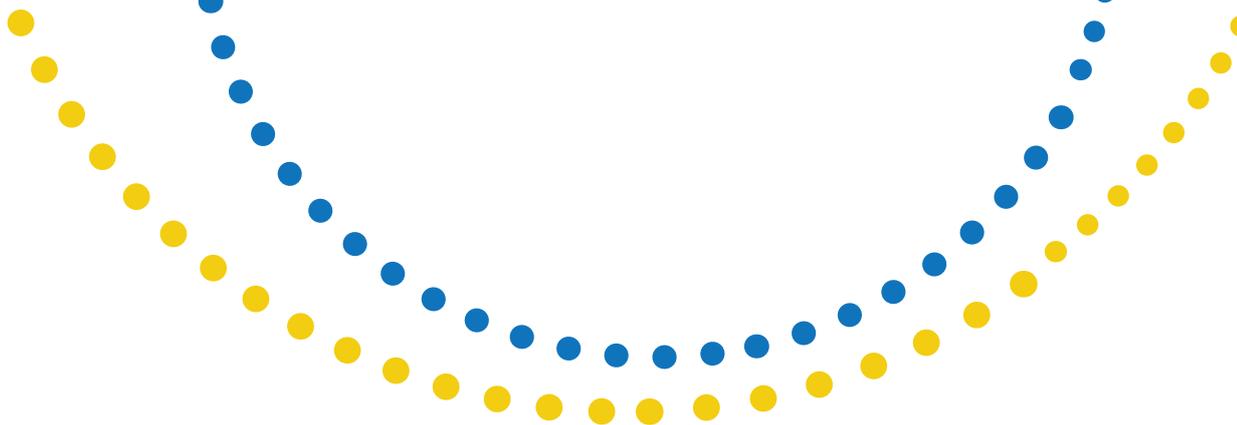




# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2032



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The Glen Innes Severn Council Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (CSP) is a ten (10) year plan for the community by the community, crafted by the Council as an umbrella or over-arching strategic instrument which establishes the goals and the challenges which in turn guide Council's development and delivery of services and projects for the community for the duration of the Plan.

In reviewing the CSP, issues identified by the community and Council partners relating to the social, environmental, economic wellbeing and civic leadership of the Local Government Area (LGA) have been included with the CSP being an extension of the previous CSP. Feedback received from the community through a consultation and engagement process has been an

important aspect of the planning process and this contribution to the plan ensures it is a better plan for our future.

It will take time to achieve what the CSP proposes- outcomes will be delivered over time. The Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals contained in this Plan form the backbone to progress over the decade to come. The hard work, the heavy lifting by Council and the community is yet to come and is focused on Council delivering to the community in accordance with the Vision Statement: "A prosperous connected community that nurtures its people and places".

The draft CSP and the 2022 - 25 Delivery Program will be placed on public exhibition in May 2022, so that community and partner feedback can be further considered by Council, prior to its final adoption in June 2022. Feedback will continue to guide the Plan's priorities and ensure that the Council stays focused on delivering them within its means, whilst supporting the qualities of life that the community values the most.

I commend the CSP to the community and anticipate positive outcomes that improve our shared experience of living and working in the LGA. Individually and collectively, we stand to benefit from the CSP which opens the doors to an optimistic future.

*Mayor, Cr Rob Banham*

# 1. ABOUT THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

## 1.1 Overview

The 2022 - 32 Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan (Community Strategic Plan), is a ten-year plan for the community, not simply the vision of the Council and its Councillors. As the 'big picture' plan for the Glen Innes Severn local government area (LGA), it is the highest-level plan used by the Glen Innes Severn Council (Council) and should align to broader State and Federal government planning for the region. It outlines how together with our partners Council will respond to the foreseeable challenges facing our LGA. The Community Strategic Plan establishes the Goals around which all of Council's services and projects can be developed and delivered in support of the quality of life of those who reside, work, invest, visit and recreate in the area.

91% of residents rated their quality of life living in the Glen Innes Severn area, as between good to excellent. Maintaining this high satisfaction rating is Council's aim, especially when the LGA faces several strategic challenges that have the potential to negatively impact on it. These challenges have been identified after analysing a range of existing data and documents as:

1. A population that is predicted to contract and age;
2. Changing environmental conditions; and
3. Job Creation and Industry Diversification.

This Community Strategic Plan will consider these, as well as a range of other issues identified by the community and Council partners relating to the social, environmental, economic wellbeing and civic leadership of the LGA. It establishes a revised Vision for our future so that our combined efforts can be focused on its achievement over time. Council believes this vision reflects the feedback that Council has received from the community about the things that matter to it. Our Vision Statement to guide the 2022 - 32 Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic plan is:

### **A prosperous connected community that nurtures its people and places**

This Community Strategic Plan also identifies goals for delivering strong governance and improving service delivery. Once the plan is adopted, Council is obligated to establish the priorities for delivering it during its term and to align all of its people and infrastructure resources to bring the plan to fruition. This is outlined in the 2022 - 25 Delivery Program which is separate to and supports the Community Strategic Plan.

To understand the views of the community, Council has engaged with residents, businesses, community-based organisations, state agencies and authorities to inform this plan. Council commissioned Micromex Research to undertake an independent, statistically validated survey of residents. In addition, Council conducted several workshops and consultation exercises with the community and partners to seek their views on the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals contained in this plan.

During Council's consultation processes, residents raised issues which are important to it, such as public housing, home support services, renewable energy, health and education. Whilst of critical importance to the future of the LGA, these services are provided and funded by other levels of Government. In response, Council will advocate on behalf of the community, for relevant government projects and services and collaborate in their implementation as appropriate.

Council also requested Micromex Research to provide it with independent resident feedback on your satisfaction with Council's services. In response, Council included a strategic objective to be 'Recognised for Local Leadership' with a number of goals relating to governance and service improvement.

Regionally, this plan aligns to the State Government's Draft New England Northwest Regional Plan 2041 which is concerned with all facets of land use planning, including employment areas, town centres, housing and related infrastructure to the natural environment and future hazards such as climate change. Locally, the Community Strategic Plan reflects the findings of a large range of Council strategies and studies undertaken over recent years and these are known as 'contributing strategies'.

In accordance with the State Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting legislative requirements, the Community Strategic Plan must be accompanied by several other documents such as the Resourcing Strategies, Delivery Program and the Annual Operational Plan. These documents outline how Council's services, projects and resources will be prioritised and funded to deliver the intent of this Community Strategic Plan during the term of Council. To ensure that progress of the plan can be tracked, these accompanying documents detail how progress will be measured and reported and is subjected to oversight by the Councillors and the Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

Due to NSW Public Health Orders, the last Council's term was extended from September 2020 to December 2021; therefore, the incoming Council will only serve a three-year term instead of the usual four. The incoming Council has determined to reset the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals of the previous Community Strategic Plan and realign the 2022 - 25 Delivery Program to it.

To make sure that Council 'has it right' this Draft 2022 - 32 Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan and the 2022 - 25 Delivery Program, will be placed on public exhibition in May 2022, so that community and partner feedback can be further considered by Council, prior to its final adoption in June 2022. Feedback will continue to guide the plan's priorities and ensure that the Council stays focused on delivering them within its means, whilst supporting the qualities of life that you value the most.

## 1.2 The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Whilst the 2022 - 32 Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan is a ten-year plan for the community and is the highest-level plan used by Council, its development and reporting activities must be in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. These requirements are set out in the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.



As outlined in the Act, Council's should:

- a) Identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.
- b) Identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.
- c) Develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.
- d) Ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources.
- e) Regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals.
- f) Maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals.
- g) Collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals.
- h) Manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively.
- i) Make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.

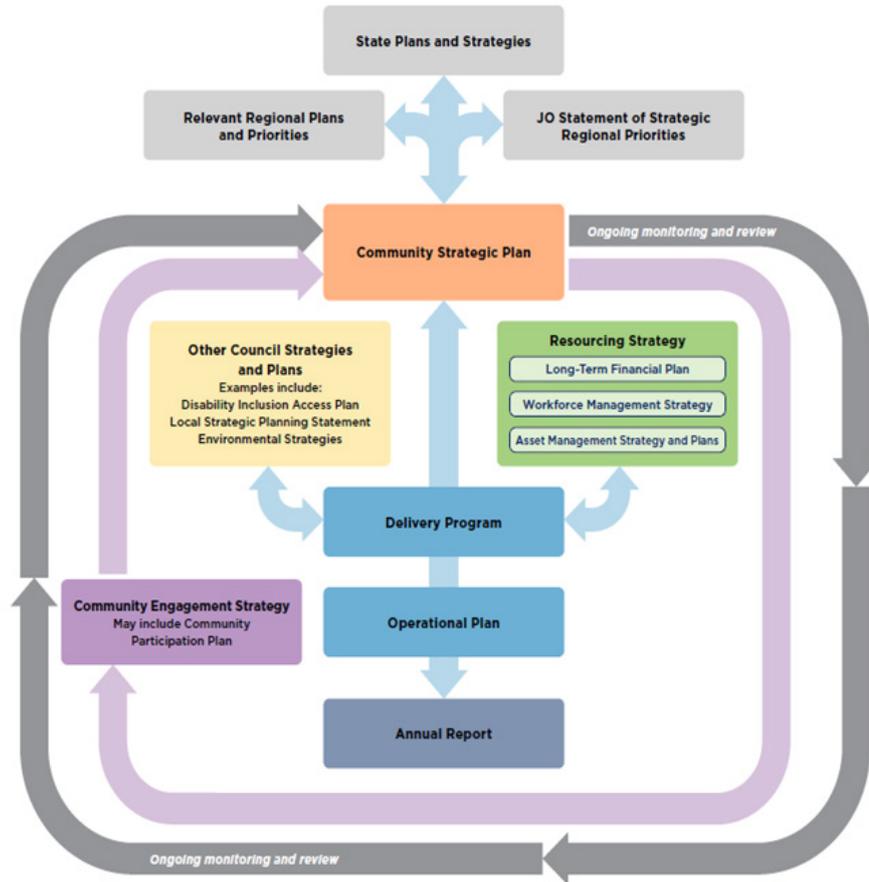
This Community Strategic Plan has been developed in keeping with the legislative requirements using Social Justice Principles and the NSW Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW - September 2021.

## **1.2.1 The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework - Interrelationships**

The IP&R cycle aligns with the local government election cycle, with each outgoing and incoming elected council having a role to play in the cycle of community engagement, planning, reporting, monitoring and reviewing the suite of plans and strategies in the IP&R framework as shown below.

The Resourcing Strategies and Delivery Program must ensure they provide for the resources and activities needed to perform all a council's functions (within Council's financial means) as required to deliver the intent of the Community Strategic Plan.

Fig 1 Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



Source  
NSW Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting  
Guidelines For Local Government in NSW - September 2021



## 1.2.2 The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework – Component Definitions

### IP&R Framework – Its Component Parts

#### 1. Community Strategic Plan

The highest level of strategic planning undertaken by a council, with a ten-year plus timeframe. The Community Strategic Plan identifies the Vision for the LGA and the Strategic Objectives required to bring the Vision to life. Each Strategic Objective is supported by a number of Goals around which services, programs and projects can be structured for their delivery in the accompanying Delivery Program.

All other plans of Council must support the achievement of the Community Strategic Plan's Strategic Objectives and Goals. Council must also clarify with its partners how their efforts will contribute to the Community Strategic Plan.

#### 2. Resourcing Strategy

The Council must develop a Resourcing Strategy consisting of 3 inter-related components:

- Long-Term Financial Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Workforce Management Plan

Collectively, these plans must estimate the cost and income targets required for Council's operations to be sustained over the next 10 years. The resourcing strategy must ensure that due regard is given to promoting the financial sustainability of the Council, whilst delivering the intent of the Community Strategic Plan accordingly.

#### 3. Delivery Program

The Delivery Program identifies how Council will allocate all its service activities, programs and projects (its Principal Activities) towards achieving the Community Strategic Plan's Goals over its three-year term. It also identifies how the Council intends to improve its services and how it will work in partnership to achieve these Goals. The Delivery Program summarises Council's commitment to the community and establishes annual priorities and financial limits for the annual Operational Plan. The General Manager must report on the progress of the Delivery Program to the Council every six months and review it every 12 months when preparing the Operational Plan for the following year. Where significant amendments are proposed in a given year, the Delivery Plan must be placed on public exhibition.

#### 4. Operational Plan

Shows the individual programs, projects and activities that a Council will undertake in a specific year. It includes the Council's annual budget and Statement of Revenue Policy. The Operational Plan details the work that will be done in support of the Delivery Program and is prepared and adopted annually. It must directly address the activities outlined in the Delivery Program and identify projects, programs or activities that the Council will undertake within the financial year towards addressing these.

#### 5. Annual Report

Reports back to the community on the work undertaken by a Council each year to deliver on the commitments of the Delivery Program via that year's Operational Plan. Council also reports on its financial and asset performance against the annual budget and longer-term plans.

#### 6. Contributing Strategies

Council has over 40 plans and strategies which can be viewed on its website many of which have been developed in consultation with partners and the community. These have been developed over time and have contributed to setting the priorities of Council's expenditure. Some are current and some are either outdated or due for renewal during the duration of this Community Strategic Plan. Over the next three years, Council will review and update all of its contributing strategies to ensure they are still relevant and align to the Community Strategic Plan.

## 1.3 Community Strategic Plan - Timeframes and Responsibilities

Local Government is regulated by the NSW State Government in accordance with the Local Government Act and its regulations which stipulates how a Community Strategic plan is developed, delivered and timed. As indicated in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework diagram above, it must align and coordinate with a range of other plans and documents and it, and its component parts are to be delivered within a cycle of timelines that align to the Local Government election cycle.

### 1.3.1 Timeframes

Following the NSW Council elections, it is a requirement of the Act, that Council reviews its Community Strategic Plan before 30 June 2022. Prior to this, Council is required to place the Draft Community Strategic Plan on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and consider any community feedback received prior to endorsing the final version of its Community Strategic Plan.

The Council may (as appropriate):

1. Endorse the existing 2017 - 27 Community Strategic Plan.
2. Endorse amendments to the existing 2017 - 27 Community Strategic Plan.
3. Develop and endorse a new community strategic plan to ensure that the area has a Community Strategic Plan for at least the next 10 years.

Since the 2017 - 27 Community Strategic Plan was completed:

- Several additional and relevant contributing strategies have been completed by Council;
- A detailed analysis of the main Strategic Challenges confronting the LGA has been completed; and
- The Draft New England Northwest Regional Plan 2041, developed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), has been placed on public exhibition.

In consideration of these changes, the Council has developed a newly framed 2022 - 32 Community Strategic Plan. This will ensure that the plan stays relevant and aligned to the other contributing strategies and plans that have recently been developed by Council and others.

The next ordinary election of the Council, will be held in September 2024, making the term of this Council for three years instead of the usual four. Due to this change, the Delivery Program which supports this Community Strategic Plan will be for 3 years and will be developed around the reframed Goals outlined in the 2022 - 32 Community Strategic Plan.

The General Manager is obligated to report on the progress of the Delivery Program to the Council every six months and review it every 12 months when preparing the Operational Plan for the following year. Where significant amendments are proposed to the Delivery

Program in a given year, it must be placed on public exhibition.

To support the implementation of the Three-Year Delivery Program, the Council must adopt an Annual Operational Plan (including its budget) each year, which identifies the individual programs, projects and activities that it will undertake during the year ahead. The Operational Plan must be placed on public exhibition and follow the directions and Principal Activities outlined in the Delivery Program.

The Annual Operational Plan includes the Council's Annual Budget and Statement of Revenue Policy and sets performance measures to enable service delivery to be tracked and managed. At the end of each year, the Council is required to develop an Annual Report to advise the community about its financial and asset performance against the annual budget and longer-term plans.

### 1.3.2 Role Responsibility

The Act also establishes the responsibilities of the Councillors, Mayor and General Manager as they relate to the establishment, resourcing and oversight of the Community Strategic Plan.



**Fig 2 Responsibility for the Component Parts of the Community Strategic Plan**

Who	Responsibilities
Mayor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Act as the spokesperson of the Council in promoting community engagement and input into the Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>● Ensure the timely development and adoption of the strategic plans, programs and policies of the Council and promote them</li> <li>● Promote partnerships between the Council and key stakeholders to advance the Community Strategic Plan's implementation</li> <li>● Advise, consult with and provide strategic direction to the General Manager in relation to the implementation of the strategic plans and policies of the Council</li> <li>● In conjunction with the General Manager, ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the Council and the local community including those relating to the Community Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide effective civic leadership and governance and ensure the Council complies with its legislative and policy requirements including those relating to the Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>● Ensure (as far as possible) the financial sustainability of the Council</li> <li>● Participate and develop the Community Strategic Plan and its associated plans, policies and documents and endorse them as necessary</li> <li>● Set appropriate rating and revenue policies and Operational Plans that support the optimal allocation of the Council's resources to implement the Community Strategic Plan for the benefit of the local area</li> <li>● Continue to review the performance of the Council, including its service delivery against the Community Strategic Plan</li> </ul>

Who	Responsibilities
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advise the Mayor and the Council on the development and implementation of the strategic plans, programs, projects, strategies and required Council policies and conduct the day-to-day management of the Council in accordance with them</li> <li>● Advise the Mayor and the Council on the appropriate form of community consultation on the Strategic Plans, Vision, Strategic Objectives, Goals, programs, projects and policies and other matters related to the Council</li> <li>● Prepare in consultation with the Mayor and the governing body, the Council's Community Strategic Plan, Community Engagement Strategy, Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Annual Report</li> <li>● Implement the Council's Workforce Management Strategy to ensure that the Community Strategic Plan can be effectively implemented</li> <li>● Manage and improve the services delivered by Council to ensure that the Council's resources are effectively and efficiently deployed to deliver the Community Strategic Plan's stated Strategic Objectives and their Goals</li> <li>● Together with the Mayor, build and sustain the strategic partnerships required to optimise the benefits of the Community Strategic Plan for the LGA</li> </ul>

## 1.4 The Importance of Partnerships

While a Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the LGA, it is not wholly responsible for its development and implementation. Other partners, such as Federal and State agencies, statutory authorities, community organisations and investors in the area, also have interests and responsibilities within the same jurisdiction. Council will continue to apply leadership, engagement, governance and shared decision making with its partners and stakeholders, to harness their knowledge, strengthen connectivity and build the collaboration required to bring the shared vision for the LGA alive.

In dealing with its partners the Council will uphold its values of Respect, Integrity, Courage, Honesty and Transparency.

**Fig 3 Partnerships Relevant to the Community Strategic Plan**

LOCAL COMMUNITY	STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL PARTNERS
<p>The local community normally elects its Council every four years.</p> <p>The Council is obligated to provide leadership and sound governance and engage with its community to understand its aspirations and priorities for the future of the LGA.</p> <p>The Council must develop a Community Strategic Plan which sets the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Goals and Principal Activities to deliver these aspirations.</p> <p>Whilst keeping within its means, the Council must align all its resources, activities and advocacy, to bring its Community Strategic Plan to fruition and keep the community informed of its progress.</p>	<p>State and Federal Government agencies prepare plans at a regional level and provide regulations, policy settings, planning frameworks and a range of services and grants to the Glen Innes Severn LGA.</p> <p>The State Government requires every Council to implement the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. It also approves the rates that are levied by each Council, directly or through reviews undertaken by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Authority. This influences the degree to which Council can implement its Community Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The State Government also develops a Regional Plan which is concerned with all facets of land use planning, including employment areas, town centres, housing and related infrastructure to the natural environment and future hazards such as climate change.</p> <p>The Council has a role to lobby other levels of government to provide the services and projects which are necessary for the achievement of the Community Strategic Plan.</p> <p>State and Federal governments provide funding for a range of projects and grant programs to local government and local community organisations and Council forms collaborative partnerships with them so they may be implemented to best achieve the Community Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Regional partners have a significant role in the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statutory Authorities such as the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, County Councils, Electricity Commission of NSW, New England Weeds Authority, Destination NSW etc. Statutory authorities are created under legislation and exist independently of government to coordinate local service delivery, undertake advocacy and/or to promote best practice amongst Councils across the state, a region or part thereof. Some have regulatory powers.</li> <li>● Research bodies and not for profit regional partners such as the Regional Australia Institute a think tank for regional development and the Northern Inland Academy of Sport.</li> <li>● New England Joint Organisation of Councils which consists of seven Councils and one affiliate Council.</li> </ul> <p>Its members collaborate to advocate, share service delivery, develop plans, procure services and share investment risk to either reduce operating costs or enhance quality of life within the region.</p>

<b>LOCALLY BASED COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS</b>	<b>PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS</b>	<b>EMPLOYEES OF COUNCIL</b>
<p>Locally based, community organisations are vital to the wellbeing and quality of life of our people and place. They are significant partners in delivering the aspirations of the Community Strategic Plan. Most locally based community organisations are independently incorporated associations and reliant on volunteers, donations and grants for their operations.</p> <p>There are numerous locally based community organisations listed in the Glen Innes Severn Community Directory providing a range of counselling, sporting, recreational, cultural, environmental and business services to the LGA.</p> <p>The Council supports 21 community-based committees some of which act as advisory committees to it, whilst others have delegations to manage certain assets on behalf of Council. It also offers volunteering opportunities in support of its own service delivery obligations.</p> <p>The Council will continue to support its community organisations and provide, grants, accommodation and training support as appropriate in keeping with the Goals and their priorities established in the Community Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>The private sector has a major impact on the long-term viability of employment opportunities relating to the relevant Strategic Objective outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.</p> <p>To attract significant investment in farming, tourism, health and energy infrastructure etc., Council will develop a stable long-term strategy for the area's future and provide a reliable investment platform.</p> <p>Council will foster strategic partnerships with local and external business partners whilst balancing the social and environmental aspects of the community's aspirations.</p> <p>As well as bringing investment and employment to the area, the private sector also supplies goods and services to the Council. Where appropriate, long term supply contracts will be sought if they provide the best possible value for residents and maintain safe standards over time.</p>	<p>The Council employs 184 staff across a diverse range of departments and occupations.</p> <p>As both residents and those accountable for delivering Council services; employees are important partners for the success of the Community Strategic Plan and the achievement of its goals. Council will continue to develop the knowledge and skills base of its staff. It will consult with and empower them to improve the way that Council provides services to their customers in the most effective and efficient way and in keeping with the priorities established in the Community Strategic Plan and its Delivery Program.</p>

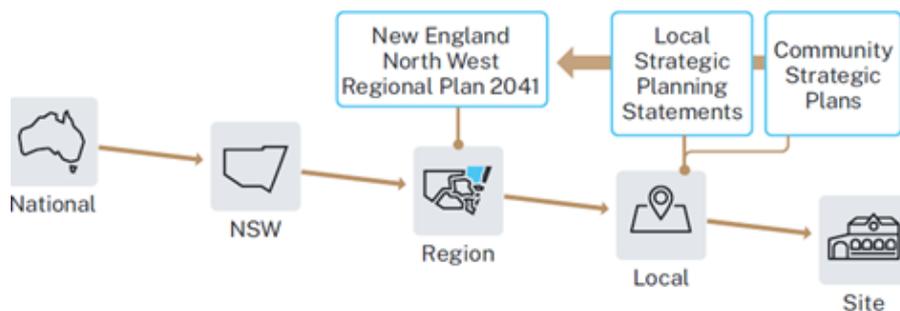
## 1.5 New England North West Regional Plan - 2041

Council does not operate in isolation from other levels of Government. The Council has a responsibility to consider how its Community Strategic Plan relates to other major plans developed at the National, State and Regional planning levels. Of all of these plans, the Council's Community Strategic Plan is most closely aligned to the New England North West Regional Plan as developed by the DPIE.

In 2017, the then NSW Department of Planning and Environment finalised regional plans to guide planning for the existing and future communities across the nine regions of NSW. The regional plans set out the requirements for coordinated planning across all levels of government and within the community. The plans are structured around defined goals, objectives and actions.

Source

Draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041- P9



The New England North West Regional Plan (Regional Plan) is a 20-year blueprint for the future of the region which is concerned with all facets of land use planning, including employment areas, town centres, housing, related infrastructure and the natural environment. It aims to harness the region's opportunities in support of ongoing prosperity and growth whilst protecting its natural environment.

The Regional Plan covers the 12 LGAs of Armidale Regional, Glen Innes Severn, Gunnedah, Gwydir, Inverell, Liverpool Plains, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tamworth Regional, Tenterfield, Uralla and Walcha. It contains Local Strategic Planning Statements for each Council in alignment with their Community Strategic Plan.

The Regional Plan identifies that the strategic centres of Glen Innes, Gunnedah, Inverell, Moree and Narrabri provide major hubs for social and economic activity in the region. It recognises that they service large surrounding catchments, which are critical to the economic prosperity of the region and states that are expected to grow in importance with the development of the inland rail and related economic precincts.

The DPIE is currently undertaking its first five-year review of the Plan to 'support ongoing prosperity, growth and to build-in resilience over the next 20 years' and has recently drafted the Draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041 for consultation across the region. The updated draft of the Regional Plan 2041 was on exhibition between 22 November 2021 and the 18 February 2022 and is likely to be finalised by July 2022.

Both the Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan 2022 - 32 and the Draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041 share a vision for the LGA, in recognition of its strategic importance for our residents.

## 2. THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

### 2.1 A Snapshot of the Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area

The Ngoorabul people are the traditional owners of the area who lived and traditionally roamed between Glen Innes and the coast. The Ngoorabul originally named the township area Gindaaydjin, 'plenty of big round stones on clear plains'.

Named after Scottish born Major Archibald Clunes Innes; the town of Glen Innes was laid out in 1851. It sits at the crossroads of the New England and Gwydir highways and provides essential retail, commercial and services to the two villages of Emmaville and Deepwater and the six hamlets of, Red Range, Glencoe, Glen Elgin, Wellingrove, Wyaliba and Dundee. Glen Innes Highlands is readily accessible by road with connections to southern Queensland to the north, Armidale to the south, Grafton to the east and Inverell and Moree to the west.



Figure 3  
Regional Context Map



- Glen Innes Severn Local Government Boundary
- National Parks
- Regional Centre
- Village Centre
- Major Connector Road

# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

The LGA has a total area of 5,487 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>) with 1,190 km<sup>2</sup> of National Parks (including World Heritage-listed Washpool and Gibraltar Range national parks) and 231 km<sup>2</sup> of State Forests. Elevations range from 100 meters above sea level, at the north-eastern boundary of the LGA, to 1,500 meters above sea level at the south-western boundary. The area has four distinctive seasons with milder summers and bracing winters with occasional snowfalls.

The LGA has important ecological and culturally significant landscapes and heritage streetscapes. Its rich agricultural and mining history provides intact examples of the way that Australia's rural towns, villages, homesteads and farms, were first settled by Europeans. As with other rural areas of Australia, its early history also relates to the dispossession of first nations people from their land and the immigration of Chinese miners.

Traditionally Glen Innes is a mid-sized town strategically placed as a service town reliant on the agricultural and visitor economies. The LGA's key economic activities are agriculture and forestry, construction, public administration and safety, health care and social assistance and tourism, with agriculture and tourism being the 'engine' industries. The LGA is a significant producer of premium Black Angus and Wagyu beef and the area is also known for its fine wool and honey production.

Whilst recognising the importance of these economic drivers, the LGA is seeking to further diversify its economic and employment base and to reduce its exposure to the negative impacts of its projected declining and aging population and changing weather patterns. In 2019, Council declared a Climate Emergency, to commit to a more sustainable future for its community and together with the State Government is promoting climate resilient projects including a Renewable Energy Zone with a focus on wind and solar energy and battery storage.

Glen Innes Highlands continues to showcase and build its impressive creative industries and provides several visitor experiences including the exploration of World Heritage areas, the Australian Standing Stones and the Australian Celtic Festival which is held annually in recognition of the early European settlement of the area by those of Celtic origin.



## 2.2 Strategic Challenges

In the last Community Satisfaction Survey 91% of our residents rated their quality of life living in the Glen Innes Severn area as ranging between 'good' to 'excellent'. The area has many positive attributes which make it an attractive place to live and invest. However, an analysis of underlying trends to 2041, indicates that there are several strategic challenges facing the area that, if not understood and managed, have the potential to diminish the quality-of-life satisfaction rating of our residents.

Like many other mid-sized rural areas, the LGA faces three significant strategic challenges that the Community Strategic Plan must address for the reasons outlined below:

1. A population that is predicted to contract and age.
2. Changing environmental conditions.
3. Job Creation and Industry Diversification.

Whilst not the only considerations of importance to the LGA, these three challenges are interlinked and complex and will require co-ordination across the wide range of services offered by Council and its partners if they are to be addressed. As with all challenges, they also create opportunities to reverse their impacts. This requires a united and sustained leadership focus with clear strategic thinking and targeted responses from the government, not for profit and private sector organisations acting in unison, to manage the risks they pose.

Setting shared and clear objectives and goals which are appropriately resourced with well executed programs and projects, will be a critical success factor. Maintaining a focus on progress with the ability to respond to unforeseen circumstances and the flexibility to change tact as required will also be required. Leaders will need to continually build and communicate the 'line of sight' between the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals outlined in this Community Strategic Plan and the daily work activities of those that can make it happen so that progress can be monitored. Regular communication and updates on progress with the community and partners along the way will build confidence and attract further resources, as success builds on success.



## 2.2.1 A Population that is Predicted to Contract and Age

Fig 4. Population at a Glance

### Our community in 2016

- 8,836 people live in the Glen Innes Severn LGA:
  - Female 50.4%
  - Male 49.6%
- 17.1% of residents are under 15 Years of age
- 25.9% of residents are aged 65 and over
- 81.8% of residents were born in Australia
- 6% of residents identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 4,348 private dwellings:
  - 42.8% owned outright
  - 26.0% owned with a mortgage
  - 26.0% rented
  - 5.2% other and not stated
- Average 3 bedrooms per dwelling
- 3,427 households:
  - 63.8% family households
  - 33.5% single person households
  - 2.7% group households.
- 2,206 families:
  - 49.1% couple families without children
  - 32.5% couple families with children
  - 17.0% one parent families
  - 1.4% other family
- Highest post school education achieved by people aged 15 and over: -
  - 17.1% had completed a Certificate III or IV
  - 9.0% had completed bachelor's degree level and above
  - 7.1% had completed Diploma or an Advanced Diploma

Source

2016 data from the Australian Bureau of statistics.

Note 2020-21 data is expected to be available in March 2022

## Population Trends and Projections

The Draft New England North West Regional Strategy 2041, projects that the population of the New England North West region is expected to grow from around 188,500 people in 2021 to over 190,000 by 2041. It identifies that this growth will mainly be concentrated in Tamworth and Armidale while other parts of the region may experience a population decline.

Historically, the population of the Glen Innes Severn LGA has experienced negative population growth over the last 25 years declining from a total population of 9,202 in 1996, to a total population of 8,934 as recorded at the last published census data of 2016. Between 2006 and 2016 changes to the total population remained stable. The results of the most recent 2021 census will not be released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics until March 2022. These figures will then be used by the DPIE to project population trends to 2046.

State government policy encourages all state government agencies to use the DPIE's projections when planning for infrastructure, services etc. Whilst population projections cannot be foreseen with certainty, the DPIE figures are used in this Community Strategic Plan, since government partners will use the same figures when considering funding support for infrastructure and service delivery.

The most recent population profiles developed in 2019 by the DPIE have been used. The DPIE analyses the numbers of babies being born, people dying and people moving in and out of an area and past and present population data to predict the trends of the future. Based on current projections by the DPIE, the LGA is facing a drop in population over the next twenty years, impacted mainly by the movement of people to larger regional centres such as Armidale and Tamworth and across the border to Queensland. This net population exodus is a common challenge faced by many mid-sized rural towns similar to Glen Innes.

Net population migration is the most difficult process to model for LGAs; not only because it is a highly unpredictable, but also because the small populations of some areas, mean that migration flows are highly variable from year to year. The closure of borders with Queensland over the past two years has further exacerbated this issue. Between the 2012 and 2016 census period, a total of 171 additional people moved into the LGA, then moved out. However, most of this inflow were people over the age of 55 years, whilst there was a significant outflow of younger people in the 20-24 year age group followed by those between 30-39 years. This suggests that younger families may not be staying. Losing these age groups has implications for the availability of the region's workforce, the local economy, demand for facilities such as sporting fields and the future growth of the LGA's population from increased birth rates.

In March 2020, Council commissioned Remplan to conduct a review of the DPIE's projections. Remplan used a different forecasting methodology and found that the projected population decline might not be as severe as predicted by DPIE. However,

# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

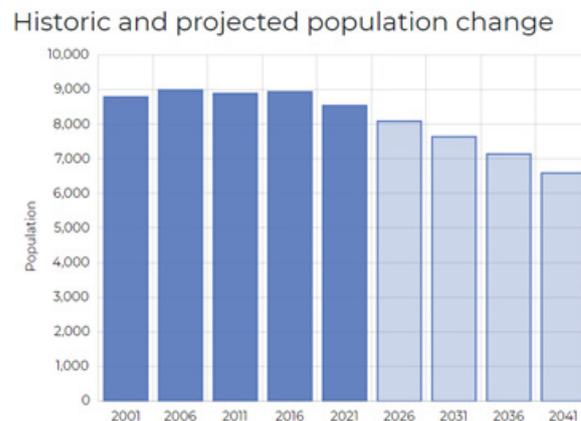
Remplan forecasted a continued decline in population to 2041 (a total decrease of 418 residents instead of the 2,275 residents predicted by DPIE) declining over each of the five-year forecast periods. It also identified (in keeping with the DPIE's projections), that retiring and elderly residents between 65 and 89 years will continue to have the highest growth rates of all age cohorts in the local population. This will impact negatively on the LGA's growth from births over time, as the fertility rates of the population are likely to continue to decrease without the immigration of younger families. The higher death or morbidity rates of an aging population will also impact negatively on the growth of the LGA's population.

Whilst our residents rank their quality of life in the LGA very highly, analysis indicates that the regional centres are attractive to younger residents, and those with families. School leavers are also attracted to the cities and some retirees leave the LGA to move to coastal towns.

As a major strategic challenge, the LGA's population is predicted to contract and age (whether at the rates projected by the DPIE or Remplan), highlighting the importance of attracting and retaining people to the LGA using a broad range of strategic approaches as identified in Council's contributing strategies. Council therefore need to promote economic opportunities in the region, to retain or attract new residents and workers, especially younger people.



Fig 5. Historic and Projected Population Changes - Glen Innes Severn LGA



Source  
Department of Planning 2021

Between 2021 and 2041, the population in the LGA is projected by DPIE to decrease by 26% (from 8,550 to 6,600 residents). This contrasts with regional population trends across New South Wales (especially to larger regional centres), which are experiencing an annual growth rate of 0.8%, or higher in some areas. This regional growth is influenced by several factors:

- Technology now allows remote access to employment opportunities and enables the urban workforce to migrate to regional centres whilst maintaining their employment;
- High urban housing costs relative to regional house prices, makes it more affordable to live in rural areas;
- An increase in 'baby boomer' retirees looking to downsize, cash up and enjoy a tree change; and
- An acceleration of people moving from the city to the bush because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

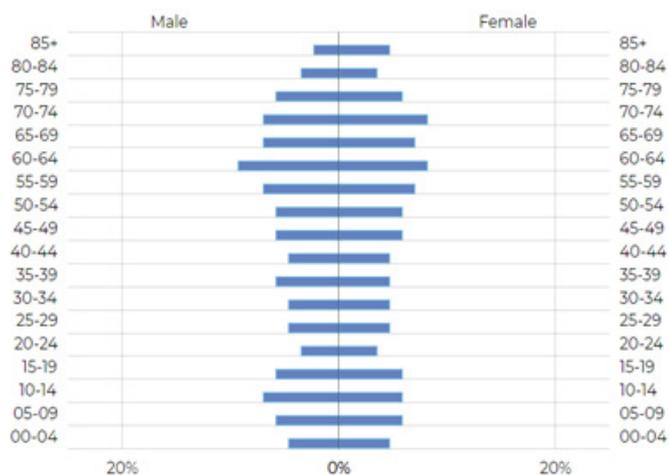
In addition to a contraction in its population size, the percentage of the population of those aged 65 and over, will increase.

**Fig 6. Changes to the Projected Aging Profile of the Glen Innes Severn LGA 2021- 2041**

(Projections based on the 2016 Population Census and awaiting results of the 2021 Census)

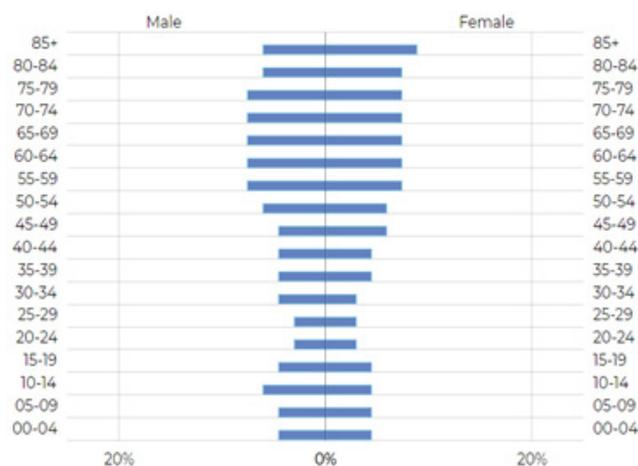
## Projected for Year 2021

Projected population by age



## Projected for Year 2041

Projected population by age



Source Department of Planning - 2021

In 2021, 27.5% of our 8,550 residents are projected to be 65 years and older, equating to 2,350 people. By 2041 (without any interventions), the DPIE project that there will be 2,450 residents in this age group, making up 37% of a smaller overall population of 6,600 residents. Although the percentage of the elderly will be greater (moving roughly from one in every four residents in 2021, to one in every three in 2041), it is predicted that the total number of residents aged 65 and over will remain relatively unchanged as those younger and more mobile continue to leave. If present trends continue, it is projected that by 2042, those aged 75 and over, will increase by 32% (or 300 residents), and make up a larger cohort of our elderly population.

Between 2021 and 2041, the current DPIE projections also indicate that without interventions:

- The working age population (those aged between 15 and 64 years) will decline by 32% from 4,850 people of working age to 3,300 people of working age;
- School aged children (those aged between five and 18 year-olds as extrapolated) will decline by 38% from 1,450 to 900 children; and
- Infants (those aged between 0 and 5) will decline by 25% (from 400 children to 300).

As the population ages, so too does the prevalence of people with a disability. Across Australia, one in nine (11.6%) people aged 0-64 years had additional needs, whilst one in two (49.6%) people aged 65 years and over have additional needs. If applied as an average

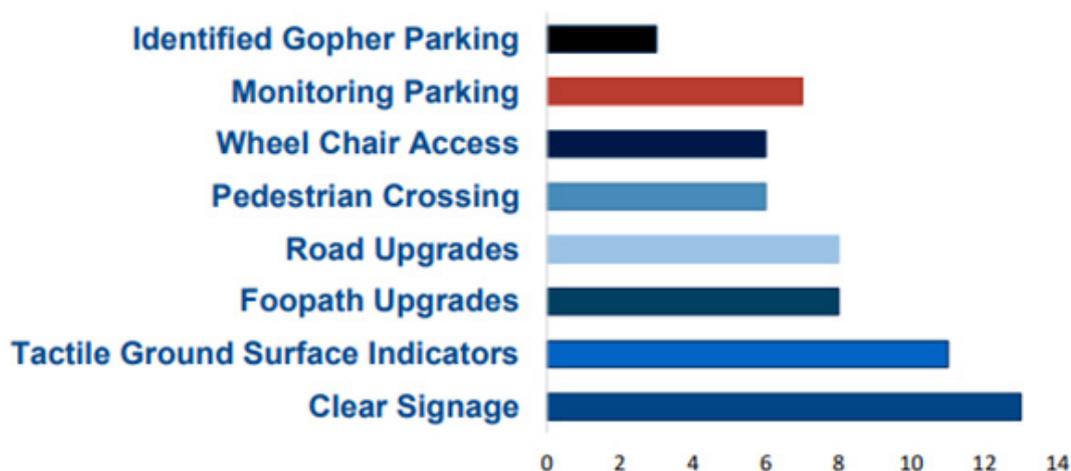
# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

to the LGA's population, this would indicate that by 2041, there will be approximately 1,700 people with additional needs living across the LGA many of which will require support services. Of those aged 65 and over with a disability, 95.3% are currently living in households whilst 4.7% are living in care accommodation. As can be seen the demand for medical and care staff to the LGA is likely to increase, to assist with independent living and the attraction of doctors and specialists to the LGA will also be important.

Following consultation with people with additional needs in 2016, the Glen Innes Severn Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017/2021 identified the most important features to aid their participation in the community.

**Fig 7. Important Civic Infrastructure to People with Disabilities**

Source- Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2017- 21)



## Challenges of a Contracting/Aging Population Trend

Over the next 20 years, both the contraction and aging of the LGA's population if unchecked, has the potential to substantially change the nature, structure and shape of the community and its prosperity. Some of the predictable negative impacts of a contracting and aging population on our quality of life are:

1. The predicted contracting and aging population trend to 2041 has the potential to:
  - Weaken employment sectors in:
    - retail, as fewer people shop locally;
    - real estate and construction, as 800 less dwellings are projected to be required;
    - childcare and education, as the number of infants and students decline; and
    - financial services, as businesses close and the population contracts.
  - Reduce curriculum choices as the number of students diminish in schools and tertiary education;
  - Expedite the outmigration of younger people to seek educational and employment opportunities that are more suitable to their career aspirations;
  - Limit the growth of the town's cultural offerings as fewer people attend local galleries, events and plays;
  - Increase vacancy rates in the hospitality sector as the available workforce declines and ages;
  - Reduce the Council's rates income at a time when demands arising from the strategic challenges increase;
  - Accelerate the outmigration of workers to other regional centres;
  - Place further downward pressure on house prices which are lower than comparative areas; and
  - Reduce the demand for sports and active playing fields (which are an important contributor to the community's quality of life ratings).



2. An increase in the percentage of the frail aged cohort of the elderly in the population, has the potential to:
  - Increase demand for home support services, geriatric care, community transport;
  - Require the attraction and training of medical support staff and specialists;
  - Increase demand for health transport across the LGA and to the regional centres;
  - Weaken the retail sector as older residents spend less than others (e.g., family households);
  - Reduce the availability of volunteers for sporting and voluntary groups;
  - Place greater demands on Council for appropriate accessible infrastructure and support services at a time when subsidised pensioner rates make up a larger portion of its income; and
  - Create a mismatch between housing demand and supply, as the changing needs of an elderly population seeks smaller sized accommodation. Currently, single households make up 33.5% of the population. There is an average of three bedrooms per dwellings and only 5% of all dwellings have one bedroom.

## Opportunities to Grow our Population arising from the Aging Population

Addressing the challenges of a projected decline in population requires a well-planned, coordinated and sustained effort across a number of interrelated areas, private industry sectors (such as health care, transport and housing), local, state and federal levels of government and the not-for-profit sector if it is to be reversed. Opportunities to grow our population relate to the retention of younger people and families whilst acknowledging that our local population is also aging. If the LGA is to reverse the net outmigration of its younger population to regional centres and cities, it will need to create opportunities for employment growth and diversification of the workforce and focus on its retention. These opportunities are covered in more detail in the section on Job Creation and Industry Diversification in section 2.2.3 below.

As the population naturally ages, farmers move off the land and retire to the town, and the percentage of the elderly as a proportion of the community continues to grow, so to do the opportunities to attract a younger workforce with a higher fertility rate to service their needs.

Health care and social assistance is the second largest employment sector in the LGA and traditionally employs a high proportion of women in the fertility age range and this cohort has the potential to grow further. Data from the National Skills Commission gives employment projections to May 2024. From these projections, forecasts for the LGA can be extrapolated. These show that the main category for expected employment growth in the LGA is the Community and Personal Service workers with 74 additional new jobs projected. The main occupational group in this category are Carers and Aides (38 new positions projected), Hospitality workers (13 new positions projected) and Health and Welfare Support Workers (10 new positions projected). Additional professional jobs are

also forecast, including in the Health Professionals (20 new positions projected) and Education Professionals (15 new positions projected). This trend is likely to continue after 2024 as our population continues to age.

Most care requirements for the elderly and those with additional needs do not require nursing home care as many would prefer to live independently with the provision of part time home support. This type of care can be an attractive career to those with younger families wishing to work family friendly hours, exactly the age group that the LGA needs to attract.

Access to reliable health services is a key attraction to an area for those of all ages and abilities but especially for the elderly. The community have identified the importance of increasing the provision medical services in the LGA. This is an opportunity to grow the health care workforce in the hospitals at Glen Innes and Emmaville.

Demand for frail aged care will also grow as that portion of our community will continue to grow. It is projected that by 2042, those aged 75 and over, will increase by 32% (or 300 residents). Whilst it is acknowledged that trained nursing home staff have been hard to recruit during the COVID era, this situation is likely to change, as aged care will become a more sensitive policy area for government, more pressure will be placed on wage growth in the sector, interstate movement is no longer restricted, increased immigration will begin as international borders open and the attraction of low cost accommodation in the rural areas continues to draw people from the cities.

Glen Innes already has many home support, employment, aged care, pharmaceutical and housing services based in the town with the capacity to expand and grow.

Opportunities to further increase employment in the aged care sector include:

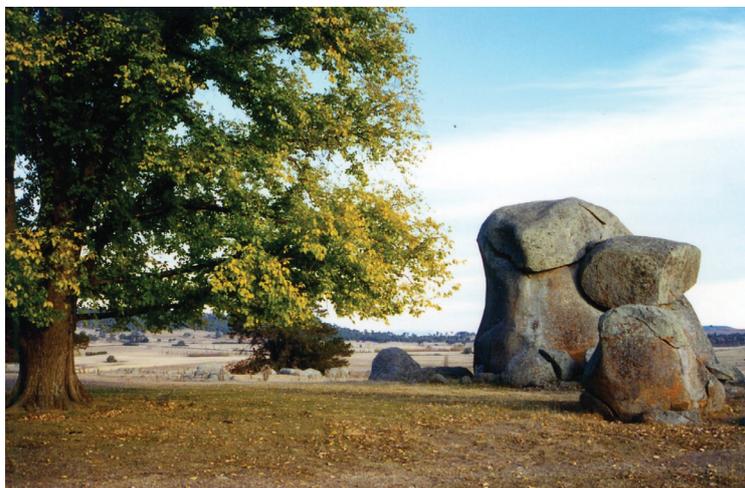
- Working with the not-for-profit organisations that support home care, residential care and retirement services to help them advocate for increased funding and provide support to assist them;
- Working with private sector partners to provide a range of residential care models, home support care and retirement services;
- Advocating for innovative funding / finance packages to encourage easy access to home finance;
- Advocating for further hospital and health centre upgrades;
- Advocating for funding programs and policies which encourage medical specialists to take up residency by building on the recent announcements by the Federal Government to attract younger interns to rural areas;
- Advocating for stronger health transport links from the villages and hamlet areas to the hospitals in town and in Armidale and Tamworth;
- Developing land use policies and instruments which encourage a diversification in housing stock in accordance with the findings of the NSW Government's Regional Housing Taskforce; and

- Developing a 'Lifestyle Opportunity Package' to attract untrained, future employees to town to work in the aged care sector which is marketed across Australia. This package would be developed in partnership with other levels of government, training institutions, private and not for profit support service and accommodation providers. This package would be promoting the high quality of life offered by living in the LGA and could include such things as offers of:
  - Skills training in aged care provision (at various levels);
  - Guaranteed employment opportunities to those that commit and agree to a tenured term;
  - Access to appropriate low-cost housing (and housing finance) to those that commit and agree to a tenured term;
  - Paid relocation costs to those that commit and agreed to a tenured term; and
  - Education opportunities for children.

## 2.2.2 Changing Environmental Conditions

Changing environmental conditions are considered a strategic challenge because they have the potential to negatively impact the quality of life of our residents, biodiversity and the viability of our major industries such as forestry, agriculture and tourism. Extreme weather events, add significant costs to the bottom line, deter tourists and add to Council's repair costs. Whilst our farming community provides careful custodianship of their lands, factors outside of their control such as an increase in extreme weather events, will challenge their resilience to its impacts and place the viability of some at risk.

Out of the 27 priority issues for the Council to address over the next 10 years, our residents ranked; improved and increased water supply/security e.g., water quality, management during drought as the 4th highest priority. Climate change, sustainability, preparedness for disaster, was ranked the 10th highest priority of concern.



## Longer Term Changes in Weather

In November 2020, increases in extreme weather events were highlighted by the United Nations Conference on Climate in Glasgow, as posing the biggest risk to the planet. The Glen Innes Severn LGA is not immune from this global trend and its agricultural sector is vulnerable to the impacts of changing weather patterns over time. Agriculture provides an essential service to Australia's broader community and is a cherished way of life for many who live in the area. It is our largest contributor to our prosperity and employment, creating 640 jobs and added \$99m to the local economy in 2020.

Following the driest winter, hottest summer and some of the worst fire storms ever experienced in the LGA's history, the Council commissioned Cress Consulting to develop the Glen Innes Severn Council Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan - 30 June 2021 (Climate Adaption Plan) which identified the steps that Council can take to mitigate the risks and to build resilience against the future negative impacts of our weather patterns.

Cress Consulting reviewed and confirmed the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage's New England North West Climate Change snapshot 2014. This report acknowledged the diverse range of climates across the region, from the cooler and more temperate Northern Tablelands through to the dryer and hotter North West slopes and plains to the west. Whilst the severity of changing climates on differing parts of this region is not uniform, the snapshots indicate consistent trends in temperature, rainfall and fire events across the region. The Climate Change Snapshot outlines the following changes in the near future (2030) and far future (2070) compared to the baseline climate (1990-2009) for New England.



## Fig 8 - Predicted Weather changes for the New England North West

### Climate Predictions for New England and North West Region

- Temperature
  - Approximately 0.7°C on average warming in the near future
  - Approximately 2.2°C in the far future
  - Number of high temperature days projected to increase
  - Number of frost risk nights projected to reduce

The warming trend projected for the region is large compared to natural variability in temperature and is of similar order to the rate of warming projected for other regions of NSW.

- Rainfall (considered variable and hard to predict with certainty)
  - Decrease in winter in the near future
  - Increase in autumn in the near future
  - Decrease in summer in the near future
  - Increase in summer in the far future
- Fire Weather Warnings (Issued by the Bureau of Meteorology when the McArthur Forest Fire Danger index (FFDI) is forecast to be over 50)
  - Average fire weather to increase in summer, spring and winter
  - Average fire weather to decrease in autumn

Note: the figures used above are mainly averages for the region. Generally, Glen Innes LGA is impacted less severely compared to some other parts of the region such as the western plains. However the modelling shows that the overall trends of a deteriorating climate still apply to the LGA compared to its baseline as confirmed and analysed in the Glen Innes Severn Council Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptaion Plan (June 21)

## Fig 9. Risk and Impact Assessment of Changing Climate

The Council’s Climate Adaptation Plan highlighted 46 risks from changing weather patterns on the community and Council.

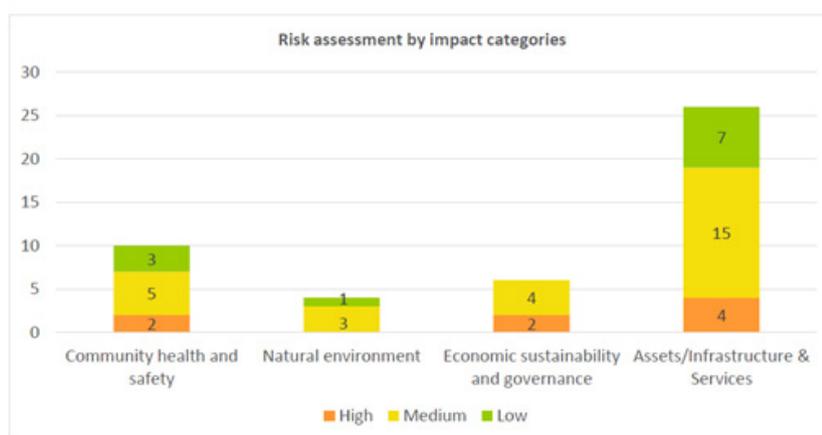


Figure 8. Risks assessment by impact categories

Source

Glen Innes Severn Council Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan (30 June 2021)

As can be seen the impacts on Council’s infrastructure and services are assessed to be the highest placing pressure and stress on Council’s ability to maintain service levels without additional financial investment.

## Water Supply

As identified in the *Draft New England North West Regional Strategy 2041*, the NSW Government is developing a 20-year water strategy to improve resilience of the state's water resources. The New England North West Planning region covers four different regional water strategies - Border Rivers, Gwydir, Namoi and North Coast. These regional water strategies are due to be finalised in 2022. Rivers in the LGA impact on two important river catchments: Border and Gwydir;

The Glen Innes Severn Drought Management Plan 2020, identifies that Glen Innes experienced severe water restrictions for 441 days during 2019-20, compared to the previous durations of 145 days in 2014 and 90 days in 2005. Deepwater experienced a similar trend with 298 days of severe water restrictions in 2019-20 compared to 73 days of water restrictions in 2003. For both catchments, 2019-20, was by far the highest level of water restrictions ever recorded. As experienced in that year, there can be no reliance on neighbouring storage facilities such as Malpas and Copeton dams which registered their lowest levels of water reserves;

The Glen Innes Severn Water Asset Management Plan December 2020, identifies that once the water in the Beardy Waters is depleted, the off-stream storage provided by the Red Range Road and Eerindii Ponds Bores, is sufficient to provide approximately 32 months of water supply. Glen Innes's water supply appears to be resilient to drought in the foreseeable future, but will require water restrictions to be applied, for that to happen;

The longer-term water security of Deepwater and Emmaville and the smaller hamlets are not as resilient against prolonged dry spells. Meeting their water requirements during extended periods of drought, depends on water being transported by road from the town's supply which adds considerable costs to its supply and;

Councils can build resilience to the impact of drought by develop planning policies and plans to reduce the demand for potable water, by encouraging water sensitive urban design and by applying integrated water cycle management principles. For example, initiatives such as investing in water catchment and storage in and around bush fire prone areas, encouraging the use of domestic water tanks, recycling treated sewerage for irrigation, building water catchment and retention into park and playing field design, encouraging the use of dual potable and grey water systems in dwellings, can reduce the demand for treated water. These and other initiatives, can extend the life and reliability of water supplies and improve water efficiency.

## Weed Invasion

Local government has a significant role in biosecurity and particularly in the management of weeds. Council works collaboratively with the New England Weeds Authority which provides weed control over a large area funded by member councils. Weeds have the potential to reduce the quality and quantity of Australia's agricultural, horticultural and forestry products, harm livestock and waterways and increase farming costs. The Northern Tablelands Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017-22 developed by the NSW Government's Local Lands Service in partnership with the Northern Tablelands Regional Weed Committee, identified that weeds negatively impact on farming viability.

Weed invasion is encouraged by changes in climate with a resultant negative impact on biodiversity, conservation, endangered species, water quality, fish and ecological communities. Minimising the impact of invasive weed species on biodiversity in the future, is a key objective of the National Biodiversity and a Climate Change Action Plan. The LGA has extensive areas of land managed for conservation, including World Heritage Areas and invasive weeds are considered amongst the most serious threats to them. Any diminution in the quality of our local world heritage areas not only threatens our biodiversity, but also our local tourist industry.

The proliferation and transfer of weeds such as fire weed from Council's road reserves to private land and public reserves creates further challenges and additional costs to the Council and the farming community.



## Future Challenges arising from the Changing Environmental Conditions

If the long term threats to the preservation of our environment are not considered and managed to the best of our ability, the quality of life currently appreciated by our residents will diminish. Not only will changing environment conditions threaten the biodiversity, lifestyle and health of the LGA, it will place pressure on the viability of our major employment industries.

Some of the predictable negative impacts of a deteriorating environment over the next 20 years are:

- Increasing maximum temperatures, heatwave events, bushfires and smoke pollution will lead to more deaths from respiratory disease, heat stress and fire, causing loss of life to humans, wildlife and livestock;
- Increasing extreme fire events, storms and floods will threaten rural settlement more frequently and increase costs of replacing/repairing buildings, fencing, roads, dams and sheds;
- Increasing insurance claims will increase insurance costs, as insurance pools globally predict a 100% increase in insurance premiums for flood, storm and fire policies into the future;
- Increasing drought events will place farm dams and rivers under stress, increase restrictions on irrigation and place the viability of some farms, recreational fishing and tourist attractions under treat;
- Extremes in rainfall intensity will have secondary impacts on farming viability such as soil erosion;
- Increasing drought events will impact on major water catchments, leading to increased water restrictions in our towns, villages and hamlets and the demand for portable water will increase the cost of water overall;
- Seasonal shifts in weather patterns will negatively impact on the reproduction patterns of our local biodiversity and some native species;
- Increasing, weed infestation, bush fires and loss of biodiversity, will reduce the attractiveness of the world heritage areas, reducing the viability of sections of the tourism and hospitality industry;
- Prolonged climate stress, will negatively impact on the mental health of farming communities, placing more pressure on their families and support services;
- Given the interrelationships of our economy, when the agricultural and tourism sectors are under stress, it negatively impacts on the viability of commerce in the town;
- Increasing extreme weather events such as floods, fires and storms impacts on Council's infrastructure such as bridges, storm water drains, culverts, unsealed roads and embankments etc. Increased infrastructure replacement and maintenance costs will add pressure on Council to increase rates and/or cut other services; and
- Increasing extreme weather events places additional demands for emergency services provided by Council and its partners'. This increases demands for labour (paid and voluntary), plant, equipment, relief programs and other support services such as counselling, food and water distribution, and emergency response teams etc. Increased costs of emergency services add pressure on Council to increase rates and/or cut other services at a time when Council has a decreasing income from a contracting and aging population base.

## Opportunities to Build Resilience for Changing Environmental Conditions

Environmental preservation is a very complex issue with many factors outside of the control of Council and its partners. However, by recognising and understanding the issues and preparing for their likely negative impacts on our quality of life, the Council can take a leadership role to address those things that are within its control, ability and financial constraints, so that the impact of negative environmental impacts is minimised and resilience is increased.

By taking a leadership role, working closely with its partners, encouraging innovation and adaptation, the Council can make a difference. It can utilise its resources, support and influence to target water security, weed invasion, protect and enhance biodiversity, prepare for natural disasters and reduce Council's consumption of non-renewable energy.

Through strategic collaboration with its partners, Council can support opportunities to address some of the negative impacts of environmental degradation on human life, biodiversity and agriculture whilst supporting economic prosperity jobs growth and population retention.

Key opportunities identified include:

1. Collaborating with the CSIRO, Glen Innes Agricultural Research and Advisory Station and the Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee to research and promote sustainable agricultural practices, including use of farming technologies, carbon farming, adaptive and regenerative agriculture and water sensitive farming practices, breeding programs, weed reducing farming practices etc.
2. Working with partners to promote and teach sustainable farming practices.
3. Sourcing grants to build disaster resilience, research and programs which support environmental preservation and habitat protection including the management of weed infestations.
4. Encouraging, Water Sensitive Urban Design to increase domestic and public place water storage and water recycling in Towns and Villages and identify alternative water supply locations for roads projects and fire responses.
5. Investing in plant and equipment to strengthen the ability of voluntary organisations and the Council to reduce hazards and manage disaster and recovery.
6. Increasing Council's use of renewable energy sources and application of sustainable environmental practices.
7. Updating bush fire zones and flooding maps and other associated planning instruments and avoid inappropriate development in the wrong areas.
8. Establishing a restricted reserve in Council's financial model to fund unforeseen disasters caused by changing environmental conditions.
9. Lobbying for and making use of carbon reduction planting schemes, which provide returns to farmers and not for profit organisations for carbon offsets.
10. Working with partners to increase community awareness and education on the pre-emptive management of the land to reduce the negative impacts of extreme and prolonged adverse weather events.
11. Working with partners and increase community awareness to keep regular checks on vulnerable people especially during extreme weather events.
12. Encouraging partnerships in new and established carbon neutral technologies to enhance environmental preservation and create employment and training opportunities.

## 2.2.3 Job Creation and Industry Diversification

The third strategic challenge relates to economic development which encourages industry diversification and the creation of jobs. 41% of residents identified that investment in job creation and the attraction of more businesses and industry, was a priority. This was by far, the highest priority of our residents.

Job creation and industry diversification is considered a strategic challenge in recognition that:

- Like other smaller LGAs and mid-sized towns, the LGA will continue to experience a net population outmigration to larger regional centres, creating negative impacts on its economy and employment opportunities and diversification unless more employment opportunities are created and the areas natural attributes promoted;
- Extrapolation of the National Skills Commission forecasts, indicate that by 2024:
  - Agriculture, (traditionally a dominant industry in the LGA), is projected to see the largest decrease in job numbers;
  - Community and Personal Service workers are projected to increase; and
  - Professional Jobs including Health and Education Professionals are projected to increase.
- The number of people of working age in the LGA is shrinking and diversification of the LGA's employment sectors is required to 'hedge' against possible shocks that will impact on an economy reliant on a limited number of specialised employment sectors such as agriculture; and
- It responds to the other two strategic challenges by taking a whole of place approach to employment diversification and making opportunities to grow new industries.

Data from the National Skills Commission gives employment projections to May 2024. From these projections, forecasts for the LGA can be extrapolated. Apart from the expected employment growth of Community and Personal Service workers (as mentioned in 2.2.1 above), additional 34 professional jobs are also forecast by 2024.

Agriculture, traditionally a dominant industry in the LGA, is projected to see the largest decrease in job numbers, underscoring the importance of the diversification of employment sectors as identified in the Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy.

# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

Fig 10. Economic Development – A Whole of Place Approach



Source: Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy

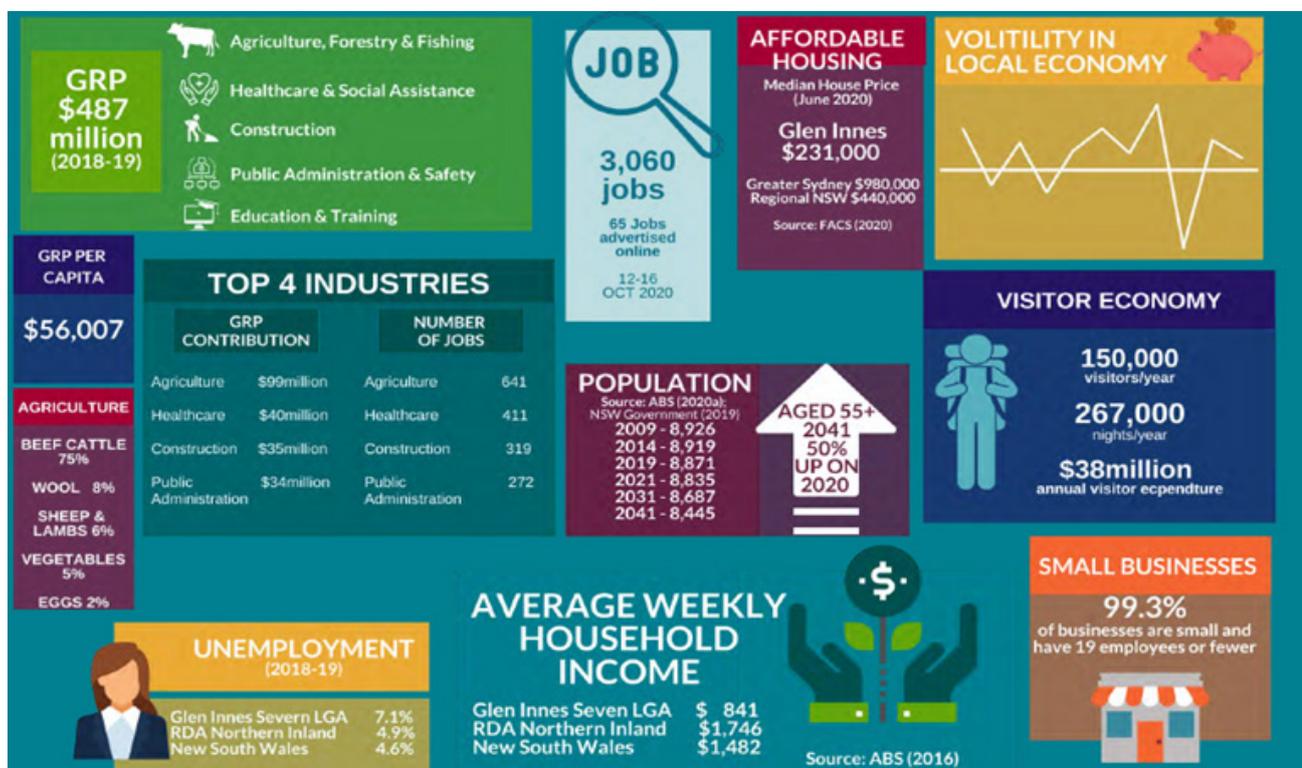
## Our Economy at a Glance

The Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy (2020 - 40) identifies the key industries that make up the Glen Innes Severn LGA's economy. The strategy is accompanied by a detailed action plan built around four strategies for Partnerships, People, Place and Prosperity.



# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

Fig 11. Economic Profile



Source: Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy

In 2018-19, the Gross Regional Product of the LGA was \$487 million, which was an increase of 1.9% from the previous year. However, during the previous 10 years, its economic growth was more volatile than the NSW average. In 2018-19, the largest industries by industry value-add were:

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing;
- Health care and social assistance;
- Construction;
- Public administration and safety; and
- Education and training.

## Labour Force and Skills

Based mainly on the 2016 census, the workforce of the LGA had the following attributes:

1. Working Patterns
  - Of couple families with children, 18.2% had both partners employed full-time, 5.4% had both partners employed part-time and 18.3% had one partner employed full-time and the other part-time;
  - The medium weekly family income was \$1,111 compared to \$1,780 in NSW;
  - 36% of the workforce worked part time;
  - 12.7% of the working aged population worked as unpaid care givers to those with special needs or chronic health conditions;
  - In 2018-19, the unemployment rate was 7.1% compared to 4.9% for the region. Although dropping in recent times, the LGA's unemployment rate has been amongst the highest in NSW and was 8.1% in 2016;
  - Employment and Occupation (employed people over the age of 15):
    - 8.8% of our workforce worked in Beef Cattle Farming (Specialised), 4.1% in Aged Care, 3.3% in Residential Services, Supermarket and Grocery Stores, 3.2% in Hospitals and 3.1% in Local Government Administration;
    - The most common occupations included Managers 21.4%, Labourers 13.6%, Professionals 12.9%, Technicians and Trades Workers 12.1%, and Community and Personal Service Workers 12.1%; and
    - 99.3% of all businesses in the LGA are small business with less than 20 staff.
2. Education and Skills (population over the age of 15) indicate that educational attainment is generally lower than the average in regional NSW in every measure, including high school completion rate, technical or university qualifications and adult learning.
  - 16.1% have a degree or diploma compared to 32.3% in NSW;
  - 17.1% have a certificate III or IV qualification compared to 14.8% in NSW;
  - 13.6% work as labourers compared to 8.8% in NSW; and
  - 30% of the overall population has completed High School.
3. The Regional Australia Institute estimates that the LGA requires an additional 422 workers over the next four years to replace those that have left the LGA or retired and to fill growing demands in some sectors especially, community and personal care services, professional and technical and trades.
4. The Draft North West Regional Plan 2041, predicts that whilst there will be similar levels of working age adults living in the region, the growth in jobs is expected to be greater than the growth in the number of working age adults. It identifies the need to attract young families to the region.

## Agriculture

70% of the land in the LGA is used for agriculture. Glen Innes Severn LGA has a dominant Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector making up approximately 25.0% of the workforce. Key agricultural industries, include Rangers Valley Feedlot, which produces premium Black Angus and Wagyu beef. The area is also well known for the production of fine wool and a regional honey industry with up to 35 commercial operators and hobbyists. In 2018, the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector's output was \$212 million and was the largest employment sector, supporting an estimated 641 jobs.

The LGA relies on the agricultural sector for employment of its workforce, but these are mainly low skilled labouring jobs. It is predicted by the National Skills Commission that this sector will see the largest decline in employment opportunities.



## The Visitor Economy

Each year on average, more than 3.1 million visitors come to the New England North West Region. Natural features, gemstone fossicking, character-rich towns, historic villages and a calendar of music, sporting and cultural events are key attractors to the region and Glen Innes is reflective of these attributes. The region also has many sites of significant Aboriginal and European history and will continue to play an important role in the tourism growth in the region.

**Fig 12. The Visitor Economy at a Glance**



The visitor economy creates approximately 245 jobs and contributed \$47.3 m to the local economy. In 2021, the Council adopted the Destination Management Plan 2021-2026 (DMP) accompanied by a detailed action plan built around five strategies for:

- Improving the visitor experience;
- Evolving brand positioning;
- Developing and improving existing experiences; and
- Creating and delivering new experiences.

This also identified that the area is well endowed with natural attractions and authentic heritage, which if well presented, protected and promoted can provide further employment growth in this sector. As highlighted in the Draft New England North West Regional Strategy 2041, over the last decade, the largest visitor group to the region have been those aged 60-69, with more than 30% of visitors aged 60 and over. Tourism facilities should be accessible and designed with age friendly considerations.

## Health Care

According to the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, healthcare is expected to be one of the fastest growing industries over the coming years as Australia's population ages. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector in Glen Innes is already a significant employer and whilst employment in the sector has increased, the rate of increase is below the State and Industry average. As the population forecast indicates, the proportion of the elderly, frail aged and those with additional needs will continue to grow in the LGA at a faster rate.

Beyond employment, ensuring high quality local healthcare services can also support population growth, as these services are essential and important to most families when considering a regional move and as local farmers retire from the land to town.



## Housing

Housing supply is crucial to facilitating population growth and community well-being. The right mix of housing is one that matches the needs of both the existing and new residents in a community. House prices and rents in the LGA are low relative to the wider Australian market and generally affordable, despite many households in the community having low incomes.

In Glen Innes, the average number of people to live in each dwelling is currently projected to decline to 1.97 by 2041, (compared to a projected regional average of 2.23 residents). However, Glen Innes and the wider region including Tenterfield and Inverell, is identified by recent analysis as having a housing shortage. The current mismatch between available housing supply and the housing demand of both younger families and 'empty nesters', is a contributing cause of the current shortage.

Creating a mix of smaller, low maintenance dwellings, will be an important strategy in providing housing options. A wider range of housing supply options and affordable choices (for both rental and purchased housing), has the potential to attract residents to the LGA if appropriately managed and marketed.

A focused approach to the housing sector which includes appropriate planning instruments, appropriate housing mixes and investment partners, has the potential to attract more residents and to strengthen the construction industry all of which have a high employment multiplier effect on the local economy.



## Mineral Deposits

The Northern New England High Country Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 (developed in collaboration with the NSW government), identified that the Region has the largest, undeveloped, hard rock tin deposit in Australia. This deposit is rich in 'rare earth metals' including lithium, rubidium and molybdenum. The granites around Emmaville contain elevated concentrations of rare earth elements and lithium and are relatively underexplored by Australian standards.

Whilst yet undeveloped, these minerals have applications in the electronics, car, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and renewable energy sectors. Global demand for these metals is increasing substantially, at a time when supply from traditional sources is declining as resources are depleted or supply is restricted. With the growth in electric cars and demand for communications technology growing at a rapid pace, the market for these minerals is likely to grow over the next ten years making the cost benefit of extraction more appealing.

## Renewable Energy

Glen Innes is part of one of the state's largest renewable energy zones and this provides opportunities for new jobs in this sector including, maintenance, engineering and transport relating to wind, solar and battery storage technologies. As the renewable energy zone increases so does the opportunity to reduce the LGA's reliance on fossil fuels for energy.

Having a major renewable energy zone on its doorstep offers the LGA opportunities to add a new visitor experience relating to wind, solar and battery storage technology.



## Challenges to Growing Economic/Employment Opportunities

The Economic Development Strategy identifies that the diversification of employment sectors is a priority to 'hedge' against the shocks that arise from relying on a specialised employment sector such as agriculture. Diversification of employment aims to build on and to maintain the depth and breadth of the existing skills and occupations of the workforce in the LGA, whilst developing a wider range of employment opportunities. It seeks to spread the risk of the over reliance on any employment sector and to build resilience to any possible negative impacts of a changing climates, changing markets or supply chains.

New industries attracted through a targeted approach to diversification, can either be totally new to the area (e.g., wind and solar farms) or affiliated with the area's existing attributes (e.g., the use of the airport for pilot training, aged care etc.). However, to be effectively achieved, the diversification of employment sectors requires careful planning and alignment of conducive investment factors including workforce training and development, competitive relocation incentives, access to strong digital and communication footprints, access to markets and a highly structured marketing campaign (to name a few).

The diversification of a local economy can be challenging for a local authority to implement, it takes time and requires a consistent focus and a commitment of adequate resources to make it succeed. Economic development and diversification are not just the sole accountability of the Council. It relies on the Councils' leadership and ability to build a shared vision and partnerships which are sustained over time with the private, government and the not-for-profit sectors.

As opportunities for new ventures arise, it is a challenge for all parties involved to understand and plan for the legislative frameworks, governance and decision-making processes applicable to their partners. Potential joint venture partners require a stable, reliable policy setting, sustained commitments and a fast reliable decision making/ approval process to have the confidence to invest or to relocate. On the other hand, the complexities of local decision making in a community that may be unsure of, or resistant to change, can be challenging to all involved and requires careful management, communication and community engagement.

The Economic Development Strategy and other contributing strategies and plans identify a range of other challenges that also need to be addressed. Its implementation requires the following challenges to be overcome if employment opportunities are to grow:

- Reversing the trend of the population exodus by creating more employment opportunities for working families and younger people;
- Reversing the trend of the population exodus by creating lifestyle opportunities which are attractive to younger, families, retirees and returning families;
- Managing the aging population trends in ways that support further diversification in the economy;
- A mismatch between existing local housing supply and that is required for appropriate housing or for those seeking appropriate accommodation for their circumstances;

- Increasing levels of tourist visitations, when the upgrade of the Pacific highway encourages tourists and trucks away from the New England Highway;
- Attracting and training a workforce with the skills that encourage new sectors to locate to the LGA;
- Finding joint venture partners to invest in the repurposing of existing underutilised infrastructure;
- Streamlining approval pathways and making the area a reliable and effective area in which to do business;
- Competing for funding for investment in new diversification opportunities and providing relocation incentives;
- Strengthening the coverage and quality of digital communication;
- Upgrading the required infrastructure to support new ventures when and where required;
- Managing the complexities of diversifying the local economy with limited Council resources available to implement the Economic Development Strategy and Destination Management Plan; and
- Targeting and attracting industries that require the infrastructure, research capability, workforce, and workforce training capability, access to supply and distribution channels etc. that the area can provide.

## Growing Economic/Employment Opportunities

Whilst not without its challenges, taking a 'whole of place' approach to the diversification of the LGA's economy, provides several opportunities for the LGA to enable it to navigate the challenges arising from the previous two strategic challenges. These opportunities focus on the area's natural attributes, turning the aging population into employment opportunities, the repurposing of existing infrastructure, promoting new research and technologies, growing new markets, attracting new industries, expanding tourism attractions, training for new jobs and skill sets and utilising local innovation.

As identified in the contributing strategies listed below, its successful implementation will require strong communication, collaboration, careful planning and execution and a long-term resource commitment from key decision makers, if the opportunities identified are to be realised and the workforce is to grow.

**Fig 13. Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy - May 2021 (Regional Australia Institute)**



Key opportunities identified mainly leverage the existing attributes of the area include (but are not limited to):

- Building on the strengths of the agricultural base to optimise partnerships in the agricultural research and education sectors to underpin new and emerging industries including: - pasture improvement technology, sustainable agriculture, remote farm monitoring and automation, on-farm renewable energy generation, drought resistant stock and plant species and the pasture improvement environment;
- Optimising existing partnerships to support local business growth through research, seeking grants and providing support for local initiatives including business incubation;
- Optimising existing partnerships to build connections between industry and education/training providers which enable employers to find an appropriate workforce and encourage population retention amongst school leavers;
- Optimising partnerships to invest in housing renewal and construction projects;
- Providing targeted training for tourism, hospitality, home care, wind farm maintenance, small business management and other emerging industries;
- Implementing a workforce attraction and retention strategy targeting specific sectors such as investors, returning families and the skilled labour required for emerging industries;
- Working with commercial partners and lobby for further upgrades of the digital platform to make the LGA more 'digitally' accessible;
- Gaining a better understanding of the viability of mining rare earth deposits.
- Improving the visitor experience by evolving the brand of the area;
- Developing and improving existing tourist experiences including using dual naming (Indigenous and English) for important places, the areas authentic heritage streetscapes and landscapes, world heritage sites, promoting agricultural lifestyle (farm stays) and establishing new tourist experiences;

# THE GLEN INNES SEVERN LGA AND ITS STRATEGIC CHALLENGES



- Supporting new and emerging job opportunities associated with Glen Innes District Hospital;
- Attracting health specialists (especially interns) to regional areas utilising local and government attraction policies;
- Support new and emerging job opportunities associated with caring for the elderly and those with additional care needs;
- Developing a migrant attraction and retention strategy, which includes migrant businesses;
- Supporting and strengthening the creative industry sector and provide a range of tourist and domestic attractions with specific programs targeting the villages as well as the town;
- Leveraging the Renewable Energy Zone to unlock renewable energy and storage projects and its associated industries including maintenance and construction support and tourist visitation;
- Optimising the low cost of housing in the LGA to attract newcomers to the area, diversify housing stock so it is more appropriate to the populations profile and create a range of alternative house financing models;
- Amending changes to land use zoning to ensure sufficient land supply and repurposing of housing to meet the areas requirements.
- Creating a sustainable housing development environment that is attractive to investors and partners and suitable to the area's climate;
- Investing in the improvement of appropriate housing infrastructure such as water and sewerage; and
- Repurposing significant assets such as the Glen Innes Airport, Glen Innes Armidale Rail line, and Museums to add to the visitor, cultural and employment experiences.

### 3. WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

As stated in Section 1.2 above, the Local Government Act establishes principals for undertaking the Community Strategic Plan using the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. In part, these Principles require Council to:

- a. Identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.
- b. Identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.
- c. Develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.

To enable us to identify and prioritise the 'key local community needs and aspirations', in July 2020, Council commissioned an independent, statistically validated survey of 401 residents (18 years and older) conducted by Micromex Research to:

- a. Understand and identify community priorities for the Glen Innes Severn Council LGA.
- b. Identify the community's overall level of satisfaction with Council performance.
- c. Explore resident perceived quality of life living in the area.
- d. Identify the community's level of agreement with prepared statements regarding the LGA.

This was the third survey of residents following previous surveys undertaken in 2018 and 2016 and has allowed the Council to track results over time. To be able to compare the Glen Innes Severn LGA's results with those of other LGAs, Micromex developed Community Satisfaction Benchmarks using data from over 60 Councils.

In addition to the resident survey, the Council has consulted with state agencies and non-government organisations to develop a range of contributing plans and strategies which have also informed this Community Strategic Plan. The feedback from our community and partners has also been used to establish the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals for the 2022 - 32 Glen Innes Community Strategic Plan. It also informs the Council's approach to identify service delivery improvements and to set its investment priorities for the services, programs and projects outlined in the accompanying 2022 - 25 Delivery Program and subsequent Annual Operational Plans.

Further consultation on the Draft Community Strategic Plan has been undertaken with key organisations and the community to ensure that we have it right.



## 3.1 What's Important to the Community

To understand what's important to the community, the Micromex survey asked a series of questions about:

- Quality of life;
- The things that are valued the most about living in the LGA;
- The things that you would like the Council to focus on; and
- The satisfaction and importance ranking of Council Services.

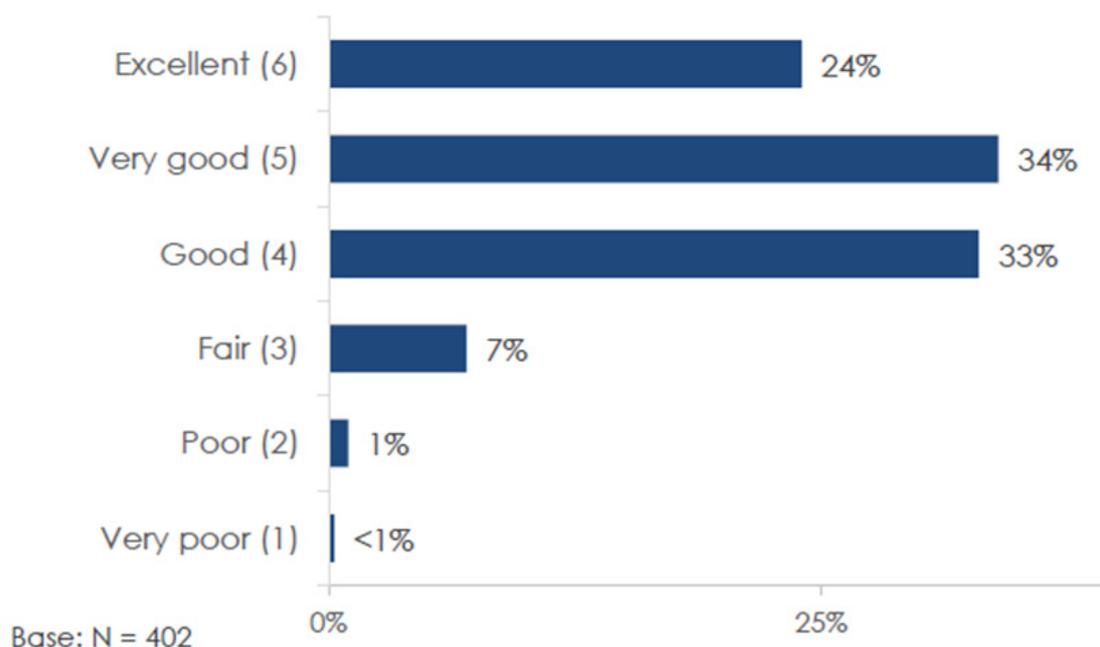
Without this understanding, Council cannot set the right Strategic Objectives and Goals and prioritise its resources, programs and projects in the Delivery Program accordingly.

### Quality of Life

In response to the question 'Overall, how would you rate the quality of life you have living in the Glen Innes Severn area?'

Source: Micromex Survey p 34 and 47

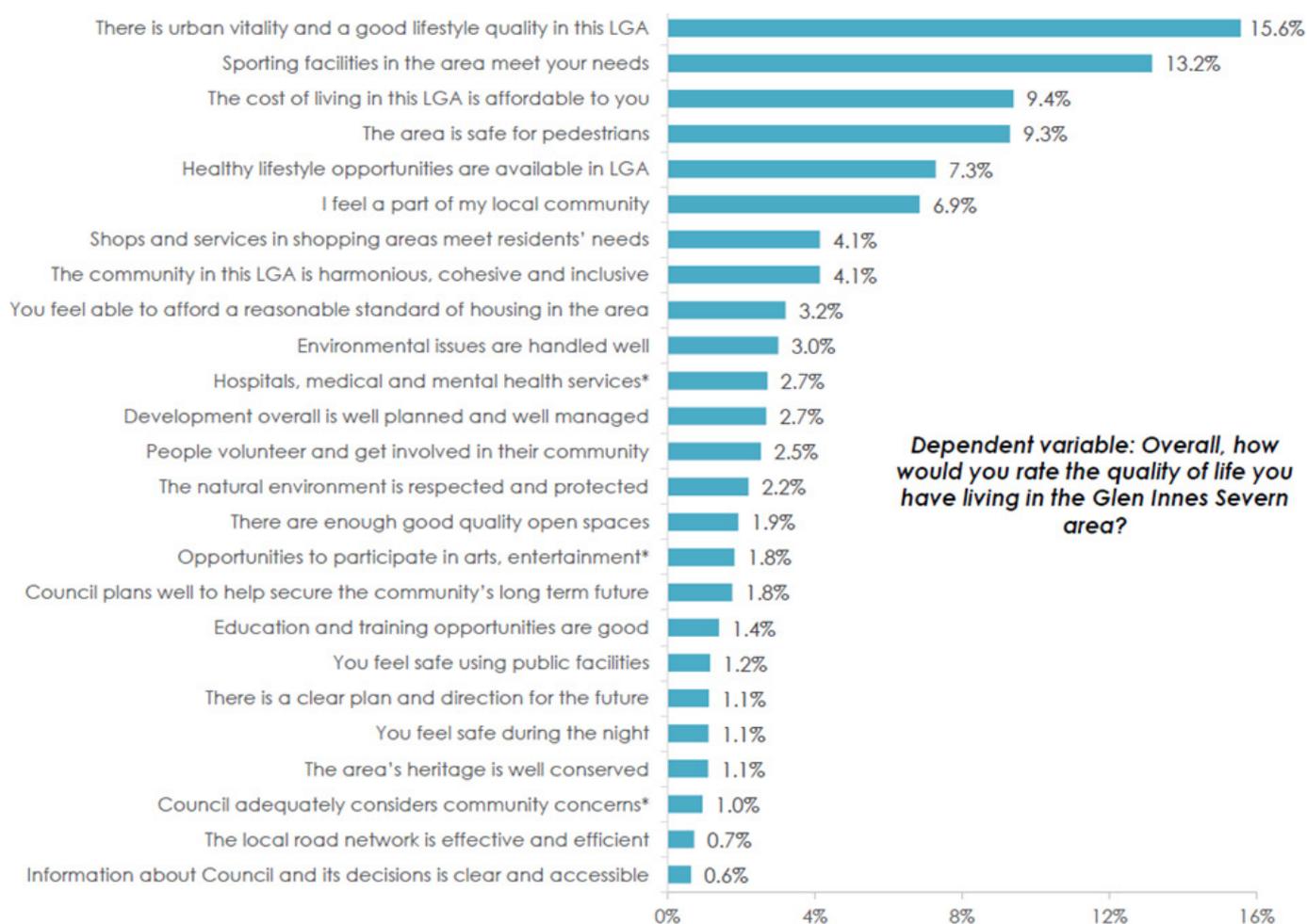
**Fig 14. Community Views on Quality of Life**



91% of residents rated their quality of life living in the Glen Innes Severn area between 'good' and 'excellent'. This is a positive response and shows that residents have a high regard for their existing quality of life. There was little variation in results between males and females, renters and rate payers and those living in and out of town. However, those in the 35 to 49 age group rated the lowest in their responses whilst those in the 65+ age group rated the highest.

## Fig 15. Contributing Factors to the Quality of Life

Mixcromex analysed and ranked the factors that most influence the quality of life of residents



Source: Micromex Survey p 93

### Value the Most

The following word scramble summarises the response to the question, 'What do you value most about living in the Glen Innes Severn region?'





## Importance and Satisfaction ratings of Council's Services

The Micromex survey also sought resident views on the importance of and resident satisfaction with, 38 service areas that Council provides.

Every council across NSW is required to encourage continuous improvement across its operations and to include its program of service improvement reviews in the 2022-2025 Delivery Program. Continuous improvement aims to improve the efficiency, productivity, financial management and governance of specific service areas provided by Council.

The following tables, identify the service areas that residents deemed to be the most important and compares that to the residents' level of satisfaction with them. This enables the service areas to be ranked in order of importance and satisfaction by analysing the gap between that ranking and resident satisfaction rating. Of the 38 service areas surveyed, residents identified 20 service areas of importance where the resident satisfaction rating was higher than the importance rating. This shows that whilst the community consider these services to be important, residents are satisfied with Council's provision of them.

However, there are 18 service areas with a significant gap between the residents' view of their importance and the level of satisfaction with them. This information enables Council to prioritise service areas for improvement or funding when it develops its 2022-2025 Delivery Program's priorities for service review and improvement.



**Fig 18. Importance and Satisfaction Ratings**

Service	Importance	Satisfaction Rating
Long term economic planning for the future	92%	66%
Condition/maintenance of sealed roads	92%	42%
Attracting new businesses to the area	91%	41%
Supporting local business and jobs	91%	60%
Water supply	90%	72%
Waste management and recycling	89%	87%
Aged care services/facilities	88%	87%
Condition/maintenance of bridges	88%	73%
Financial management	87%	62%
Condition/maintenance of unsealed roads	87%	38%
Public toilets	86%	89%
Tourism	86%	88%
Supporting growth of jobs/businesses	85%	56%
Sporting facilities and grounds	84%	90%
Supporting community groups and volunteers	84%	86%
Disability services	83%	83%
Weed/vegetation control	83%	69%
Sewerage services	82%	94%
Parks and playgrounds	82%	94%
Swimming pools/Aquatic centres	82%	90%
Protecting the natural environment	82%	87%
Facilities and services for youth	80%	73%
Libraries/library services	79%	95%
Protecting heritage values and buildings	79%	91%
Consultation with the community	79%	60%

Service	Importance	Satisfaction Rating
Enhancing town/village centres	77%	71%
Events and festivals	76%	90%
Street cleaning	75%	89%
Children's services	75%	82%
Council provision of information	75%	66%
Community buildings/halls	74%	90%
Glen Innes Aggregates quarry	74%	88%
Domestic animal control	74%	82%
Environmental and sustainability initiatives	74%	76%
Footpaths	73%	71%
Environmental protection and enforcement	68%	70%
Support for the Aboriginal community	65%	77%
Bike paths/cycleways	41%	67%

Source: Micromex Survey (pages 88/89)

This information can be ranked by the degree of the gap between the importance of the services and the resident's satisfaction rating and this helps to further identify which areas Council need to focus on improving.



**Fig 19. Gaps between Importance and Satisfaction Ratings**

Service Ranked by Gap between Importance and Satisfaction Ratings	Importance	Satisfaction	Performance Gap (Importance Satisfaction)
Attracting new businesses to the area	92%	41%	51%
Condition/maintenance of sealed roads	92%	42%	50%
Condition/maintenance of unsealed roads	87%	38%	49%
Supporting local business and jobs	91%	60%	31%
Supporting growth of jobs/businesses	85%	56%	29%
Long term economic planning for the future	92%	66%	26%
Financial management	87%	62%	25%
Consultation with the community	79%	60%	19%
Water supply	90%	72%	18%
Condition/maintenance of bridges	88%	73%	15%
Weed/vegetation control	83%	69%	14%
Council provision of information	75%	66%	9%
Facilities and services for youth	80%	73%	7%
Enhancing town/village centres	77%	71%	6%
Waste management and recycling	89%	87%	2%
Footpaths	73%	71%	2%
Aged care services/facilities	88%	87%	1%
Disability services	83%	83%	0%

Source: Micromex Survey (page 90)

The above tables further reinforce the need to focus on:

- Economic development and job creation;
- Road and bridge maintenance;
- Long term economic planning for the future;
- Financial Management;
- Community Consultation and the provision of information by Council;
- Water Supply; and
- Weed/vegetation control.

Each of these areas have a 10% gap or larger between those things that the community identify as important to them and their satisfaction level with the services provided by Council.

## 4. VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The Community Strategic Plan establishes the Vision, Strategic Objectives and Goals for the future. These are high level aspirational statements which sets the direction for the next ten years and enables the resources of Council and its partners to be allocated and prioritised during each term of Council. The way that Council's resources (Principal Activities) are allocated and prioritised for this term of the Council, is identified in the 2022 - 24 Delivery Program which accompanies this plan.

### 4.1 Vision Statement and the Community Strategic Plan

The Vision Statement describes the desired future state for the LGA which reflects the aspirations of the community. The Community Strategic Plan begins with a Vision Statement for the LGA, from which Strategic Objectives, Goals, Principal Activities and resourcing priorities flow.

Whilst a Vision Statement is not an end in itself, an effective Vision Statement should clearly and briefly express a desired future state for the LGA which:

- Succinctly articulates the aspirations of those that live in the LGA;
- Is relevant to the LGA, realistic and achievable;
- Reinforces the areas branding;
- Is understood, owned and constantly reinforced by leadership with their partners;
- Attracts and unites cross - sectoral partnerships;
- Sets the priorities for key projects and future investments in programs, projects and services across all of Council's functions;
- Enables a plan to be built, reviewed and modified to ensure that the vision can be brought to life and progress monitored; and
- Focusses effort over a sustained length of time and be aspirational enough to unify and 'push' the organisation and its partners forward whilst being achievable.

After reviewing the:

1. Feedback from the community's views in the Micromex survey.
2. Analysis of the LGA's Strategic Challenges and its opportunities.
3. Content of the regional and local contributing strategies.
4. Branding of the area as the 'New England Highlands'.

Our Vision Statement to guide the development of Glen Innes Severn LGA over the next 10 years as supported by the 2022 - 32 Community Strategic Plan is:

### **A prosperous connected community that nurtures its people and places**

The Vision Statement has been deliberately kept brief to enable it to be easily understood and remembered whilst capturing the things the community hold as important to its future. Whilst brief, it enables a 'whole of place' approach to be taken to the 2022 - 32 Community Strategic Plan and enables more detailed Strategic Objectives and Goals to be formulated to bring it to fruition over an extended period.

## 4.2 Strategic Objectives to support the Vision Statement

It is a general requirement of the NSW Office of Local Government that the Community Strategic Plan includes:

- Strategic Objectives for the community that address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues identified by the community; and
- Strategies for achieving each objective (i.e., the selection of the most appropriate goals).

Strategic Objectives therefore define the longer-term outcomes desired for the achievement of the Vision and enable more detailed Goals to be established for their delivery. They are by nature aspirational statements that 'put the meat on the bone of the Vision Statement'. In the context of the IP&R framework, the Strategic Objectives should address amongst other things, the social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues that are of importance to the community.

The Strategic Objectives identified below are supported by a number of contributing Strategies that have been developed over the years by Council in partnership with the community and others. These Contributing Strategies are listed with each of the main Strategic Objectives to which they apply. Key Regional Plans and documents which have been developed by other agencies/organisations and analysed for this Community Strategic Plan, are listed in the References at the back of this plan.

The Five Strategic Objectives around which the 2022 -32 Community Strategic Plan and its accompanying 2022 - 25 Delivery Program have been developed are:

Strategic Objective 1 - **An Attractive Quality of Life** - that is enhanced by cultural expression, an active inclusive community, with accessibility to the best possible services and facilities in a high country climate.

Strategic Objective 2 - **A Prosperous Local Economy** - that is encouraged and supported by sustainable investment opportunities, in a diversified business environment with accessibility to a trained and willing labour market.

Strategic Objective #3 - **Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure** - that is designed, constructed and appropriately maintained, to keep our community and visitors, connected, safe and able to access the amenities and services they require.

Strategic Objective #4 - **An Appealing Sense of Place** - that is protected and preserved, so that our authentic natural and built assets are showcased and enhanced for the enjoyment of all and enriched by new developments.

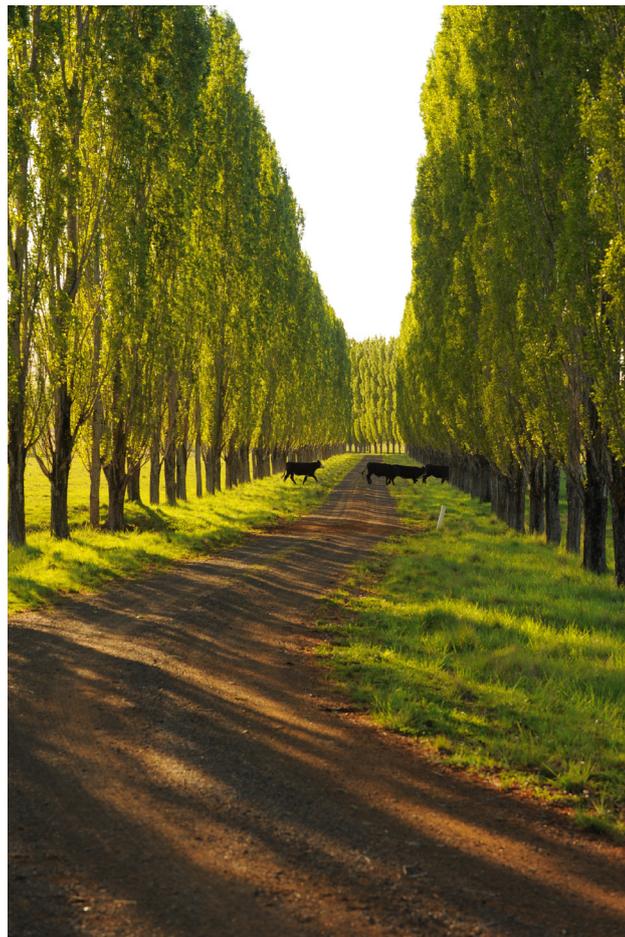
Strategic Objective #5 - **Recognised for Local Leadership** - that upholds its values and responsibilities, is focussed on the community through the custodianship of its assets and empowerment of its employees, to deliver the best value services and projects in partnership with others and within the means of Council.

### 4.3 Goals that Support the Strategic Objectives

Goals emerge as the result of strategic thinking. They are statements of what is to be achieved, so that the strategic objectives can be delivered in the best possible way. The time frame for accomplishing goals is typically long-term, depending on the complexity of obstacles standing in the way. Goals provide direction, highlight priorities and support effective decision-making and enable programs, projects and services to be identified and resourced towards their achievement over time.

The Goals as listed below cover all of Council's operations and have been distilled from a number of the Contributing Strategies developed by Council over the years in consultation with the community. They have also been framed to address the issues and opportunities identified in the Strategic Challenges facing the LGA and in support of the Regional Plans of other government agencies.

Goals enable Programs, Projects and Services (Principal Activities) to be developed in the 2022 -25 Delivery Program so that progress can be measured.



Strategic Objective 1 - An Attractive Quality of Life - that is enhanced by cultural expression, an active inclusive community, with accessibility to the best possible services and facilities in a high country climate

Micromex analysed and summarised the feedback from the community on the provision of community services as they relate to this Strategic Objective



The 'Community Services' area is a high performing area

- Satisfaction ratings were highest for services/ facilities such as libraries, parks and events
- Although not a local government service, residents are looking for better medical services



## 4. VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Goal Reference	Goal
1.1	<p><b>Encourage an Inclusive Active Lifestyle</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to increase opportunities for all age groups and abilities to utilise sporting venues and active recreational settings and events</p>
1.2	<p><b>Encourage Community Connectivity and Cohesion</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to increase the opportunities for the participation of those from all age groups and abilities to participate in appropriate passive recreational and learning opportunities and events</p>
1.3	<p><b>Encourage Opportunities for Cultural Expression</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to increase opportunities for the participation of those from all age groups and abilities in appropriate cultural venues, events and commissions which showcase and celebrate the area's artistic talents across all cultural mediums</p>
1.4	<p><b>Increase Community Transport Access to Services</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to advocate for accessible community transport options that connect the hamlets and villages to the Town and Regional Centres for access to medical, educational, recreational and cultural activities</p>
1.5	<p><b>Support the Voluntary and Not-For-Profit Sector to strengthen its capability</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to provide appropriate support to the Voluntary and Not-For-Profit Sector which strengthens its capability to provide services</p>
1.6	<p><b>Support an Increase of housing options</b></p> <p>To advocate for an increase in residential development to enable population growth including affordable housing options</p>
1.7	<p><b>Support for improved medical services</b></p> <p>To advocate for an increase in the provision of medical services to meet the changing health requirements of the community</p>



## Council's Contributing Strategies

The following Contributing Strategies support the Attractive Quality of Life Strategic Objective and most can be found on Council's website. As the Council reviews, updates and adds to these strategies, each will include a consistently framed Action Plan with clarity of actions, timelines, accountabilities and resource commitments in keeping with its Long-Term Financial Plan and the Goals contained in this Community Strategic Plan.

These prioritised actions and resource allocations will be included (as approved) as programs and projects in the Council's 2022 - 25 Delivery Program and used to measure progress against the relevant goals.

<b>Council's Contributing Strategies - <i>An Attractive Quality of Life</i></b>	
1	Glen Innes Severn Council Cultural Plan
2	Australian Celtic Festival Strategic Plan
3	Glen Innes Severn Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan
4	Glen Innes Severn 10 Year Strategic Plan for Community Services
5	Draft Glen Innes Severn Housing Strategy
6	Glen Innes Sporting Facilities Review and Master Plans June
7	Glen Innes Severn Council Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan
8	Glen Innes Severn Learning Centre Strategic Marketing Plan

## 4. VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

**Strategic Objective 2 - A Prosperous Local Economy - that is encouraged and supported by sustainable investment opportunities, in a diversified business environment with accessibility to a trained and willing labour market.**

Micromex analysed and summarised the feedback from the community related to this Strategic Objective



Economic development is a key area to focus on, particularly:

- Employment
- Business growth
- Attraction of business/Industry
- Long-term economic planning

Goal Reference	Goal
2.1	<p><b>Support Agricultural Diversification and Resilience</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to support and promote emerging research and technologies which enable the Agricultural sector's ability to improve productivity, to diversify and to improve resilience to changing markets and environmental conditions.</p>
2.2	<p><b>Support the Growth of the Visitor Economy</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to expand the branding, promotion, attraction and opportunities in support of the growth of the visitor economy</p>
2.3	<p><b>Enable an Attractive Industry Investment Environment</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to create an environment and policy platform that attracts and encourages partners from across diversified employment sectors to invest with confidence in the LGA</p>
2.4	<p><b>Support Skills Development for Existing, Expanding and Emerging Industries</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to grow skills development, training and support opportunities for existing, expanding and emerging industries</p>
2.5	<p><b>Support Workforce Attraction and Retention</b></p> <p>To work in partnership to support the attraction and retention of a workforce with the required skills to support targeted industry requirements</p>
2.6	<p><b>Optimise Returns from Council Trading Enterprises</b></p> <p>To operate Council's trading enterprises with an optimum profit returned to Council after full cost attribution</p>

## Council's Contributing Strategies

The following Contributing Strategies support the Prosperous Local Economy Strategic Objective and most can be found on Council's website. As the Council reviews, updates and adds to these strategies, each will include a consistently framed Action Plan with clarity of actions, timelines, accountabilities and resource commitments in keeping with its Long-Term Financial Plan and the Goals contained in this Community Strategic Plan.

These prioritised actions and resource allocations will be included (as approved) as programs and projects in the Council's 2022 - 25 Delivery Program and used to measure progress against the relevant goals.

<b>Council's Contributing Strategies - A Prosperous Local Economy</b>	
1	Glen Innes Severn Council - Glen Innes Highlands Economic Development Strategy and Acton Plan (2020-2025)
2	Glen Innes Severn - Destination Management Plan 2021-26
3	Glen Innes Severn Council - Future Jobs Growth and local skills Gap Research - Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy



## 4. VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

**Strategic Objective 3 - Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure - that is designed, constructed and appropriately maintained, to keep our community and visitors, connected, safe and able to access the amenities and services they require**

Micromex analysed and summarised the feedback from the community related to this Strategic Objective



Community pride in local infrastructure is to be uplifted with greater investment and maintenance, particularly, local roads

- Roads are always problematic, particularly in Regional NSW, so there is no surprise it has come up so strongly in these results too
- Catering for the future i.e. public transport and water supply were identified as priority areas for the next 10 years
- With the drought water supply is seen as an issue

Goal Reference	Goal
3.1	<p><b>Construct or renew capital works projects and programs to quality, time and budget</b></p> <p>To design, quality assure, schedule, cash flow and construct, fully accessible capital works projects and programs for each asset class to agreed asset management policies, standards, time and budget</p>
3.2	<p><b>Maintain Council's infrastructure assets to adopted standards, time and budget</b></p> <p>To maintain Council's infrastructure assets for each infrastructure asset class, to agreed asset management policies, design standards, time and budget in accordance with approved, costed, prioritised and time-lined Maintenance Schedules</p>
3.3	<p><b>Build Resilience and maintain capability to repair Council's infrastructure assets following extreme weather damage</b></p> <p>To work in partnership, to strengthen an appropriate response capability to repair damage caused by extreme weather conditions</p>
3.4	<p><b>Design, maintain, manage and improve water and sewerage services</b></p> <p>To ensure that water and sewerage services are designed, implemented and maintained in accordance with the adopted Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan to meet the requirements of the town and villages</p>
3.5	<p><b>Strengthen the digital and communication footprint covering the LGA</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to enhance communication, internet, Wi-Fi and smart city technology access and availability across the LGA</p>
3.6	<p><b>Optimise Underutilised Assets</b></p> <p>To work in partnership and across the organisation, to optimise the use of existing public assets (as identified by the Disused Asset Audit) for community and industry purposes</p>

## Council's Contributing Strategies

The following Contributing Strategies support the Strategic Objective and most can be found on Council's website. As the Council reviews, updates and adds to these strategies, each will include a consistently framed Action Plan with clarity of actions, timelines, accountabilities and resource commitments in keeping with its Long-Term Financial Plan and the Goals contained in this Community Strategic Plan.

These prioritised actions and resource allocations will be included (as approved) as programs and projects in the Council's 2022 - 25 Delivery Program and used to measure progress against the relevant goals.

<b>Council's Contributing Strategies</b> <i>- Fit for Purpose Public Infrastructure</i>	
1	Glen Innes Severn Council - Draft Integrated Asset Management Strategy
2	Glen Innes Severn Council - Roads Asset Management Plan (Part 2 Version 5)
3	Glen Innes Severn Council - Urban Drainage Asset Management Plan (Part 3 Version 4)
4	Glen Innes Severn Council - Water Asset Management Plan (Part 5 Version 3)
5	Glen Innes Severn Council - Sewer Asset Management Plan (Part 5 Version 3)
6	Glen Innes Severn Council - Buildings and Other Structures Asset Management Plan (Part 6 Version 4)
7	Glen Innes Severn Council - Bridges Asset Management Plan (Part 7 Version 3)
8	Glen Innes Severn Council - Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan (Part 8 Version 3)
9	Glen Innes Severn Council - Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan (Part 2 Strategy Plan)
10	Glen Innes Severn Council - Drought Management Plan
11	Glen Innes Severn Council - Infrastructure Backlog Management Plan
12	Glen Innes Severn Council - Cemetery Management Plan

## 4. VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

**Strategic Objective 4 - An Appealing Sense of Place - that is protected and preserved, so that our authentic natural and built assets are showcased and enhanced for the enjoyment of all and enriched by new developments**

Micromex analysed and summarised the feedback from the community related to this Strategic Objective



- Conservation of the natural environment and sustainability for future years to come is an area to continue focus and investment
- Council is performing well with regard to heritage protection

Goal Reference	Goal
4.1	<p><b>Land use planning instruments and Policies regulate and support the LGA's Vision and encourage population growth</b></p> <p>To revise planning instruments and policies so that population growth, in the LGA is supported with well-planned housing and business investment.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Support the protection, conservation, enhancement, accessibility and interpretation of the cultural heritage of habitation sites</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to encourage, the protection, conservation, enhancement, interpretation and accessibility of Indigenous (as appropriate), European and Asian cultural sites of habitation, streetscapes and public places of significance, as identified in the updated Aboriginal Heritage Study and State and Local Heritage Registers</p>
4.3	<p><b>Support the protection, conservation, enhancement accessibility and interpretation of World Heritage National Parks</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to encourage, appropriate protection, conservation, enhancement, interpretation and accessibility of the local World Heritage National Parks, including the interpretation of flora, fauna, Indigenous (as appropriate) and European cultural heritage</p>
4.4	<p><b>Support the protection, conservation, enhancement accessibility and interpretation of Sites of High Conservation Value</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to encourage, appropriate protection, conservation, enhancement, interpretation and accessibility of nominated sites of high environmental conservation value including, biodiversity corridors, water tables, waterways and freshwater fish habitats as identified by the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment and the NSW Department of Primary Industry and Council</p>

4.5	<p><b>Encourage the community’s use of renewable energy in the LGA and reduce Council’s carbon footprint and energy costs</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to promote the use of renewable energy across the LGA and minimise Council’s carbon footprint and energy costs</p>
4.6	<p><b>Encourage waste minimisation and recycling and regulate waste management practices to protect the environment</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to manage waste minimisation and recycling and regulate the communities waste management practices to protect the environment, whilst reducing Council’s own waste generation and management practices</p>
4.7	<p><b>Support Weed Management and Control</b></p> <p>To work with partners, to support weed management control and regulate the community’s weed management practices, in waterways, landscapes, habitats and corridors across the LGA</p>
4.8	<p><b>Strengthen Resilience to the Negative Impacts of Extreme Weather</b></p> <p>To work with partners to prepare for and lessen the catastrophic impacts, including hazard and flood mitigation from extreme weather and natural disasters on our built and natural environments</p>
4.9	<p><b>Regulatory Services are Provided to Support the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of the Community</b></p> <p>To ensure that regulatory services are provided in compliance with and in the spirit of relevant legislation and are aimed at providing a benefit to the wellbeing of the community</p>
4.10	<p><b>Encourage Cultural Practices</b></p> <p>To consult with Aboriginal communities and collaborate with appropriate Agencies to support cultural practices in land management relating to cultural burning, weed management, advice from Indigenous Protection Area (IPA) rangers, protection of biodiversity and bush tucker medicines, signage for protected areas, cultural trails and joint naming ventures</p>

## Council’s Contributing Strategies

<b>Council’s Contributing Strategies</b> <i>An Appealing Sense of Place</i>	
1	Glen Innes Severn Council - Local Strategic Planning Statement - 2020 - 2040
2	100% Renewables Renewable Energy Action Plan LGA: Glen Innes Severn Council Final Report
3	Glen Innes Severn Council Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan

The following Contributing Strategies support the Appealing Sense of Place Strategic Objective and most can be found on Council’s website. As the Council reviews, updates and adds to these strategies, each will include a consistently framed Action Plan with clarity of actions, timelines, accountabilities and resource commitments in keeping with its Long-Term Financial Plan and the Goals contained in this Community Strategic Plan.

These prioritised actions and resource allocations will be included (as approved) as programs and projects in the Council’s 2022 - 25 Delivery Program and used to measure progress against the relevant goals.



Strategic Objective 5 - Recognised for Local Leadership - that upholds its values and responsibilities, is focused on the community through the custodianship of its assets and empowerment of its employees, to deliver the best value services and projects in partnership with others and within the means of Council

Micromex analysed and summarised the feedback from the community related to this Strategic Objective



A key opportunity is to improve communication and relations with the community, e.g.:

- Improve communication for all levels (both formal and informal) from inform to consult/engage
- Improve the customer focus
- More transparency of messaging, particularly with regard financial management

Goal Reference	Goal
5.1	<p><b>Maintain the focus, importance and relevance of the CSP</b></p> <p>To regularly communicate and consult with the Community, Councillors, Partners and Staff on the importance and progress of the 2022 -32 Community Strategic Plan and its Delivery Programs and ensure contributing strategies and plans are current with a clear line of sight to all of Council's functions, projects, budgets and performance assessment methodologies</p>
5.2	<p><b>Councillors and employees demonstrate appropriate Capabilities and Behaviours</b></p> <p>To maintain and reinforce a culture of compliance with the expected behaviours and regulatory requirements for public leaders and officials as articulated in Council's Code of Conduct, Values and Governance Framework</p>
5.3	<p><b>Councillors and staff uphold budget and financial accountability</b></p> <p>To maintain budgeting and financial management disciplines required to establish and adjust the longer term and annual budget forecasts so that managers of functional cost centres and projects are held accountable for their delivery</p>

5.4	<p><b>Responsible custodianship of the community’s assets</b></p> <p>To ensure appropriate policies and standards for the management of Council’s assets which optimises their use, leverages optimal resources from partners and commercial activities and maintains their upkeep, whilst balancing competing priorities in keeping with Community aspirations, known risks and Council’s financial means</p>
5.5	<p><b>Enhance an ethos of customer service</b></p> <p>To enhance a customer service ethos across all of Council’s internal and external service functions, by establishing a range of customer satisfaction measures, to be used for service improvement and performance assessment methodology</p>
5.6	<p><b>Deliver best value services</b></p> <p>To develop a methodology and train and empower staff to undertake a rolling program of best value service reviews across Council’s services, designed to improve customer service and efficiencies, using staff involvement, customer service data, process analysis, cost data, and innovation</p>
5.7	<p><b>Recruit, empower, assess and develop employees whilst maintaining accountability</b></p> <p>To develop a consistently applied capability framework and training program, for all people managers and their staff, which supports recruitment, performance management, staff development and an empowered culture of accountability</p>
5.8	<p><b>Information Technology Systems are integrated, resilient and support customer service and efficiency</b></p> <p>To ensure Council’s Information technology architecture and systems are fit for operational requirements (including remote staff access), interoperable, reliable, recoverable in the event of a disaster and support customer service, performance reporting and service improvement</p>
5.9	<p><b>Collaborate with partners to deliver the Community Strategic Plan’s Goals and Priorities</b></p> <p>To engage with local representatives, government ministers and agencies, private and not for profit sector partners, who are critical to the successful implementation of the Community Strategic Plan; to understand their views and seek their commitment to its implementation</p>

## Council's Contributing Strategies

The following Contributing Strategies support the Recognised for Local Leadership Strategic Objective and most can be found on Council's website. As the Council reviews, updates and adds to these strategies, each will include a consistently framed Action Plan with clarity of actions, timelines, accountabilities and resource commitments in keeping with its Long-Term Financial Plan and the Goals contained in this Community Strategic Plan.

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### Council's Contributing Strategies *Recognised for Local Leadership*

1	Glen Innes Severn - Long Term Financial Plan
2	Glen Innes Severn - Workforce Plan
3	Glen Innes Severn Council - Communication Strategy
4	Glen Innes Severn - Aboriginal Employment Strategy
5	Glen Innes Severn - Continuous Improvement Policy



- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, 2011, 2016, Australian Census of Population and Housing*
- Australian Government - 2020 Employment Projections - for the five years to November 2025*
- Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW) - Gibraltar Range Group of Parks Plan of Management - 2005*
- Department of Planning and Environment - Glen Innes Severn Council 2019 NSW population projections*
- Department Planning Industry and Environment - Draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041*
- Department Planning Industry and Environment - New England North West Regional Plan 2036*
- Glen Innes Severn Council, Tenterfield Shire Council, Southern Downs Regional Council - Northern New England High Country*
- Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 22*
- Glenrac Strategic Plan 2020-2025*
- Forestry Corporation Forest Land Flora Reserve - Site Specific Working Plan October 2023*
- Micromex Research Community Satisfaction & CSP Research - July 2020*
- New England Joint Organisation - Strategic Plan for 2018 -21*
- North West Regional Weeds Committee - North West Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017 - 2022*
- NSW Office of Environment and Heritage's New England North West Climate Change snapshot 2014*
- Office of Local Government 2020 - Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW - September 2021*
- Regional Australia Institute - Understanding Regional Livability Discussion Paper - Bourne, K. (2019)*
- Remplan - DPEI Population Projections Independent Review 2019 for Glen Innes Severn Council*

# DRAFT GLEN INNES SEVERN COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2032



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