

17 October 2018

Steve Pinnuck and Colin Kane
Greater Hume Council
PO Box 99
Holbrook NSW 2644

Dear Steve and Colin,

RE: Glenellen Solar Farm Local Government Contributions

I write to you to outline the proposed contribution by the Glenellen Solar Farm to the Greater Hume Council. I have previously raised the concept of the local government contribution with yourselves in meetings and discussions during the early development phase (July-August 2018) and with the Greater Hume Council's Councillors during a workshop on 3 October 2018.

I understand the topic of development contributions for Major Projects defined by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (NSW) (EP&A Act) is one which the Greater Hume Council is currently discussing with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE). I acknowledge in previous discussions we have presented our position that the Glenellen Solar Farm would be willing to negotiate entering into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with the Greater Hume Council, rather than being levied consistent with the Greater Hume Council's position of section 94a contributions under the EP&A Act (now section 7.11 of the renumbered EP&A Act).

Our proposal is that the Glenellen Solar Farm enter into a VPA with Greater Hume Council which:

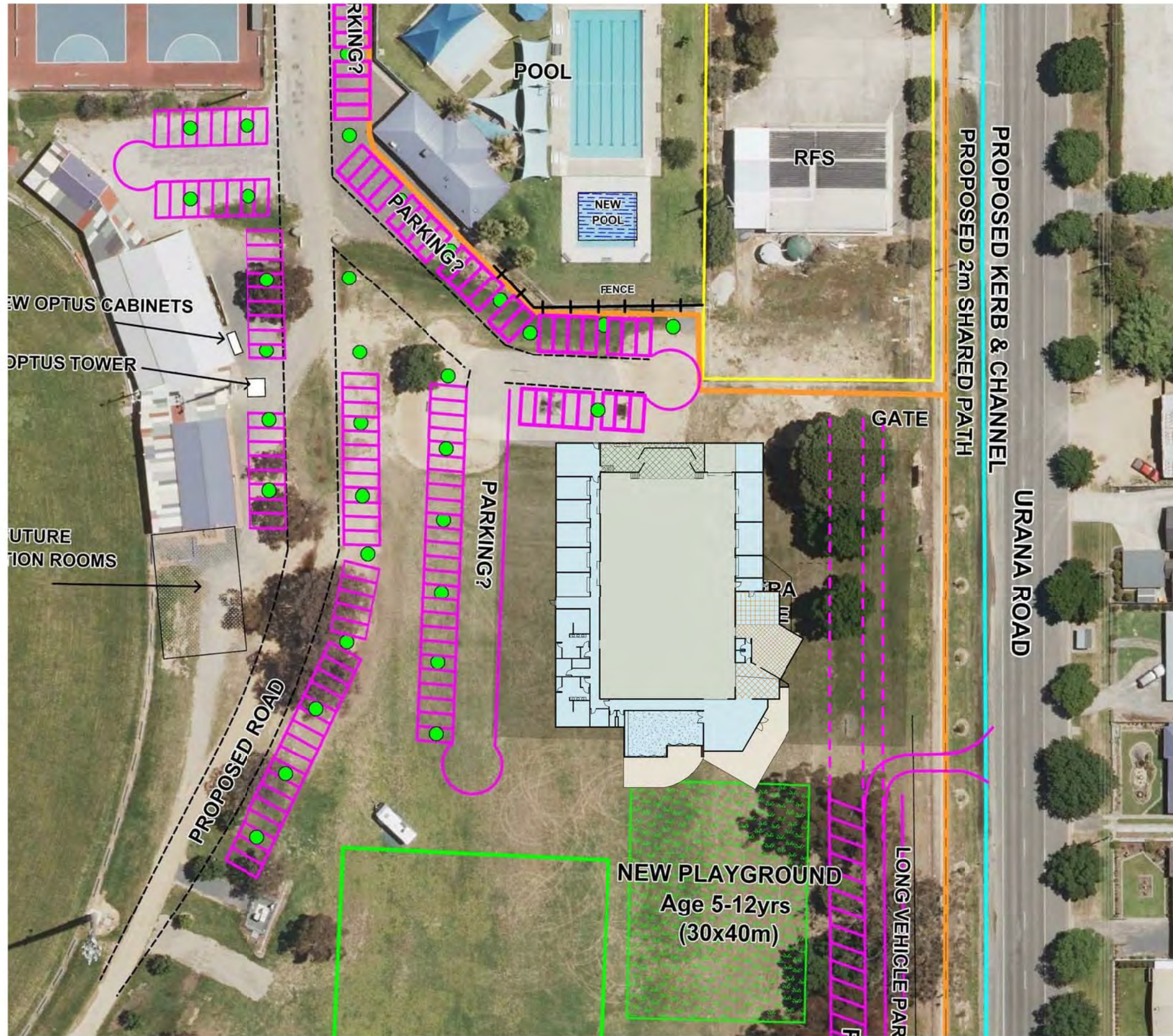
- Would comprise an amount equal to 1% of the project's capital investment value;
- This amount would be funded over equal payments spread over ten years;
- Amounts over the initial period (term to be agreed with Council) would be specifically set aside as a contribution to the Jindera Multi-Purpose Centre capital works (similar to a 'Town Hall' type community space); with
- The balance of funding amounts to be allocated by Council across the LGA.

We look forward to discussing this further with you and the Greater Hume Council's Councillors.

Yours sincerely,



Ed Mounsey
Chief Operating Officer
CWP Renewables Pty Ltd



BUILDING AREAS

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	
Gross Building Area	1810m ²
Net Areas - external	
Outdoor Entry Zone	86m ²
Outdoor Terrace	55m ²
Net Areas - internal	
Foyer	76m ²
Multi-Purpose Hall	850m ²
First Aid & WC's	15m ²
Function Room(s)	88m ²
Bar	37m ²
Kitchen & Utility	100m ²
Club Storage Areas 1-9	230m ²
Staging Room	40m ²
Stage Areas	96m ²
Amenities	101m ²
Circulation & Access	177m ²
Court Areas	
Netball Court	30.5m x 15.25m
Including run-off	36.6m x 21.35m
Basketball Court	28.0m x 15.0m
Including run-off	32.0m x 19.0m

1 Site Plan
1 : 500

0 5 30 m

Preliminary Concept

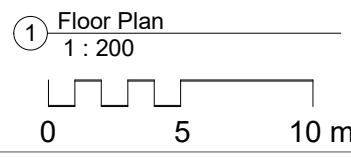
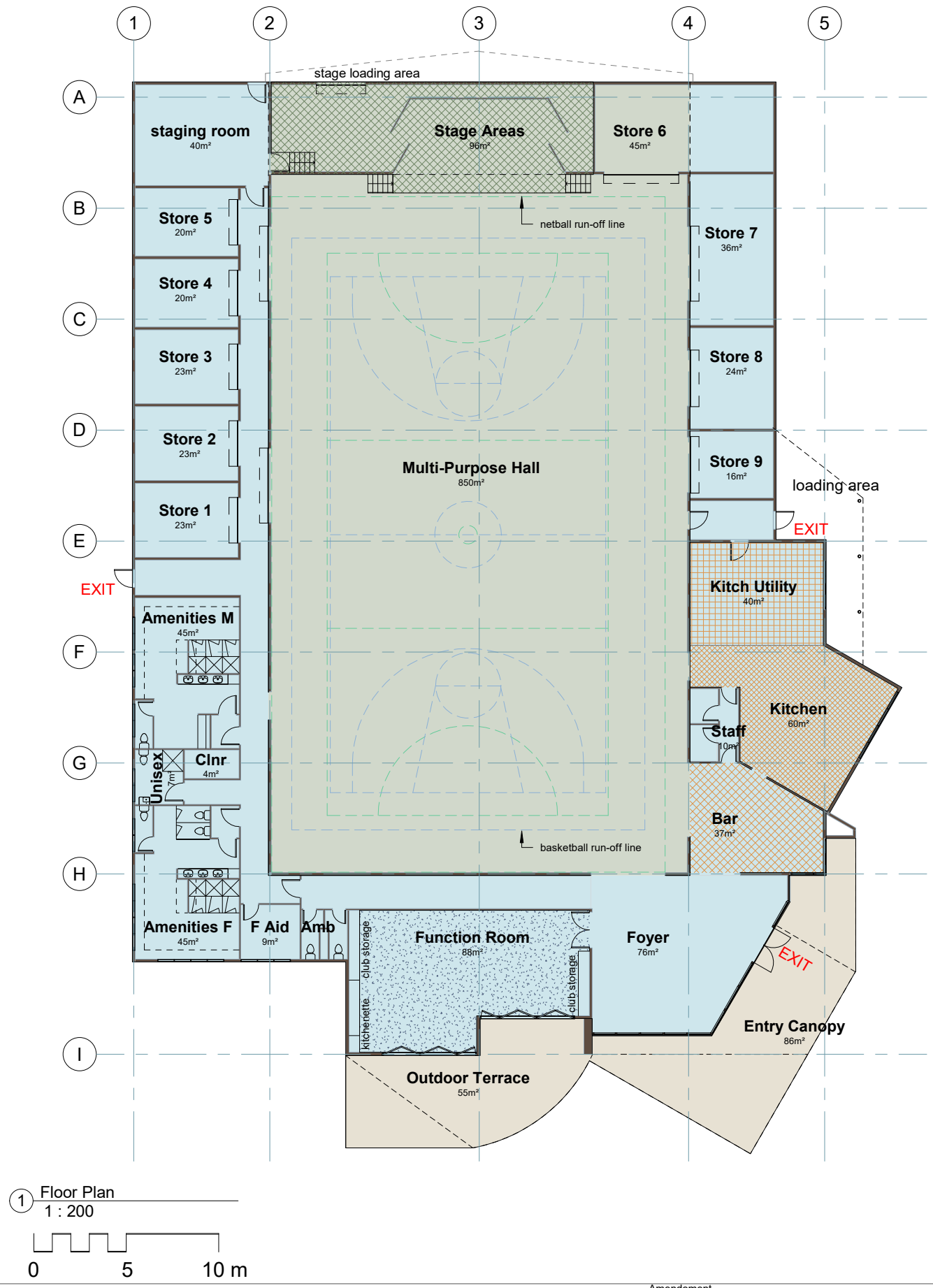
Amendment No	Description	Date	north	drawing	project title	project no.	sheet
					Jindera Community Center at Jindera Recreation Reserve Jindera NSW 2642 for Greater Hume Shire Council	180041	01
						dwg no:	SK03
						scale:	As indicated @ A2
						drawn:	Author
						checked:	Checker
						plot date:	9/10/2018 2:25:14 PM



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Site Context Plan



BUILDING AREAS

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Gross Building Area	1810m ²
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Including run-off	32.0m x 19.0m

approx line of continued car - parking



2 3D View 1



3 3D View 2



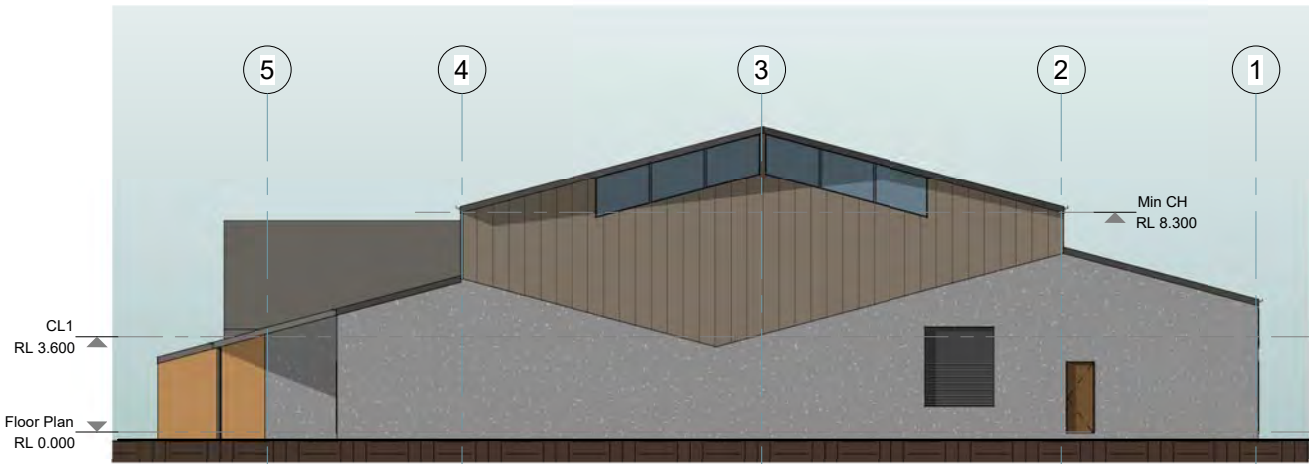
4 3D View 3

Preliminary Concept

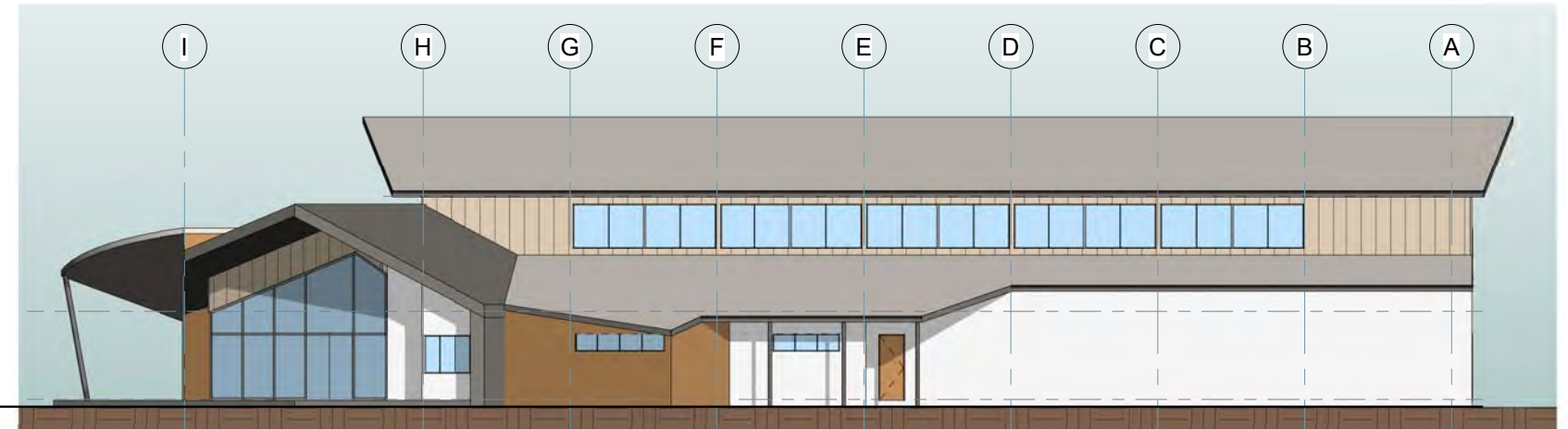
P:\1800\18004100 GHSC - New Community Centre- Jindera Recreation Reserve, Jindera\Building Design\DWG\Model\180041_SK03_04Oct18.rvt



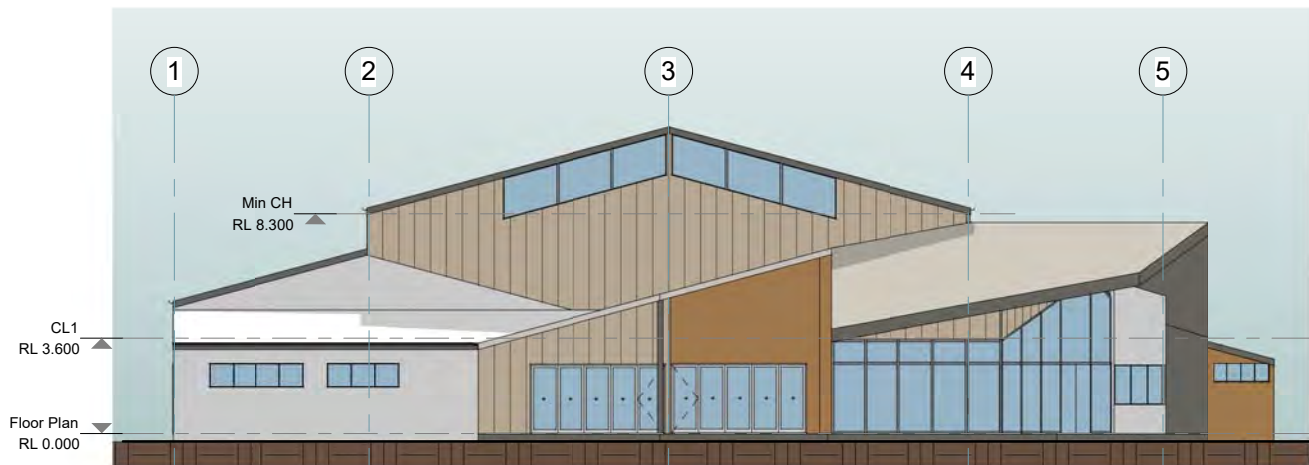
① Elev - South East
1 : 200



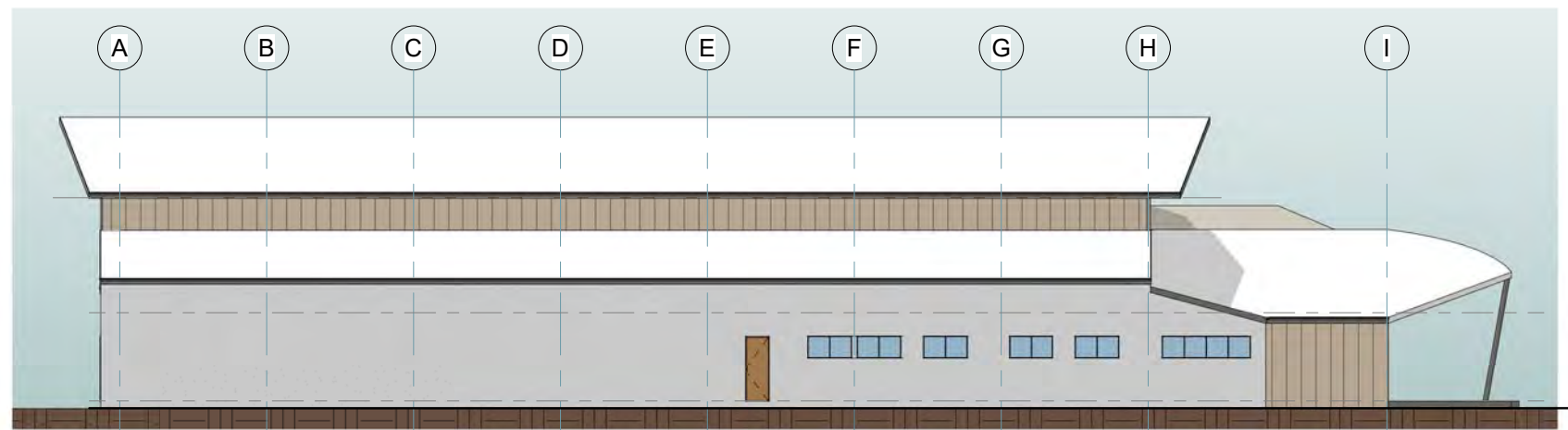
③ Elev - North
1 : 200



② Elev - East
1 : 200



⑤ Elev - South
1 : 200



④ Elev - West
1 : 200

Preliminary Concept

Amendment No	Description	Date	north	drawing	project title	project no.	sheet
					Jindera Community Center at Jindera Recreation Reserve Jindera NSW 2642 for Greater Hume Shire Council	180041	03
						dwg no:	SK03
						scale:	1 : 200 @ A2
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Elevations

Albury – Wodonga

Regional Economic Development Strategy | 2018 – 2022



VISION

The Albury – Wodonga region will leverage its endowments, building on its economic strengths and specialisations to grow the transport and logistics, manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare and social assistance and tourism sectors, growing the population and creating prosperity to set the region on a path for sustainable development supporting business development and enhancing quality of life for its residents.



PREFACE

The NSW Government has assisted local councils and their communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies across regional NSW. Each strategy is designed around one or more local government areas that form a functional economic region as defined by economic data and community input. While the strategies have been developed using consistent methodology, each is a product of detailed data analysis and local community consultation to ensure ownership through a ‘bottom-up’ process: it sets out a vision for the region, the strategies, and early stage actions required to achieve the vision.

Regional Economic Development Strategies articulate a framework for identifying actions crucial to achieving the regional vision. Projects listed within this strategy should therefore be viewed as example projects that have emerged from the initial application of the framework, rather than a comprehensive list of all potential projects. Adoption of these projects would be subject to further evaluative processes.

The power of the strategy is its ability to be used on an on-going basis to identify additional high value projects over time. By complementing existing funding processes, these strategies present new opportunities to strengthen and increase investment in regional development across NSW.



Importantly, the strategy should be viewed as the first stage of a process that will assist those with an interest in the economic development of the region, particularly councils, communities and local businesses, in planning their future economic activities. It provides a vehicle for engaging the community in a ‘conversation’ about regional needs and priorities, assists in bringing together key stakeholders and mobilising resources, and in so doing, can facilitate faster access to dedicated NSW Government funding, such as the Growing Local Economies Fund, as well helping to capitalise upon other economic opportunities.

This Strategy, prepared by Sensing Value on behalf of the region, was formed in collaboration with Albury City, Wodonga City, Greater Hume Shire, Federation, and Indigo Shire Councils, key stakeholders and the broader regional community, which benefited from economic analytical assistance from the NSW Government’s Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

It is presented in two documents, the Albury – Wodonga Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022 which allows the reader to quickly and easily determine key content, while the accompanying *Albury – Wodonga Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022 – Supporting Analysis* details the Strategy methodology, evidence and the strategy development process.

For further information about the Regional Economic Development Strategies program please contact the CERD on 02 6391 3025 or CERD@dpc.nsw.gov.au.



INTRODUCTION

The *Albury – Wodonga Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022* (the Strategy) sets out a long-term economic vision and associated strategies for the Albury-Wodonga Functional Economic Region (Albury-Wodonga or the region), which encompasses the five local government areas (LGAs) that form the region to implement. Specifically, these are Albury City, Wodonga City, Greater Hume Shire, Federation and Indigo Shire. It builds on the endowments and economic strengths and specialisations of the region to guide investment over the next four years.¹

Economic principles suggest that endowments and specialisations play a key role in regional economic development.²

The Strategy aims to leverage the region's endowments. These include its key strategic location along the NSW major east coast transport corridor; liveability and lifestyle appeal; productive climate, soils and water for food production; major service infrastructure in hospitals, airports and intermodal freight hubs; strong local institutions and businesses; excellent educational institutions and skilled workforce; and marketable product branding. These endowments are the basis of the region's specialisations in manufacturing, healthcare and tourism. The endowments and specialisations have been identified through a process of data analysis and community consultation.

The Strategy builds on the region's endowments, specialisations and economic strengths to ensure long-term sustainable development in the future. It includes a number of key elements:

- support and grow Agribusiness and Softwoods industries throughout the region
- grow the Transport and Logistics sector
- continue to develop and grow the Tourism sector and the visitor economy
- grow the Healthcare sector through the development of a Health Precinct
- attract and retain talent to sustain the supply of skilled workers
- capitalise on the region's opportunity to be a special economic zone.

The Strategy also takes account of regional risks and how they might be addressed.

While the order of these goals reflects the current opportunities and challenges, each should be considered as part of an holistic package that will be important for the overall future growth of the regional economy.

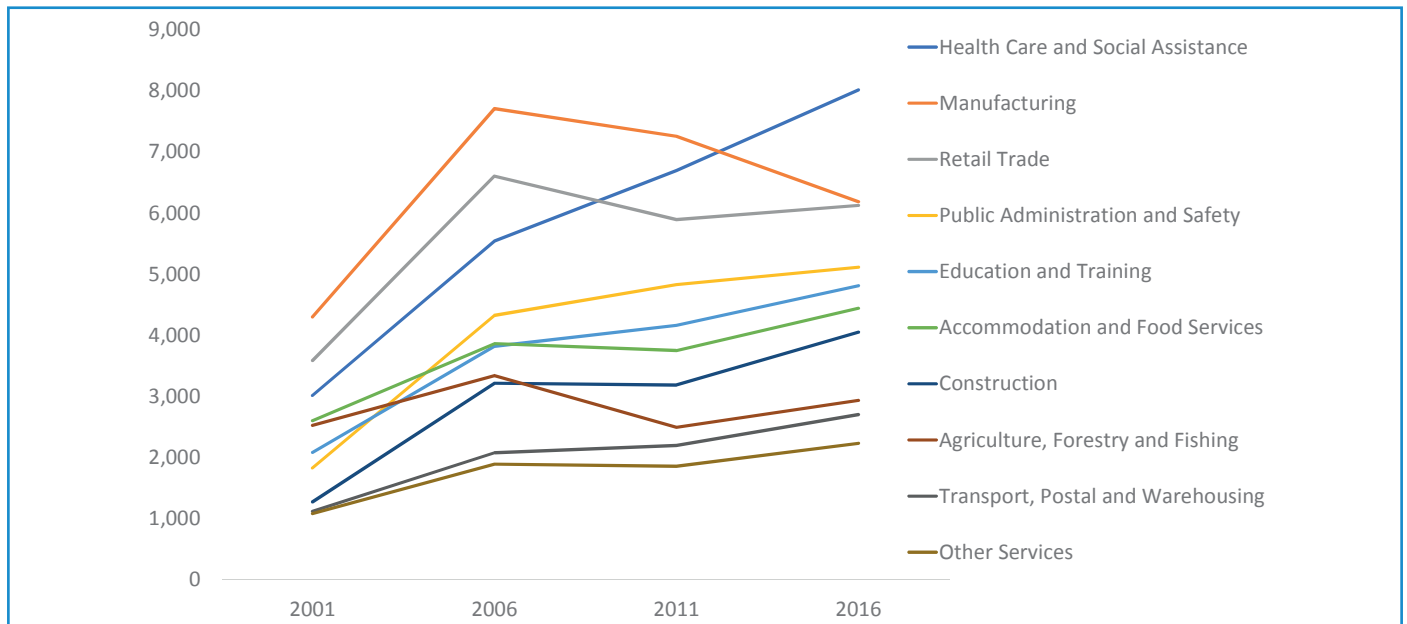
This Strategy is the culmination of collaboration between the councils of Albury City, Wodonga City, Greater Hume Shire, Federation, Indigo Shire, their respective communities, and the NSW Government's Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

- 1 [Regional Economic Development Strategies, Centre for Economic and Regional Development \(https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/programs_and_services/centre_for_economic_and_regional_development/projects\)](https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/programs_and_services/centre_for_economic_and_regional_development/projects)
- 2 [Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report \(2017\), Centre for Economic and Regional Development.](#)



BACKGROUND CONTINUED

Figure 2: Employment in the Region, 2001–2016



Trends in employment in the region's industry sectors are shown in Figure 2.

Health Care and Social Assistance is the region's major employing sector, with employment having significantly increased over the past 15 years (see Figure 2). This has been driven by consistent growth in the portion of the population 65 years and older, with urban Albury – Wodonga acting as a regional hub for services to a number of surrounding areas. While Manufacturing employment in general has declined over the past decade, the region recently has seen employment in some Manufacturing subsectors continue to grow, such as Beverage Product Manufacturing, which grew by close to 50 per cent between 2011 and 2016.

Agriculture Forestry and Fishing (predominantly sheep, beef cattle and grain farming) also has a major role in the regional economy, particularly outside of Albury – Wodonga. Employment declines in these sectors are consistent with broader industry sector trends seen across Australia, but the sector is showing trends that suggest future employment growth potential, having experienced increased employment between 2011 and 2016.

Tourism is also a major employer in the region, which is a combination of business and health travel to Albury – Wodonga, and more traditional tourism offerings to places such as Beechworth, the Rutherglen wine region and Lake Mulwala. While Tourism employment is not formally captured in the same manner as other sectors by the ABS, the importance of the industry can be seen by the high number of workers employed in the Accommodation and Food Services and Retail Trade sectors.

Economic indicators, in this instance employment trends, represent one aspect of the approach to identifying key sectors. Other types of information, such as community consultation and online surveys, provide qualification and context that can be used in conjunction with these indicators to identify the sectors which represent the region's competitive advantage.

ENDOWMENTS

Endowments are strengths that a regional economy possesses and can capitalise on. Economic principles suggest that endowments play a key role in the economic development of each region. The CERD in its *Regional Economic Enablers Report (2017)* found that:

*the future of individual regional economies is inexorably linked to their natural endowments and attempts to retain or establish industries without an underpinning endowment are unlikely to succeed.*⁴

A region seeking to encourage economic development should concentrate on the factors that enable the growth of endowment-based industries, as well as building local leadership capacity, to capitalise on the opportunities that the region's endowments present. Endowments can lead to opportunities from which commercial and industrial interests may leverage and develop specialisations.

Endowments of the region identified through analysis and community consultation.

Location

Albury – Wodonga is located on the major transport route between Sydney and Melbourne and is a major population and employment centre between the two cities. This creates a natural competitive advantage for the transport and logistics sector in the region, which in turn can act as an enabler for sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture. The region also enjoys a location along the Murray River, which provides opportunities for tourism and agriculture industries, as well as proximity to the Victorian High Country.

However, there are also a number of issues and complications that come with being a cross-border region, including regulatory inconsistencies and competition between states.

Natural resource endowment

The region has a significant land endowment and forestry assets, with high levels of water security and sunshine exposure that provide the basis for competitive advantages for the agricultural and softwoods industries in the region.

For Albury – Wodonga, these assets have direct linkages to food manufacturing businesses that source many of their inputs from local producers and pulp and paper product manufacturers, who enjoy connections to major forestry assets in Tumbarumba and Tumut. The region also contains a number of key environmental endowments such as Lake Hume, the Murray River, Lake Mulwala, the Wonga Wetlands and state forestry lands.

Liveability and lifestyle appeal

The scale of Albury – Wodonga allows for the provision of high-quality services and facilities, together with a lifestyle offering that would be expected of major metropolitan cities, but with a lower cost of living. This provides a point of competitive advantage as a potential migration destination for those looking to move out of the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra.

Albury Airport

Albury Airport is a major regional airport with daily connections to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. This provides a significant access corridor to the region and planned expansion of services and facilities are expected to increase the appeal of the region for visitors, businesses and potential migrants.

Education infrastructure

The region is home to a range of education facilities, most notably the three universities in Albury – Wodonga (Charles Sturt University, UNSW Medical School and La Trobe University), as well as TAFE campuses in both Albury and Wodonga, which offer courses responsive to local industry needs.

Healthcare infrastructure and services

The region contains a number of assets that can benefit the healthcare and social assistance sector, including two major healthcare assets in the Albury Base Hospital, which is the largest and most well-equipped hospital in the region and the Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre, which offers a unique research capability.

There are also a number of other hospitals in the region which provide healthcare and social assistance services, including hospitals in Wodonga, Holbrook and Beechworth.

Transport and logistic infrastructure

The region's strategic location means a number of major freight routes run through the region, both by road and rail. This includes assets such as the Ettamogah Rail Hub, Hume Highway, Olympic Highway, Riverina Highway, as well as major future assets such as the fully developed NEXUS Precinct and Wodonga Logic.

Military sector

Albury – Wodonga is home to the Australian Army Barracks located at Bandiana, which is one of the major employers in the region. The presence of the Defence sector in the region creates a significant source of local demand in other industries throughout the region, such as Thales in Federation LGA.

4. [Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report \(2017\)](#), Centre for Economic and Regional Development

ENDOWMENTS CONTINUED

Human capital

Albury – Wodonga region has a highly skilled labour force, with a higher proportion of individuals holding post-school qualifications than the Regional NSW average.

The region also enjoys a highly varied workforce as a result of the diversity of the economy, which is atypical for a regional area.

Local institutions and strong leadership

The region is well supported by an array of education, health, tourism and business institutions, with mature relationships with the community and local businesses.

These institutions include a range of joint organisations which work to further the specific strategic objectives of the region such as the *Two Cities, One Community committee*.

Strong branding for products

The Rutherglen region is a famous wine producing area, which can act both as a drawcard for visitors into the region, as well as a competitive advantage for exported products that are produced from Indigo Shire. Beechworth is also recognised as a premium wine growing region, boasting some of Australia's most sought-after wine labels. Within the domestic market these brands have some of the highest per bottle wine prices in Australia.

Historical significance

A number of places across the region have historical significance that can act as a tourism drawcard for visitors. These include famous historical sites in Federation Shire, such as the Federation Museum, Corowa Courthouse and Oddfellow Hall, Robert O'Hara Burke Memorial Museum, Old Beechworth Gaol, the goldfields and high country in Indigo Shire and a number of cultural heritage sites of traditional land-owners across the region.



SPECIALISATIONS

A simple form of analysis that can be used to gain an understanding of a region's comparative advantages⁵ is the Location Quotient (LQ), which measures the employment concentration in industry sectors within a regional economy, compared with the same sectors across NSW. The higher the LQ, the more specialised a region is in that industry relative to NSW. For the purpose of this analysis, specialisations as defined by LQs are in turn used as a proxy measure for those sectors and industries that represent a region's true comparative advantages.

Importantly, while LQs are used in this document for that purpose, they are only a partial measure of those comparative advantages. Hence, they have been considered alongside additional qualitative evaluations and data analysis, such as Input-Output analysis, to arrive at the findings for the Strategy.

Location Quotient Analysis

While Healthcare and Social Assistance is the largest sector in the region, employing 14.3 per cent of the workforce⁶, a more granular analysis may identify specific sectors in which Albury – Wodonga has a regional specialisation. In this analysis, key sectors fall into one of three categories:

Important sectors where employment is growing

In assessing the LQ of sectors in the region, a number were identified as important and growing sectors and thus likely to be sectors of regional specialisation (coloured blue in Figure 3). Pulp, Paper and Converted Paper Product Manufacturing, Primary Metal and Metal Product Manufacturing, Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing, Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing, Residential Care Services, Repair and Maintenance and Road Transport were all sectors identified as having high LQs and employment in each of these sectors grew at a faster rate in the region than it did across NSW between 2011 and 2016.

Potentially emerging sectors

Emerging sectors are sectors with a LQ lower than the state average, but where employment growth nonetheless grew faster than the NSW state average over the period between 2011 and 2016 (coloured green in Figure 3). In Albury – Wodonga, these include Administrative Services, Public Order, Safety and Regulatory Services, Food and Beverage Services and Preschool and School Education. If growth in these sectors can continue to be encouraged and cultivated, they could eventually develop into regional specialisations.

Important where employment is declining

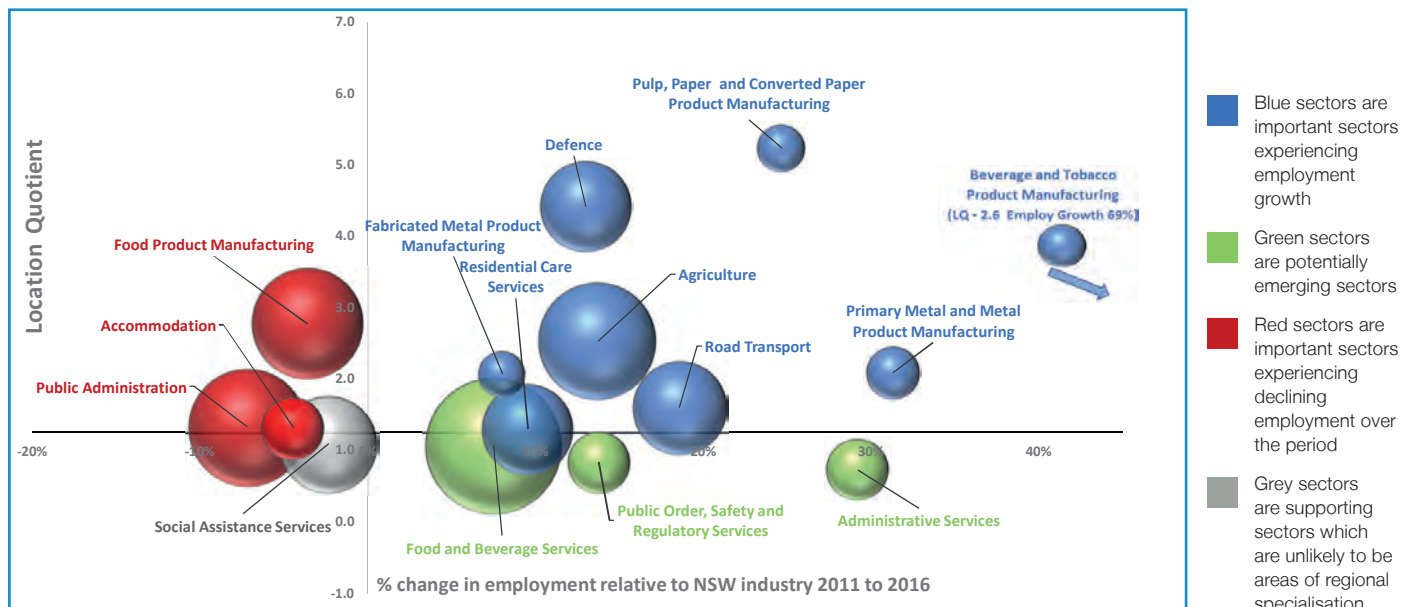
There were also a number of key sectors that had high LQs, but whose employment grew by less than the state average for that sector (coloured red in Figure 3). In the Albury – Wodonga, these include Food Product Manufacturing, Accommodation and Public Administration. However, the inclusion of these sectors in this classification may be due to the significant growth of these sectors across NSW (particularly in metropolitan areas) rather than the decline of these sectors in the region. Notably, the Public Administration sector increased in absolute employment between 2011 and 2016 but was outpaced by the overall state average.

- 5 A region's competitive advantage for an industry includes its ability to produce goods and services at a lower cost or differentiate its products from other regions, along with access to external factors which enhance business and operations/ minimize risk (Stimson, Stough and Roberts, 2006).
- 6 Australian Bureau of Statistics census data, August 2016.



SPECIALISATIONS CONTINUED

Figure 3: Location Quotients and Employment Growth for Industries in the Region



Source: ABS Census 2016 and Sensing Value analysis.

Figure 3 charts selected industries in the regional economy in 2016:

- industries with a larger 'bubble' employed more people;
- industries further above the horizontal line are more specialised when compared to NSW (i.e. an LQ greater than 1.25⁷); and
- industries to the right of the vertical line grew faster between 2011 and 2016 than comparable industries across NSW, industries on the left grew more slowly.

Input-Output Analysis

LQ analysis can provide insight into regional specialisations, particularly for employment, but this measure may not fully capture the growth occurring in less labour-intensive sectors. An analysis of the value of outputs generated from industry sectors can provide another indication of economically important sectors.

The estimated Gross Regional Product (GRP) of Albury – Wodonga was estimated to be \$7.1 billion in 2015-16. Some of the major sectors which were the big contributors to GRP included (but are not limited to) Sheep, Grains, Beef and Dairy Cattle Farming (\$739.1 million), Other Food Product Manufacturing (\$484.8 million), Basic Chemical Manufacturing (\$443.9 million), Road Transport (\$440.7 million) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (\$411.9 million). These sectors reflect the diversity of major sectors within the region, as well as the importance of the wider manufacturing, agriculture and transport and logistics sector in the region from a value-add standpoint.

It is particularly important to identify the major export sectors which also provide an indication of a potential regional specialisation. The region's major exporting sectors include Sheep, Grains, Beef and Dairy Cattle (\$304.5 million), Basic Chemical Manufacturing (\$212 million), Wholesale Trade

(\$109.7 million) and Road Transport (\$105.1 million). Road Transport and Wholesale Trade are notable sectors with high export values, as they reflect the major role of Albury – Wodonga as the key freight connection between Melbourne and Sydney. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (\$49.5 million) was also a major exporting sector, which suggests the region acts as a major service hub with a reach that extends beyond the boundaries of the region.

Identifying regional specialisations

The region's existing specialisation sectors identified above, along with the potentially emerging specialisations, have a reliance on local endowments with their outputs being traded outside the region (i.e. exported). Some of these may be termed the region's 'engines of growth', with others in the category of 'enabling industries' which are crucial for servicing the 'engines of growth' sectors. These represent the sectors key to the region's development and may be considered major generators of GRP.

The 'engines of growth' sectors for the region's economy include Manufacturing, Agriculture and Forestry, and Tourism. Meanwhile, Transport and Logistics is acknowledged by the region as an important 'enabling industry'. This is one of the most important sectors for the region's future, as establishing the region as the premier transport and logistics hub on the eastern seaboard represents one of most significant 'enablers' which can unlock growth across the region's other major industries. Health Care and Social Assistance (notably Residential Care Services), which is a population-serving sector, is also an important regional specialisation.

A number of these sectors form the basis of the key elements of the Strategy in the next section.

⁷ An LQ of 1.25 is identified in the literature as denoting a specialisation.

STRATEGY

The Strategy for the economic development of the region builds upon the opportunities presented by its endowments and the industry specialisations discussed above, and it also aims to address some of the key regional risks.

The six elements to the Strategy are derived from analysis of the existing endowments that enhance the region's competitive advantages. This was followed by examination of current industry specialisations, which then progressed to the identification of potential emerging specialisations that have been identified through data analysis in consultation with the community and five councils within the region.

Each element of the Strategy is accompanied by a set of early actions, which should be interpreted simply as example actions derived from the preliminary application of the Strategy framework. It is therefore expected that there will be other actions capable of contributing to the attainment of the region's vision that are yet to be identified. Consequently, an action's alignment with the Strategy is the primary strategic consideration, rather than it being listed in this document, and all proposed actions will be subject to further qualitative and quantitative evaluative processes.

The Six Elements of the Strategy

1	Support and grow Agribusiness and Softwoods industries throughout the region
2	Grow the Transport and Logistics sector
3	Continue to develop and grow the Tourism sector and the visitor economy
4	Grow the Healthcare sector through the development of a Health precinct in the region
5	Attract and retain talent to sustain the supply of skilled workers by improving liveability throughout the region
6	Capitalise on the region's opportunity to be a special economic zone

STRATEGY CONTINUED

1 | Support and grow Agribusiness and Softwoods industries throughout the region

Albury – Wodonga has a competitive advantage in several agricultural industries, based on the region's significant natural resources as well as the proximity of food and fibre manufacturing firms. There is a strong agribusiness sector that supports these industries and provides additional economic growth through value-adding, services and employment. The region also has a growing Softwoods industry, anchored by a major manufacturer in Norske Skog in Albury, which draws inputs from forests across southern NSW.

These industries are important drivers of the region's economy, and future growth can be assisted with improvements to key infrastructure. In particular, the Transport and Logistics sector requires efficient transport infrastructure to link agriculture and forestry with manufacturing and markets. Improved business connectivity will help productivity growth. Growth in the above industries will require a highly skilled future workforce.

Infrastructure Priorities

- **Transport infrastructure:** improve the accessibility and ease of travel to, from and throughout the region for freight vehicles.
- **Telecommunications:** decrease mobile reception blackspots for greater business connectivity.
- **Access to land:** better utilise existing land for growing and logging softwoods.
- **Increase skills capacity:** investigate options to address issues relating to skills needs and ageing population within the agriculture sector in the region.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Upgrade a 5km section of Holbrook-Culcairn Road to support Higher Mass Limit (HML) vehicles use by agribusiness and forestry sectors.
- Construct a highway and railway crossing at Henty to facilitate improved B-Double Access to the major grain retrieval facility in Henty.
- Undertake upgrades to Coppabella Road to accommodate the haulage of softwood timber.
- Upgrade a 10km section and widen four bridges on Jingellic Road (MR 331) to enable efficient freight linkages between Holbrook and Jingellic.
- Undertake an assessment of the extent of digital connectivity problems across the region.
- Allow more streamlined applications for utilising lands for growing and logging softwoods.
- Expand the softwood plantations to ensure suitable fibre supply within an economic transport distance to processors.
- Investigate options for provision of reliable and affordable energy at industrial sites to support expansion and growth of food and fibre processors.

STRATEGY CONTINUED

2 | Grow the Transport and Logistics sector

An assessment of the region's competitive advantages identified transport infrastructure and the region's strategic location as major endowments which underpin the performance of key 'engines of growth' industries. These engines of growth are the manufacturing, agriculture and forestry, and tourism sectors. Good transport links and efficient logistics help reduce freight and handling costs and increase productivity in these industries. Other industries in the region, including retail trade and professional, scientific and technical services, will also benefit from growth and improvement of the transport and logistics sectors.

The NEXUS and Wodonga Logic industrial precincts provide a significant opportunity for growth of major transport and logistics hubs in the region. These hubs also provide opportunities for industries that locate around these hubs.

Infrastructure Priorities

- **Sector assets:** investment to a range of infrastructure to bolster and leverage the region's strategic location and key role in the NSW/Victoria freight network.
- **Road infrastructure:** upgrades and improvements to major highways and bridges to and from the region to improve efficiency, reduce impact of heavy vehicles, travel times and time to market.
- **Regional airport development:** to improve access to the region and the accessibility of the region for tourists and potential residents.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Complete Nexus Precinct Stage 1 enabling infrastructure projects including gas reticulation, completion of southern access ramps at the Davey Road interchange and extension of rail siding at Ettamogah Rail Hub.
- Install gas gate connection and storm water retention facility at Logic industrial estate.
- Conduct a feasibility study and identify possible routes for Mulwala Alternative Freight Route.
- Develop design documents for Federation Way Freight Upgrade Route.
- Continue to develop the Mulwala Industrial Estate.
- Identify options for the Rutherglen heavy vehicle deviation.

STRATEGY CONTINUED

3 | Continue to develop and grow the Tourism sector and the visitor economy

Albury – Wodonga has a significant tourism sector which predominantly caters for domestic visitors. These visitors come to the region for a variety of purposes. Albury City, Wodonga City and Greater Hume Shire tend to attract visitors who come for business and health purposes, and to visit friends and relatives. Federation and Indigo shires tend to attract holiday tourists.

The business, health and family segments of the tourism market will likely grow in line with economic and population growth. However, the region has a number of endowments that can be major drawcards for more 'traditional' tourism. These include the Murray River, Lake Hume, Lake Mulwala, Rutherglen wineries and a number of historic locations.

Infrastructure Priorities

- **Sector assets:** Investment to a range of infrastructure to develop tourism products and assets that can drive further visitation into the region.
- **Road upgrades:** Improve the accessibility and ease of travel to, from and throughout the region.
- **Greater access to natural assets:** Provision of critical infrastructure to maintain and strengthen accessibility for visitors, such as walking paths along river banks, safe swimming zones, picnic, boating or camping facilities.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Undertake projects identified in the Murray Region Destination Masterplan including the Wagirra Trail Extension, establishment of the Wonga Wetlands Education and Experience Centre and upgrades to Riverside Parks.
- Construct a new bridge between Yarrawonga and Mulwala to provide a new route for tourism, agribusiness and manufacturing.
- Expand the Albury Entertainment Centre to increase capacity of the Convention Wing to attract convention event tourism.
- Upgrade the Lauren Jackson Sport Centre to enhance the venue as an attraction for large scale sporting, entertainment and conference events.
- Upgrade the Henty – Coorkarinia Road from Henty township to the Henty Machinery Field Days site to expand the number and range of the events at the location.
- Establish a new Federation Museum in Corowa to develop a stronger tourism product.
- Implement planned upgrades identified in the Mulwala Foreshore Redevelopment Masterplan including additional boat launching facilities and fishing wharfs and jetties.
- Commence restoration works of the Dexter Horizontal Windmill to develop it into a tourist attraction.
- Construct Beechworth to Yackandandah link of the off-road rail trail cycling link on the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.
- Upgrade Albury Airport Terminal to accommodate future passenger growth to support tourism and business travel.

STRATEGY CONTINUED

4 | Grow the Healthcare sector through the development of a Health Precinct

A priority for the region is the significance of the Healthcare sector. Already a major employer, the demand on the Healthcare sector will be increased as the region's ageing population continues to grow, particularly outside of the cities of Albury and Wodonga. Additionally, the major hospitals in Albury – Wodonga, as well as first class medical facilities such as the Regional Cancer Centre, will attract new residents to the region for healthcare services. These institutions are expected to form the basis of a wider Health Precinct, which aims to increase both the quality and variety of healthcare services in the region.

Infrastructure Priorities

- **Health precinct:** Investment to a range of infrastructure to increase and diversify the range of services offered by the health sector.
- **Local roads:** Planning and investment to roads to enhance traffic flow and management around the growing health precinct.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Create a masterplan to establish a health precinct around Albury Base Hospital to drive consolidation of health services to maximise sector productivity.
- Seek amendments to Albury Local Environment Plan to facilitate precinct establishment.
- Upgrade infrastructure to improve traffic management and pedestrian connectivity in and around the health precinct.
- Upgrade the Emergency Department at the Albury Base Hospital to meet growing regional community demand.

STRATEGY CONTINUED

5 | Attract and retain talent to sustain the supply of skilled labour by improving liveability throughout the region

As business and industry continue to grow, Albury – Wodonga may be faced with the challenge of sustaining the supply of skilled workers to meet growing demand. The region is expected to have a significant ageing population through to 2025, and it will be vital for the region to undertake efforts to bring in new workers to support the economy as people in the current workforce retire. Stronger linkages between educational institutions and local industry could help better align the local workforce to the needs of businesses, but it will be important for the region to position itself as an attractive destination for any potential workers who may choose to move to the region.

There are a number of factors that will have an impact on the decision of skilled workers to relocate to the area. Affordable housing, lifestyle blocks, access to services, strong communities, and vibrant local settings are factors that can make a location more appealing to a skilled workforce. Initiatives aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the region in any of these ways should be given consideration.

Infrastructure Priorities

- **Amenity improvements:** Improvements to the lifestyle amenities in the region to increase the attractiveness of the region to skilled workers.
- **Digital connectivity:** Provide fast and reliable internet access (NBN rollout) as well as improve mobile reception in parts of the region to enable a variety of employment opportunities.
- **Transport infrastructure:** Improve the accessibility and ease of travel to, from and throughout the region.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Implement Stage 3 of Lavington Sports Ground Redevelopment to improve amenity offering and enhance its capacity and appeal as a major event venue.
- Develop and implement annual marketing campaign and maintenance of Evojobs platform as part of the Evocities Program to attract residents from metropolitan cities.
- Undertake works as part of Albury Cultural Precinct Masterplan Implementation to enhance activation and major event opportunities for the QEII Square.
- Undertake upgrades to Wodonga Community Cultural Precinct including the expansion and upgrade of cultural assets and galleries.
- Implement projects identified in the Wodonga Hilltops Strategy including the establishment of Federation Hill lookout, upgrades to Huon Hill lookout and the development of new trails and signage.
- Undertake subdivisions of new residential land in Walla Walla to address accommodation constraints limiting the ability of businesses in the region to grow their workforce.
- Undertake an assessment of the extent of connectivity problems across the region.

STRATEGY CONTINUED

6 | Capitalise on the region's opportunity to be a special economic zone

As a combined entity, Albury – Wodonga is recognised as Australia's 20th largest city with a population of almost 100,000 residents. Given its unique strategic position along the major freight corridor connecting Melbourne and Sydney, the region will play a major economic role for NSW, Victoria and Australia in the future. However, the region also faces a number of unique economic issues created by the cross-border environment, adding additional costs to planning and construction, significant delays in consultation and therefore delivery of some infrastructure/services that non-border locations do not face.

To maximise the benefits that could be leveraged from this position, it may be worth investigating the possibility of establishing a 'Special Economic Zone' across the region that spans across both NSW and Victoria. This would allow a greater level of autonomy for the region to make adjustments to business and trade laws to drive investment, job creation and more effective administration within the region. This is seen in the *Two Cities One Community Strategic Plan* for Albury and Wodonga, but cross-border issues have impacts across the region, including at the Corowa – Wahgunyah and Mulwala-Yarrowonga borders.

This strategy does not feature any major infrastructure actions at this stage – however, implementation of a number of projects identified in the *Two Cities One Community Implementation Plan* will work towards addressing similar issues.

Infrastructure Priorities

None at present.

Early Stage Priority Actions

- Implement major actions identified in the *Two Cities One Community Action Plan* to incorporate initiatives that may lead to shared infrastructure and facility development.

Strategies and Early Stage Actions						
Enablers	Grow the Transport and Logistics sector	Continue to develop and grow the Tourism sector and the visitor economy	Grow the Healthcare sector through the development of a Health precinct	Support and grow Agribusiness and Softwoods industries throughout the region	Attract and retain talent to sustain the supply of skilled labour by improving liveability throughout the region	Capitalise on the region's opportunity to be a special economic zone
People and skills						
Government, regulation and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct a feasibility study and identify possible routes for Mulwala ➤ Develop design documents for Federation Way Freight Upgrade Route ➤ Identify options for the Rutherglen heavy vehicle deviation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a masterplan to establish a health precinct around Albury Base Hospital to drive consolidation of health services to maximise sector productivity ➤ Seek amendments to Albury Local Environment Plan to facilitate precinct establishment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and implement annual marketing campaign and maintenance of Evojobs platform as part of the Evocities Program to attract residents from metropolitan cities ➤ Undertake subdivisions of new residential land in Walla Walla to address accommodation constraints limiting the ability of businesses in the region to grow their workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement major actions identified in the Two Cities One Community Action Plan to incorporate initiatives that may lead to shared infrastructure and facility development
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete Nexus Precinct Stage 1 enabling infrastructure projects including gas reticulation, completion of southern access ramps at Davey Road interchange and extension of rail siding at Ettamogah Rail Hub ➤ Upgrade a 5 km section of Holbrook-Culcairn Road to support HML vehicle use by agribusiness and forestry sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undertake projects identified in the Murray River Experience Masterplan ➤ Expand the Albury Entertainment Centre to increase capacity of the Convention Wing to attract convention event tourism ➤ Upgrade the Lauren Jackson Sport Centre to enhance the venue as an attraction for large scale sporting, entertainment and conference events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgrade infrastructure to improve traffic management and pedestrian connectivity in and around the health precinct ➤ Upgrade the Emergency Department at the Albury Base Hospital to meet growing regional community demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construct a highway and railway crossing at Henty to facilitate improved B-Double Access to the major grain retrieval facility in Henty ➤ Undertake upgrades to Coppabella Road to accommodate the haulage of softwood plantations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement Stage 3 of Lavington Sports Ground Redevelopment to improve amenity offering and enhance its capacity and appeal as a major event venue ➤ Undertake works as part of the Albury Cultural Precinct Masterplan Implementation to enhance activation and major event opportunities for the QEII Square 	

Strategies and Early Stage Actions						
Enablers	Grow the Transport and Logistics sector	Continue to develop and grow the Tourism sector and the visitor economy	Grow the Healthcare sector through the development of a Health precinct	Support and grow Agribusiness and Softwoods industries throughout the region	Attract and retain talent to sustain the supply of skilled labour by improving liveability throughout the region	Capitalise on the region's opportunity to be a special economic zone
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construct a new bridge between Yarrawonga and Mulwala to provide a new route for tourism, agribusiness and manufacturing ➤ Continue to develop the Mulwala Industrial Estate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgrade the Henty – Coorkarinia Road from Henty township to the Henty Machinery Field Days site ➤ Establish a new Federation Museum in Corowa to develop a stronger tourism product ➤ Implement planned upgrades identified in the Mulwala Foreshore Redevelopment Masterplan ➤ Commence restoration works of the Dexter Horizontal Windmill to develop it into a tourist attraction ➤ Construct Beechworth to Yackandandah link of off-road rail trail cycling link on the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail ➤ Upgrade Albury Airport Terminal to accommodate future passenger growth to support tourism and business travel 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Upgrade a 10km section and widen four bridges on Jingellic Road (MR 331) to enable efficient freight linkages between Holbrook and Jingellic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undertake upgrades to Wodonga Community Cultural Precinct including the expansion and upgrade of cultural assets and galleries ➤ Implement projects identified in the Wodonga Hilltops Strategy 	
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install gas gate connection and storm water retention facilities at Logic industrial estate 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undertake an assessment of the extent of connectivity problems across the region 	

IMPLEMENTATION

The Strategy will need to be implemented by all five member councils as well as state government agencies and local entities.

The completion of this document is intended to be the first stage of an ongoing process where new specific actions aligned with the Vision are identified through application of the framework. It is suggested that an Advisory Committee made up of representatives from each council be established to progress the actions listed in this Strategy, apply the Strategy's framework to identify new actions to be added to the Action Plan, develop key performance indicators and evaluate outcomes. The Advisory Committee would meet every three months and would report progress on actions to each council. The Advisory

Committee could also meet every six months with the Regional Director, Albury – Wodonga, NSW Premier and Cabinet. These meetings could also be used to check the Strategy's progress and review current grant opportunities.

After two years, the Advisory Committee will conduct a formal review of the Action Plan and produce a brief report card to be published as an addendum to the Regional Economic Development Strategy. This will also provide an opportunity to update the Action Plan for new or modified actions.

After four years, the Advisory Committee will also begin the process of updating or refreshing the Regional Economic Development Strategy.



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G W Y D I R
SHIRE COUNCIL

Ref: 18/20499

26 October 2018

Attention Mayors and General Managers

Gwydir Shire Council hosted a meeting in Albury for all NSW councils prior to the recent LGNSW Conference to discuss concerns around in particular attracting and retaining doctors in rural NSW. There is a new Stronger Rural Health Strategy about to be introduced and this produces real fears that the situation will get worse.

While the meeting was well attended, there was a further 23 councils who expressed their support and interest but submitted apologies due to travelling arrangements. All relevant NSW and Federal Ministers and Shadow Ministers were invited to the meeting however none of them were able to attend.

The minutes of the meeting are attached.

The main outcomes of the meeting were for concerned councils to form a Health Alliance in their LGA similar to Gwydir Health Alliance, with each LGA Alliance then to join a NSW Alliance. Gwydir Health Alliance's Charter is attached for your information.

The meeting felt there was a real urgency to lobby state and federal governments for better health policies and funding that supports more equitable provision of health services in regional areas of NSW. It was agreed that concerned councils would seek signatures on a petition and representatives of concerned councils would seek a meeting with relevant Ministers in Canberra at the end of November, prior to Parliament rising.

Accordingly a draft Petition is attached for all concerned councils to seek signatures – the paper petition must contain a name, address and signature to be valid for use in the House. *We are still waiting on approval of an e petition from NSW Parliament and a link will be distributed once this has been received.*

In order to receive a Ministerial Response a Petition must have a minimum of 500 signatures and to facilitate a discussion in Parliament a petition must have a minimum of 10,000 or more signatures.

The paper petition MUST contain the name, address and original signature of each petitioner.

Another outcome was for interested councils, organisations and citizens to send letters to Ministers and Shadow Ministers expressing concern and seeking funding to attract and keep medical practitioners in rural areas. A draft letter is attached for your convenience.

This matter has been given media coverage last week via ABC radio. A media release is attached for concerned councils to distribute in their local media.

Also attached is the flyer distributed by the Department of Health with the details of the proposed Stronger Rural Health Strategy.

Gwydir Council was tasked with coordinating a Policy Platform to seek endorsement from other interested councils to take to Ministers in Canberra prior to Parliament rising at the end of November. This will be sent once developed.

Yours faithfully

Max Eastcott
General Manager

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Minutes of Meeting held at the Commercial Club in Albury 21 October 2018

Gwydir Health Alliance and concerned councils – Provision of Health Services in Rural,
Regional and Remote NSW

ATTENDANCE:

Bourke Shire Council, Cr Barry Hollman, Mayor
 Bourke Shire Council, Mr Ross Earl, General Manager
 Brewarrina Shire Council, Cr Phillip O'Connor, Mayor
 Brewarrina Shire Council, Cr Angelo Pippas
 Brewarrina Shire Council, Cr Vivian Slack-Smith
 Brewarrina Shire Council, Mr Jeff Sowiak, General Manager
 Carrathool Shire Council, Cr Peter Laird, Mayor
 Carrathool Shire Council, Cr Darryl Jardine, Deputy Mayor
 Cobar Shire Council, Cr Lillian Brady OAM, Mayor
 Cobar Shire Council, Cr Peter Vlatko
 Forbes Shire Council, Cr Phyllis Miller, Mayor
 Forbes Shire Council, Cr Jenny Webb, Deputy Mayor
 Forbes Shire Council, Cr Michele Herbert
 Greater Hume Council, Cr Heather Wilton, Mayor
 Greater Hume Council, Cr Doug Meyer, Deputy Mayor
 Greater Hume Council, Mr Steve Pinnuck, General Manager
 Greater Hume, Mr Mick Broughan, Chair Local Area Health Committee
 Gunnedah Shire Council, Cr Jamie Chaffey, Mayor
 Gunnedah Shire Council, Cr John Campbell
 Gunnedah Shire Council, Mr Eric Groth, General Manager
 Gwydir Shire Council, Cr John Coulton, Mayor
 Gwydir Shire Council, Cr Catherine Egan, Deputy Mayor
 Gwydir Shire Council, Cr Frances Young
 Gwydir Shire Council, Cr David Coulton
 Gwydir Shire Council, Cr Jim Moore
 Gwydir Shire Council, Mr Max Eastcott, General Manager
 Hay Shire Council, Ms Amanda Spalding, General Manager
 Kempsey Shire Council, Cr Liz Campbell, Mayor
 Moree Plains Shire Council, Cr George Chiu
 Moree Plains Shire Council, Mr Lester Rodgers, General Manager
 Murrumbidgee Shire Council, Cr Ruth McRae, Mayor
 Murrumbidgee Shire Council, Cr Robert Black, Deputy Mayor
 Murrumbidgee Shire Council, Mr John Scarce, General Manager
 Murray River Council, Cr Chris Bilkey, Mayor
 Murray River Council, Mr Des Bilske, General Manager
 Narrabri Shire Council, Cr Cathy Redding, Mayor
 Narrandera Shire Council, Mr George Cowan, General Manager
 Snowy Monaro Regional Council, Cr Peter Beer
 Snowy Valleys Council, Cr James Hayes, Mayor
 Snowy Valleys Council, Cr John Larter, Deputy Mayor

Snowy Valleys Council, Cr Cor Smit
 Snowy Valleys Council, Cr Margaret Isselman
 Snowy Valleys Council, Mr Matthew Hyde, General Manager
 Temora Shire Council, Mr Gary Lavelle, General Manager
 Tenterfield Shire Council, Cr Peter Petty, Mayor
 Tenterfield Shire Council, Cr Greg Sauer, Deputy Mayor
 Tenterfield Shire Council, Mr Terry Dodds, Chief Executive

Special Guests:

Rural and Remote Medical Services, Shane Hatton, CEO
 Australian Society of Physicians Assist, Monique Hindmarsh, Secretary
 Rural Doctors Network, Emer O'Callaghan, Snr Manager, Workforce

BACKGROUND:

Gwydir Health Alliance (GHA) was formed in 2017 after a community forum highlighted the concerns with the difficulty in attracting and retaining GPs to our rural practices. Gwydir Health Alliance consists of members from Hunter New England Local Health District, Bingara and Warialda MPS', Bingara and Warialda Aged Care Facilities, local General Practitioners, NSW Ambulance service, NSW Rural Doctors Network, Rural and Remote Medical Services (RaRMS), local Councillors, Deputy General Manager of Gwydir Shire Council and several members of the community.

The Alliance meets quarterly. Objectives include lobbying government for change, developing recruitment incentives, identification of needs, communicate with the community and with a goal of recruiting 2 – 3 fellow GPs for our two towns to solve the current workforce issues.

Management of Gwydir's two medical practices was transferred to Rural and Remote Medical Services in 2014.

At the September meeting of GHA it was agreed to schedule a meeting during the LGNSW Annual Conference and invite rural councils who may be experiencing similar problems in attracting and keeping doctors in their rural communities. Thirty councils accepted the invitation and another 15 councils indicated their support and would like to be involved, however were unable to attend as they would still be travelling at the time of the meeting.

The following Ministers and Members of Parliament were invited to attend this meeting:

The Hon Greg Hunt - Federal Minister for Health
 The Hon Catherine King – Federal Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare
 The Hon Brad Hazzard – NSW Minister for Health and Medical Research
 The Hon Walter Secord – NSW Shadow Minister for Health
 Senator The Hon Bridget McKenzie - Minister for Regional Services, Sport, Local Govnt and Decentralisation
 Professor Paul Worley – National Rural Health Commissioner
 The Hon Mark Coulton – Federal Member for Parkes
 The Hon Barnaby Joyce – Federal Member for New England

APOLOGIES were received from all the above Ministers and Members of Parliament and the following councils:

Balranald, Blayney, Bogan, Broken Hill, Central Darling, Cessnock, Cowra, Edward River, Hilltops, Inverell, Junee, Lachlan, Lithgow City, Liverpool Plains, Lockhart, Oberon, Orange City, Parkes, Singleton, Upper Hunter, Walcha, Walgett and Wentworth shire councils. Apologies also received from the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Hay Shire Council.

Minister Brad Hazzard's office contacted Gwydir Council on 18 October offering a meeting with Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health, Ms Leslie Williams MP on Thursday 25th October at Parliament House in Sydney. Max Eastcott (Gwydir GM) will attend that meeting and Shane Hatton (RaRMS) will have a phone link up.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Shane Hatton – (CEO of Rural and Remote Medical Services) gave a presentation outlining concerns with the introduction of the Stronger Rural Health Strategy to be introduced on 1 November 2018 (*flyer attached*). While this Commonwealth Strategy has been developed to ensure that people living in rural, regional and remote Australia have better access to health services, some initiatives in the strategy could have a detrimental impact on the ability of small rural practices to recruit a General Practitioner.

One of the measures of the Stronger Rural Health Strategy is Improved Access to Australian Trained Practitioners, however that strategy is likely to result in a decrease in the number of doctors taking up general practitioner posts in rural and remote locations, particularly in the short term.

The Medicare rebate available to new non-vocationally registered GPs (non VR GPs) who are not on an approved GP training program will be reduced by 20%.

There are already 277 existing GP vacancies, and this number has increased from 231 in 2016.

Concerns that Rural Other Medical Practitioners Program will cease on 31 October leaving no immediate increase in dedicated GP training places for rural, remote and regional areas. New non-VR GPs will be affected with training programs difficult to access.

Emer O'Callaghan from Rural Doctors Network advised that RDN does provide some funding assistance with the Health Workforce Scholarships Program in the Modified Monash Model classification areas 3 – 7 to gain fellowship.

Likely outcomes of the Stronger Rural Health Strategy (SRHS):

- 20% reduction in GP remuneration
- Bulk billing practices to incur 20% reduction in operating revenue
- Introduction of out of pocket fees for non-VR GPs, but bulk billing for VR GPs
- Patients who aren't bulk billed to receive a MBS rebate 20% lower than current levels
- Reduced viability for rural / remote general practice
- Less GPs recruited compared to already low rates, meaning less access to GPs for rural/remote communities
- Worse health outcomes as a result of less access

Seek short term results – how do we get doctors to the bush? Recruitment of GPs will worsen after 1 November – need to have the Policy makers understand the impacts the Stronger Rural Health Strategy will have on rural doctors.

Possible longer term items for consideration - lobbying for greater percentage of medical students from rural areas and a full review of Medicare Benefits Schedule (? move away from fee for service model and move to a health outcomes payments model).

Summary of RaRMS presentation attached.

Monique Hindmarsh – Secretary of the Aust Society of Physicians Assist (PA)

- A Physician Assistant (PA) is a health professional who practices medicine as a member of a team under the supervision of a medical practitioner. The supervision model can be direct, indirect or remote supervision depending on the experience and qualifications of the PA, as well as the needs of the community. PAs are trained under the medical model with all PAs having had previous healthcare experience (many PAs

are experienced Paramedics, Nurses and ex-military medics). The scope of a PA is determined by an agreement between the PA and the supervising doctor and is able to grow with experience and training and is flexible to meet the demands of the role. PAs are also trained as generalists.

- PAs are covered under their own indemnity insurance through Medi-insure however are also under supervision/authorisation of a senior medical practitioner.
- The PA role is present in many overseas countries including US, UK, Germany and Canada.
- Australia ran pilots in Queensland and South Australia in 2009-2010 to trial PAs. The Queensland pilot program final report demonstrated successful outcomes.
- Health Workforce Australia released a report in 2011 stating the benefits of implementing the PA model into Australia.
- The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine also released a statement in 2011 supporting the further development of models like the PA profession in rural and remote areas.
- Nurse Practitioners (NP) are trained under the nursing model in a one year Master's qualification whereas Physician Assistants are trained under the medical model (currently James Cook University School of Medicine) through a Bachelor's degree. A NP works autonomously, is specialised in one field and has a set defined scope of practice. A PA works in collaboration with the medical practitioners, is trained in all areas of medicine and the scope is determined by their supervising medical practitioner so has the ability to grow expansively over time with training.
- A PA working with Queensland Health is employed on a similar wage to a NP. A recent job advertisement (April 2018) for PAs working at Townsville Hospital in Queensland report salary as \$3,757-\$4,052 per fortnight (variable for PAs working in private practice).
- PAs supplement the general practitioners and ease the workload, increasing throughput and efficiencies in the practice.
- Able to provide support training of medical students and junior doctors.
- Majority of Australian PAs are working in QLD (general practice, emergency, speciality inpatient and outpatient services).
- Wagga Wagga about to appoint a PA.
- PAs can only prescribe in a public hospital under QLD health but cannot prescribe in a private practice.
- Australian Society of Physician Assistants Contacts:
 - William Alexander (President): 0422 738 256 ; president@aspa-australianpas.org
 - Monique Hindmarsh (Secretary): 0402 046 143; moniquehindmarsh@downsruralmedical.com.au or secretary@aspa-australianpas.org

GENERAL BUSINESS/ COMMENT:

Hay Shire Council advised they have a motion going to the LGNSW Conference seeking NSW Health Minister to form a task force representing the three tiers of government and consider financial packages for engagement of rural doctors – a similar motion was put to the national General Assembly in June – expressed disappointment in the response from Senator The Hon Bridget McKenzie.

Also seeking safeguards against medical practices profiting from sale of medical records (transferring to incoming practitioners).

Council owns and is now running the medical practice after unsuccessfully outsourcing management. VMO is now the GP, Hay Aboriginal Medical Service comes in 2 days/week.

This issue has been discussed at Riverina and Murray JO (RAM JO)

Tenterfield would like to see Royal Flying Doctors Service included in Point 5 of the proposed outcomes. Suggest QLD branch be contacted – history with recruitment issues and burnout. Collaborative approach will have more success than individuals.

Forbes Shire advised they have had a history of difficulties with doctor's shortage. Council teamed with doctors and purchased 2 practices and developed a walk in walk out model. Forbes doctors are still having difficulty attracting doctors even after offering a partnership in the practice. Parkes relies on Forbes as well.

Noted that the issues of keeping doctors in the bush are impacted by social aspects, partners and children, employment and schools.

Agreed that we need to lobby politicians, mobilise communities.

Mayor of Forbes is a Board member of LGNSW and Australian LG Association – will take copy of letter from Minister (Hay motion to National General Assembly) to ALGA board meeting in November. Believes the rural arm of LGNSW will support us.

Carrathool – commended Gwydir for raising the issue – national crisis – rural communities need doctors, pivotal to the wellbeing of the community. Noted that the Local Health District (LHD) that covers Hillston won't pay a retainer to VMOs because the larger centres in the LHD can share a VMO and the fee for service is adequate, however in the smaller town the fee for service is inadequate.

Snowy Valleys Council believes while they may not have a shortage of doctors in their towns, the doctors leave their families in Sydney and the doctors are not committed to making a lifestyle change. Also when doctors are called to emergency sections at hospitals they are not servicing the medical practices. Also when doctors are unavailable or may not be confident to make decisions, patients are sent to larger hospitals using Ambulances as a taxi service.

Cobar – take the matter to Country Mayor's meeting.

A request to send Gwydir Health Alliance's Charter out with Minutes.

OUTCOMES:

Moved Forbes Shire THAT concerned councils form an alliance in their LGA, similar to that of the Gwydir Health Alliance, with each LGA Alliance then invited to join a NSW Alliance.

Seconded Tenterfield – Vote was unanimously in favour

2. **FURTHER** THAT a Rural NSW Health Consumers and Providers Alliance be formed whose key mandate is to lobby State and Federal Governments for better health policies and funding that supports more equitable health services provision in rural and regional areas of NSW.

3. Organise a petition to be signed by community representatives across NSW – interested councils to take back to their community e.g. CWA, Lions, Rotary Club. Advertise through social media, mailing lists. **Need signatures, names and addresses within 30 days.**

A draft petition has been developed and *is attached to the Minutes* for LGAs to gain signatures.

In order to receive a Ministerial Response a Petition must have a minimum of 500 signatures and to facilitate a discussion in Parliament a petition must have a minimum of 10,000 or more signatures.

The paper petition MUST contain the name, address and original signature of each petitioner.

4. Concerned Councils, Organisations and Citizens to send letters to State and Federal Ministers and Shadow Ministers expressing concern and seeking funding – initially to attract and keep medical practitioners into rural medical practices. *Template attached to Minutes.*

5. Provide updates to and seek assistance from the following organisations:

- a. NSW Rural Doctors Network – www.nswrdn.com.au
- b. National Rural Health Alliance
<http://ruralhealth.org.au/sites/default/files/publications/nrha-factsheet-about-us-august-2018.pdf>
- c. Rural Doctors Association (NSW)
- d. Rural Doctors Association Australia
- e. Australian Medical Association (NSW)
- f. Royal Flying Doctor Service (NSW)

6. A media release be developed by Gwydir Shire Council/RaRMS reps and distributed. LGAs to distribute locally.

Some discussion about Joint Organisations adding HEALTH to their strategic priority. Do we integrate LGA alliances with JO? Members of LGA alliances having a delegate on Joint Organisations – it was agreed this can be a future outcome – main objective right now is to mobilise communities and have a delegation of Mayors/GMs meet with relevant Ministers in Canberra as soon as possible.

We need to mobilise our rural communities – they deserve the same health care that city counterparts receive – strength in numbers - make this URGENT.

What has been happening to date is not working, we need change.

Moree expressed their disappointment at the lack of response/ attendance of Politicians. Could GHA discuss recognition of the proposed Alliance and a meaningful structure of engagement with MPs when meeting with Parliamentary Secretary Ms Leslie Williams MP on 25 October, 2018.

Cobar – need to emphasise the voting issue when meeting in Canberra.

Gwydir Shire Council will coordinate the Policy Platform outlining the problems we see with the SRHS and suggested solutions, coordinate and seek authorisation from councils prior to meeting with Ministers in Canberra.

Action: Gwydir

Postscript

Following the meeting, the Parliamentary sitting dates were discussed and it was agreed that we would aim to arrange a visit with Ministers and Members in Canberra prior to Parliament rising.

Rural NSW GP crisis to worsen after the introduction of the Commonwealth's "Stronger Rural Health Strategy" measures on 1 November 2018

The scale of NSW's current rural GP workforce shortage was evident in Albury last week, when representatives from 20 of the State's rural Shire Councils met to discuss the lack of GPs in their areas. The meeting was coordinated and Chaired by the Gwydir Shire Council and was attended by approximately 50 Mayors, Councillors and General Managers, all expressing their concerns at the lack of GPs in their Shires. Representatives from another 23 Shires who shared similar concerns were unable to attend.

All relevant NSW and Federal Ministers and Shadow Ministers were invited to attend, along with the National Rural Health Commissioner. Unfortunately none were able to attend.

A survey of all attendees indicated that 100% felt that they needed more GPs in their Shires to meet patient demand, and almost 100% felt that not enough was being done to address the situation.

The meeting group was appalled at the introduction of measures associated with the Commonwealth Government's "Stronger Rural Health Strategy" which is due to come into effect on 1 November 2018, and which will likely make the GP shortage worse, not better. CEO from Rural and Remote Medical Services Ltd, Mr Shane Hatton, spoke at the meeting and said, "One of the measures of the Stronger Rural Health Strategy is actually called *"Improved Access to Australian Trained General Practitioners"* but that very strategy is likely to see a decrease in the number of doctors taking up general practitioner posts in rural and remote locations, particularly in the short to medium term."

Mr Hatton said, "The Commonwealth in their wisdom, believe that by reducing the Medicare rebate available to new non-Vocationally Registered GPs who aren't on an approved GP training program, we will somehow end up with more GPs in the bush. This is madness. This policy measure defies logic, particularly when the wait time for a Dr to get onto an approved GP training program can be up to 2 years in rural and remote locations."

According to information obtained from the NSW Rural Doctors Network website, there are already 277 existing GP vacancies being advertised across rural and remote NSW. That number has increased from 231 in 2016.

Mr Hatton believes that the Commonwealth has jumped the gun by announcing it will scrap the Rural Other Medical Practitioners (ROMPs) program on 31st October 2018. The ROMPs program came into effect in 2001, and allows non-Vocationally Registered GPs enrolled on that program to claim 100% of the Medicare rebate.

Mr Hatton said, "The Commonwealth is effectively asking new non-Vocationally Registered GPs working in rural and remote bulk billing practices, to work for 20% less. And they're asking patients who are required to pay an out of pocket fee to see those GPs, to pay 20% more than they currently are to see a GP. For rural communities already drought affected, that 20% hit to patient pockets couldn't come at a worse time."

General Manager from Gwydir Shire Council, Mr Max Eastcott, Chaired the meeting and said, "The time for action is now. We can't allow our communities to face further inequitable access to GP services any longer."

Mr Eastcott also explained how the Gwydir Health Alliance was formed, which saw health and community stakeholders from the Gwydir Shire come together each quarter to discuss issues affecting GP recruitment and retention, and health service access more broadly.

The meeting group voted unanimously for similar health alliances to be set up in each Shire across rural NSW, with each health alliance joining a NSW Rural Health Consumers and Providers Alliance, who would advocate on behalf of the relevant Shires. The meeting group also agreed to organise a mass visit to Canberra to protest over the planned changes associated with the Stronger Rural Health Strategy and to draw attention to the rural GP crisis.

Media enquiries: Mr Shane Hatton (RaRMS CEO) – 0422386676 or shatton@rarms.org.au

Mr Max Eastcott (Gwydir Shire Council General Manager) – 02 6724 2000 or meastcott@gwydir.nsw.gov.au

**TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

This petition of **concerned community members throughout rural, remote and regional NSW**

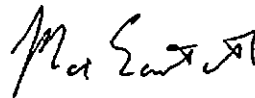
draws to the attention of the House: **As at October 2018, there are already at least 277 vacancies for GPs in rural, remote and regional locations across NSW impacting community access to, and viability of, general practice services in those locations. Rather than address this shortage of GPs in rural, remote and regional locations, the Commonwealth's *Stronger Rural Health Strategy – Improved Access to Australian Trained General Practitioners*, which takes effect on 1 November 2018, will have a detrimental impact to the recruitment and viability of adequate GP workforce to service these locations, as it will right across Australia. Further, the 20% reduction in Medicare rebates available to new non-Vocationally Registered GPs as part of this *Strategy* (i.e. the introduction of A7 Level Medicare rebates for non-VR GPs not on an approved GP training program), will further compromise the viability of general practice in rural locations at a time where drought affected communities can least afford a decrease in access to GP services, or an increase in health care costs.**

We therefore ask the House to: **1) Oversee the reinstatement of the Rural Other Medical Practitioners (ROMPs) program which was to be abolished on 31st October 2018 as part of the *Stronger Rural Health Strategy*; and 2) Increase the opportunities for non-VR GPs in locations classified as Modified Monash Model 4,5,6,7 to join approved GP training programs to better support them and improve the quality of primary healthcare provided in rural areas.**

PRINCIPAL PETITIONER

Name: Max Eastcott

Signature:



Address: Locked Bag 5, BINGARA NSW 2404

Email (if available): meastcott@gwydir.nsw.gov.au

Telephone: 02 67242018 Mobile 0427240112

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Australian Government
Department of Health

STRONGER RURAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Improved access to Australian Trained General Practitioners

Under the Stronger Rural Health Strategy, this initiative introduces a new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) fee structure and identifies non-vocationally recognised (non-VR) doctors as a distinct group for Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) General Practitioner (GP) item claiming purposes. The changes:

- ensure that MBS fees payable reflect recognised levels of qualification
- reward and incentivise investment in postgraduate specialist qualifications
- encourage more doctors to work in regional, rural and remote areas.

Fee structure

Non-vocationally recognised (non-VR) doctors will be able to bill a new set of MBS items, set at 80 per cent of what VR doctors can bill, unless they are on a recognised General Practice College training program. Non-trainee doctors who choose to practice in regional and rural areas will be able to bill a standard 80 per cent of the MBS item fee to which their more highly qualified specialist GP colleagues are entitled. Other billing restrictions will apply to non-VR doctors in metropolitan areas. The new MBS items for non-VR doctors are listed under Schedule A7, and replicate the existing GP items while setting the fee at 80%.

Doctors in private practice already have the power to charge fees above the MBS rebate level, and this will not change. Ultimately, fees charged by a practice for a doctor consultation reflects the practice's business model and what can be borne by their patients. This will depend on the level of competition between doctors in a region.

Five year grandfathering of existing provisions will apply for current Other Medical Practitioners (OMPs) participants (until 30 June 2023). Relevant OMPs programs will stop taking new entrants from 1 November 2018.

The base rate for standard consultations for non-VR doctors has been increased by 20 per cent in regional, rural and remote areas. Those on a OMPs program will have five years to attain Fellowship. All non-VR doctors will be able to apply for additional assistance through new non-VR Fellowship support programs that will be run by the General Practice Colleges.

The new fee structure commenced on 1 July 2018 and applies to all services performed on and from that date.

Pathway to Fellowship

To bill 100 percent, non-VR doctors will need to be on an approved pathway for College Fellowship as a GP.

The new fee structure and access arrangements will affect all new non-VR doctors (other than those participating on approved training programs). There are no changes to the MBS fees payable to VR

GPs or to GP trainees on the Australian General Practice Training Program, Remote Vocational Training Scheme and ACRRM Independent Pathway.

Rural and remote areas

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification will be used to determine geographic eligibility. The MMM designation of any location can be identified using the DoctorConnect locator map at www.doctorconnect.gov.au/locator.

There are a large number of junior doctors who are not on a Fellowship program and are not able to practice under Medicare. A new workforce program commencing in 2019 will give them access to Medicare provider numbers if they practice supervised medicine in rural and regional areas. Under the changes, non-VR doctors in specified areas will be able to bill 80 per cent of the benefit available to VR doctors and GP trainees.

Non-VR doctors in MMM-1 locations will be restricted to the existing A2 and A19 items for standard GP services, with access to the new group A7 items for after hours and other general practice services beyond standard consultations.

Further information

Updates on progress of the reform and further information:

- Department of Health's website www.health.gov.au
- Modified Monash Model of geographical classification and locations: www.doctorconnect.gov.au

The Gwydir News

Incorporating **The Bingara Advocate** and **The Warialda Standard**

Bingara (02) 6724 1127

Warialda (02) 6729 1460

Vol. 1. No. 31

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2018

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Rural NSW GP crisis to worsen

The rural NSW GP crisis will worsen after the introduction of the Commonwealth's "Stronger Rural Health Strategy" measures on 1 November, according to a group of rural Councils.

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The meeting was coordinated and chaired by the Gwydir Shire Council and was attended by approximately 50 Mayors, Councillors and General Managers, all expressing their concerns at the lack of GPs in their Shires. Representatives from another 23 Shires who shared similar concerns were unable to attend.

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The meeting group also agreed to organise a mass visit to Canberra to protest over the planned changes associated with the Stronger Rural Health Strategy and to draw attention to the rural GP crisis.

A petition has been circulated in a number of businesses in Bingara and Warialda and an on-line petition will be posted as soon as possible.

Contract Management Policy

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Contract Management Policy	1.0.1	November 2022
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
Click Here to Enter Date	Insert Minute Number Here	Revised

Purpose

To implement a defined policy and procedure that identifies the key responsibilities associated with the management of Council contracts.

The application of this policy and procedure will commence at the completion of the procurement process (post award) and is designed to assist Council Officers in managing and monitoring contracts and to ensure all contractual objectives are realised.

Scope

The policy applies to all Council Officers responsible for the management of contracts on behalf of Council.

This policy applies to contracts if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The procurement activity is high risk
- The contract value is greater than \$150,000 (including GST) or a lesser amount if tenders are called.
- The term of the contract exceeds 12 months.

Definitions

Contract means any contract, agreement or lease entered into by Council with a third party.

Contract Manager – is the Council staff member responsible for the management and oversight of the contract.

Policy Content

Council is responsible for the management of a diverse range of contracts including service, supply, building and construction-based contracts. To effectively manage these contracts Council Officers must apply the following key principles of effective contract management:

- Contracts are to be administered in accordance with Council's policies and procedures, local government regulations and relevant NSW State and Commonwealth legislation;
- A Contract Management Plan must be developed prior to the commencement of the contract;
- Contract Managers must be suitably qualified and experienced;
- At contract start-up the key objectives of the contract must be confirmed with the contractor;
- During the contract term effective communication and open and collaborative business relationships are to be established and maintained with contractors and all stakeholders;
- Contracts must be monitored regularly and their performance assessed against Performance Measurement Indicators;
- All risks must be reviewed annually and where applicable, risk management plans updated;
- All contract variations must be managed in accordance with the conditions of the contract;
- Contract variations exceeding 5% of the original contract value or a cumulative total of 10% or greater must be approved by the General Manager;
- All contract term extensions greater than 30 working days in any one occurrence or for a cumulative period greater than 60 days, must be authorised by the relevant Director;
- Disputes are to be managed in accordance with the Resolution of Disputes clause in the contract;
- Management reporting must be carried out in accordance with the contract specifications;

Contract Management Policy

- At the completion of a contract a formal review process must be undertaken by the Contract Superintendent.
- The application of this policy and the attached Contract Management Procedure may be considered for shorter term (less than 12 months) procurement/contracts less than \$150,000 (including GST).

Links to Policy

Procurement Policy

Statement of Business Ethics

Links to Procedure

Contract Management Plan and Procedure

Procurement Procedures

Links to Forms

Contract Management Checklist

Contract Variation Form

References

Nil

Responsibility

All Staff involvement in managements of contracts

Document Author

General Manager

Relevant Legislation

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

Associated Records

Nil

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Aboriginal Cultural Protocols and Practice Policy	1.0.2	October 2022
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
Click Here to Enter Date	Insert Minute Number Here	Revised

Purpose

Council has resolved to adopt a protocol that observes respect for the recognition of Aboriginal people at official meetings and events. This policy outlines Council's position with regard to the protocol.

Council recognises Aboriginal people's unique position in the history and culture of NSW. Aboriginal people are the original owners of the land and it is important that this special position is recognised and incorporated into official protocol.

By incorporating Aboriginal cultural practices into official events, Council is able to:

- recognise and pay respect to Aboriginal peoples, cultures and heritage.
- communicate Aboriginal cultural practices to the broader community to promote respect and understanding.
- demonstrate that Aboriginal cultures are living through maintenance and practice of ceremonies and protocols.
- demonstrate recognition of Aboriginal people's unique position which can assist in building relationships and partnerships.

Scope

The policy applies to all formal Council meetings and all special events where Council has the lead organisational role, e.g. citizenship ceremonies and Australia Day events.

Definitions

Acknowledgement of Country

This is a short statement (as follows) read by the chairperson of the meeting, master of ceremonies or speaker at commencement. Adopted wording for the Acknowledgment of Country is:

"I would like to acknowledge that this event/celebration/meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people, and pay my respect to elders both past, present **and emerging.**"

Policy Content

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing awareness of and respect for the traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owners of the land on which a meeting or event is being held, and of recognising the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to their Country.

An Acknowledgement of Country can be informal or formal and involves visitors acknowledging the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owners of the land as well as the long and continuing relationship between Indigenous peoples and their Country.

At a speech or formal occasion the Chairperson or speaker begins the proceedings by offering an Acknowledgement of Country. Unlike a Welcome to Country, it can be performed by a non-Indigenous person.

At a formal meeting of Council, the Acknowledgement of Country shall immediately follow the prayer.

Links to Policy

Nil

Links to Procedure

Code of Meeting Practice

Links to Forms

Nil

References

NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Aboriginal Cultural Protocols and Practices Policy
Reconciliation Australia Q and A Factsheet – Welcome To and Acknowledgement Of Country

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Welcome-to-and-Acknowledgement-of-Country.pdf>

Responsibility

General Manager

Document Author

Executive Assistant – Governance/Economic Development

Relevant Legislation

Nil

Associated Records

Nil

Communications Policy

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Communications Policy	1.0.1	October 2022
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
Click Here to Enter Date	Insert Minute Number Here	Revised

Purpose

The Greater Hume **Shire** Council Communications Policy provides the framework for communication between Council and its internal and external stakeholders.

The effective dissemination of information and communication engagement is a vital element in building a positive identity for Council through awareness of its services, activities and projects, achievements and resources. Community engagement, consultation and public relations are embraced in this policy statement.

Effective **successful** communication will be achieved through the distribution of regular, consistent and truthful information in partnership with productive community consultation on key issues.

Scope

This policy applies to councillors, employees, contractors, consultants and any other persons including volunteers who undertake activities for Council.

Greater Hume **Shire** Council's 'communication stakeholders' include:

- Ratepayers and residents
- Potential residents of Greater Hume **Shire**
- Greater Hume **Shire** Councillors
- Employees and volunteers of Greater Hume **Shire**
- Visitors to **the** Greater Hume **Shire**
- Investors, developers and individuals with business interests within the Greater Hume **shire**
- Customers who seek products or services or information from Council
- Community and government organisations
- Local, regional and national media.

Definitions

Communication is the imparting or exchanging of information between Council, the community and stakeholders.

Community includes all people who live, work, study or conduct business in, or who visit, use and enjoy the services, facilities and public places of Greater Hume Council **area. Shire.**

Consultation is the provision of information and engagement by Council to its community and stakeholders (external and internal) that enables them to respond (expressing concerns and identified issues) so these can be considered before a final decision is made.

Social Media is the term given to computer-mediated technologies that allow the creating and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.

Policy Content

In committing to this policy Council aims to ensure that its communication strategy will:

- Provide regular and consistent communication on Council's projects and activities to all stakeholders
- Create a positive and professional image for Greater Hume **Shire** Council through open communication and increased awareness of Council's activities and projects

Communications Policy

- Foster a meaningful community consultation process in Council's activities
- Ensure that effective internal communication be undertaken is a key factor in all communication
- Develop a strong customer service focus within Greater Hume Shire Council
- Effectively manage negative issues
- Effectively manage unexpected crisis/disaster issues or events, e.g. Loose Fill Asbestos
- Ensure print, web based and electronic communication layouts comply with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Use a variety of methods to communicate and to provide information in formats that accommodate the needs of all stakeholders.

Corporate Identity

Council's corporate identity image must reflect-expresses its Council's approach to business, its culture and its values.

Council needs to present a consistent and uniform visual image to ensure that its values are most effectively portrayed. Visual symbols include the correct use of Council's logo and corporate colours and use of consistent fonts and layouts in all publications and promotional material including stationery, Council strategic documents, printed community newsletter, electronic newsletters, banners, displays, etc.

Council will adhere to the Greater Hume Council Shire (GHC) Brand Manual which will ensure a consistent image is portrayed across all mediums and formats.

Senior management will encourage the wearing of corporate uniforms and name badges.

Greater Hume Shire Council Brand Manual

GHS Brand Manual is a document that establishes distinct guidelines on the use of how all aspects of Council's new branding. will be handled. It should establish rules for creating a unified and identifiable presence for the Council brand.

Council's Brand Manual will define the Council logo and formats, and provide a guideline when the corporate brand and corporate brand with positioning statement formats are to be used.

The Brand Manual will provide templates for letterhead, business cards, Integrated Planning & Reporting document layouts, front covers for strategic documents, community newsletter layout, Microsoft Powerpoint template, email signatory format, website design/layout, community engagement guides, media releases, regional entry signage and town/village signage layouts, office external branding, facility signage (e.g. Customer Service Offices, Depots, Libraries), park signs, interpretative town/tourism signs, vehicle decal signage, corporate banners, as well as prescribe layouts for agendas, public notice and employment advertisements. In addition, icons created for Facebook posts will also be defined in the Brand Manual (e.g. Council announcement, Council News, etc.), and front page imagery for Survey Monkey online survey platform.

It is proposed that the GHS Brand Manual will include the three other brands in the Greater Hume 'brand family' and reaffirm definitions for these brands:

- Greater Hume Children Services
- Greater Hume Youth Advisory Committee
- Buy Local in Greater Hume Shire.

Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan

The adoption of the policy will be the catalyst for development of the The Greater Hume Shire Council Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan was adopted in June 2017.

Communications Policy

The strategy ~~plan will~~ incorporates a Communication Engagement Toolkit (CET) which is a planning tool for all events/projects (including crisis management communication) which are deemed by senior management to require a CET. ~~The CET will apply to events/projects across all departments of Council. All documents requiring public comment prior to final adoption will require a CET. The CET is prepared prior to commencement of the project and is reviewed at key milestones and/or as determined by the department or General Manager. Directors are responsible for ensuring CET documents are developed for projects that they have overall management responsibility.~~

Stakeholder Engagement

Council has also adopted a Stakeholder Engagement Policy to assist staff to identify stakeholders and the level and type of engagement required for effective communication and decision making for all projects and changes to service delivery.

Website

Council's new website is ~~will be~~ regarded as a corporate publication with high visibility. ~~The new website and its image and content must reflect Council's corporate image and strategic objectives.~~ The website is ~~will be~~ designed to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 standards in accordance with the Australian Government Accessibility Policy.

~~The new website is an will be an effective information source which can be accessed by anyone, anywhere, at a time that is convenient to the user with computer, laptop, tablet and smartphone friendly format. As more people transact with Council online, the more the website becomes the council.~~

~~Regular communications and marketing initiatives must be maintained by Council to encourage stakeholders to use the website for Council and community information, and provide an effective mechanism for community engagement and feedback.~~

~~Council's new website design must be consistent with the Greater Hume Shire Brand Manual to support Council's corporate image and achieve the key outcomes outlined above.~~

Social Media

Council actively uses social media platforms to engage and communicate its services, activities, achievements and resources with residents and ratepayers.

~~A social media strategy will be developed as part of the Communication Plan. The proper use, documentation and record keeping of all Council's social media communications is summarised in Council's Social Media Policy.~~

Customer Service

The way in which Council receives, answers and responds to phone calls, letters, ~~faxes~~ and ~~communication received electronically~~ ~~emails~~ combined with its face to face contact with customers, has the greatest impact on how Council is perceived in the community.

It is vital that Council ensures correct, effective, efficient and customer orientated responses are generated to develop and maintain a positive reputation for Council.

Council's Customer Service Standard defines customer service expectations of staff, including the use of Telephone Call Forward, Email Out Of Office and Status View.

Communications Policy

Events

Greater Hume Shire's annual Australia Day Event is Council's major sponsored event in the shire. Events are planned in accordance with Council's Event Guide. ~~A Communication Engagement Toolkit is utilised in preparing for any Council major event.~~

Events play an important role in community life as a means of entertainment, social interaction and source of pride and sense of place. Council events are commonly staged to celebrate and recognise achievements within the community and/or to promote a specific key message or interest.

Council also provides financial or in-kind support to community events to establish mutually beneficial partnerships between Council and the community which raise the profile of the Council.

Employee Relations

Elected Councillors and employees are its most effective public relations ambassadors. It is vital that all employees and Councillors receive timely, relevant, consistent and user friendly information to ensure that they are adequately informed on Council's activities, and to minimise the likelihood of misinformation ~~in the community.~~

Effective internal communication also encourages a participatory approach to change management, increases employees' morale and encourages more effective communication between employees across department and management levels.

Councillors of Greater Hume ~~Shire~~ are expected to demonstrate standards of conduct and behaviour that are consistent with relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Media Relations

The local media, including newspapers, radio, television and digital media is a significant source of community information about Council. There are times when regional, statewide and national media interest is generated or occurs due to external conditions.

Council is committed to good media relations requiring a commitment to good governance, transparency and regular media contact in addition to a strategic outlook, political sensitivity and access to senior staff/information.

Only the Mayor and General Manager (or ~~his~~ delegated officer) are authorised to speak to the media on behalf of Council, in accordance with the Media Policy.

~~Monitoring and Evaluation~~

~~The effectiveness of Council's communication tools must be monitored to ensure that Council's stakeholders are adequately aware of and informed of Council's activities and services.~~

~~Monitoring and evaluation must occur on a regular basis to ensure that Council is achieving its communication objectives and so that Council can modify, amend or continue communication programs as needs be.~~

~~Monitoring and evaluation shall be addressed in the Communication Plan.~~

Links to Policy

[Stakeholder Engagement Policy](#)

[Media Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

Links to Procedure

[Stakeholder Engagement Procedure](#)

Links to Forms

Insert Content

References

Insert Content

Responsibility

General Manager

Document Author

Executive Assistant – Governance and Economic Development

Relevant Legislation

[Local Government Act 1993](#)

[Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)

[Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and the Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014](#)

[Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998](#)

Associated Records

[Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan](#)

[Community Engagement Strategy](#)

[Disability Inclusion Action Plan](#)

[Local Disaster Plan](#)

[Greater Hume Council Brand Guidelines](#)