important buildings along the main street;
- White on Brown tourist/heritage/National Park signs.
- White on Green navigation signs to nearby towns.
- White on Blue navigation signs to local attractions.

The only comment is that each of these signs have been implemented at different times but they are not always integrated or use a similar signage style or colour. As signs are upgraded, the **Signage Strategy** should provide guidance on how to integrate this.

#### 7.1.1. Central Information Boards

Balranald has a central information board located outside the Senior Citizens building that was recently upgraded by Balranald Inc.

#### 7.1.2. Public Art & Memorials

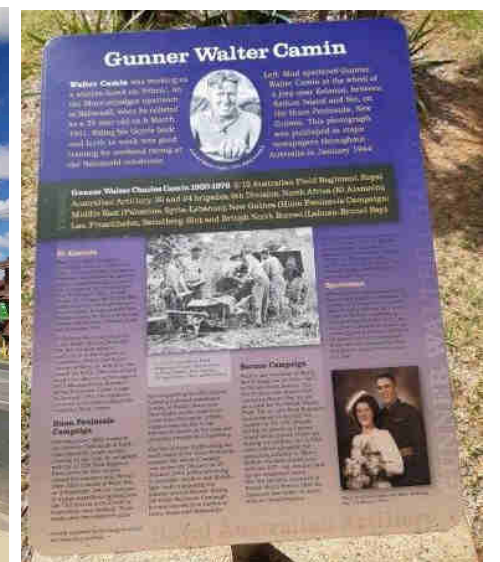
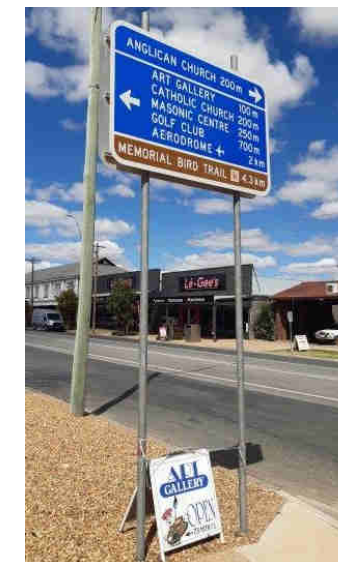
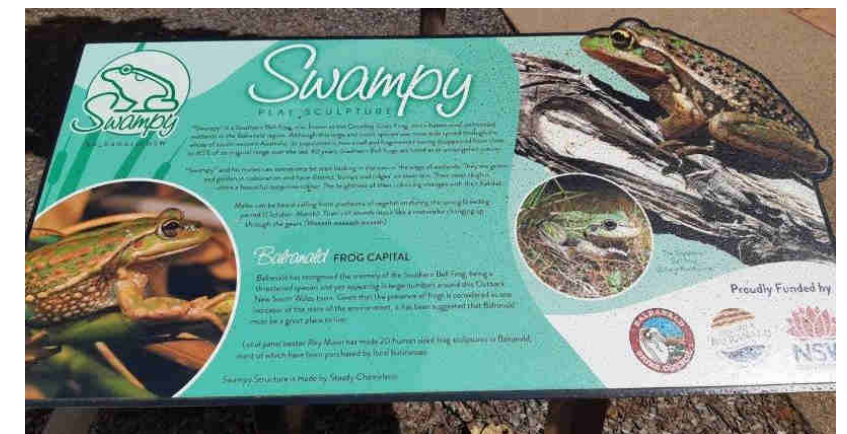
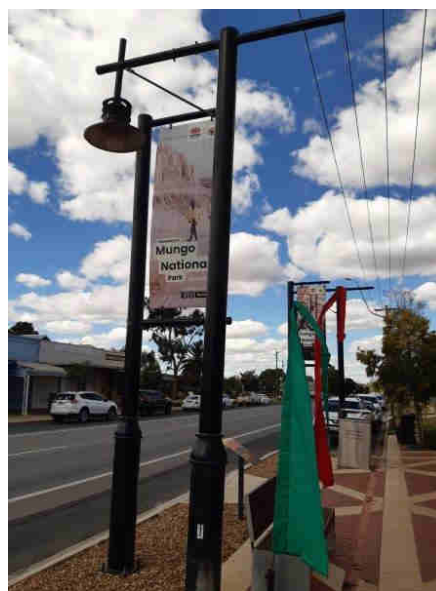
Balranald already has a significant amount of sculpture, art & murals that contribute to the identify & character of the town.

The theme of the Southern Bell Frog is particularly strong & appealing with frog sculptures at the entrance & around the town. Without being too superficial, there may be potential to have some even bigger frog sculptures – particularly at the town entrances or in the main street to capture passing traffic. There could also be sculpture competitions with exhibits around town or shown along the highway/Hay Plain (much like 'Animals on Bikes' near Cumnock).

One opportunity may be to build on the indigenous heritage, culture & stories with a trail that starts at the Discovery Centre but ideally connects to the riverfront & Aboriginal heritage items around Balranald. These should only be prepared in consultation with local community groups, schools, the local Aboriginal peoples & cultural groups, heritage & historians & located as part of a broader strategy for parks & public spaces.

There are already a number of murals, especially the eye-catching mural on the side of the Theatre Royal. There may be potential to identify blank walls on vacant or older buildings that could allow for more pictures that activate buildings & tell the town's history.

Until such time as vacant shopfronts are filled then shopfront (with owner permission) could be activated with art work constructed using local schools & community members (not costed).



**Public Art Strategy:** prepared to continue to build on the sculpture, art, war memorial & mural trails through Balranald that is effective, accessible, low-maintenance, & celebrates the unique identity of the town/region. Build on the indigenous heritage, culture & stories & connection to river-front. Build on non-indigenous heritage places & stories. Look at opportunities for additional mural (e.g., Greenham Park water towers).



## 8. Key Sites/Recreation Area(s)

### 8.1. Management Plan(s)

For all Crown Lands (and also Council Community lands & Parks) ideally there would be a **Plan of Management** prepared that would guide all future decision making in these areas & include the community & Crown Lands Division in their preparation. A generic plan is suitable to overview all of the smaller parks in Balranald but specific Plans of Management & possibly Master Plans are needed for key sporting facilities or major parks.

Council should certainly aim to provide a range of parks & facilities accessible across the community. However, with financial pressures on council, large areas to maintain (particularly with river frontages), & increasing expectations for safety & upgrades at each facility – it is important to clearly define the role of each area & minimise duplication of facilities unless they are in demand or multiple locations are needed for accessibility.

**Plans of Management** (if not already available/updated) should be prepared/ updated & relative priorities identified to engage with the community & facilitate funding & appropriate development.

### 8.2. Greenham Park

Greenham Park is located to the north of the town centre/highway & is bounded by Church St to the south, Moa St to the west, We St to the east, & the golf course to the north. It is the primary active recreation area in Balranald & is a multi-purpose facility that includes:

- a) **Balranald Racecourse:** 1.56km grass track. Two (2) race meets per year. Race stand & ancillary stables & buildings.
- b) **Sports Fields:** Two (2) fields. Primary field used for AFL & Seniors Cricket. Second field used for junior cricket (pitch in poor condition) & Junior AFL. Balranald Football Club affiliated with Central Murray Football Netball League. Balranald Cricket Club/Swan Hill District Cricket Association.
- c) **Function Centre & Changerooms:** Multi-purpose function centre. New changerooms opened in March 2022.
- d) **Swimming Pool:** Three pools -25m/toddlers /middle-sized. Free entry.
- e) **Kevin Coombs Netball/Basketball Courts:** Two (2) relatively new (Netball Australian Standard) courts with lights & shed.
- f) **Tennis Courts:** 2-3 new tennis courts (1 older court).
- g) **Playgrounds:** One partly covered medium-sized playground near the Tennis Courts & one smaller playground near the Netball Courts.
- h) **BMX Track:** There is mounding for an outdoor BMX track but it has fallen into disrepair (possibly due to lack of use). It is currently overgrown & would need reshaping.
- i) **Water Storage & Parking Area:** Two (2) water tanks (one for potable & one for raw water) provide storage & pressure for Balranald. Roughly sealed parking area for pool with RV dump point.

Figure 15: Pictures from Greenham Park.

Racetrack finish line.



Race stand & tower.



Primary AFL/cricket oval with function centre & new changerooms.



Multi-purpose function centre.



New accessible changerooms.



Second oval (junior cricket pitch).



Netball/basketball courts.



Smaller playground near netball courts.



Larger playground near tennis courts.



Swimming pool facility.





Proposed works at Greenham Park could include the following:

#### Perimeter & Parking Areas

- Add central median & street trees along Church St (south frontage).
- Formalise entrance from Church St to internal area of racecourse & sportsgrounds with appropriate signage.
- Formalise pool car parking around water storage tanks with tree planting for shade & possible one-way in/one-way out during events.
- Allow room for possible expansion of water storage tanks for additional capacity for Balranald's growth.
- Expand on school murals on water tanks with potential professional murals as part of silo art trail (if good business case).
- Formalise overflow parking area driveways inside racetrack (southern end) for larger events (if required).

#### Pool Area

- Add water play park near pool (possibly outside fenced area near corner Church & We Streets) – see Hay example.
- Look at business case for solar heating of pool to extend swimming season (though may require fee to be charged unless grant funded).
- Consider relocating skate park at Discovery Centre (requires replacement) to Greenham Park – possibly at rear of pool/tennis court area.

#### Sportsgrounds/Ovals

- Maintain & upgrade AFL ground & review demand & potential to attract more regional matches.
- Upgrade junior cricket pitch for senior cricket use.
- Consider if demand for a 400m athletics track / multi-sports oval to either replace junior cricket oval or beside that oval (see if schools can contribute).

#### Netball/Basketball/Tennis Courts/Playgrounds

- Replace netball courts with new courts. Provide shaded seating around perimeter of courts (either as trees or permanent shelters).
- Add shade & toddler equipment for smaller playground to allow supervised play during sporting events.
- Add shade & more advanced equipment to larger playground near tennis courts.
- Add lights to tennis courts (if used during winter/late evenings).
- Repair older tennis courts or refurbish for alternative sports.

#### Racecourse/Horse Events

- Try to increase use of racing facilities more than two (2) times per year to justify costs for upgrading & maintenance of track.
- Discuss with Pony Club whether they could receive improved facilities if they co-located to Greenham Park – possibly including an outdoor arena & yards (campdrafting/rodeo/horse sports), dressage arena, horse stables, storage shed, etc. to avoid duplication of horse & supporting facilities.

#### Landscape Plan

- Subject to funding, a Landscape (Planting & Maintenance) Plan could be prepared to activate, beautify, shade, & improve ecological outcomes for the site.

Figure 16: Indicative projects for Greenham Park & water storage tanks in car parking area.





8.3. Discovery Centre Complex

The Discovery Centre & its associated information centre, café, historic buildings, skate park, men’s shed & RV overnight camping area is an amazing facility for visitors & travellers. It is ideally located on the Sturt Highway at the eastern end of the main street in close proximity to other attractions & town services.

The showers are available to the RV Camp users & all passers-by so they are sometimes used by truck drivers. However, there is very limited parking suitable near the Discovery Centre on the highway that doesn’t interfere with driveways (see Lions Park below as an alternative).

Figure 17: The Balranald Discovery Centre is a key visitor attraction.



**Discovery Centre Complex:**

- a) Continue to centralise visitor information & services in this location to leverage these facilities to improve the visitor experience & facilitate local expenditure.
- b) Continue to leverage grant funding to update & improve the interaction with the Shire’s history, heritage, culture & attractions (some presentations were not working at the time of our visit).
- c) Some additional lighting could be provided at night-time to connect through to the RV Park. Consider alternative sites for RV overnight.
- d) This Site should form the starting point for any walking or historic trails around the town (except the Honour Veterans Trail that starts at the Club).
- e) The timber elements of the skate park require major repair and/or replacement. Consider relocating skate park to Greenham Park (see above).

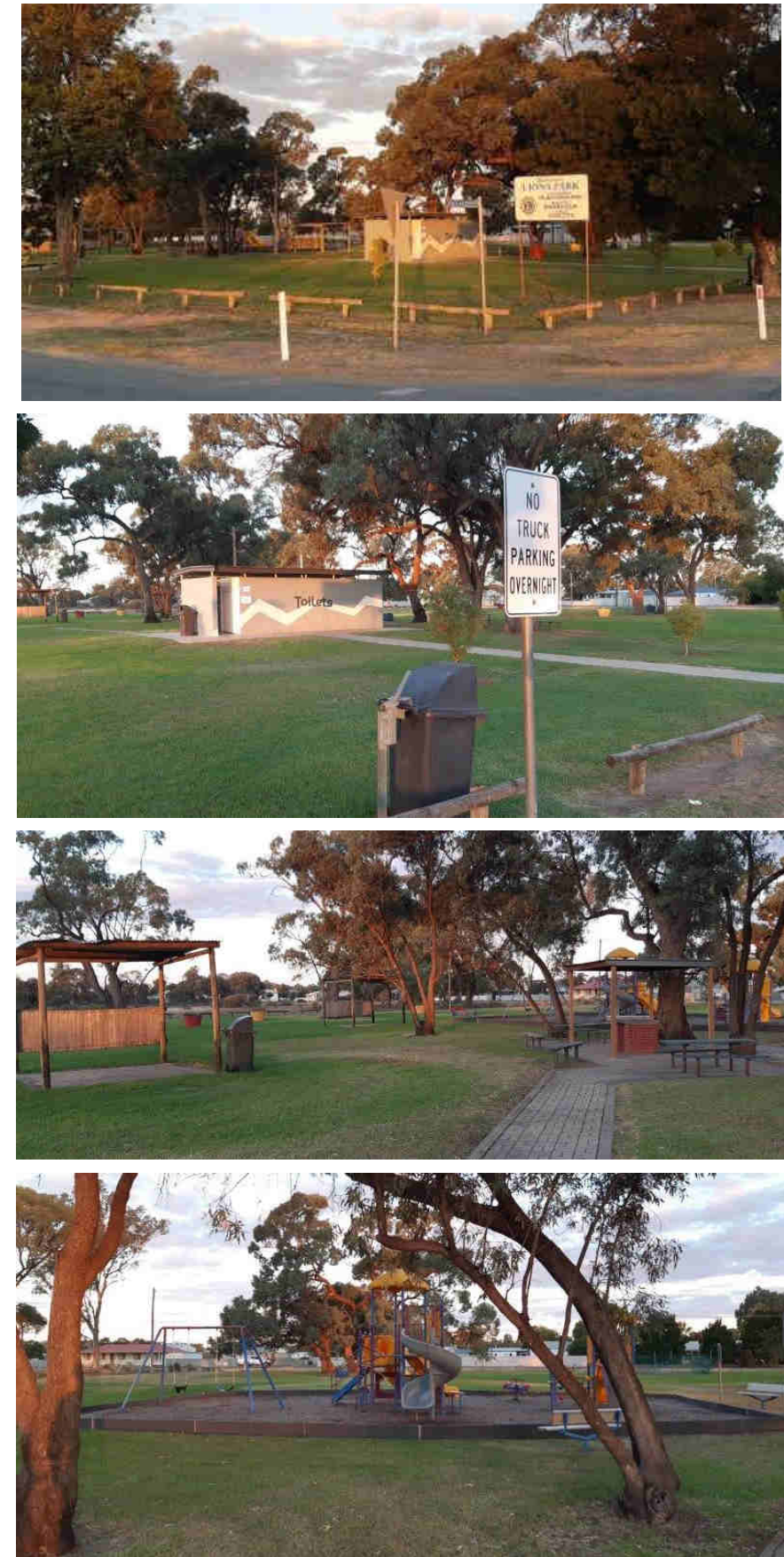
8.4. Lions Park

Lions Park is Crown Land located towards the western side of Balranald with frontages to the Sturt Highway, Sydney St, Yuranigh St, & Church St at the rear. It has a simple playground & toilets in the front half. The rear half is an open space with limited facilities.

It provides an alternative rest area to highway travellers compared to the Discovery Centre & a larger play area for children. However, as stated above – ideally visitors should be directed to the more comprehensive facilities at the Discovery Centre.

There are several BBQs & shade structures. However, there is no formal seating within the shade structures. Currently, dogs are only permitted on a leash in this area.

Figure 18: Lions Park toilets, shade structures & playground.



Council is already investigating upgrades to the toilets & playground areas. Lions Park could provide an alternative to the Discovery Centre for a rest area for light vehicles. The highway frontage is ~100m long & there is a sealed pull-off area.

Heavy vehicles would be better suited to using the BP Service Station / rest areas outside of town. There is a sign stating ‘No Truck Parking Overnight’ – so concerns from this need to be addressed & this location is not on the proposed heavy vehicle bypass routes & not near the town services – so it unlikely to be desirable for heavy vehicles.

**Lions Park:** Potential upgrades to be further investigated include:

- a) Upgrade the toilet block with accessible facilities.
- b) Upgrade the lighting around the upgraded toilet for safe night-time use.
- c) Progressively improve the playground & provide a shade canopy for at least part (current project).
- d) Add seating & upgrade the shade structures around the BBQ area (current project).
- e) Look at fencing part of the park (possibly in the northern under-utilised section) for a dog off-leash area.

8.5. ANZAC Park

This is a smaller park located on the eastern side of Balranald, east of the Sturt Highway & south of Court St. It has the main war memorial & is at the end of the war memorial walking trail. Because of the highway & its location, this park is a bit isolated but may be used by the hospital.

**ANZAC Park & Surrounds:** Council should continue to maintain this park. However, its connectivity & amenity may be improved if there was an investigation of vacant land on the eastern side of the highway & south of Market St to extend plantings & the connection to ANZAC Park to improve this gateway to Balranald.

Figure 19: ANZAC Park entry.



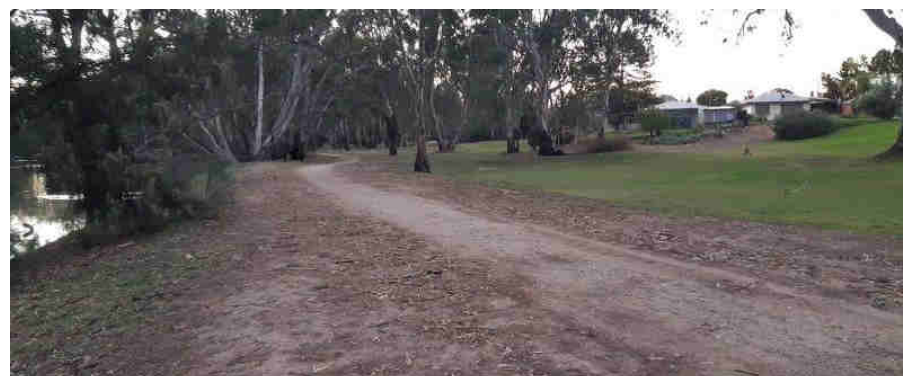
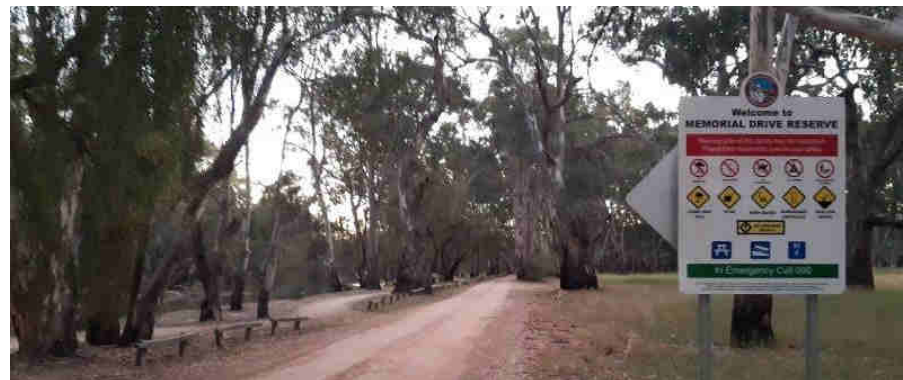


### 8.6. River Bend Reserve / Memorial Drive (River Park)

The River Park is a beautiful park along the Murrumbidgee River that can be accessed from the ends of Cally St, We St & Mayall St. Most of the park is flood affected so this limits the sorts of facilities that can be included. However, it has walking trails, toilets, exercise equipment & seating benches. It is the preferred location for the Five (5) Rivers Outback Festival & sometimes farmer's markets etc.

**Bend Reserve/Memorial Drive (River Park):** Council should continue to highlight this park to visitors & enable it for passive recreation use & some events with supported facilities (in consultation with Balranald Inc.) – subject to flood impacts & future levee banks. 'Green links' along Mayall, Moa, We & Cally Streets should be extended down to the river front for ecology & amenity. There is an opportunity to provide more/upgraded (flood resistant) interpretative signage with history of the river-front activities, the role of the flood plain & ecology, and/or Aboriginal history & culture.

Figure 20: Bend Reserve/Memorial Drive (River Park) on the Murrumbidgee River.



### 8.7. Balranald Golf Club

The Golf Club is located to the north of Greenham Park with the club house accessed from the corner of We & O'Connor Streets. There are nine (9) grass greens. The Balranald Football Club utilise the club rooms for social functions on Friday nights.

There is a pocket of freehold land held by Council in the middle of the golf course & possibly excess land along Mayall St that may be recommended for residential growth (see Section below). The benefit of this location is that the residential dwellings could be marketed as part of a 'golf course estate' with landscape outlooks. However, this may require a reconfiguration of the greens for the golf club.

**Golf Course:** Council should work with the Golf Club & its committee to support the maintenance of the golf course & club house. As part of growth plans listed below there may be a need to reconfigure part of the course.

### 8.8. Pony Club

The Pony Club is currently located on part of the Crown Land located to the north-west of town at the intersection of Piper St & O'Connor St West. The inside of the facility was not inspected but appeared to have simple facilities with some storage sheds/containers, a yard & outdoor area for horse events. It is expected this may use the Crown Commons for expanded horse riding.

There may be potential to upgrade the pony club facilities over time to attract more users & possibly some regional events. As discussed in the section on Greenham Park above, the horse facilities at Greenham Park are only sporadically used & all of the infrastructure could be better leveraged if there was some consolidation of horse activities at this location. This requires further investigation with the Pony Club.

**Pony Club:** Investigate whether existing Site should be upgraded OR relocate facilities to Greenham Park to leverage horse facilities & improve sustainability & usage.

### 8.9. Crown Commons to North of Town

The Crown Commons are a vast under-utilised resource for the Town of Balranald. It is not possible to maintain them for active uses. However, there appears to be a series of trails & clusters of vegetation across the area. Bypass roads are discussed above & would significantly change how this area is accessed & possibly used. Regardless, Council needs to investigate how the land could be better used consistent with its ecological opportunities & constraints.

**Crown Commons (North of Balranald):** Council should work with the community to investigate appropriate activities for the Crown Commons & cost-effective / low maintenance upgrades that could facilitate the use & amenity of the area. The ecology of the area could be significantly enhanced with stage native plantings & simple walking trails that connect into trails around the town.

### 8.10. Balranald Motocross (Motorbike) Track

Balranald also has a motocross park located to the north-east of town and east of the aerodrome. The club has race days that attract hundreds of visitors & plans to hold state & regional events. The club is seeking funding to upgrade facilities to host these larger events.

**Motocross Track:** Investigate grant funding opportunities to upgrade facilities to host larger events.



## 8.11. Aerodrome

The Balranald Aerodrome is located to the north-east of town. It has two runways, 1185m paved & 650m unsealed grass with a small shed & sealed parking area.

Council has prepared an Obstacle Limitation Surface (OLS) Map (2012) for the Balranald Aerodrome. This shows the maximum Height of Buildings within certain contours around the site. The majority of the urban area of Balranald is within contour RL108.715. The Airport itself is at ~RL63.715 & most of Balranald is at around RL64. Therefore, there is an approximate 45m height limit (10-15 storeys) for building in the urban area. This is unlikely to be a major constraint to urban growth at this time.

There is apparently a small single levee bank 1.5km long around the south, east & part north-east side of the Aerodrome based on the 1956 Flood (1 in 90 ARI) but it may need upgrade/maintenance.

The aerodrome may have significant potential (subject to plane size & limitations) to attract fly-in/fly-out workers; executive staff for major projects; flight training schools, community flying events, logistics flights, Flying Doctors Service, & people who are looking to live regionally & fly their own planes.

**Balranald Aerodrome:** Council should investigate ways to leverage the aerodrome to attract funding for upgrades & support higher use of the facility. This may require a Master Plan for future development.

Figure 21: Photo at the main gates to the aerodrome & the main shed/taxi area.

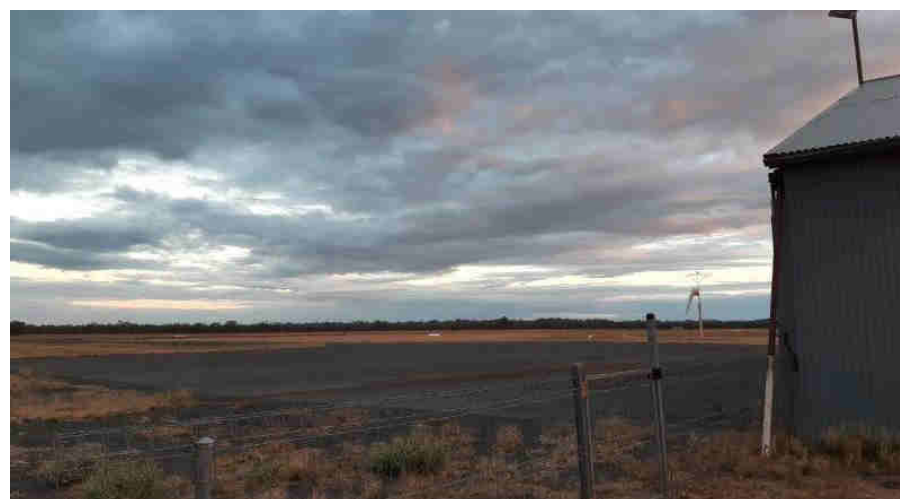
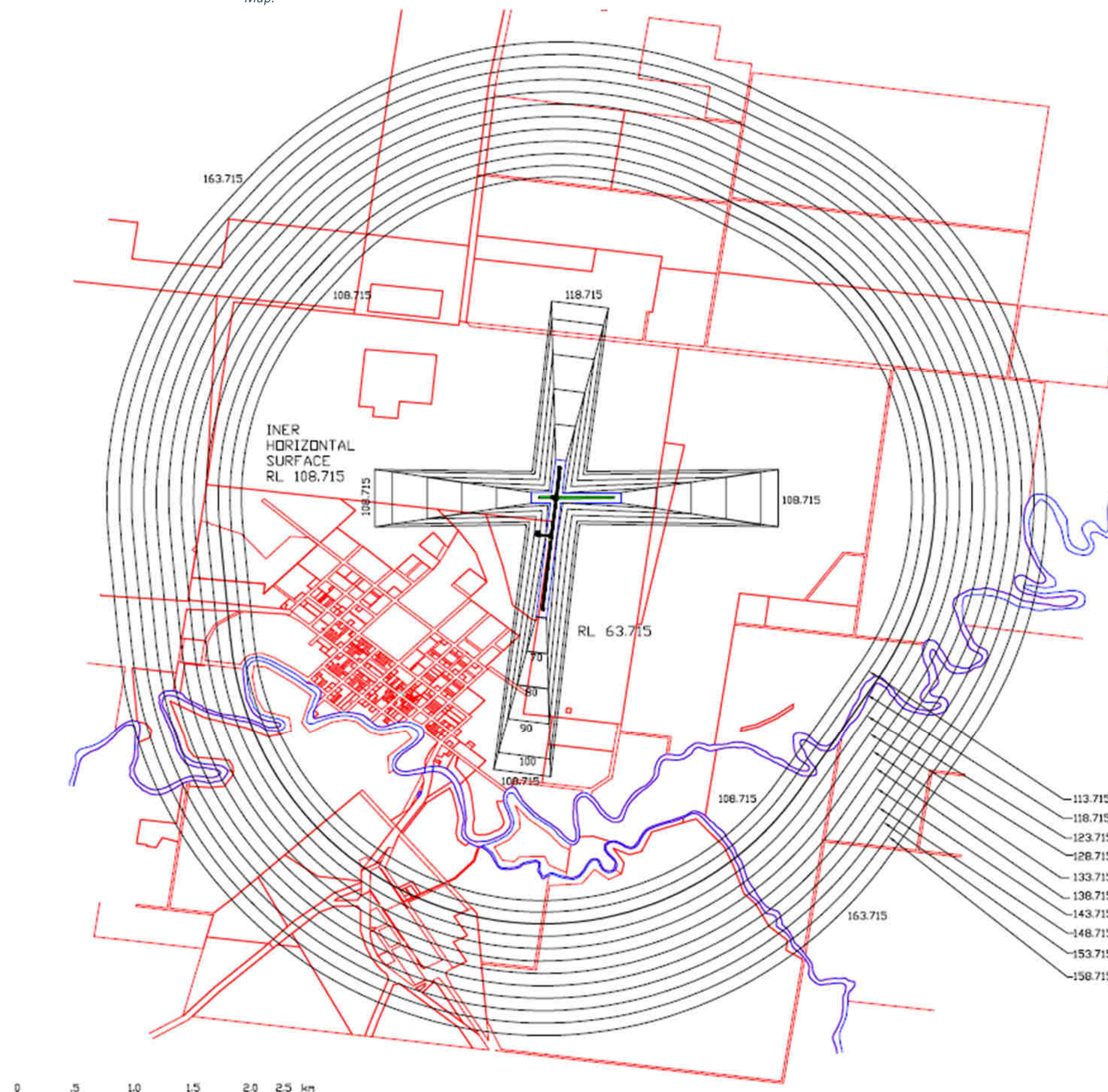


Figure 22: Excerpt from Council (2012) Balranald Aerodrome—Obstacle Limitation Surface Map.





## 9. Growth Opportunities

### 9.1. Key Opportunities

Balranald is well located/placed to leverage significant growth in infrastructure, mining, agriculture & tourism in the sub-region as shown in Chapter 1. It is a beautiful town located on the Murrumbidgee River with a reasonable level of services, employment, & recreational facilities (assuming these can be maintained).

### 9.2. Key Constraints

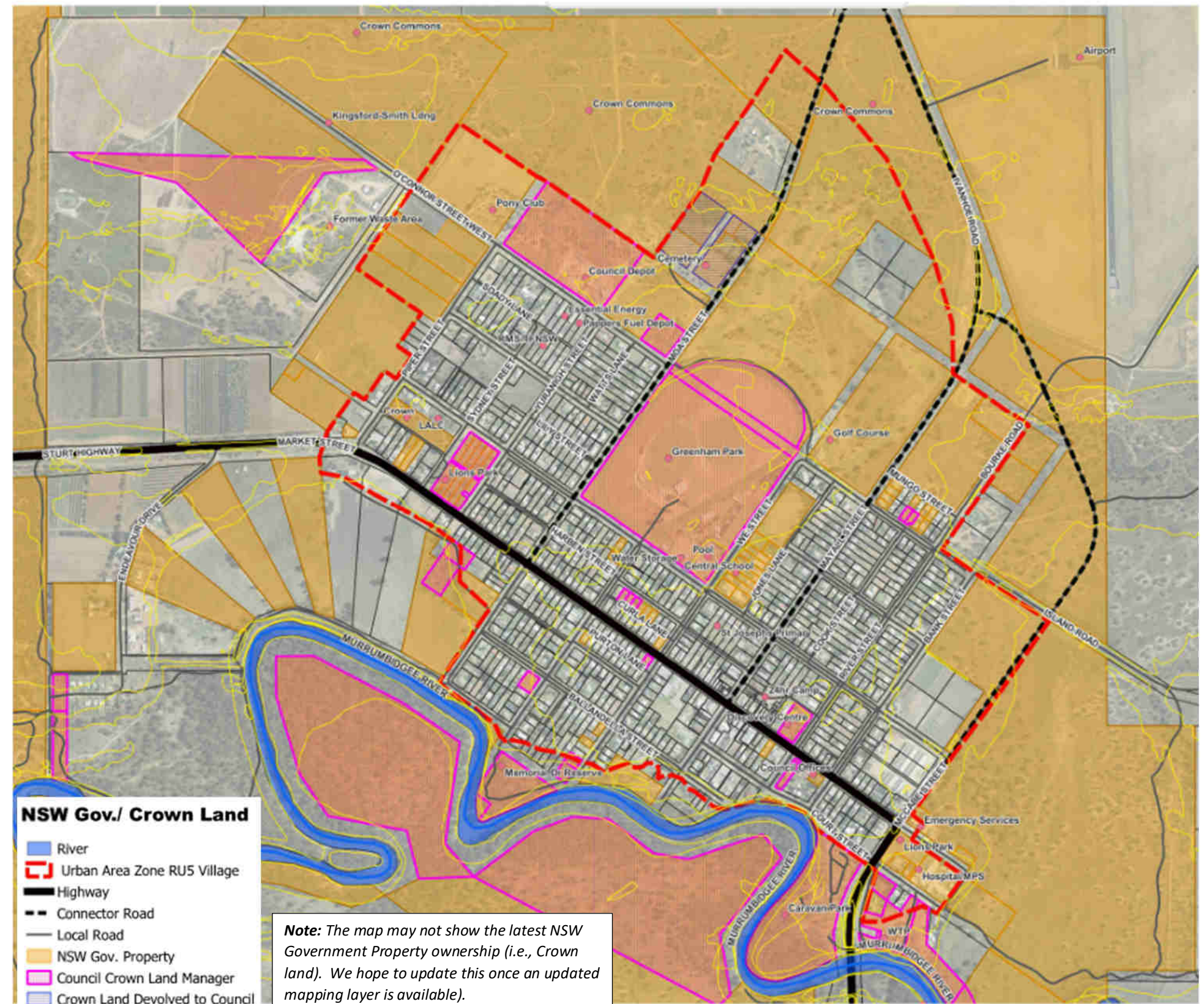
The village's potential growth/expansion is significantly constrained by (supported by findings in Council's *Housing Development – Balranald* (undated) Report):

- River:** The Murrumbidgee River & its associated wetlands/flood-plain to the south & east. The flood risk area is unlikely to change unless there are significant extensions to levee bank systems requiring detailed studies to avoid exacerbating flood impacts downstream (see details in Section below);
- Crown Lands:** Crown lands constrain growth in all directions, particularly to the north & west (see Figure opposite & next page). Long-term leasing of some Crown lands is possible but less attractive for investment. The *Crown Lands Management Act 2016* (CLM Act) allows eligible Western lands leases to be purchased to convert the title to freehold. Crown lands are often subject to native title claims & covered by sensitive biodiversity & other environmental issues that take significant time & studies to resolve for redevelopment;
- Infill Development:** People have moved to Balranald for its rural lifestyle. This sometimes means that people want to have a larger than average house lot size with privacy from neighbours. This does, however, mean that there are significant parts of the existing Zone RU5 Village area that are under-utilised (up to ~100 lots). As there is little potential to expand the village zone – it would be far more efficient (in terms of infrastructure & development costs) to develop infill land prior to addressing the constraints above. However, Council has approached these owners with limited success.
- Construction Cost:** Across Australia, construction costs have jumped due to increased demand, lack of local builders or skilled trades & construction material supply, & macro & micro-economic factors. It is suggested that the 'cost to build a house in Balranald is up to 20% more expensive than other regional centres.' If construction costs exceed perceived or actual housing value then people are less likely to develop land.
- Rental Availability:** With a growing temporary workforce anecdotal evidence is that appropriate rental housing is not meeting demand & is often of poor quality.
- Highway:** The Sturt Highway creates both opportunities & constraints for the town. It brings passing traffic to support local businesses, but this traffic has priority & creates a barrier to connection & traffic noise may impact residential amenity.

- Infrastructure:** Current sewer & water infrastructure is already experiencing issues (see Chapter 1 of this Strategy) that may limit growth & result in significant upgrade costs. The IWCM will provide guidance on ways to address this but will take time to implement.

**Aerodrome:** Protection of the aerodrome from sensitive development may also restrict development to the north-east.

- Historical Growth:** The above constraints are HIGHLY LIKELY to have significantly constrained growth of housing (& possibly ancillary





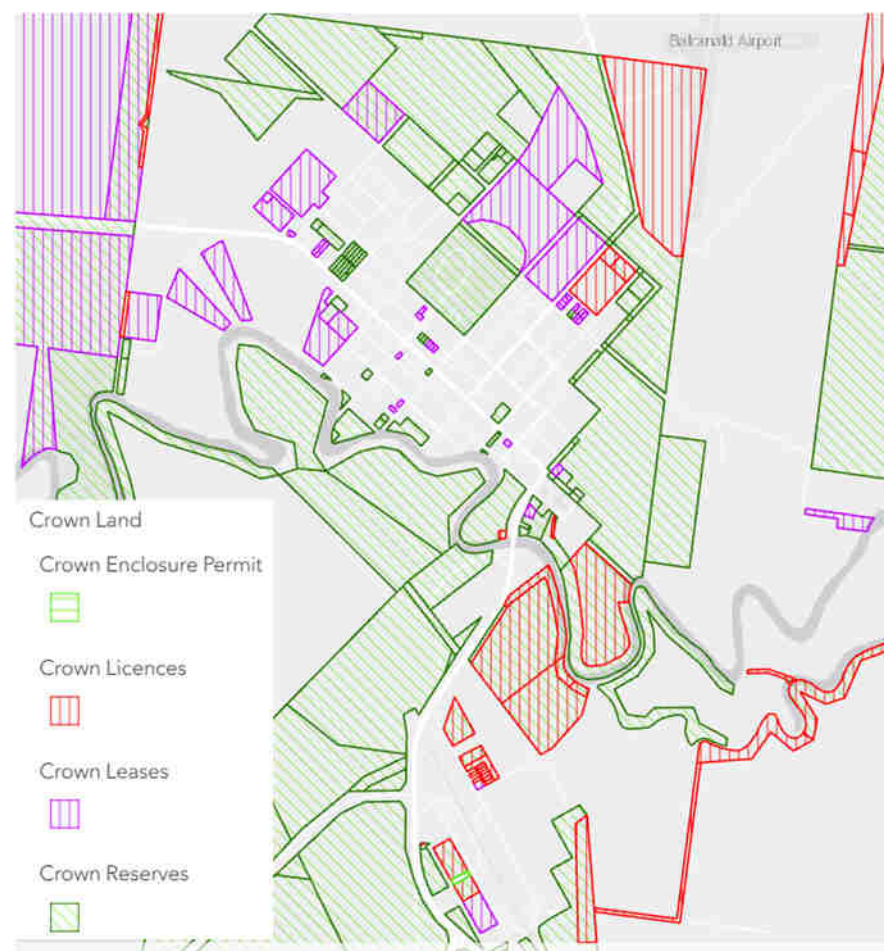


Figure 24: Excerpt NSW Planning Portal showing breakdown of Crown Lands.

### 9.3. Flood Prone Land

As already stated, Balranald sits on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River. Flood prone land largely constrains growth of the town in all directions except to the north & north-west. However, the town is fortunate in that the majority of the urban area sits outside the known or likely 1 in 100 Annual Recurrence Interval (ARI) level without the need for extensive high levee barriers through town (there are levees along McCabe St eastern link & to the south-east of town).

It is understood that the 1 in 100 ARI Flood Level is ~RL63.30m based in part on the 1956 flood of 63.24m being a 1 in 90-year ARI flood & 1974 flood of 62.91m a 1 in 45-year flood (Balranald Levee Bank Overall Layout Plan 2004). This suggests the Flood Planning Level (with 0.5m freeboard) is ~RL63.8m. Most of the Town sits at ~RL64m above the flood planning level but there are some houses below this along the river & the levee may only be to RL63.5m. The levee was constructed in 2005 (McCabe St.) & 2008 (Western end).

**Flood Study (Balranald):** Updates to the current study could include:

- A crest level survey be undertaken every five (5) years (even though the SKM Balranald O&M Manual says 10 years). We find this picks up problems early (and are repairable more easily & cheaply);
- Preparation of a formal Flood Risk Management Study & Plan with mitigation measures taking into account Climate Change;

- Investigation why the area around Malcolm St & Duryea St (the old railway siding) was originally shown as flood-free in the Habitat Planning (2006) Balranald Shire – Strategic Framework Plan but is now shown as flood affected & would it be suitable for industrial growth;
- Review if the levee south of Market St / west of Moa St can be extended along the eastern side of Endeavour Drive to remove flood prone land both west of Piper St & provide additional housing opportunity along Endeavour Drive (without exacerbating downstream flooding);
- Improved understanding of flooding of the area south of the Murrumbidgee River/town to enable appropriate bush walking & visitor facilities/access;
- Improved understanding of water consumption from river & groundwater systems to maintain environmental flows.

### 9.4. Dwelling Supply & Demand

The following table sets out the dwelling approvals in & around Balranald that would affect housing supply (noting that an approval does not always result in construction & this excludes demolition/rebuilds).

Figure 25: Summary of Dwelling Approvals in &amp; around Balranald 2004-2022.

No. of Years	Year	New (Detached) Dwellings	Secondary Dwellings	Workers Accom.	(MINUS) Dwelling Demolitions
1	2004	4		1	1
2	2005	2			
3	2006	1			
4	2007	0			
5	2008	1			2
6	2009	2			
7	2010	1			1
8	2011	0			
9	2012	4			2
10	2013	1			
11	2013/2014	1			
12	2014/2015	3			1
13	2015/2016	3		8	
14	2016/2017	0		2	
15	2017/2018	3			2
16	2018/2019	1	2		
17	2019/2020	1		2	1
18	2020/2021	3	1		
19	2021/2022	2			
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39 new dwellings</b>			

The Table above highlights that over 19 years there has been the addition of up to 39 new dwellings (or approximately 2 dwelling/year on average).

Unfortunately, it would appear that dwelling approvals do not appear to correlate to the anecdotal evidence of dwelling demand in & around Balranald. There is a clear need for housing for several sectors of the housing market & temporary workers that is NOT being met in Balranald. This strongly suggests that there are economic or other constraints to growth in housing that are not easily resolved.

There have been small pockets of redevelopment, but unlike Euston – no large new subdivisions appear to have been developed. The scope of this Strategy did not include a detailed review of supply & demand within the existing Zone RU5 Village area.

The Figure on the next page (based on a desktop review of a 2021 aerial photo only & no consultation with owners) tries to summarise some key growth investigation areas (subject to detailed review & possible **Housing Strategy**).

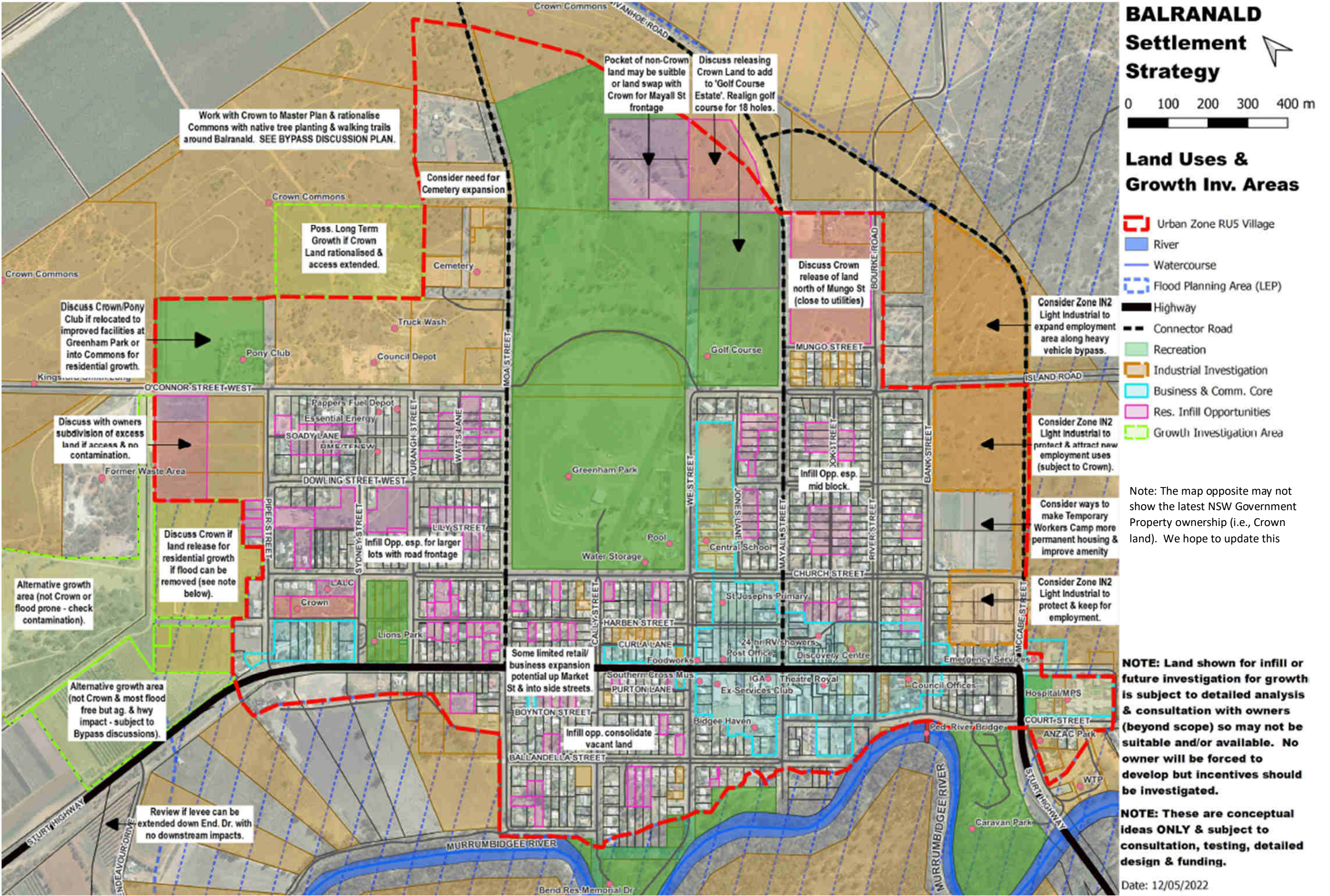
Growth in housing supply is likely to require a mixture of infill development of privately owned land, infill development of Crown land, & some minor expansion of the urban area to meet projected growth – particularly in the next 10 years when most of the major projects are expected to occur.

If appropriate land and/or housing is not made available in the next 2-3 years then there is a high probability much of the increase in population & economic growth would be fleeting or would relocate to other centres.

**Housing Strategy:** As this Strategy did not have the scope for a full residential land use study – we suggest that funding is sought to update the demographic analysis to the 2021 Census data, improve constraint/opportunity mapping, prepare a more detailed residential supply/demand analysis (including different housing types), and further test investigation areas and vacant land/development opportunities in Balranald consistent with NSW Government guidelines. In the meantime, this Strategy should enable consideration of short-term solutions/obvious investigation areas.

Figure 26: (Next Page) Summary Map of Growth Investigation Areas for Balranald.







## 9.5. Infill Development Opportunities

### 9.5.1. Infill - Temporary Workers Camp

The existing Temporary Workers Camp (TWC) area at the eastern end of Church St has perhaps the greatest potential to be leveraged to meet a substantial amount of housing need for the major projects & peak agricultural employment.

It has an existing approval & there is the flexibility to upsize or down-size the number of accommodation rooms to suit the demand.

It is also uniquely located within a block's walk of the main street & services so there is greater potential that workers will rely on local services (compared to out-of-town workers' camps).

#### **Temporary Workers Camp:**

- Continue to work with the owners of the Temporary Workers Camp to encourage more permanent & higher amenity facilities to service a range of projects over the next 10 years including EnergyConnect / Solar Farms / key picking seasons etc.
- Council should work with the current owner to see if there is flexibility to extend operations to address a wide range of projects in the next 5 years (& ongoing).
- There may be opportunity for Council to partly invest in some of the facilities or facilitate more permanent / higher amenity accommodation & support services.
- Links between the TWC to the town centre should be improved.
- Identify a smaller site for temporary workers for other projects.

### 9.5.2. Infill – Privately Owned Lands

Infill development within the existing Zone RU5 Village Area (private land outside of Crown Lands) is likely to remain the primary method for housing supply & limited business growth in Balranald in the short term.

The difficulty, as with many rural towns, is that people desire larger lots for gardens, sheds, additional vehicles, & space/privacy. Therefore, Council will need to look at ways to incentivise release of land to the market & further subdivision.

Ideally, closer to the main street & town services – there should be opportunities for medium density housing

**Infill (Privately owned lands):** Council should investigate the following opportunities with land owners of under-utilised or vacant land within the urban area. Various incentives should be investigated including, but not limited to, assistance with approvals & reduced contributions.

Possible areas of land may include:

- Larger urban vacant or under-utilised lots – e.g., those on Sydney St & Dowling Street West (one of which was for sale in early 2022) where some medium density housing could be achieved;
- Subdivision of under-utilised large lot residential land west of Piper St & south of O'Connor St West - This land would be further opened up if the Bypass Option 1 connected the highway up to O'Connor St West;

- Consolidation of pockets of multiple adjacent vacant lots (possibly in different ownership);
- Consolidation of the under-utilised rear of lots – often in the middle of blocks – particularly where there is a rear lane that could provide access (e.g., Watts Lane & Cook St) – but this will often require consent & consolidation from multiple owners;
- Smaller lots where single dwellings or dual occupancies may be achieved;
- Dual occupancies or secondary dwellings at the rear of existing lots to add to housing/rental supply;
- Shop-top housing or multi-level serviced apartments near to the town centre.

### 9.5.3. Infill – Golf Course Estate

There are four (4) large lots (believe to be owned by Council) that sit in the northern portion of the Golf Course – with an access handle off Mayall St. This land was identified for development in the 2006 Strategy.

The opportunity is to develop this for housing in a golf course setting- with perimeter lifestyle housing with landscape & views. The constraint is the need to construct access into this parcel & possibly realign part of the golf course.

**Golf Course Estate:** If the land within the northern section of the golf course cannot be swapped for other Crown land with frontage to Mayall St - then Council should prepare a plan of subdivision & ideally get this approved & then either sell it to a developer or prepare a business case to develop it themselves.

### 9.5.4. Infill - Crown Land – Industrial

The existing Bypass Route along McCabe Street to the east of town provides an excellent truck route connecting up to Ivanhoe Road. It is also adjacent to some existing industrial uses (grain handling, etc.).

**Industrial Demand Investigation & Potential Rezoning:** Council should seek funding to conduct a business study / further investigation whether all of the major projects in the sub-region are likely to generate additional demand for urban industrial or employment land (as opposed to rural industry that may generally occur in the rural zone). Council should approach Crown to determine the pathway to release this land for industrial (or otherwise, residential, use).

If so then the land between Bank St & McCabe Street (excluding the Temporary Workers Camp) could be identified & possibly protected & facilitated with an industrial zoning. It is relatively well separated from most residential areas to minimise land use conflict.

Part of this (south of Island Rd) is already in Zone RU5 but the area to the north of Island Road would ideally have an urban zoning (unless the proposed uses are permissible in the rural zone).

### 9.5.5. Infill - Crown Land – Housing

There are two main areas of Crown Land within the Zone RU5 Village area that are relatively undeveloped:

- Land west of Moa St & north of O'Conner St West – this already has the Council depot & truck wash & is adjacent to the cemetery so it may not be as desirable in the short term; and
- Land between Mayall & Rivers Streets – north of Mungo St. This land is opposite the golf course & surrounded by residential development with utilities in adjacent streets & is largely clear of vegetation.

**Infill – Crown Land:** Council should approach Crown (& any associated current lessee) to understand the process for release of this land for housing development & investigate any native title or other issues. This may take some time so should be started as soon as possible.

## 9.6. Expansion of the Urban Area

### 9.6.1. South Balranald (Malcolm/Duryea Streets)

The area known in the 2006 Strategy as South Balranald includes a historic dwelling area along Malcolm St as well as historic rural industries along Duryea St (GrainCorp/rail siding/stock yards) extending out to the Sturt Highway with the old & new Service Stations. The 2006 Strategy may have resulted in this area no longer being identified for urban expansion, most likely due to flood constraints & servicing issues.

However, with current growth pressures on Balranald – it is necessary to reconsider whether some sort of urban expansion may be suited to the land constraints in this area. It is also the South-East Outer Gateway to the town & some growth may allow some upgrades to improve visual amenity.

As stated above, flood mapping appears to have changed between the 2006 Strategy (where the land was not all flood prone) to current (where all of South Balranald is affected). This requires clarification as to the extent & risk of potential inundation.

Likewise, historical railway & rural industrial use may have resulted in some contamination so this should be investigated to estimate any costs for remediation to either light industrial or residential use.

Even if the land is not suitable for standard residential expansion it may be suited to light industrial uses & temporary accommodation areas for major projects. It is located near the main road to the major solar farm projects near Kyalite. It is close to services in Balranald. Light industries that are screened by vegetation along the highway may have low land use conflicts & can use existing connections to the highway.

#### **South Balranald (Malcolm/Duryea Streets):**

- Review the Flood Study work for South Balranald to determine the Flood Planning Level & height/risk of inundation to align with future land uses in this area;
- Review servicing (sewer/water/electricity) needed to support any additional growth in South Balranald;



- c) *Get some preliminary soil sampling to determine the extent of any contamination at key sites such as the stock yards to determine suitability for light industrial uses;*
- d) *Prepare a Structure Concept Plan for the area & consult with Crown Lands to see if land could be released for development.*
- e) *Discuss with DPIE the potential to rezone land along Duryea St up to the Sturt Highway for industrial purposes.*

9.6.2. West Balranald – Crown Land

There are several large parcels of Crown land west of Piper St & north of the Sturt Highway that would be a natural extension of the adjacent Zone RU5 Village area with frontage to Piper St.

Currently, the Flood Map shows this as flood prone land but this may require further investigation & it may only require an extension of the existing flood levee (south of the highway) as far as Endeavour Drive to protect this land (assuming it doesn’t impact land further downstream).

This land would be further opened up if the Bypass Option 1 connected the highway up to O’Connor St West. In the longer term, a bypass option here would also open up land further west, some of which is not Crown Land.

There are several parcels of current intensive horticulture – each of which has a dwelling potential. A possible incentive to permit the bypass through this land may be to include it in the urban zone for some highway frontage business development with residential land uses behind.

**West Balranald – Crown Land:** *The Bypass Option 1 should be further investigated along with discussion with Crown Lands & determination of flood levels/mitigation to see if the parcels west of Piper St & north of the highway can be developed in the next 5-10 years.*

9.6.3. North-West Balranald – Crown Land

**North-West Balranald – Crown Land:** *Subject to the progression of a Bypass route through the Crown Commons to the north-west of Balranald – there may be longer term potential to investigate release of land up behind the Cemetery & the Pony Club.*

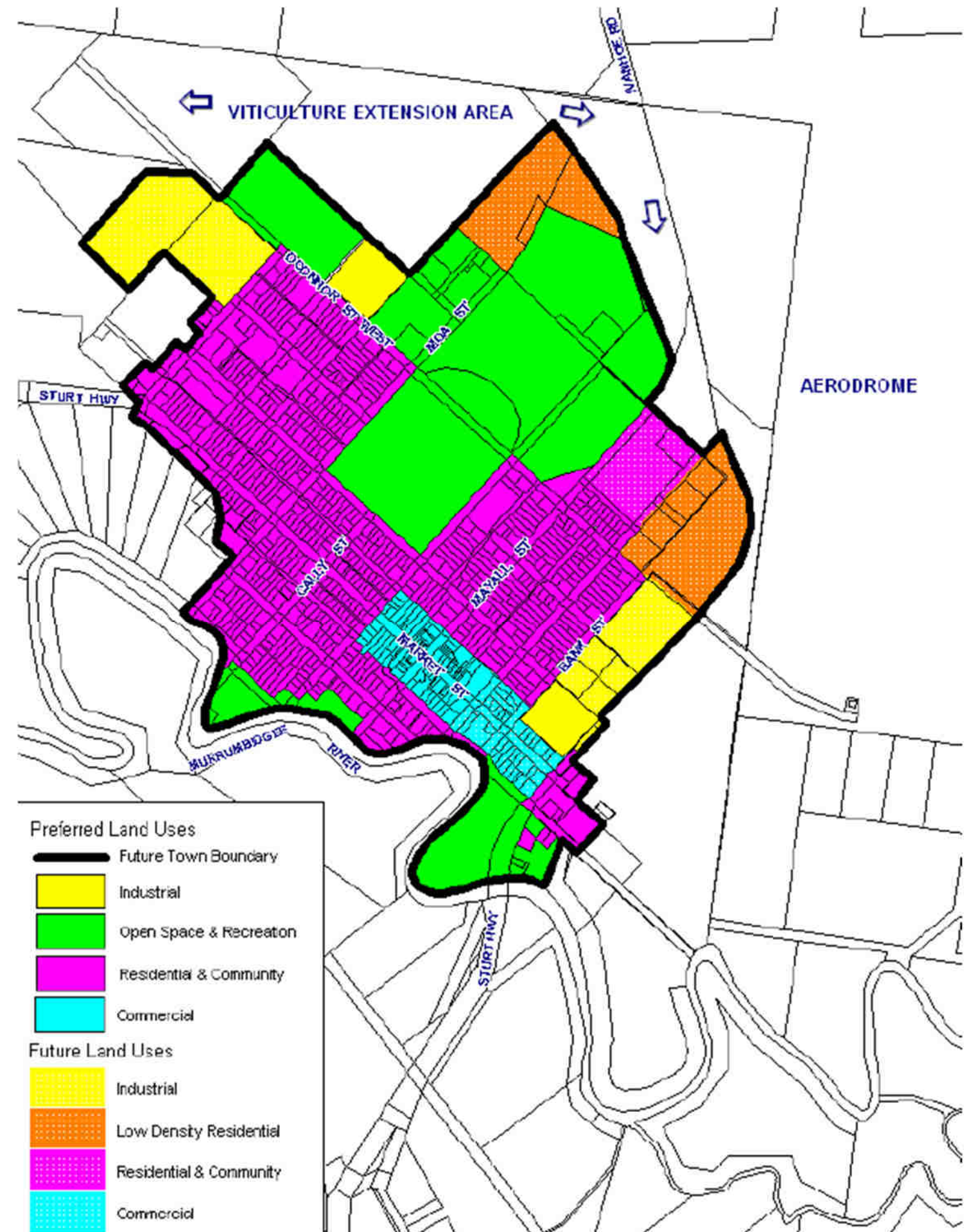


### 9.7. 2006 Strategy

The 2006 Strategy made a number of recommendations for land uses & growth in Balranald & this Strategy seeks to build on & adapt those as set out in the summary table below.

Key 2006 recommendations for Balranald:	2022 Response
1. <b>Abandon South Balranald</b> as an option for future urban development because of its isolation, lack of infrastructure & flood prone nature. The location can remain as a potential site for a land consumptive industrial development or the like, to compliment the sparse existing development & the little infrastructure that is available (raw water). The zoned land conceded in South Balranald should be reallocated to the township proper on the northern side of the Murrumbidgee River to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure & to provide for a more cohesive urban form.	Agreed/Modified. Land may require inclusion in an industrial or flexible zone to facilitate businesses & possibly temporary workers accommodation options.
2. <b>Provide an industrial precinct between Bank Street &amp; the new levee bank</b> on the eastern side of the town. The precinct should include the existing grain handling facility & make land adjoining to the north available for future industrial development.	Agreed/Modified. Exclude Temp. Workers Camp if it will be made more permanent.
3. <b>Provide a second industrial precinct on the western fringe of the town</b> that acknowledges the current use of land in this area for this purpose. This area could be utilised for both small & medium sized industry.	Modified. Urban residential growth/ higher demand & should be favoured (light industry OK).
4. <b>The provision of a rural residential precinct between River Street &amp; the new levee bank.</b> This land was previously flood prone but will be protected by the new levee bank.	Test industrial or urban res./ more efficient land use.
5. <b>The provision of a rural residential precinct on the abandoned nine holes of the golf course &amp; also to the west of Moa Street.</b> This land is well suited for low density residential development with the extent of public land adjoining assisting in enhancing levels of amenity.	Modified. Urban residential more efficient land use.
6. <b>Provide for future residential development north of Mungo Street between Mayall &amp; River Streets.</b> This land will need to be released from the Crown if it is to be made available for development.	Strongly Agreed. Need to progress Crown discussions.
7. <b>Provide for residential development at the corner of Mayall &amp; O'Connor Streets.</b> This small parcel of land represents an unused portion of the golf course & can be easily serviced.	Agreed if supported by golf club & Crown.
8. <b>Encourage infill residential development in the area bounded by Moa, Dowling Street West, Piper &amp; Market Streets.</b> There are several large parcels of undeveloped land within this area that are suitable for residential development.	Agreed/Modified. Additional larger parcels south of Dowling St West.
9. <b>Acknowledge the camp draft yard &amp; cemetery in Moa Street as preferred for open space.</b>	Agreed.
10. <b>Prefer any expansion of the commercial area to be to the east along Market Street</b> with the view to creating an 'entrance' to the town at the corner of McCabe & Market Streets.	Agreed but existing res. unlikely to change short term.
11. <b>Extend the town boundary from the eastern corner of McCabe &amp; Market Streets to allow for provision of community services.</b>	Agreed. Done.
12. <b>Realign the town boundary to accord with the proposed levee bank.</b> The new levee excludes some existing zoned land in Moa Street & includes a narrow strip of land along the southern side of Market Street at the western end of the town. At the eastern end, the 'peninsula' of zoned land beyond the hospital is reduced.	Agreed.
13. <b>Allow for the extension of the existing viticulture area southwards towards the town.</b>	Not affected by this Strategy.

Figure 27: 2006 Strategy - Balranald Strategic Plan (Fig.24).





## 10. Summary Action Table

*Note: Short Term = 1-5 years; Medium Term 5-10 years; Long Term 10 years+*

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
	<b>ENTRANCE DESIGN &amp; SIGNAGE</b>	
1.	<b>A Signage Strategy</b> should be prepared by a suitably qualified person that comprehensively looks at navigation, facilities, information, & history/heritage signage to ensure a comprehensive solution – focussing particularly on the key entrances, gateways & main street(s).	Short-Medium
2.	<b>Shire Boundary Signage (as part of Signage Strategy):</b> Upgrade the existing sign at or near the actual LGA boundary OR combine the LGA signage with a new entrance feature for Balranald closer to town.	Short-Medium
3.	<b>South-East Outer Gateway:</b> Work with TfNSW to improve following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 90km/hr sign needs to be repainted on the asphalt (TfNSW).</li> <li>Council may contribute to some street tree planting &amp; road lighting.</li> <li>Upgrade Rest Area to capture people on way to Adelaide &amp; promote people stopping in town. Consider 24-hour facilities at the truck rest stop (TfNSW).</li> <li>Investigate a new town entrance sign/feature just either just north or just south of Balranald-Tooleybuc Rd intersection with Sturt Hwy (possibly in the Rest Area).</li> <li>Feature tree planting along Sturt Highway in towards River.</li> <li>Current windmill/frog sculpture could be relocated to integrate into a new larger entrance feature (subject to funding).</li> <li>Entrance feature to consolidate some of the ‘clutter’ of signs along this entrance point to the river including ‘Gateway to Mungo’ signage, any regional trail navigation signage, the ‘RV Friendly’ sign, a white on blue summary sign of services in the town (fuel, food, toilets, park etc). Ideally, the sign would be lit at night.</li> </ul>	Short-Medium
4.	<b>South-East Inner Gateway:</b> Work with TfNSW to improve following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage use of McCabe St as a key heavy vehicle route to/from Ivanhoe (minimising impacts on the town centre) (TfNSW).</li> <li>Ensure signage &amp; street (Give Way) signs give clear order of priority for highway vehicle movements at this intersection (TfNSW).</li> <li>Review if a zebra crossing (or widened pedestrian blisters) can connect to the triangular blister &amp; across to the hospital (TfNSW).</li> <li>Staged replacement of the heavily pruned eucalyptus trees (some of which are dead or dying) with suitable decorative species.</li> <li>Large under-utilised area in front of the hospital with views of service areas/back of buildings – this could have additional plantings along the street edge &amp; rear of buildings, irrigated grassed areas, &amp; possibly be used for a temporary sculpture park or similar.</li> <li>The blister strips &amp; pedestrian triangle appear worn/cracked &amp; create large areas of hardstand – subject to not impeding vehicle movements these could have small areas of hardy low landscape that doesn’t block signage or sight-lines for safety.</li> <li>The lots on the south-west corner are partly vacant, the building appears unused, the yard needs maintenance, &amp; the building is set back from the street with a gravel parking area so overall there is poor appearance – Council should work with the owner to clean-up the yards, landscape the frontage &amp; perhaps add a mural to the shop-front (subject to owner’s consent &amp; support).</li> <li>The view up McCabe St is to a quasi-industrial area with poor visual amenity. The central blister needs upgrading/landscaping &amp; possibly kerb &amp; gutter extended. Consider mural on the emergency services building at north-east corner.</li> <li>Looking down the main street from this entrance there is limited features defining the street &amp; the town retail core &amp; strong built-form/ landscape is too far away to be visible. Power poles dominate the street &amp; street trees are weak. Suitable height &amp; spacing of street trees should be extended along Market St to the town centre, taking into account visual distances for heavy vehicles.</li> <li>Discuss with TfNSW if a zebra crossing (or at least widened pedestrian blisters) can connect to the triangular blister &amp; across to the hospital.</li> </ul>	Short

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
5.	<b>Western Outer Gateway:</b> Work with TfNSW to improve following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A larger feature entrance sign for Balranald (same as south-east).</li> <li>A larger frog as this is barely visible at traffic speeds.</li> <li>Lighting of the sign &amp; up-lighting of the windmill.</li> <li>Consolidation of some of the multiple signs along the western entrance into one information sign.</li> </ul>	Medium-Long
6.	<b>Western Inner Gateway:</b> Work with TfNSW to improve the Western Inner Gateway by strengthening with some additional landscape / street trees extended from the 50km/hr speed signs along the highway as far as Lions Park/Sydney Street.	Medium
	<b>HEAVY VEHICLE BYPASS INVESTIGATIONS</b>	
7.	<b>Testing/Options:</b> Council should discuss the preferred routes & loads/impacts with the proponents of any projects likely to significantly increase heavy vehicle movement. Council should also validate some of these impacts with traffic counts along key streets & build a business-case / options study for any proposed solutions.	Short
8.	<b>Heavy Vehicle Limits:</b> We believe there may already be heavy vehicle limits on use of Moa & Mayall Streets but the Main Road status of Mayall St may need to be relocated to McCabe St. This could be reinforced by widening the blisters to narrow the streets where Moa St & Mayall St meet the Sturt Highway/main street (whilst still allowing caravans etc.). Encourage trucks to use McCabe St & avoid local streets (especially arrival from west).	Short
9.	<b>Ivanhoe Road:</b> Consider redesign key intersections with McCabe St & Mayall St so trucks have a through-route (priority) whilst still directing visitor traffic down Mayall St. Council may investigate alternative sites for the truck wash that would be easily accessible to trucks & attract them to use the McCabe St route or this may be taken up by a future private highway service centre on the new bypass route.	Medium
10.	<b>Western Bypass:</b> Council should work with Crown to investigate the construction of a western bypass to the town through the Crown Commons to the north. A shorter-term solution could involve a link to the end of Piper St (Option 3) as one possible bypass route that would avoid the need for a new intersection with the Sturt Highway (but there are still residential impacts). Alternative routes that connect to the Sturt Highway either close to Endeavour Drive or west of Endeavour Drive through Crown Lands should also be investigated (see Options 1, 2 & 4).  As of 2022, <b>Council has indicated a long-term preference for Option 4</b> that would bypass at the western edge of town but this would require substantial funding from TfNSW.	Long
	<b>TOWN PERIMETER UPGRADES</b>	
11.	<b>Levee:</b> Review if the levee south of Market St / west of Moa St can be extended along the eastern side of Endeavour Drive to remove flood prone land both west of Piper St & provide additional housing opportunity along Endeavour Drive (without exacerbating downstream flooding). See Growth Opportunities Section.	Medium-Long
12.	<b>Commons:</b> Work with Crown & local Aboriginal groups to master plan the Commons to the north of Balranald to use this land more effectively for the community. This may include native tree planting (where bushfire risk is not significantly increased), walking & bicycle trails, & bird watching opportunities.	Medium - Long
13.	<b>Pony Club:</b> Work with the Balranald Pony Club to determine opportunities for upgrades and/or to consolidate horse-related activities at Greenham Park (or other areas with existing facilities) with better facilities to attract regional events. Long-term construct an outdoor horse event arena.	Short-Medium
14.	<b>Cemetery:</b> Ensure that Balranald Cemetery has sufficient land to grow for 20-40 years. Prepare a master plan to guide staged landscape upgrades & improvements.	Medium
15.	<b>Gateway Beautification:</b> Work with owners at key ‘gateways’ to the town to promote beautification & appropriate activities/signage for an improved visitor & local experience.	Ongoing
16.	<b>River Walking Path:</b> Consider whether a public walking path can be extended around the river frontage of the Caravan Park & connect under the bridge & up to Anzac Park (may require an extended levee).	Medium
17.	<b>Active Travel Plan (Town Perimeter):</b> Consider other pedestrian & cycle connections as part of an <b>Active Travel Plan</b> that may include improved walks, bird-trails & ecological opportunities.	Medium



No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
<b>TOWN CENTRE &amp; MAIN STREET UPGRADES</b>		
18.	<b>Active Travel Plan (Town Centre):</b> prepared to recommend appropriate footpath & kerb ramp upgrades; cycle paths & facilities, & any additional off-street parking opportunities required. Review opportunities to improve River Loop Walk. Upgrade connections to Temporary Workers Camp.	Short
19.	<b>Street Tree Master Plan:</b> prepared for Balranald Town Centre (as well as the Entrances noted above). <i>Note: Costings for plantings/irrigation/maintenance are not currently included in this Strategy &amp; are subject to the Street Tree Master Plan. This should be considered at the same time as determining whether overhead electricity lines can be placed underground along (at least) the main (Market) street and/or appropriate species selection occurs under overhead lines though there are a number of funding barriers to this.</i>	Short
20.	<b>Facades/Signage:</b> Council should continue to work with land owners along the main street, particularly businesses, to ensure that building & advertising sign presentation enhances, rather than detracts, from street & town presentation & determine what grant funding may be available for upgrades. This may include paving & landscaping larger off-street parking areas & adding murals.	Ongoing
21.	<b>Lighting Strategy:</b> prepared for the main street for events, streets trees, & key buildings & shop-fronts to provide night-time presentation & activation.	Medium
22.	<b>Main Street Paving:</b> Seek to improve long-term consistency, durability & low-maintenance paving along main-street.	Long
23.	<b>Discovery Centre:</b> Continue to refresh Centre as key tourist hub. Raise awareness of 24-hr RV Camping at town entrance signs & online. Potentially relocate skate park to Greenham Park. Encourage truck services at defined rest areas to avoid trucks parking in the main street.	Ongoing
<b>TOWN CENTRE SIGNAGE &amp; ART</b>		
24.	<b>Public Art Strategy:</b> prepared to continue to build on the sculpture, art, war memorial & mural trails through Balranald that is effective, accessible, low-maintenance, & celebrates the unique identity of the town/region. Build on the indigenous heritage, culture & stories & connection to river-front. Build on non-indigenous heritage places & stories. Look at opportunities for additional mural (e.g., Greenham Park water towers).	Medium
<b>KEY SITES/ RECREATION AREAS</b>		
25.	<b>Plans of Management</b> (if not already available/updated) should be prepared/ updated for all Crown Lands/Community Lands & relative priorities identified to engage with the community & facilitate funding & appropriate development.	Short
<b>GREENHAM PARK</b>		
26.	<b>Perimeter &amp; Parking Areas</b> a) Add central median & street trees along Church St (south frontage). b) Formalise entrance from Church St to internal area of racecourse & sportsgrounds with appropriate signage. c) Formalise pool car parking around water storage tanks with tree planting for shade & possible one-way in/one-way out during events. d) Allow room for possible expansion of water storage tanks for additional capacity for Balranald's growth. e) Expand on school murals on water tanks with potential professional murals as part of silo art trail (if good business case). f) Formalise overflow parking area driveways inside racetrack (southern end) for larger events (if required).	Medium
27.	<b>Pool Area</b> g) Add water play park near pool (possibly outside fenced area near corner Church & We Streets) – see Hay example. h) Look at business case for solar heating of pool to extend swimming season (though may require fee to be charged unless grant funded).	Medium

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
	i) Consider relocating skate park at Discovery Centre (requires replacement) to Greenham Park – possibly at rear of pool/tennis court area.	
28.	<b>Sportsgrounds/Ovals</b> j) Maintain & upgrade AFL ground & review demand & potential to attract more regional matches. k) Upgrade junior cricket pitch for senior cricket use. l) Consider if demand for a 400m athletics track / multi-sports oval to either replace junior cricket oval or beside that oval (see if schools can contribute).	Short-Medium
29.	<b>Netball/Basketball/Tennis Courts/Playgrounds</b> m) Replace netball courts with new courts. Provide shaded seating around perimeter of courts (either as trees or permanent shelters). n) Add shade & toddler equipment for smaller playground to allow supervised play during sporting events. o) Add shade & more advanced equipment to larger playground near tennis courts. p) Add lights to tennis courts (if used during winter/late evenings). q) Repair older tennis courts or refurbish for alternative sports.	Medium
30.	<b>Racecourse/Horse Events</b> r) Try to increase use of racing facilities more than two (2) times per year to justify costs for upgrading & maintenance of track. s) Discuss with Pony Club whether they could receive improved facilities if they co-located to Greenham Park – possibly including an outdoor arena & yards (campdrafting/rodeo/horse sports), dressage arena, horse stables, storage shed, etc. to avoid duplication of horse & supporting facilities.	Short-Medium
31.	<b>Landscape Plan</b> t) Subject to funding, a Landscape (Planting & Maintenance) Plan could be prepared to activate, beautify, shade, & improve ecological outcomes for the site.	Medium
<b>DISCOVERY CENTRE COMPLEX</b>		
32.	Continue to centralise visitor information & services in this location to leverage these facilities to improve the visitor experience & facilitate local expenditure.	Ongoing
33.	Continue to leverage grant funding to update & improve the interaction with the Shire's history, heritage, culture & attractions (some presentations were not working at the time of our visit).	Ongoing
34.	Some additional lighting could be provided at night-time to connect through to the RV Park. Consider alternative sites for RV overnight stays.	Short
35.	This Site should form the starting point for any walking or historic trails around the town (except the Honour Veterans Trail that starts at the Club).	Ongoing
36.	The timber elements of the skate park require major repair and/or replacement. Consider relocating skate park to Greenham Park (see above).	Short
<b>LIONS PARK</b>		
37.	Upgrade to the toilet block with accessible facilities.	Short
38.	Upgrade the lighting around the upgraded toilet for safe night-time use.	Short-Medium
39.	Progressively improve the playground & provide a shade canopy for at least part (current project).	Short-Medium
40.	Add seating & upgrade the shade structures around the BBQ area (current project).	Short-Medium
41.	Look at fencing part of the park (possibly in the northern under-utilised section) for a dog off-leash area.	Medium
<b>ANZAC PARK</b>		
42.	Council should continue to maintain this park. However, its connectivity & amenity may be improved if there was an investigation of vacant land on the eastern side of the highway & south of Market St to extend plantings & the connection to ANZAC Park to improve this gateway to Balranald.	Short-Medium



No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
	<b>RIVER BEND RESERVE/MEMORIAL DRIVE (RIVER PARK)</b>	
43.	Council should continue to highlight this park to visitors & enable it for passive recreation use & some events with supported facilities (in consultation with Balranald Inc.) – subject to flood impacts & future levee banks.	Medium
44.	'Green links' along Mayall, Moa, We & Cally Streets should be extended down to the river front for ecology & amenity.	Short-Medium
45.	There is an opportunity to provide more/upgraded (flood resistant) interpretative signage with history of the river-front activities, the role of the flood plain & ecology, and/or Aboriginal history & culture.	Medium
	<b>OTHER</b>	
46.	<b>Golf Course:</b> Council should work with the Golf Club & its committee to support the maintenance of the golf course & club house. As part of growth plans listed below there may be a need to reconfigure part of the course.	Medium
47.	<b>Pony Club:</b> Investigate whether existing Site should be upgraded OR relocate facilities to Greenham Park to leverage horse facilities & improve sustainability & usage.	Short-Medium
48.	<b>Motocross Track:</b> Investigate grant funding opportunities to upgrade facilities to host larger events.	Short-Medium
49.	<b>Balranald Aerodrome:</b> Council should investigate ways to leverage the aerodrome to attract funding for upgrades & support higher use of the facility. This may require a Master Plan for future development.	Short-Medium
	<b>GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES &amp; CONSTRAINTS</b>	
50.	<b>Flood Study (Balranald):</b> Updates to the current study could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A crest level survey be undertaken every five (5) years (even though the SKM Balranald O&amp;M Manual says 10 years). We find this picks up problems early (and are repairable more easily &amp; cheaply);</li> <li>b) Preparation of a formal <b>Flood Risk Management Study &amp; Plan</b> with mitigation measures taking into account Climate Change;</li> <li>c) Investigation why the area around Malcolm St &amp; Duryea St (the old railway siding) was originally shown as flood-free in the Habitat Planning (2006) Balranald Shire – Strategic Framework Plan but is now shown as flood affected &amp; would it be suitable for industrial growth;</li> <li>d) Review if the levee south of Market St / west of Moa St can be extended along the eastern side of Endeavour Drive to remove flood prone land both west of Piper St &amp; provide additional housing opportunity along Endeavour Drive (without exacerbating downstream flooding);</li> <li>e) Improved understanding of flooding of the area south of the Murrumbidgee River/town to enable appropriate bush walking &amp; visitor facilities/access;</li> <li>f) Improved understanding of water consumption from river &amp; groundwater systems to maintain environmental flows</li> </ul>	Short-Medium
51.	<b>Housing Strategy:</b> As this Strategy did not have the scope for a full residential land use study – we suggest that funding is sought to update the demographic analysis to the 2021 Census data, improve constraint/opportunity mapping, prepare a more detailed residential supply/demand analysis (including different housing types), and further test investigation areas and vacant land/development opportunities in Balranald consistent with NSW Government guidelines. In the meantime, this Strategy should enable consideration of short-term solutions including some of the projects below.	Short
52.	<b>Temporary Workers Camp:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to work with the owners of the Temporary Workers Camp to encourage more permanent &amp; higher amenity facilities to service a range of projects over the next 10 years including EnergyConnect / Solar Farms / key picking seasons etc.</li> <li>b) Council should work with the current owner to see if there is flexibility to extend operations to address a wide range of projects in the next 5 years (&amp; ongoing).</li> <li>c) There may be opportunity for Council to partly invest in some of the facilities or facilitate more permanent / higher amenity accommodation &amp; support services.</li> <li>d) Links between the TWC to the town centre should be improved.</li> <li>e) Identify a smaller site for temporary workers for other projects.</li> </ul>	Short

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
53.	<b>Infill (Privately owned lands):</b> Council should investigate the following opportunities with land owners of under-utilised or vacant land within the urban area. Various incentives should be investigated including, but not limited to, assistance with approvals & reduced contributions. Possible areas of land may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Larger urban vacant or under-utilised lots – e.g., those on Sydney St &amp; Dowling Street West (one of which was for sale in early 2022) where some medium density housing could be achieved;</li> <li>b) Subdivision of under-utilised large lot residential land west of Piper St &amp; south of O'Connor St West - This land would be further opened up if the Bypass Option 1 connected the highway up to O'Connor St West;</li> <li>c) Consolidation of pockets of multiple adjacent vacant lots (possibly in different ownership);</li> <li>d) Consolidation of the under-utilised rear of lots – often in the middle of blocks – particularly where there is a rear lane that could provide access (e.g., Watts Lane &amp; Cook St) – but this will often require consent &amp; consolidation from multiple owners;</li> <li>e) Smaller lots where single dwellings or dual occupancies may be achieved;</li> <li>f) Dual occupancies or secondary dwellings at the rear of existing lots to add to housing/rental supply;</li> <li>g) Shop-top housing or multi-level serviced apartments near to the town centre.</li> </ul>	Short
54.	<b>Golf Course Estate:</b> If the land within the northern section of the golf course cannot be swapped for other Crown land with frontage to Mayall St - then Council should prepare a plan of subdivision & ideally get this approved & then either sell it to a developer or prepare a business case to develop it themselves.	Short-Medium
55.	<b>Infill – Crown Land:</b> Council should approach Crown (& any associated current lessee) to understand the process for release of this land for housing development & investigate any native title or other issues. This may take some time so should be started as soon as possible.	Short
56.	<b>South Balranald (Malcolm/Duryea Streets):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Review the Flood Study work for South Balranald to determine the Flood Planning Level &amp; height/risk of inundation to align with future land uses in this area;</li> <li>b) Review servicing (sewer/water/electricity) needed to support any additional growth in South Balranald;</li> <li>c) Get some preliminary soil sampling to determine the extent of any contamination at key sites such as the stock yards to determine suitability for light industrial uses;</li> <li>d) Prepare a Structure Concept Plan for the area &amp; consult with Crown Lands to see if land could be released for development.</li> <li>e) Discuss with DPIE the potential to rezone land along Duryea St up to the Sturt Highway for industrial purposes.</li> </ul>	Short-Medium
57.	<b>West Balranald – Crown Land:</b> The Bypass Option 1 should be further investigated along with discussion with Crown Lands & determination of flood levels/mitigation to see if the parcels west of Piper St & north of the highway can be developed in the next 5-10 years.	Short-Medium
58.	<b>North-West Balranald – Crown Land:</b> Subject to the progression of a Bypass route through the Crown Commons to the north-west of Balranald – there may be longer term potential to investigate release of land up behind the Cemetery & the Pony Club.	Medium-Long
59.	<b>Industrial Demand Investigation &amp; Potential Rezoning:</b> Council should seek funding to conduct a business study / further investigation whether all of the major projects in the sub-region are likely to generate additional demand for urban industrial or employment land (as opposed to rural industry that may generally occur in the rural zone). Council should approach Crown to determine the pathway to release this land for industrial (or otherwise, residential, use).	Short





# EUSTON



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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This Settlement Strategy has been prepared with the aim of encouraging discussion around required upgrades & growth opportunities that can create long-term sustainable growth for each settlement and the Shire as a whole.

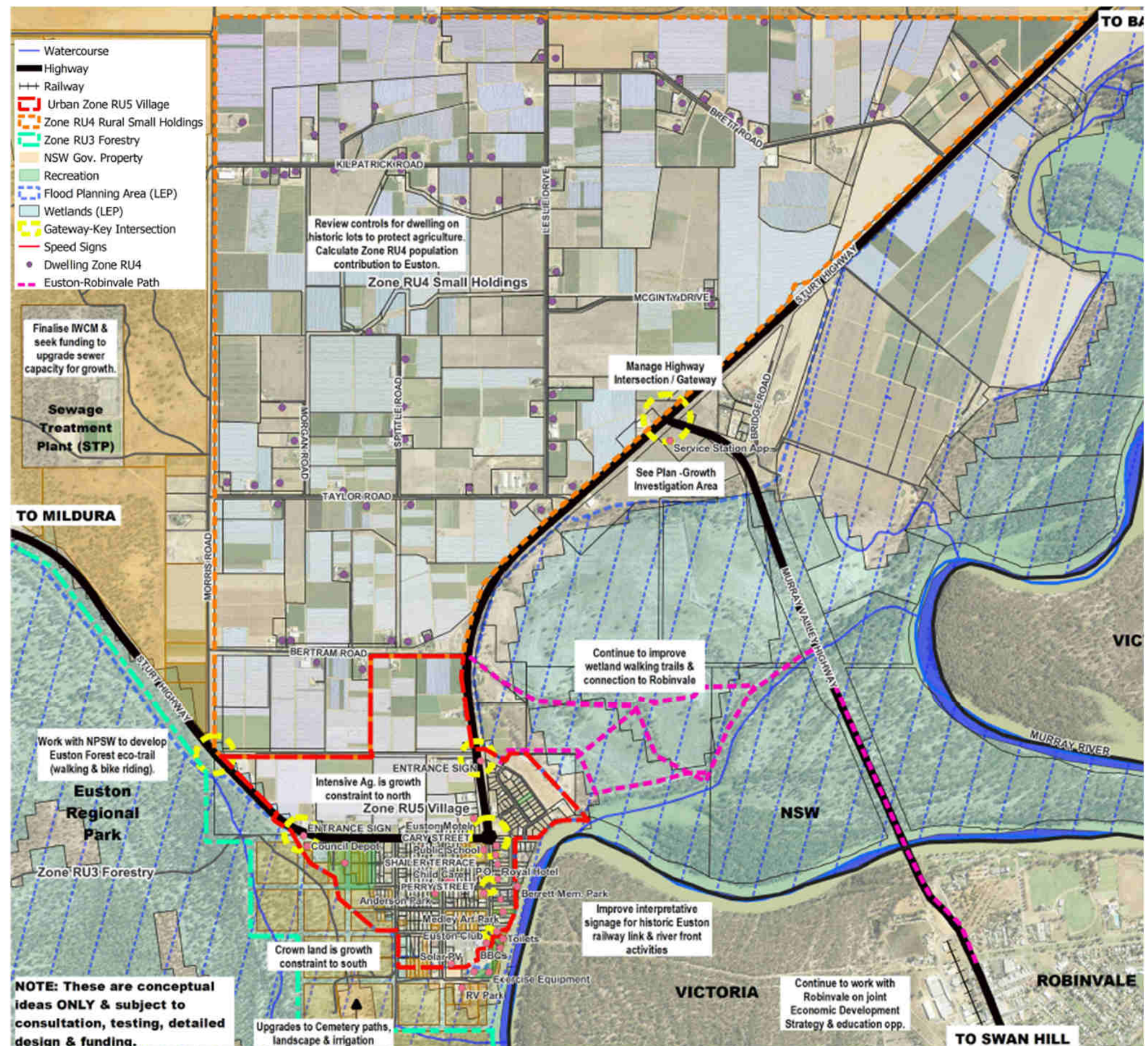
A range of ideas have been collated & presented that do NOT necessarily reflect the position of Council and may NOT have the funding support for all to be achieved. The aim is to prioritise the community and council ideas so that the available funding is best directed.



Figure 2: Euston & Surrounds including Zone RU4 & key gateways/connections.

Therefore, any suggestions in this Strategy do not seek to criticise the extensive work already achieved but to build on these qualities & opportunities.

Figure 1: The Murray River is the main attraction at Euston & a key part of its history.





3. Village Surrounds & Infrastructure Upgrades

As shown on the Figure on the preceding page, there are a number of opportunities for review/upgrade surrounding the Village of Euston (some of these are covered in other chapters):

- Village Surrounds & Infrastructure Upgrades:**
- a) **IWCM:** Finalise the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWCM) & seek funding for water & sewer infrastructure projects;
  - b) **Sewerage:** Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) upgrade as per IWCM recommendations to cater for the projected population & employment growth;
  - c) **Water:** Design a new water tower & processing plant to meet future water demands of the Euston community including upgrade storage capacity & increase water pressure as per IWCM recommendations;
  - d) **RFS:** Relocate the Rural Fire Services (RFS) Shed from the water treatment plant area to the Council depot;
  - e) **Cemetery:** Create a master plan for the Euston Cemetery to manage its use/ expansion & improve pathways/landscape/irrigation/maintenance;
  - f) **Regional Park:** Work with National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) to develop Euston Regional Park eco-trails (with clear links to Euston), additional ecological plantings, interpretative signage & highlight the recreational opportunities. Consider some additional native vegetation plantings along the Sturt Highway to improve the north-western gateway;
  - g) **Wetlands:** Work with NSW Government & local Landcare groups to recognise the importance of the wetlands & floodplain along the Murray River, provide interpretative signage & create recreational opportunities;
  - h) **Robinvale Connections:** Continue to improve walking/bicycle trails connecting Euston to Robinvale through floodplain & up onto Murray Valley Highway overpass & extend to river-frontage with additional ecological plantings & interpretative signage;
  - i) **Economic Development:** Continue to work with Robinvale on joint Economic Development Strategy, joint tourism initiatives, & synergies to manage population growth, education & employment;
  - j) **Riverfront History:** Work with Robinvale on interpretative signage & walking trails along the historic railway & other connection to Euston & historic riverfront activities;
  - k) **Dwellings in Zone RU4:** Review controls for dwelling potential on Zone RU4 land to protect agriculture & facilitate dwellings in appropriate locations;
  - l) **Road Maintenance:** More regular road maintenance along key bus routes such as Tapalin Mail Road.

Figure 3: Gate to cemetery south of Euston.



Figure 4: Some parts of cemetery are nicely maintained.

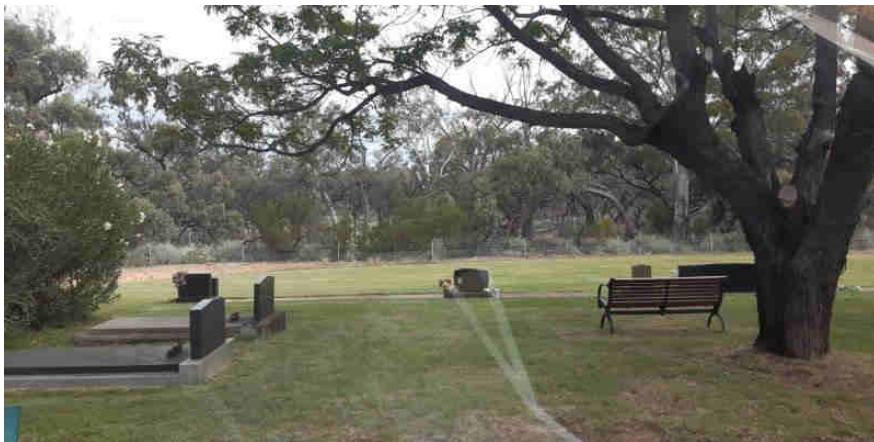


Figure 5: Other parts of cemetery lack grass, paths & maintenance.



Figure 6: Euston-Robinvale walk/cycle path on Murray Valley Highway.



Figure 7: Start pf Euston-Robinvale walk/cycle path on Garreffa Parade.



Figure 8: Water storage towers on Murray Terrace, Euston.



Figure 9: Euston Regional Park Map.





#### 4. Heavy Vehicle Bypass Investigations

The existing Sturt Highway takes a slightly longer route by travelling down to the urban edge of Euston from the north-east & then connecting back out to the north-west.

The roundabout & safety issues with school frontages & other driveways/land uses accessing the highway increase the risk of highway traffic coming into conflict with urban land uses.

Therefore, we understand that TfNSW has already commenced investigating the provision of a highway bypass to the village, as evidenced by the acquisition of land at the intersection of the Sturt Highway & Bertram Road (Option 1 on the Figure opposite).

Already the community is aware of a number of vehicles using Morris Rd & either Bertram or Taylor Roads as a 'short-cut' to avoid the village & this is raising issues of safety on these local roads – requiring some traffic calming devices to be installed by Council.

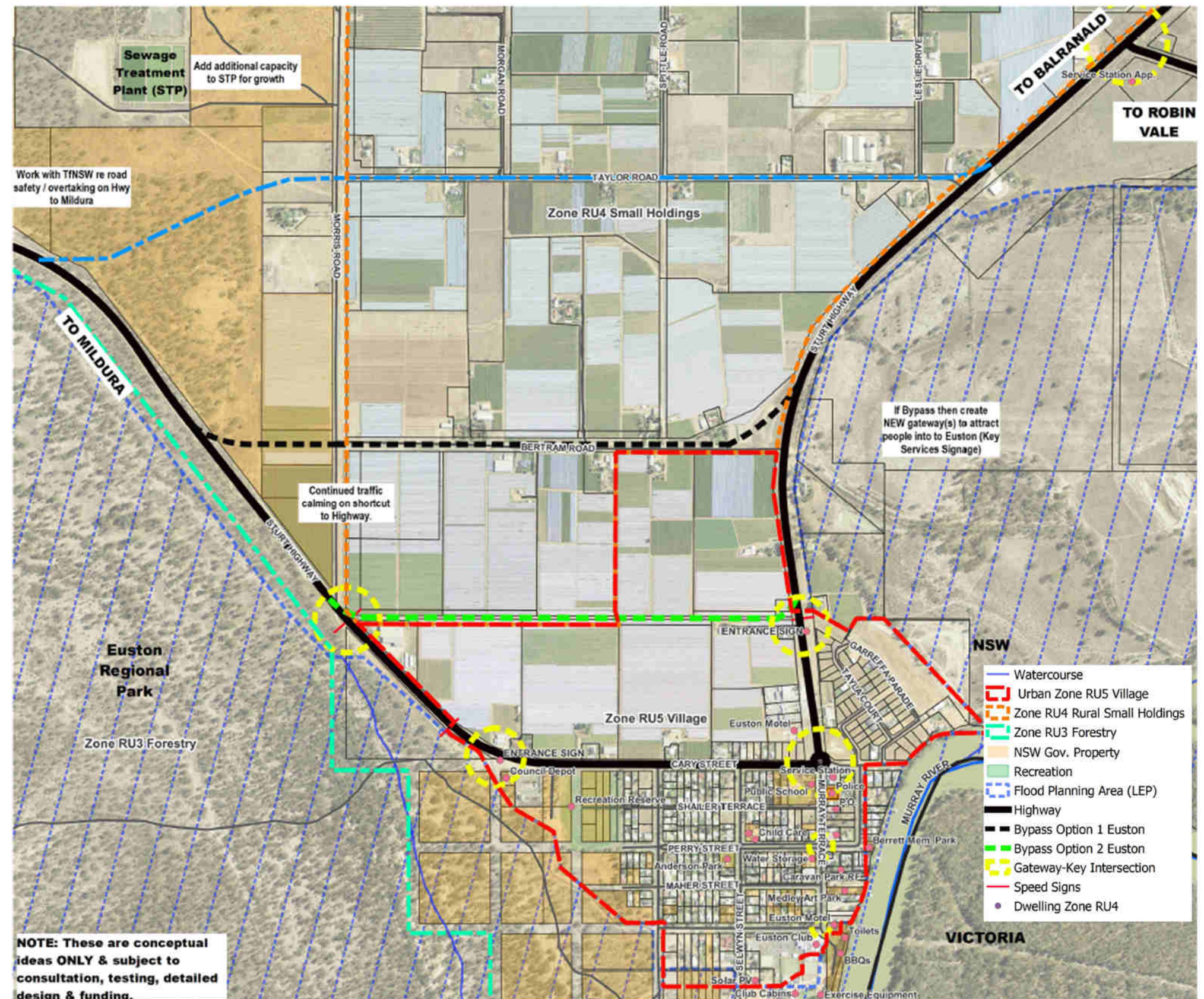
Bypasses can often be seen by local businesses as a significant loss in passing traffic, particularly for opportunistic sales such as accommodation, cafes, vehicle repairs etc. However, it would be expected that on longer travel distances people are more likely to plan their stops or would stop at a town anyway if it had the services they need & it is not a significant distance.

In addition, the TfNSW requirements to maintain highway functions, minimise disruptions to highway traffic, & meet their highway guidelines may limit what Council & the community can do in terms of beautification along the highway frontage & requires TfNSW approval. This can be counter-productive in terms of attracting people to stop.

**Bypass Options:** This Strategy supports the further investigation of the three (3) likely Bypass Options (shown opposite) with Option 1 already progressed. If this proceeds then the Entrance Gateway & Signage Section above may need to be adapted to recognise/address this new gateway. Until the Bypass is constructed then there should be continued traffic calming on any short-cut route along Morris, Bertram or Taylor Roads to protect local users.

- Bypass Option 1 (Bertram Rd)** has the benefit of the existing land acquisition at the intersection of Bertram Rd & the Highway & an existing east-west road. However, it would still need to acquire land at the western end to re-join the highway & take up valuable intensive horticultural land & there may be some impact/opposition by dwellings/businesses along that route.
- Bypass Option 2 (Southern/No Road)** could be created as a new route between the existing agricultural holdings. The downside is that is the need for significant new road construction. The benefit is that it connects directly to the highway at the western end & it is away from most existing dwellings so lower in impact.
- Bypass Option 3 (Taylor Rd)** was suggested in the 2006 Strategy providing the most direct route, largely using the existing road & limiting impacts on agriculture – but potentially impacting the highest number of existing dwellings.

Figure 10: Preliminary Euston Bypass Investigation routes.





## 5. Entrance Design & Signage

### 5.1. Signage Strategy

As with many settlements, signage has been progressively added over time with different influences addressing tourist, business & navigation needs. Largely, the existing signage is suitable in its current form.

However, there is a lack of consistency in sign types, colours & layout that are not always cohesive with the natural brand/image of Euston. There is some signage clutter (business & information signage), particularly on the highway approach from Mildura. Many signs are old or need upgrading. There is also a lack of signage indicating the facilities & services offered at Euston that can direct people off the highway.

Whilst this Strategy seeks to suggest some potential modifications to town signage, there is a complex range of factors that go into determining appropriate signage & signage should be considered cohesively across the entire settlement – not just individual locations.

**A Signage Strategy** should be prepared by a suitably qualified person that comprehensively looks at navigation, facilities, information, & history/heritage signage to ensure a comprehensive solution – focussing particularly on the key entrances, gateways & main street(s).

Where possible this Signage Strategy should seek to minimise/consolidate signage to avoid signage clutter & focus on critical intersection & entrances.

It should also investigate the use of & funding for Tourist Trail Signage (White on Brown) in accordance with the TfNSW guidelines e.g., Euston Regional Park & Murray Riverfront area.

**Note:** Costings for sign removal/updates/replacement are not currently included in this Strategy & are subject to the Signage Strategy findings.

### 5.2. Shire Boundary Signage

Euston is located on the border between NSW & Victoria (the Murray River) & near a key intersection of the Sturt Highway & Murray Valley Highway. Therefore, the settlement is a gateway not only to the Shire of Balranald, but also to NSW. Whilst this was not investigated in any detail, a brief drive over to Robinvale didn't reveal any significant Shire Boundary Signage. There are some difficulties locating this signage on the elevated part of the Murray Valley Highway above the wetlands/floodplain.

**Shire Boundary Sign:** There is an opportunity for some larger signage (possibly on the western side of the Sturt Highway at the terminus of the Murray Valley Highway) that welcomes people to NSW, Balranald Shire & Euston. This could be emphasised with some landscape/street tree plantings that do not interfere with sight-lines or overhead electricity.

This could build on the themes of the Shire including the catchphrase 'Where the wetlands meet the outback', recognition of the Aboriginal groups whose land is in the Shire, & updating the colour & styling to match the Shire's themes (to be covered by Signage Strategy).

### 5.3. Gateways

Clear entrances or gateways to settlements are important not just in signalling arrival, but in slowing traffic speeds, identifying local services that may warrant stopping in the town, providing some key navigational signage, & integrating with the theme of the shire or village.

#### 5.3.1. Northern Outer Gateway(s)

The first major gateway to Euston when travelling either from Balranald on the Sturt Highway or from Robinvale on the Murray Valley Highway is the intersection of these two highways.

On approach on the Sturt Highway there is a sudden transition from the wider outback plains to the intensive horticulture area. There is a white-on-blue Euston 'Rest Revive Survive' & then a transition from 110km/hr to 80km/hr near the intersection where the first larger sheds are located. Other than this there is only a sign to Robinvale hospital & the white-on-green turn-off to the Murray Valley Way.

Figure 11: First Euston entrance sign on Sturt Highway northern approach.



Figure 12: Change in speed prior to highway intersections.



Figure 13: Murray Valley Highway turn-off sign & intersection.



Figure 14: Intersection of Sturt & Murray Valley Highway.



After crossing the Murray River, the approach to the same intersection along the Murray Valley Highway heading north it is similarly understated. This is addressed in the 'Shire Boundary Signage' above.

#### 5.3.2. Northern Inner Gateway

Further south on the Sturt Highway there is a 'Residential Area – Limit Compression Braking' sign & travel distances white-on-green sign (Euston -2km). Then a significant distance passing around the bend with several intersections to the Zone RU4 Rural Small Holdings area. The intensive agriculture on the right provides a scenic entry. There is no clear marker for where the Zone RU5 Village starts at Bertram Road (but this northern area is largely not developed for urban uses yet).

Then several hundred metres before the roundabout (where the Sturt Highway turns right) there is the speed sign transition from 80km/hr to 50km/hr with the primary 'Euston – Where the Murray Rivers Fun' solid plinth sign is located. This is a wide section of the Sturt Highway with the start of urban subdivision to the left (east). However, this area lacks established landscape (except for horticulture to the west).

Figure 15: Northern Inner gateway to Euston at main entrance/speed signs.



**Northern Inner Gateway (Euston sign)** could be upgraded in consultation with TfNSW, as follows:

- Upgrade of low planting in-front of the main Euston sign;
- Street tree planting from the Euston sign to the roundabout as part of a 'green link' into the village suggesting the 'oasis' along the river, screening the urban subdivision behind/ overhead power-lines & creating a clear entrance feature (overhead power lines are well setback from the highway frontage);
- Potential location for some consistent & consolidated signage for the key attractions & facilities in Euston (that are unlikely to change over time or date);
- Repetition (or relocation) of the 'Residential Area – Limit Compression Braking' sign as the existing sign location may be less effective;
- Possible consideration for relocating the speed transition to 50km/hr slightly further out as the village expands.

As the village is already aware, the arrival at the roundabout is a bit underwhelming. There is limited landscape, there are large road verges that lack any character, there are large gravel entries to businesses along



the highway & the motel. The roundabout itself is hard-paved with no landscape, there are uneven/broken/overgrown kerbs & median strips & the main view is of an older service station with signage clutter. There is little to 'invite' people to turn-off the highway & stop at Euston at this point.

Figure 16: Northern inner gateway on approach to roundabout on Sturt Highway.



Figure 17: Northern inner gateway at roundabout on Sturt Highway.



Figure 18: Large handstand areas at roundabout lack character or invitation to visit.



Figure 19: View from roundabout looking south down Murray Terrace.



**Northern Inner Gateway (roundabout)** should be a short-term priority in consultation with TfNSW, as follows:

- In the roundabout remove some of the middle hard-paved area & replace with low-shrub landscape & possibly a central established tree with clear sight-lines under the branches;
- Repave & median strip/kerb edges in & around the roundabout;
- As stated above, extend street tree planting along the frontage of the new residential subdivision connecting to street trees further south along Murray Terrace (main street);
- Define entrances to motel & highway businesses & plant street trees between;
- Work with owner of service station to progressively upgrade with consolidated signage & improved entrances;
- Work with school to enhance existing landscape at front fence;
- Signage for historic courthouse (white-on-brown) & toilets to attract people to stop.

### 5.3.3. North-Western Outer Gateway

The approach along the Sturt Highway from the north-west (Mildura) commences with the change in landscape from the Euston Regional Park into the intensive horticulture area with a white-on-blue 'Euston – Rest Revive Survive' sign followed shortly after by the transition in speed sign from 110km/hr to 80km/hr (with Caravan Park & Motel signage) (see photo below).

Figure 20: North-western outer gateway on Sturt Highway (speed signs).



The highway passes the Almond processing shed & some additional accommodation signage followed by the '50km/hr ahead' signs. This area is fairly dusty & lacks landscape but is not critical (see actions re Euston Regional Park above).

### 5.3.4. North-Western Inner Gateway

The next gateway is a bit spread-out but extends from the 50km/hr speed signs into the recreation grounds & includes the other main Euston – Where the Murray Rivers Fun' solid plinth sign. Unfortunately, the main sign is set in a large dirt & gravel part of the road reserve that is used for entrances to the Council depot, recreation ground, & lacks significant character & amenity.

**North-Western Inner Gateway** could be improved by the following:

- Defined entrances to the Council depot, recreation ground, & other land uses with road seal where suitable;
- Street tree planting from the main Euston entrance sign to the roundabout on both sides of the Sturt Highway as part of a 'green link' into the village (where driveways & sight-lines permit);
- Bitumen seal the vehicle rest-area or find a more suitable area;
- Expand the landscape planting around the Euston entrance sign;
- Additional sign to reduce use of engine brakes in urban area.

Figure 21: North-western inner gateway – speed transition signs.



Figure 22: North-western inner gateway – Euston main entrance sign.



Figure 23: Large gravel area around Euston main entrance sign has poor visual amenity.

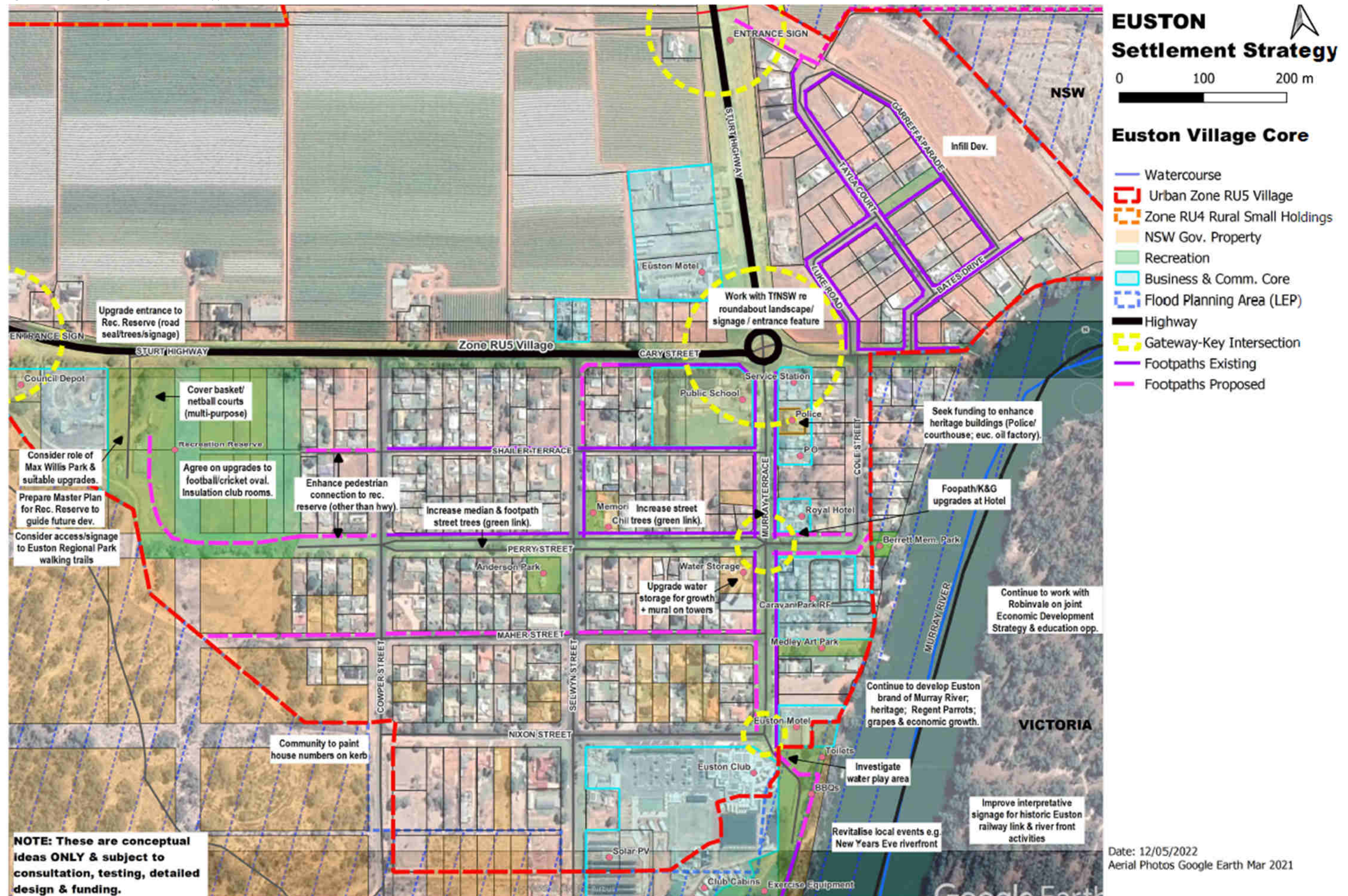


Figure 24: View from roundabout looking west out to north-western gateway.





Figure 25: Euston village core enhancement opportunities.





## 8. Village Centre & Signage Upgrades

**Village Centre & Signage Upgrades:** As shown on the Figure on the page above, there are a number of opportunities for upgrades in the core of Village area/zone:

- Village Gateway:** The priority mentioned above in the Gateway Section is to work with TfNSW to upgrade the roundabout / intersection on the Sturt Highway to improve the visual amenity of the entrance to the village & attract people to visit;
- Street Trees:** A Street Tree Master Plan should be prepared that focusses on several key 'green links' extending along the Sturt Highway from both main entrance signs back to the roundabout, down Cary St to the river, then down Murray Terrace to the Euston Club & along Perry St (both median & footpath plantings) connecting the recreation ground & key parks back to the main street;
- Murray Terrace Median Strip:** Investigate whether there is sufficient road width for some sections of at grade median strip planting & street lighting (similar to main street of Robinvale) to add to the 'green link', attract people to enter when visible from the roundabout, provide traffic calming, reduce the large hard-stand area of the road & beautify the village (may require one-side as parallel parking);
- Pedestrian Blisters:** Extend landscaped pedestrian blisters & crossing across Murray Terrace outside Royal Hotel (intersection Perry Street) – key intersection connecting to recreation ground;
- Footpath:** A staged footpath extension & upgrade plan could consider some of the links shown on the plan which prioritise connections between key recreation areas, parks, the river-front, the main street (community & business uses) & school (whilst avoiding the highway until such time as a bypass is constructed);
- Street Numbering:** Council to assist the community to add house numbering along kerb edges;
- Public Art:** Investigate locations to increase public art & walking trails to connect these (linking the public parks) including potentially murals on the water towers with the Regent Parrot as a key local theme (see example murals on next page);
- Heritage:** Seek funding for upgrades to local heritage items & buildings (e.g., courthouse) & enhanced recognition & signage of historic riverfront activities.

Figure 26: 'Green link'/tree plantings needed down to river along Cary St east.



Figure 27: Murray Terrace needs visual interest & street trees ('green link').



Figure 28: For example, an at-grade median strip planting & street lights like Robinvale.



Figure 29: Landscaped pedestrian blisters/crossing – Murray Terrace & Perry St.



Figure 30: Enhance median strip (& footpath) plantings along Perry St ('green link').



Figure 31: Anderson Park - additional shade trees & perimeter plantings.



Figure 32: Shailer Terrace – additional shade trees – connection to recreation grounds.



Figure 33: Extend shared path along Perry St & through recreation ground.





**Water Tower Murals**

Silo & water-tower art is increasingly a significant visitor attraction & can turn less-interesting pieces of infrastructure into major art works. The website <https://www.australiansiloarttrail.com/> showcases some of this work. Some examples are below.

Figure 34: Mural on water tower - Moura QLD (Painter Sam Wikinson; Pictures Jeni Stott; <https://streetartcities.com/>)



Figure 35: Silo Art at Grenfell (iPLAN PROJECTS).





## 9. Key Sites/Recreation Area(s)

### 9.1. Management Plan(s)

For all Crown Lands (and also Council Community lands & Parks) ideally there would be a **Plan of Management** prepared that would guide all future decision making in these areas & include the community & Crown Lands Division in their preparation.

A generic plan is suitable to overview all of the smaller parks in Euston but specific Plans of Management & possibly Master Plans are needed for key sporting facilities or major parks.

Council should certainly aim to provide a range of parks & facilities accessible across the community. However, with financial pressures on council, large areas to maintain (particularly with river frontages), & increasing expectations for safety & upgrades at each facility – it is important to clearly define the role of each area & minimise duplication of facilities (especially with Robinvale) unless they are in demand or multiple locations are needed for accessibility.

**Plans of Management** (if not already available/updated) should be prepared/ updated & relative priorities identified to engage with the community & facilitate funding & appropriate development.

### 9.2. Euston Recreation Reserve

Euston Recreation Reserve (or Recreation Ground) is located in the north-west of the village with access from the Sturt Highway & the ends of Shailer Terrace & Perry St (& possibly Maher St). It has a sportsground for football/cricket & basketball/netball courts with an area to the south used for horse events/pony club.

As noted above, the entrance from Sturt Highway needs some upgrades to improve the visual amenity of the north-west entrance to Euston. There also needs to be further investigation with the current clubs to determine necessary upgrades.

It is assumed that there are also recreation grounds at Robinvale that are shared for sports – so there may need to be some co-ordination as to what events should be facilitated in Euston to avoid unnecessary duplication & costs.

**Euston Recreation Reserve:** A master plan could be prepared for the Reserve to manage some reasonable upgrades that may include:

- Upgrades to the entrance & vehicle road into the grounds;
- Shade cover to the basketball/netball courts & improve multi-functional court markings/surface;
- Upgrades to the football/cricket oval (as required);
- Insulation & minor works to the club rooms;
- Minor upgrades to Max Willis Park to increase shade tree plantings & make it more useable;
- Potential walking trail access to Euston Regional Park;
- Review of use by schools for sports carnivals, athletics & cross-country;

- Investigation if there is surplus land for possible residential growth to the south (see Growth Section below). This may require an alternative location for the horse activities.

Figure 36: Euston Recreation Ground entrance & driveway to be re-gravelled/sealed.



Figure 37: Work with local clubs to determine usage with Robinvale & field upgrades.



Figure 38: Upgrade courts for multi-purpose & consider shade, seating & trees.



Figure 39: Determine the role of Max Willis Park & possibly integrate horse activities.



### 9.3. Euston Club & Riverfront Park

The riverfront & its association with the Euston Club at the southern end of Murray Terrace is also a significant passive recreation area along the Murray River (within the flood zone up to the club) & connects around to the RV Park. This area has great river frontage & amenity but may be under-utilised.

#### Riverfront Park:

- Investigate potential for small water park/play area to attract families & visitors esp. in summer (or alternatively Anderson Park);
- Interpretative signage of historic riverfront activities, natural ecology & walking trails, & indigenous culture & heritage significant to the area;
- Connect the walking/cycle trail down to the exercise equipment & RV Park;
- Look to revitalise riverfront events (e.g., New Years' Eve; etc.) once COVID concerns are addressed.
- Manage flood prone lands to minimise maintenance/impacts.

Figure 40: Euston Club -Potential to improve presentation to street/screen loading dock.



Figure 41: Continue to activate river-front & provide community events.



Figure 42: Upgrade shared path along river-front to RV Park.





Figure 43: Continue work to activate walking trail around Euston to recreation ground.



Figure 44: Improve awareness of RV Park & relationship with Caravan Park.



9.4. Anderson Park

Anderson Park is centrally located at the corner of Perry St & Selwyn Streets. It is a larger flat grassed area with playground equipment & shade area that is outside the flood prone land. It is located along the proposed ‘green link’ along Perry St to the recreation ground. Therefore, it could be considered for some additional infrastructure.

- Anderson Park:**

  - a) Add additional street trees & perimeter planting to enhance the east-west ‘green link’ along Perry St;
  - b) Provide some more advanced children’s play equipment & shade cover (e.g., larger swings, flying fox);
  - c) Provide additional BBQs & shaded seating areas;
  - d) Alternative area for a potential ‘Water Play Park’ if not suitable at the Riverfront Park.

Figure 45: Anderson Park is centrally located



9.5. Berrett Memorial Park

Berrett Memorial Park is located at the eastern end of Perry St on the Murray River. It is dominated by electricity & other infrastructure so it lacks some amenity. This should be part of the east-west ‘green link’ along Perry St. It is within the Flood prone land so this may limit improvements (though most land appears built up behind the retaining walls).

- Berrett Memorial Park:**

  - a) Add additional street trees & perimeter planting to enhance the east-west ‘green link’ along Perry St;
  - b) Try to shield infrastructure & reduce visual impact;
  - c) Provide some additional seating overlooking the Murray River.

Figure 46: Berrett Memorial Park-extend ‘green link’ along Perry St & add landscape.



9.6. Medley Art Park

Medley Park is located near the eastern end of Maher St with access off Murray Terrace. It is a long, skinny linear park with some excellent signage of Euston’s history & a small seating area at the end. It is above the Flood Planning Level so it can support some additional infrastructure.

- Medley Art Park:**

  - a) Minor maintenance to pathways (weeds);
  - b) Irrigation for grassed areas, particularly near seating;
  - c) Investigate adjacent partly vacant lot to see if park can be expanded & improve connectivity with Caravan Park.

Figure 47: Medley Art Park – maintenance of pathways.



Figure 48: Medley Art Park – repainting of signage.

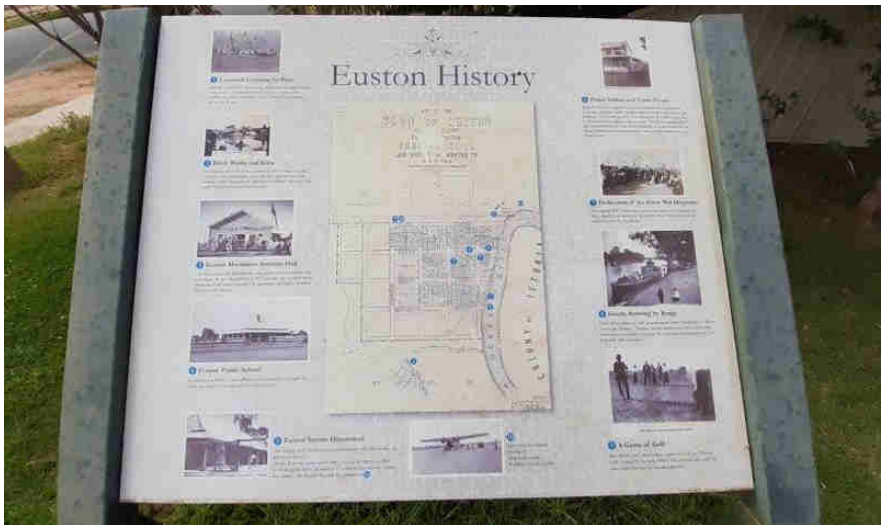


Figure 49: Medley Art Park–irrigation, use adjacent vacant lot & connect to caravan park.



9.7. ‘Bates’ Subdivision – New Park

There has been discussion around the provision of a new park in the ‘Bates’ subdivision to the north-east of town. This should be investigated taking into account the additional demand created by the subdivision, the hierarchy of existing parks & services, & the existing approval.

- Bates Subdivision:** Investigate the demand & requirements for a small park in the new subdivision in the hierarchy of existing parks & services.



10. Growth Opportunities

10.1. Key Opportunities

Like Balranald, the Euston-Robinvale area appears to be experiencing significant growth pressures based on growth in intensive agricultural/ horticultural activities in the area (irrigation), a number of significant projects adding to employment demands, a large itinerant work-force, & significant constraints to growth of new housing areas.

Euston also has significant tourism potential with its location on the Murray River & a wide range of accommodation types based around the Euston Club.

10.2. Key Constraints

The village’s potential growth/expansion is significantly constrained by (supported by findings in Council’s *Housing Development – Balranald* (undated) Report):

- a) **River:** The Murray River & its associated wetlands/flood-plain to the east & south. This is unlikely to change unless there are significant extensions to levee bank systems & this requires detailed studies to avoid exacerbating flood impacts downstream;
- b) **Crown Lands:** Crown lands & the Euston Regional Park to the west & south. Long-term leasing of some Crown lands is possible but less attractive for investment. The *Crown Lands Management Act 2016* (CLM Act) allows eligible Western lands leases to be purchased to convert the title to freehold. Crown lands are often subject to native title claims & covered by sensitive biodiversity & other environmental issues that take significant time & studies to resolve for redevelopment;
- c) **Agriculture:** Agriculture is the largest employer & economic generator in the area. Therefore, prime agricultural lands should be protected where possible. However, agriculture can be cyclical in nature & is highly dependent on favourable climate conditions (& potentially highly impacted by climate change). Without housing for employees, it may be counter-productive. Irrigated horticulture & its agricultural value which anecdotally is higher in value than residential use (at this time) so it is less like to be redeveloped. There are already lands to the north of the Sturt Highway within Zone RU5 Village but little has been developed;
- d) **Highway:** The Sturt Highway creates both opportunities & constraints for the village. It brings passing traffic to support local businesses, but this traffic has priority & this creates a barrier to development north of the highway to connect into the village. Traffic noise may impact residential amenity. TfNSW guidelines may limit the ability for traffic calming, street trees, pedestrian crossings etc. Some of these issues may be improved if a Bypass is provided to the village but the village would have to work harder to attract people to stop & stay;
- e) **Robinvale:** Euston’s association/competition with Robinvale – though Robinvale is perhaps equally or more constrained in growth so Euston may have the potential to leverage these opportunities;

- f) **Workforce:** The large itinerant/temporary workforce in the area that has peak employment periods & lower socio-economic stability. It is difficult to get an accurate count of local populations & users of local facilities with less fixed places of residence;
- g) **Infrastructure:** The current sewer & water infrastructure is already exceeding capacity (see Chapter 1 of this Strategy) so there is significant limitation to growth & cost in upgrades. The IWCM will provide guidance on ways to address this but this will take some time to implement.
- h) **Infill Development:** As with many regional villages, people have moved to Euston for its rural lifestyle. This sometimes means that people want to have a larger than average house lot size with privacy from neighbours. This does, however, mean that there are significant parts of the existing Zone RU5 Village area that are under-utilised. As there is little potential to expand the village zone – it would be far more efficient (in terms of infrastructure & development costs) to develop infill land prior to addressing the constraints above.
- i) **Construction Cost:** Similar to Balranald & across Australia, construction costs have jumped due to increased demand, lack of builders & construction material supply, & macro & micro-economic factors. If construction costs exceed perceived or actual housing value then people are less likely to develop land.
- j) **Rental Availability:** We have not reviewed housing rental availability in any detail for Euston (& accurate statistics are unlikely to be readily available). However, with a significant temporary workforce it would be expected that rental housing is at a premium & would not match demand.
- k) **Historical Growth:** The above constraints are HIGHLY LIKELY to have significantly constrained growth of housing (& possibly ancillary businesses). Therefore, it is very difficult to use past growth of land use types to estimate future growth.

10.3. Recent Housing Development & Supply/Demand

The scope of this Strategy did not include a detailed review of supply & demand within the existing Zone RU5 Village area. However, the Figure on the next page (based on a review of a 2021 aerial photo only) tries to summarise the opportunities.

The following table sets out the dwelling approvals in & around Euston that would affect housing supply (noting that an approval does not always result in construction & this excludes demolition/rebuilds).

The Table below highlights that over 19 years there has been the addition of up to 106 new dwellings including workers accommodation & secondary dwellings (or approximately 5.6 dwelling/year on average).

There has been a new residential subdivision (known as ‘Bates’ subdivision) to the north-east of the village along Bates Drive, Luke Road, Tayla Court & Garreffa Pde. This appears to have been successful with significant take-up of lots & only the final stages (close to the highway & at the rear) that are yet to have their subdivisions registered.

Figure 50: Summary of Dwelling Approvals in & around Euston 2004-2022.

Year	New (Detached) Dwellings	Secondary Dwellings	Workers Accom.	(MINUS) Dwelling Demolitions
2004	3			
2005	1			
2006	4			
2007	5			
2008	6	2		
2009	7			1
2010	8			
2011	2			1
2012	1			
2013	3			
2013/2014	1			1
2014/2015	1			1
2015/2016	2			
2016/2017	3			1
2017/2018	1			
2018/2019	5			1
2019/2020	5		28	
2020/2021	9		12	2
2021/2022	5			
Sub-Total	72	2	40	8
TOTAL	66 New Dwellings + 50 Workers Accommodation			

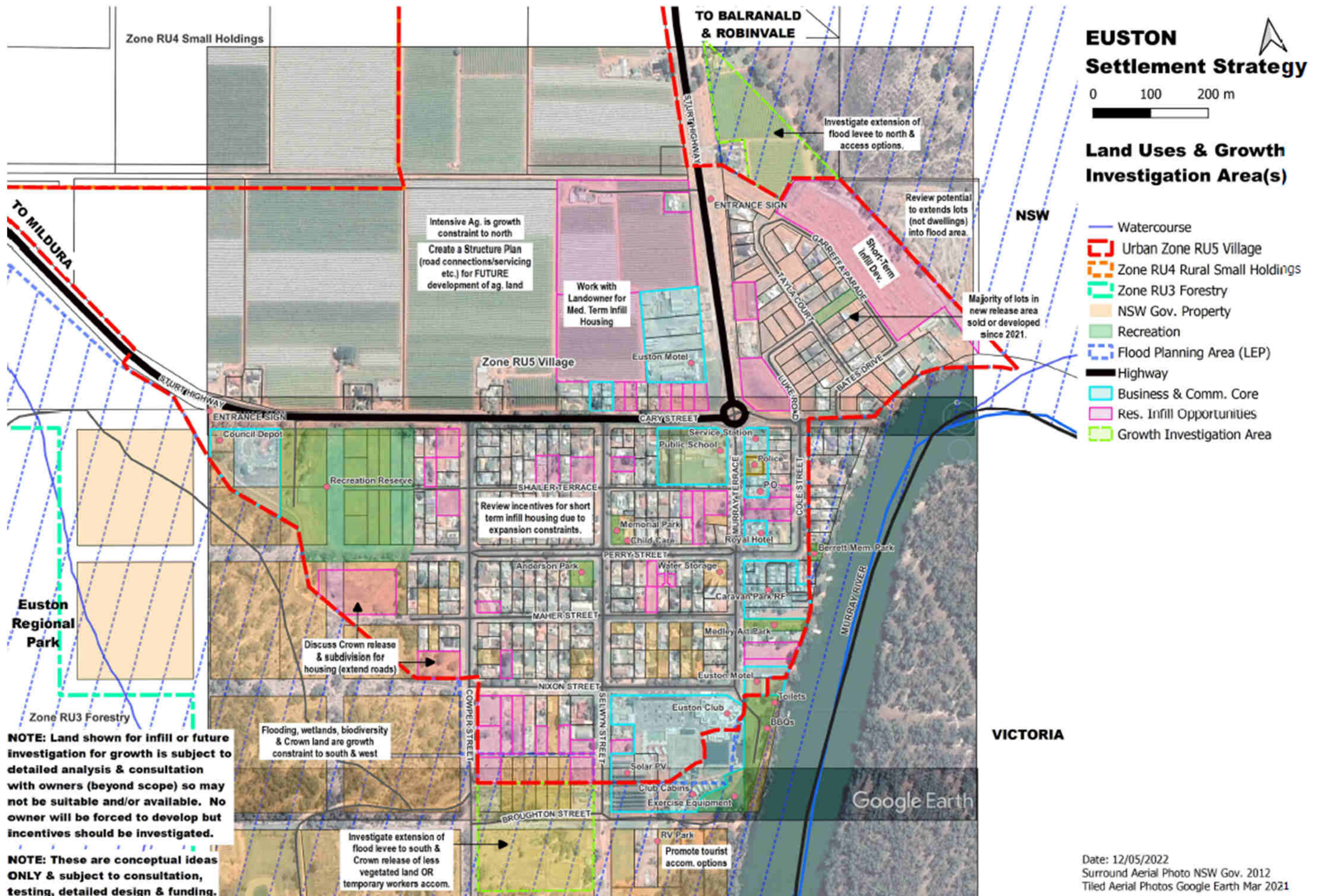
Council’s records show that there have been 31 dwellings approved in this subdivision since 2008 with the last 3 years showing increased take-up of 5-8 dwellings/year. We don’t have accurate counts on which vacant lots in the Bates subdivision are held by the original developer or owned awaiting approval/construction. However, anecdotal evidence is that there are only a handful of lots available on the market & limited additional subdivision potential.

As a result, Euston’s dwelling approval rates suggest significant demand in the current market. It is clear that there is a distinct lack of land suitable for housing to meet projected growth in the medium term (up to 10 years) & certainly not for long-term (10+ years) growth so additional land supply is likely to be required (see below).

**Housing Strategy:** As this Strategy did not have the scope for a full residential land use study – we suggest that funding is sought to update the demographic analysis to the 2021 Census data, improve constraint/opportunity mapping, prepare a more detailed residential supply/demand analysis (including different housing types), and further test investigation areas and vacant land/development opportunities in Euston consistent with NSW Government guidelines. In the meantime, this Strategy should enable consideration of short-term solutions including some of the projects below.

Figure 51: (Next page) Euston potential housing growth areas (desktop study only & subject to site investigation).







## 10.4. Infill Development

### 10.4.1. Infill – Vacant or Underutilised Lots

As noted above, with all of the constraints & likely delays to expanding the Village Zone, it is more cost effective to promote infill development compared to development of new ‘greenfield’ sites for the short to medium term (0-5 years).

The Figure on the next page suggests where some vacant or under-utilised lots are located within the Village Zone. There are several larger lots or collections of lots along Cowper St, Shailer Terrace, & in the newer subdivision area.

Figure 52: The new subdivision area adjacent to the highway has limited lots available.



**Note:** There has been no consultation with individual owners or review of specific site constraints to determine if these lots would be suitable and/or available for future housing. A reasonable expectation is that only 20-30% of the marked lots are likely to be suitable/available in the next 5-10 years.

An increase in regional land & housing prices is likely to drive some additional supply if construction costs can be managed.

Ideally, some cost efficiencies can be gained by increasing development of medium density housing types with lower land costs, smaller & more efficient building layouts, & shared services.

**Infill – Vacant or Underutilised Lots:** Council & real estate agents should continue to consult with land owners of parcels that appear vacant or under-utilised to test likely availability/suitability for infill development. Where possible Council should facilitate approvals for development of these lots.

### 10.4.2. Infill - Intensive Agriculture Land

As noted above, there is an area located north & west of the Sturt Highway that is in Zone RU5 Village but has limited housing or subdivided lots & is dominated by intensive agriculture.

Owner's may not be developing this land due to agricultural value, history, land use conflicts with the highway & adjacent intensive horticulture, or difficulty navigating the planning system & development costs. However, this area has the greatest potential to provide steady supply for the next 10-20 years.

Council may be able to overcome some of these barriers through strategic planning & the preparation of a Concept Structure Plan that protects the agricultural values & highway operations whilst making it easy for owners to develop land in accordance with an agreed concept. It is likely that the land immediately to the west of the Euston Motel & north of the highway businesses would be the logical first land to develop (subject to owners (but not precluding other Zone RU5 areas).

#### **Zone RU5 Village – Intensive Agriculture Land:**

*Council should work with the land owners to prepare a Concept Structure Plan for the intensive agricultural lands in Zone RU5 Village north & west of the Sturt Highway to facilitate its logical development & incorporate this into a Development Control Plan (DCP). The concept plan would need to look at:*

- Key constraints to development & ways to facilitate growth;*
- Interest of land owners & staging of release;*
- Appropriate access points to the highway & buffers for residential amenity from traffic noise/impacts;*
- Internal road layouts that maximise yield & minimise costs whilst promoting connectivity & traffic calming;*
- Buffers to intensive horticulture to protect the right to farm & ways to minimise impacts on prime agricultural land.*

*Council should look to facilitate this development with reduced or staged contributions & encouragement for housing diversity.*

### 10.4.3. Infill - Crown Land

Concurrently to the above infill opportunities, it may be necessary for Council to commence discussions with the NSW Government/Crown Lands Division to determine the process to release under-utilised Crown Lands within the existing Zone RU5 Village area.

In particular, the southern end of the Recreation Ground is a larger parcel on relatively unconstrained lot (see picture opposite) that can be accessed with extensions of Perry &/or Maher Streets (subject to a suitable relocation of the pony club). There is also a smaller parcel north-west of the intersection of Nixon & Cowper Streets.

**Infill – Crown Land:** Council to engage with Crown Lands to determine potential for release of and/or development of Crown Lands for housing with a focus on larger parcels that are vacant or under-utilised.

## 10.5. Expansion of Urban Area

If there is limited additional supply created within the existing Zone RU5 Village area above then Council will need to investigate rezoning of suitable land for an expansion of urban land adjacent to or near to Euston, with the following areas for investigation:

### 10.5.1. Expansion to South (Broughton St)

The 2006 Strategy suggested investigation of opportunities for suitable redevelopment of the existing ‘borrow pit’ to the south of the village for

river-related activities. Subsequently, it appears this area has been developed for the RV Park (temporary uses). This is likely to be more compatible with the flood status.

In the medium to longer-term (if there was sufficient funding) an additional flood study could be prepared to investigate extending the levee bank to protect this area & enable its future residential use. However, this would not be possible if there was exacerbated flood impacts downstream or significant impacts on the ecology of the area.

Alternatively, this may be a suitable location for a temporary workers camp with accommodation buildings built up above the flood level & ability to relocate them as required.

### 10.5.2. Expansion to North (Garreffa Parade)

There is also potential to investigate (through a flood study) whether the existing Zone RU5 area could be extended to the north of Garreffa Parade along the east side of the Sturt Highway. However, unless access is provided via Garreffa Parade (unlikely) this would require a new highway access point & only has limited subdivision potential.

**Expansion of Urban Area (Flood Studies):** Council to continue to seek grant funding to investigate minor extensions of the existing Zone RU5 area into adjacent flood prone lands, the impacts of minor extensions of the flood levee, discussions with Crown on potential to release these lands, & suitable uses that could potentially co-exist with flood prone lands.

Figure 53: Land at southern end of Recreation Reserve at western end of Perry St that could support additional infill development.





### 10.5.3. Junction of Sturt & Murray Valley Highways

One of the few larger parcels of land close to Euston that is outside the current mapped flood prone land (but this may require updating) & not used for substantial irrigated horticulture is located on both sides of the Murray Valley Highway at the junction with the Sturt Highway & up Bridge Rd (see Figure opposite).

This appears to be a historic dwelling area with a small cluster of dwellings & businesses & recent new sheds likely used for agricultural storage/processing. There is also a recent approval for a Service Station on the southern side of the junction. The 2006 Strategy suggested this as a 'highway business centre' but did not result in the introduction of an urban zone to facilitate more diverse uses.

This land would ideally be included in a multi-functional zone like Zone RU5 Village or possibly some business or industrial zoning along the highway frontages. The business & light industrial uses that could take advantage of the highway location & potentially buffer residential uses from the Sturt Highway. Whilst it is not an ideal residential area, there are few opportunities so this should be further investigated.

Land could be developed along both sides of Bridge Road – though to the east of this road would require removal of some horticultural land & buffers to horticultural land in the flood plain.

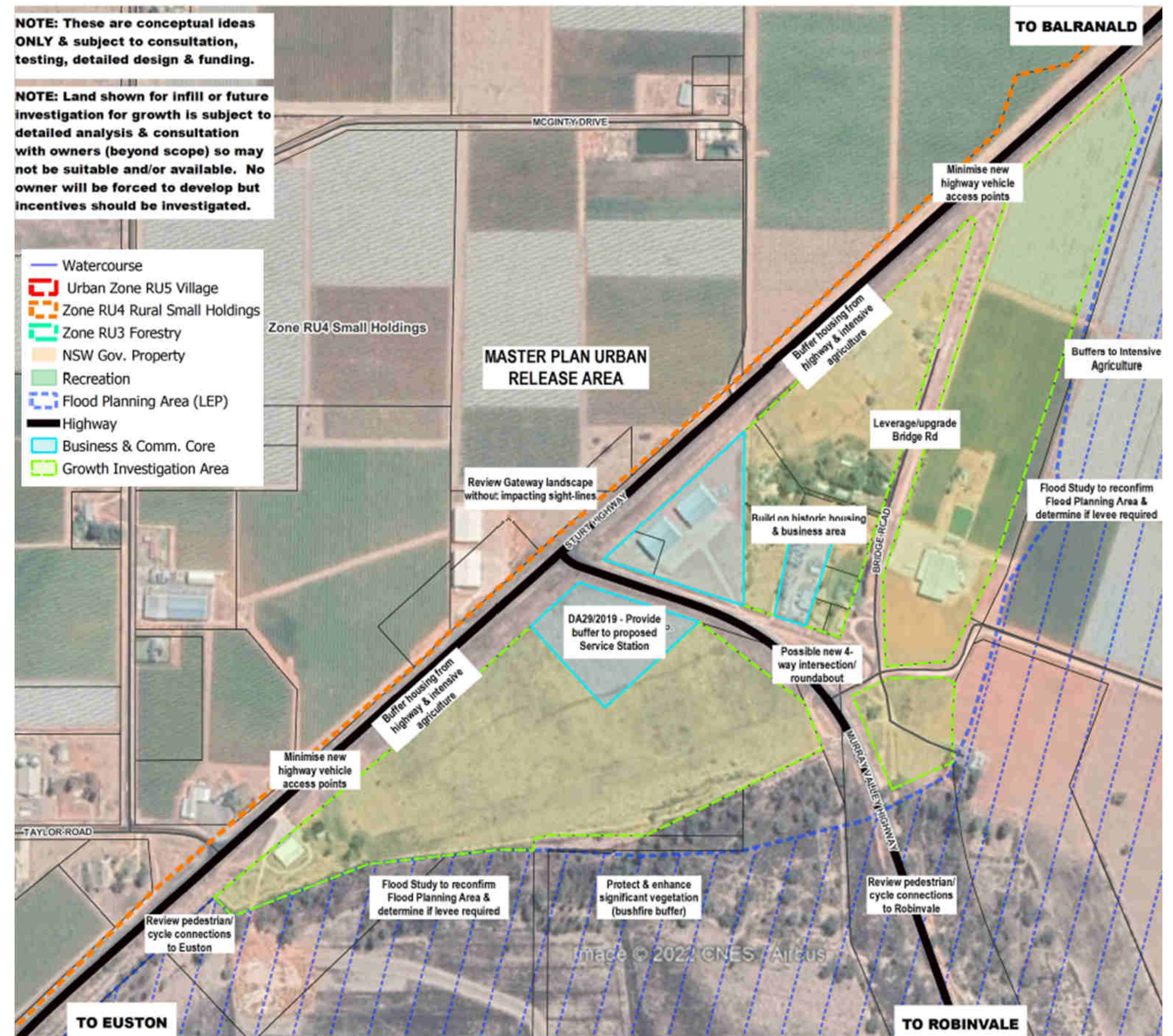
However, it is noted this area is well beyond the current limit of water & sewerage reticulated networks. This area may require its own water storage for gravity pressure & a new sewer pump station.

**Highway Junction Urban Release Area:** Investigate the junction of the Sturt & Murray Valley Highways for urban zoning that would facilitate highway businesses & possibly some buffered residential. Prepare a Concept Structure Plan to test & facilitate this rezoning.

### 10.6. New Large Lot Residential Areas

Rural or Large Lot Residential uses are reviewed in more detailed in the 2006 Strategy (& are not part of this Strategy). With the increasing pressures on need for housing & the constraints to urban residential growth in & around Euston – Council may need to investigate new large lot residential areas in lower quality agricultural lands – such as around Lake Benanee. However, this is unlikely to significantly solve the housing issue in the short to medium term.

Figure 54: Investigate extension of urban area to junction of highways (NE Growth Area).



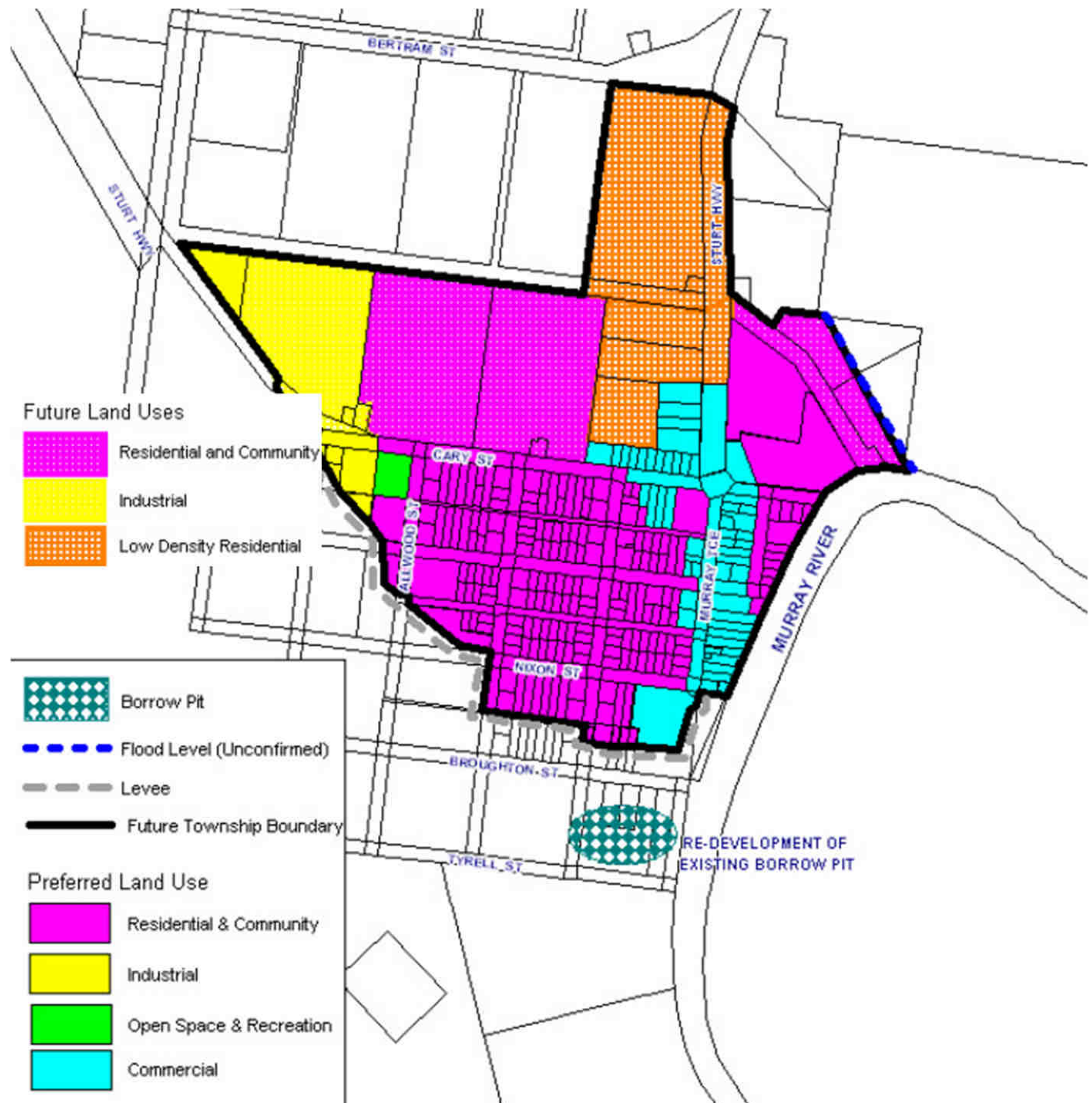


### 10.7. 2006 Strategy

The 2006 Strategy (Habitat Planning) was the most recent comprehensive Land Use Strategy for the Shire. This Strategy seeks to build on the aspects of the 2006 Strategy that are unlikely to have significantly changed including the review of history, the environment, & key opportunities & challenges in the Shire. However, since that time growth pressures & many constraints have increased.

Key 2006 recommendations for Euston:	2022 Response
1. <b>Provide for future rural residential development north of the township on both sides of the Sturt Highway.</b> The actual extent of land available for development east of the highway needs to be confirmed by identification of the flood level.	Modified. Large Lot Residential to north of highway has not proceeded. May need to reduce lot size with suitable buffers.
2. <b>Provide for future residential development to the north of Cary Street.</b> This is the only direction the town can expand to cater for urban development as all other potential 'fronts' are flood affected.	Agreed. Needs to be facilitated by a Structure Concept Plan.
3. <b>The consolidation of the commercial precinct around the roundabout &amp; south along Murray Terrace to the Bowling Club.</b> This would incorporate most of the existing commercial development in Euston.	Agreed. Limited growth of commercial expected near Robinvale.
4. <b>The provision of an industrial precinct to the northwest of the town along the Sturt Highway &amp; up Morris Road.</b> This precinct would incorporate the existing Select Harvest industrial development.	Supported within existing Zone RU5 but gateway needs controls to protect visual amenity.
5. <b>Investigate opportunities for suitable redevelopment of the existing borrow pit to the south of the town</b> for river-related activities	Agreed. RV Park is suitable use. Flood risk unlikely to make this suitable for permanent uses.
6. The opportunity created by the new bridge between Euston & Robinvale & <b>the major intersection at the Sturt Highway &amp; the Murray River Bridge Road to be recognised by the provision of a highway business type precinct.</b> The precinct should be restricted to land uses that relate to the highway & not become an alternative location to Euston for residential development.	Modified. Highway business uses likely to be suitable. Needs Zone RU5 Village flexibility. Buffered residential needs investigation as in higher demand.
7. <b>The existing development at Lake Benanee &amp; surrounds to be acknowledged as a potential rural residential/tourism precinct.</b> However, given the relative isolation of the site & environmental sensitivities associated with the two lakes, confirmation of the suitability of this land use requires further study.	Agreed. Further investigation required (not part of this Strategy).

Figure 55: 2006 Strategy - Euston Strategic Plan (Fig.26)





## 11. Summary Action Table

**Note:** Short Term = 1-5 years; Medium Term 5-10 years; Long Term 10 years+

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
<b>VILLAGE SURROUNDS &amp; INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES</b>		
1.	<b>IWCM:</b> Finalise the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWCM) & seek funding for water & sewer infrastructure projects.	Short
2.	<b>Sewerage:</b> Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) upgrade as per IWCM recommendations to cater for the projected population & employment growth.	Short-Medium
3.	<b>Water:</b> Design a new water tower & processing plant to meet future water demands of the Euston community including upgrade storage capacity & increase water pressure as per IWCM recommendations.	Short-Medium
4.	<b>RFS:</b> Relocate the Rural Fire Services (RFS) Shed from the water treatment plant area to the Council depot.	Short-Medium
5.	<b>Cemetery:</b> Create a master plan for the Euston Cemetery to manage its use/ expansion & improve pathways/landscape/irrigation/maintenance.	Medium
6.	<b>Regional Park:</b> Work with National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) to develop Euston Regional Park eco-trails (with clear links to Euston), additional ecological plantings, interpretative signage & highlight the recreational opportunities. Consider some additional native vegetation plantings along the Sturt Highway to improve the north-western gateway.	Medium
7.	<b>Wetlands:</b> Work with NSW Government & local Landcare groups to recognise the importance of the wetlands & floodplain along the Murray River, provide interpretative signage & create recreational opportunities.	Medium
8.	<b>Robinvale Connections:</b> Continue to improve walking/bicycle trails connecting Euston to Robinvale through floodplain & up onto Murray Valley Highway overpass & extend to river-frontage with additional ecological plantings & interpretative signage.	Medium
9.	<b>Economic Development:</b> Continue to work with Robinvale on joint Economic Development Strategy, joint tourism initiatives, & synergies to manage population growth, education & employment.	Ongoing
10.	<b>Riverfront History:</b> Work with Robinvale on interpretative signage & walking trails along the historic railway & other connection to Euston & historic riverfront activities.	Medium
11.	<b>Dwellings in Zone RU4:</b> Review controls for dwelling potential on Zone RU4 land to protect agriculture & facilitate dwellings in appropriate locations.	Short
12.	<b>Road Maintenance:</b> More regular road maintenance along key bus routes such as Tapalin Mail Road.	Ongoing
<b>HEAVY VEHICLE BYPASS INVESTIGATIONS</b>		
13.	<b>Bypass Options:</b> This Strategy supports the further investigation of the three (3) likely Bypass Options (see Figure in Strategy) with Option 1 already progressed. If this proceeds then the Entrance Gateway & Signage Section above may need to be adapted to recognise/address this new gateway. Until the Bypass is constructed then there should be continued traffic calming on any short-cut route along Morris, Bertram or Taylor Roads to protect local users.	Short-Medium
<b>ENTRANCE DESIGN &amp; SIGNAGE</b>		
14.	<b>A Signage Strategy</b> should be prepared by a suitably qualified person that comprehensively looks at navigation, facilities, information, & history/heritage signage to ensure a comprehensive solution – focussing particularly on the key entrances, gateways & main street(s).	Short
15.	<b>Shire Boundary Sign:</b> There is an opportunity for some larger signage (possibly on the western side of the Sturt Highway at the terminus of the Murray Valley Highway) that welcomes people to NSW, Balranald Shire & Euston. This could be emphasised with some landscape/street tree plantings that do not interfere with sight-lines or overhead electricity.	Medium

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
16.	<b>Northern Inner Gateway (Euston sign)</b> could be upgraded in consultation with TfNSW, as follows: a) Upgrade of low planting in-front of the main Euston sign; b) Street tree planting from the Euston sign to the roundabout as part of a 'green link' into the village suggesting the 'oasis' along the river, screening the urban subdivision behind/ overhead power-lines & creating a clear entrance feature (overhead power lines are well setback from the highway frontage); c) Potential location for some consistent & consolidated signage for the key attractions & facilities in Euston (that are unlikely to change over time or date); d) Repetition (or relocation) of the 'Residential Area – Limit Compression Braking' sign as the existing sign location may be less effective; Possible consideration for relocating the speed transition to 50km/hr slightly further out as the village expands.	Medium
17.	<b>Northern Inner Gateway (roundabout)</b> should be a short-term priority in consultation with TfNSW, as follows: a) In the roundabout remove some of the middle hard-paved area & replace with low-shrub landscape & possibly a central established tree with clear sight-lines under the branches; b) Repave & median strip/kerb edges in & around the roundabout; c) As stated above, extend street tree planting along the frontage of the new residential subdivision connecting to street trees further south along Murray Terrace (main street); d) Define entrances to motel & highway businesses & plant street trees between; e) Work with owner of service station to progressively upgrade with consolidated signage & improved entrances; f) Work with school to enhance existing landscape at front fence; Signage for historic courthouse (white-on-brown) & toilets to attract people to stop.	Short
18.	<b>North-Western Inner Gateway</b> could be improved by the following: a) Defined entrances to the Council depot, recreation ground, & other land uses with road seal where suitable; b) Street tree planting from the main Euston entrance sign to the roundabout on both sides of the Sturt Highway as part of a 'green link' into the village (where driveways & sight-lines permit); c) Bitumen seal the vehicle rest-area or find a more suitable area; d) Expand the landscape planting around the Euston entrance sign; Additional sign to reduce use of engine brakes in urban area.	Short-Medium
<b>VILLAGE CENTRE &amp; SIGNAGE UPGRADES</b>		
19.	<b>Street Trees:</b> A Street Tree Master Plan should be prepared that focusses on several key 'green links' extending along the Sturt Highway from both main entrance signs back to the roundabout, down Cary St to the river, then down Murray Terrace to the Euston Club & along Perry St (both median & footpath plantings) connecting the recreation ground & key parks back to the main street.	Short-Medium
20.	<b>Murray Terrace Median Strip:</b> Investigate whether there is sufficient road width for some sections of at grade median strip planting & street lighting (similar to main street of Robinvale) to add to the 'green link', attract people to enter when visible from the roundabout, provide traffic calming, reduce the large hard-stand area of the road & beautify the village (may require one-side as parallel parking).	Short-Medium
21.	<b>Pedestrian Blisters:</b> Extend landscaped pedestrian blisters & crossing across Murray Terrace outside Royal Hotel (intersection Perry Street) – key intersection connecting to recreation ground.	Medium
22.	<b>Footpath:</b> A staged footpath extension & upgrade plan could consider some of the links shown on the plan which prioritise connections between key recreation areas, parks, the river-front, the main street (community & business uses) & school (whilst avoiding the highway until such time as a bypass is constructed).	Short-Medium



No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
23.	<b>Street Numbering:</b> Council to assist the community to add house numbering along kerb edges (or other appropriate locations).	Short-Medium
24.	<b>Public Art:</b> Investigate locations to increase public art & walking trails to connect these (linking the public parks) including potentially murals on the water towers with the Regent Parrot as a key local theme (see example murals on next page).	Short-Medium
25.	<b>Heritage:</b> Seek funding for upgrades to local heritage items & buildings (e.g., courthouse) & enhanced recognition & signage of historic riverfront activities.	Ongoing
	<b>KEY SITES/RECREATION AREAS</b>	
26.	<b>Plans of Management</b> (if not already available/updated) should be prepared/ updated for all Crown/Community Lands & relative priorities identified to engage with the community & facilitate funding & appropriate development.	Short
27.	<b>Euston Recreation Reserve:</b> A master plan could be prepared for the Reserve to manage some reasonable upgrades that may include: a) Upgrades to the entrance & vehicle road into the grounds; b) Shade cover to the basketball/netball courts & improve multi-functional court markings/surface; c) Upgrades to the football/cricket oval (as required); d) Insulation & minor works to the club rooms; e) Minor upgrades to Max Willis Park to increase shade tree plantings & make it more useable; f) Potential walking trail access to Euston Regional Park; g) Review of use by schools for sports carnivals, athletics & cross-country; h) Investigation if there is surplus land for possible residential growth to the south (see Growth Section below). This may require an alternative location for the horse activities.	Medium
28.	<b>Riverfront Park:</b> a) Investigate potential for small water park/play area to attract families & visitors esp. in summer (or alternatively Anderson Park); b) Interpretative signage of historic riverfront activities, natural ecology & walking trails, & indigenous culture & heritage significant to the area; c) Connect the walking/cycle trail down to the exercise equipment & RV Park; d) Look to revitalise riverfront events (e.g., New Years' Eve; etc.) once COVID concerns are addressed.	Short-Medium
29.	<b>Anderson Park:</b> a) Add additional street trees & perimeter planting to enhance the east-west 'green link' along Perry St; b) Provide some more advanced children's play equipment & shade cover (e.g., larger swings, flying fox); c) Provide additional BBQs & shaded seating areas; d) Alternative area for a potential 'Water Play Park' if not suitable at the Riverfront Park.	Short-Medium
30.	<b>Berrett Memorial Park:</b> a) Add additional street trees & perimeter planting to enhance the east-west 'green link' along Perry St; b) Try to shield infrastructure & reduce visual impact; c) Provide some additional seating overlooking the Murray River.	Medium
31.	<b>Medley Art Park:</b> a) Minor maintenance to pathways (weeds); b) Irrigation for grassed areas, particularly near seating; c) Investigate adjacent partly vacant lot to see if park can be expanded & improve connectivity with Caravan Park.	Short-Medium
32.	<b>Bates Subdivision:</b> Investigate the demand & requirements for a small park in the new subdivision in the hierarchy of existing parks & services.	Short

No.	Item Description	Indicative Timing
	<b>GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES &amp; CONSTRAINTS</b>	
33.	<b>Housing Strategy:</b> As this Strategy did not have the scope for a full residential land use study – we suggest that funding is sought to update the demographic analysis to the 2021 Census data, improve constraint/opportunity mapping, prepare a more detailed residential supply/demand analysis (including different housing types), and further test investigation areas and vacant land/development opportunities in Euston consistent with NSW Government guidelines. In the meantime, this Strategy should enable consideration of short-term solutions including some of the projects below.	Short
34.	<b>Infill – Vacant or Underutilised Lots:</b> Council & real estate agents should continue to consult with land owners of parcels that appear vacant or under-utilised to test likely availability/suitability for infill development. Where possible Council should facilitate approvals for development of these lots.	Ongoing
35.	<b>Zone RU5 Village – Intensive Agriculture Land:</b> Council should work with the land owners to prepare a Concept Structure Plan for the intensive agricultural lands in Zone RU5 Village north & west of the Sturt Highway to facilitate its logical development & incorporate this into a Development Control Plan (DCP). The concept plan would need to look at: a) Key constraints to development & ways to facilitate growth; b) Interest of land owners & staging of release; c) Appropriate access points to the highway & buffers for residential amenity from traffic noise/impacts; d) Internal road layouts that maximise yield & minimise costs whilst promoting connectivity & traffic calming; e) Buffers to intensive horticulture to protect the right to farm & ways to minimise impacts on prime agricultural land. f) Council should look to facilitate this development with reduced or staged contributions & encouragement for housing diversity.	Short-Medium
36.	<b>Infill – Crown Land:</b> Council to engage with Crown Lands to determine potential for release of and/or development of Crown Lands for housing with a focus on larger parcels that are vacant or under-utilised.	Short-Medium
37.	<b>Expansion of Urban Area (Flood Studies):</b> Council to continue to seek grant funding to investigate minor extensions of the existing Zone RU5 area into adjacent flood prone lands, the impacts of minor extensions of the flood levee, discussions with Crown on potential to release these lands, & suitable uses that could potentially co-exist with flood prone lands.	Short-Medium
38.	<b>Highway Junction Urban Release Area:</b> Investigate the junction of the Sturt & Murray Valley Highways for urban zoning that would facilitate highway businesses & possibly some buffered residential (subject to flood studies and other constraints). Prepare a Concept Structure Plan to test & facilitate this rezoning.	Short-Medium