

9 SUMMARY OF REGIONAL CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES, AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL KEY ISSUES

Dungog LGA plays an important role in the wider Hunter Region and NSW as a whole, in particular for its wealth of wilderness areas, and as an important agricultural production and water catchment area. If the proposed Tillegra Dam proceeds, this role will strengthen.

Many of the constraints to growth and change are economic and related to global conditions. Structural issues particularly affecting the Region and future development opportunities are:

- Ageing of the population, particularly in rural areas
- Increased centralisation of services in major centres (especially for health and education)
- Continued structural adjustment in the rural and agricultural industries, together with some growth of more diversified rural enterprises and constraints based on limited water availability
- Relatively poor public transport accessibility
- An attractive natural/rural environment
- Generally adequate land supply but potential for future mismatch between available housing and future demand (e.g. accommodation suitable for aged persons, and affordable housing for disadvantaged groups)

Specific land use issues that can be anticipated in the future within Dungog LGA include the possible construction of the Tillegra Dam; a continuing rationalisation of agricultural production; and increasingly divergent land use characteristics (e.g. uses, population and services) between the towns and villages, depending on their size and location. This Situation Analysis discusses and highlights key issues for consideration in the preparation of future land use strategies for the LGA an overview of which can be found in the executive summary at the beginning of the document.

In broad terms the following list requires the most emphasis in the future landuse strategy.

1. Developing vibrant places in which people live and do business by;
 - Protecting local heritage
 - Providing local employment opportunities
 - Improving accessibility
 - Stimulating local culture and vibrancy
 - Developing strategies to retain young people
 - Maintaining commercial competition
2. Promoting economic development, protecting and enhancing local employment opportunities

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- Providing opportunities to maintain and grow urban populations
 - Providing adequate industrial and commercial land
 - Protecting agricultural land and viability, considering opportunities for future growth (including minimum subdivision size)
 - Strengthening the provision of infrastructure (e.g. Water, sewer, roads, telecommunications, public transport)
 - Developing new local economic opportunities
 - Facilitating tourism development
3. Identifying future settlement needs
- Identifying settlement needs across LGA and areas for future urban expansion while considering overflow of housing demand from the Lower Hunter
 - Providing and maintaining urban infrastructure (e.g. urban water supply, road networks)
 - Providing for infill development (including mixed densities)
 - Maintaining village and town centre integrity
 - Increasing demand for 'tree change' lifestyle
 - Providing adequate and appropriate aged care facilities
 - Urban sustainability (e.g. waste disposal, stormwater, onsite wastewater disposal)
4. Providing appropriate opportunities for rural small holding subdivision and development considering;
- Future use and development of villages
 - Adequate land for large lot residential and rural small holdings
 - Minimum land areas for dwelling entitlements
 - Service provision (including water, sewer, groundwater and surface water runoff)
5. Recognising environmental values, constraints and protection requirements including:
- Catchment health, rural water quality and availability
 - Impacts of the proposed Tillegra Dam
 - Heritage issues (including indigenous and natural)
 - Scenic and cultural landscapes
 - Natural hazards
 - Land capability (including salinity)
 - Biodiversity and natural ecosystems
 - Climate change implications

These issues are generally reviewed at the LGA scale. The focus of the Future Land Use Strategy will primarily be on these key issues which are critical to future land use planning and are able to be significantly influenced by the land Use Strategy and future LEP provisions.

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9.1 Consultation

This Situation Analysis is a research document that has been developed to inform the Dungog Land Use Strategy. Throughout its development, information was collected from Government Agencies and Dungog Shire Council. The Following agencies have provided input and will be formally consulted at the Draft Land Use Strategy Stage:

- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (Commonwealth)
- Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (Commonwealth)
- Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (Commonwealth)
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Commonwealth)
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Commonwealth)
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Commonwealth)
- Department of Health and Ageing (Commonwealth)
- NSW Department of Planning
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- NSW Department of Education and Training
- Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW
- Department of Environment and Climate Change
- NSW Health
- NSW Department of Housing
- NSW Department of Community Services
- NSW Ministry of Transport
- NSW Primary Industries- Agriculture
- NSW State Emergency Services
- Department of State and Regional Development
- Department of Commerce
- NSW Heritage Office
- Department of Lands
- Country Energy
- State Forests of NSW
- Transgrid
- NSW Department of Natural Resources
- Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority
- Hunter New England Health Services