

OBERON COUNCIL
Local Strategic Planning
Statement 2040



“Oberon – more than you imagine”

Document Status

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1	Oberon Council	March 2020	Pre exhibition draft
2	Oberon Council	May 2020	Exhibition draft
3	Oberon Council	June 2020	Final

Mayor's Foreword



To develop a vision for land use for the next twenty years the Oberon Council Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) considers land use trends that are currently occurring in the Local Government Area (LGA) and anticipates others that may likely emerge.

The continued importance of agriculture, forestry, lifestyle and tourism is acknowledged and planning actions are included in this document to ensure ongoing viability in these areas. However we must also be cognisant of the fact that the use of agricultural land is changing across the country.

Council is looking at planning strategies to increase employment opportunities in both the manufacturing and farming sectors through value adding and new development.

Currently Oberon is enjoying popularity as a lifestyle option with many new residents choosing to move here and embrace our lifestyle. The LSPS looks to expand upon this trend and analyse what will be required to further enhance the popularity of Oberon whilst minimising risks to new residents posed by bushfire, flooding and other natural disasters.

“Oberon – more than you imagine” is the vision of Council community strategic plan with the mission being “A prosperous town, village and rural communities set amongst the rolling hills, rivers, forests, mountains and caves of the Great Divide. Breathe fresh air in a landscape of light, colour and seasonal beauty. Life as it should be.”

Oberon Council is committed to this message and views land use planning as a means to protect our most important assets whilst at the same time providing lifestyle and employment opportunities which will enhance the vibrancy of our LGA into the future.

Kathy Sajowitz
Oberon Council Mayor

Acknowledgement of Country

Oberon Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the Traditional Lands of the Wiradjuri, Dharug and Gundungurra people. Oberon Council respects elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal peoples.

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About this Statement

This Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets out a 20 year vision for land use planning framework for Oberon Council's economic, social and environmental needs over this period. It addresses the planning and development issues of strategic significance to the Council through planning priorities and actions, spatial land use direction and guidance.

The LSPS gives effect to the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036* implementing the Directions and actions at a local level. It is also informed by other State-wide and Regional Policies including *Future Transport Plan 2056* and the *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2018 – 2038*.

The LSPS works with Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019-2040. The LSPS has a similar but broader purpose on how Council will through land use planning meet the community's needs.

The planning priorities and actions contained in the LSPS provide the strategic framework about how land is used to achieve the community's broader goals.

Purpose of this Statement

Oberon's population is projected to increase (from 5,301) to 6,650 people by 2038. To manage this growth and build capacity in our townships and rural communities, the Oberon Council LSPS sets 20-year plan integrating land use, transport and infrastructure planning that aligns with the Directions set out in the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036*.

All councils within NSW are required to prepare a local strategic planning statement to act as a link between the strategic priorities identified at a regional level and the finer-grained planning at a local level expressed in council's local environmental plan and development control plans, to ensure consistency in strategic planning approaches.

The link or line-of-sight between Council's Planning Priorities and the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan* is illustrated in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Role of the Local Strategic Planning Statement: Strategic-led planning framework
Source: Department of Planning and Environment, 2018, LSPS Guideline for Councils

Context

Policy Context

This Statement has been prepared in accordance with section 3.9 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act) which requires that it include or identify the following:

- a. the basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters,
- b. the planning priorities for the area that are consistent with any strategic plan applying to the area and (subject to any such strategic plan) any applicable community strategic plan under section 402 of the *Local Government Act 1993*,
- c. the actions required for achieving those planning priorities,
- d. the basis on which the council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.

Consultation

Council prepared this LSPS by building upon the results of extensive engagement undertaken in developing Council's Community Strategic Plan, during 2017-2018, including community feedback regarding what residents like and dislike about Oberon and what residents would like to see retained and changed.

Councillors were made aware of the LSPS requirements via Council Reports in July and December 2019.

Initial consultations were held with the residents of some of the villages of the Oberon LGA as well as Oberon itself. However a consultation meeting within Oberon was cancelled due to the Public Health Orders mandated from the onset of the COVID-19 virus. Residents were made aware of this via social media. The presentation was made available on social media in March 2020. A pop-up stand was also utilised in Oberon Street seeking community input.

These consultation sessions were designed to give residents information on this new strategic planning approach prior to the draft LSPS document being placed on public exhibition in May 2020. The community was invited to make themselves aware of the LSPS and submit their views to Council.

During this process the community was also informed that the LSPS will lead to the development of a new Land Use Strategy (LUS) and eventually a new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) this work to be undertaken in 2022/23. Following this will be the development of a new Development Control Plan (DCP). The community was also informed that all these documents will have consultation processes throughout their development where the community will again be asked to participate.

Context

Monitoring and Reporting

This LSPS describes the long-term land use strategy for the Oberon Council LGA to 2040. This statement is intended to be a living document and should be revised on an ongoing, as-needs-basis so that the plan remains responsive, relevant and local.

Council will monitor and report on progress of the LSPS priorities, actions and outcomes in its annual report. This will inform adjustments to the LSPS to ensure local planning policy is effective, responsive and delivering on local community aspirations. A comprehensive review will be undertaken in 2026, if not earlier.

Community feedback will be regularly sought. This consultation will identify continuous improvement opportunities and will ensure that the LSPS continues to reflect the community's social and economic needs.

Existing governance arrangements with Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils will be utilised to support effective approaches to regional issues. The need to collaborate with other council's in the region recognises the wider role that Oberon Councils strategic planning and decision-making plays in achieving the objectives of the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036* and the *Abercrombie Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022*, as outlined in Table 1. It also recognises the potential impact that strategically important decisions regarding critical infrastructure, environmental issues, housing, investment and a range of other topics covered in the LSPS may have on the plans of neighbouring communities. These valued cross Council boundary partnerships will also help deliver Oberon Council's vision by driving efficiencies in accessing government funding, attracting inward investment and accessing a wider field of expertise.

Council will monitor, review and report on its LSPS to ensure that its planning priorities are being achieved, using the existing Integrated Planning & Reporting framework (IP&R) in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Funding & Investment

Strategies and studies required by this LSPS will be included within the future 4-year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plans of Council. Ongoing funding opportunities through the Regional Growth Fund as well as other state agencies will also be explored.

Context

Linkages to Oberon CSP and Regional Plans – Table 1

Oberon CSP - Strategic Themes	Infrastructure	Environment	Comm. Well being	Growth	Leadership
Central West & Orana Regional Plan	Direction 11: Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities	Direction 1: Protect the region’s diverse and productive agricultural land	Direction 5: Improve access to health and aged care services	Direction 25: Increase housing diversity and choice	Direction 4: Promote and diversify regional tourism markets
	Direction 12: Plan for greater land use capability	Direction 2: Grow the agribusiness sector and supply chains	Direction 16: Respect and protect Aboriginal Heritage Assets	Direction 26: Increase housing choice for seniors	Direction 10: Promote business and industrial activities on land with appropriate zoning
	Direction 18: Improve freight connections to markets and global gateways	Direction 9: Increase renewable energy generation	Direction 17: Conserve and adaptively re-use Heritage Assets	Direction 28: Manage rural residential development	Direction 15: Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change
	Direction 19: Enhance road and rail freight networks	Direction 13: Protect and manage environmental assets	Direction 22: Manage growth and change in regional cities and strategic and local centres		Direction 20: Enhance access to air travel and public transport
	Direction 21: Coordinate utility infrastructure investment	Direction 14: Manage and conserve water resources for the environment	Direction 23: Build the resilience of towns and villages Direction 29: Deliver healthy built environment and better urban design		
Abercrombie Regional Economic Development Strategy	Strategy 3: Optimising Regional Transport and Intermodal Networks	Strategy 5: Encouraging Value-Adding in Agriculture		Strategy 1: Develop and Diversify the Region’s Brand and Local Tourism Offerings	Strategy 2: Provide Opportunities for Attracting and Retaining Entrepreneurs and Young Skilled Professionals
	Strategy 4: Optimising Growth in the Development of Regional Infrastructure			Strategy 6: Capitalise on Existing Strengths in Manufacturing	

Context

Our Place in the Central West and Orana Region

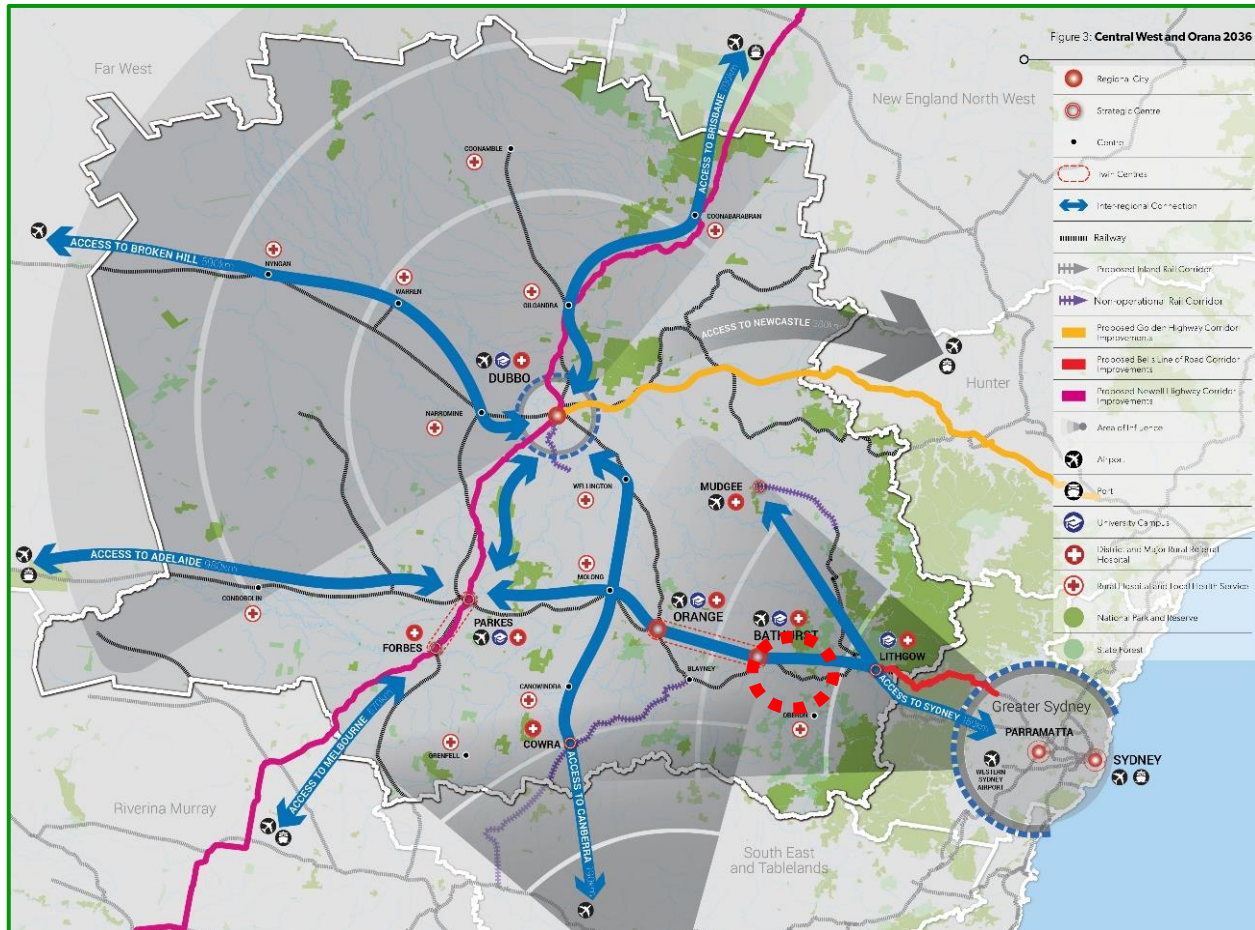


Figure 2: Oberon Council's relationship to the region.
Source: Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036

Oberon Council is located in Central New South Wales, bordering with the local government areas of Lithgow City, Bathurst Regional, Blue Mountains, Wollondilly, Goulburn and Upper Lachlan Councils. It is approximately 200km from Sydney and has strong connections with nearby Regional Centres of Goulburn, Lithgow and Bathurst.

Due to its location there are continued opportunities to grow the population of Oberon as the Lithgow and Bathurst local government areas (LGA's) have a major influence through employment and access to higher level goods and services. There are growing numbers of residents who work in Bathurst and Lithgow that have chosen the affordable rural and community lifestyle offered by Oberon. The proximity to Sydney also makes Oberon a popular choice for older professionals seeking a "tree change" as they move from full time work into semi-retirement.

Context

Our community

The population of the Oberon LGA is expected to reach 6650 by 2038 which represents an increase of 1242 people from 2018. Proximity to jobs and higher-level services in Bathurst, Orange, Lithgow and Sydney is a key driver of this ongoing growth, with new residents attracted to the rural lifestyle, rural services and large residential allotments on offer in Oberon's towns and villages.

Population figures have been derived from a report by Western Research Institute (WRI) Oberon Population Projection 2018-43 October 2019. The population projection estimates contrast with NSW Government forecasts which anticipate a decline in the Oberon population over the next 20 years. WRI suggest this is caused by a number of factors including the factoring in of the impacts of known Oberon development projects that will generate jobs and stimulate both the economy and potential increases in the tourism sector and drive resident population figures upwards as shown in Tables 2 and 3










Our population is dispersed across seven (7) villages and localities (Oberon, Edith, Mount David, Jenolan, O'Connell, Burruga and Black Springs), and rural areas. Overall 1419 people work full-time and 694 people work part-time. 12.8% of these people are employed in the agricultural sector.

Our community is ageing and it is forecasted that the population in the Oberon LGA in the over 65 year old age group will represent a significantly larger proportion of the population in years to come. There are also an increasing number of families without children in the area. This change in the population demographic will continue to increase the importance of the health care and the social assistance sector in the Oberon LGA. Currently employment in the sector has been rising since 2011.

The proximity of Oberon to Bathurst and Sydney provides employment opportunities for a large portion of our working population (for example in 2018, 444 Oberon residents worked in Lithgow and Bathurst. It is expected this figure to rise to 475 by 2023). This figure may increase to 2036 as the Bathurst LGA growth is estimated at 20.8% for that period. The proximity to these cities allows the Oberon community to gain employment in a variety of professional jobs, with many of our workforce employed as managers, professionals or clerical and administration workers. The growing populations of the regional cities and Oberon have also provided opportunity for the construction industry which accounts for a third of our workforce.

Context

Oberon Local Government Area trends and NSW comparison - Table 2

 <p>Current Population 5301 persons</p> <p>Trend Rising (6650 persons by 2038)</p> <p>NSW Comparison 7,480,228 persons</p>	 <p>Current Median Age 45 years</p> <p>Trend Rising</p> <p>NSW Comparison 38 years</p>	 <p>Proportion of Population Younger (0-14) 16.7% of pop</p> <p>Trend Falling</p> <p>NSW Comparison 18.5% of pop</p>
 <p>Proportion Unemployed 5.7% of pop.</p> <p>Trend Rising</p> <p>NSW Comparison 6.3% of pop</p>	 <p>Proportion of Rental Housing 23.4% of homes</p> <p>Trend Steady</p> <p>NSW Comparison 31.8% of homes</p>	 <p>Median weekly household income \$1,239</p> <p>Trend Rising</p> <p>NSW Comparison \$1,486</p>
 <p>Average Household Size 2.4 persons</p> <p>Trend Steady</p> <p>NSW Comparison 2.6 persons</p>	 <p>Proportion of Lone Person Households 27.3% of homes</p> <p>Trend Steady</p> <p>NSW Comparison 23.8% of homes</p>	 <p>Proportion of Older Adults (65+) 22.1% of pop</p> <p>Trend Rising</p> <p>NSW Comparison 16.3% of pop</p>

Context

Top Three Industry Trends Compared to New South Wales – Table 3

Agricultural Sector	Manufacturing Sector	Health & Assistance Sector
Oberon: Now: 16.5% of pop. Trend: Steady	Oberon: Now: 15.4% of pop. Trend: Falling	Oberon: Now: 7.9% of pop. Trend: Rising
NSW: Now: 2.2% of pop. Trend: Falling	NSW: Now: 5.8% of pop. Trend: Falling	NSW: Now: 12.5% of pop. Trend: Rising

Our Environment

The environment which makes up the Oberon LGA is diverse, as shown in Table 4, and plays an integral role in the economic, social and natural environment of the Area. These assets have been utilised by the traditional land owners, the Wiradjuri, Dharug and Gundungurra people, who historically recognised the favourable climate and water resources and continue to have long standing cultural and community connection with the land.

Our diverse environmental areas provide important habitat for rare and vulnerable species which includes 46 species of mammals including 27 marsupials. The beds, banks and riparian areas adjacent to the water bodies are key habitat areas and home to a number of important plant and animal species.

In the Oberon LGA the Kanangra-Boyd National Park, part of the Blue Mountains National Park, parts of the Abercrombie National Park, Jenolan Karst Conservation Reserve, Jenolan Caves, Lake Oberon/Oberon Dam are environmental assets that have a regional, state and national significance.

Oberon climate is a cool temperate climate with an average rainfall of 838mm. Frosts occur regularly during autumn, winter and spring, because of its elevation 700m-1,350m above sea level (Oberon township: 1,113m) and occasional snowfalls are experienced.

The NSW Wind Atlas identifies Oberon LGA as having a relatively high wind speed. Alternative energy sources such as wind farming are an identified potential future opportunity for the LGA.

Our agricultural lands leverage off the climate conditions and fertile soils and are the largest economic contributor, contributing \$246 million to the local gross domestic product (12% of the total Gross Domestic Product).

Context

Oberon Council Environment and Infrastructure – Table 4

Oberon Council Land Area Total Area: 3660 km ²	Rainfall Average Per Year: 838 mm	Average temperature Summer: 21 day 12 night Winter: 8 day 1 night
Land Management Forestry Land: 68,789 ha Bushfire prone land: 326,250 ha	National Parks & Reserves National Parks: 2 Nature Reserves: 1	Open Space Oberon: 48ha of Open Space 13.7ha/1,000 persons 7.51% urban areas <i>5-10% State recommended</i>
Schools Primary Schools: 2 Public 1 Private High Schools: 1 Public	Healthcare Hospitals: 1 (50 beds) Aged Care 1 (66 beds)	Waste Sewerage: 1 Primary Sewerage Treatment Plant 3200EP Tips: 1 Tip 2 Transfer Stations
Heritage Heritage Listings: 57 items Heritage Conservation Areas: 2 areas Archaeological Sites: 2 sites	Infrastructure Roads: 530 km Unsealed 480 km Sealed Facilities: 25 Bridges 22 Parks 2 Community Halls	Water Potable Source: Oberon Dam Water Mains 30 km of reticulated mains 10 km of trunk water mains

Context

Oberon Development Projects Driving Employment Opportunities

Significant development projects have commenced or are planned to commence within a 5 year period which will drive employment opportunities. The Borg Timber Processing Facility and associated developments are a good example. Other job generating (pre and post construction) developments include:

- Sports Complex and Football Fields relocation
- Service Station and Retail outlets
- Small and medium enterprise (SME) industrial development
- Council's Independent Living Units in Curtis Street
- Aged Care facility
- Fitness Centre
- Bark and Timber Processing
- Tourism Visitation Growth

Oberon Tourism

In the midst of dramatic natural landscapes that give way to a mosaic of pine forests and rolling farmlands, lies Oberon. Situated on a plateau at a height of 1130m above sea level, Oberon is on the western fall of the Blue Mountains. The area is popular for its cool summers, snowy winters and its four distinct seasons.

Oberon is one of the first genuine rural communities west of the Blue Mountains and is still dependent on its rural industries. The reasons to visit this beautiful part of the world are many and varied. Some come for the spectacular scenery, Jenolan Caves, Mayfield and other fabulous cool climate gardens, while others enjoy the magic of winter snow or to simply experience a rural lifestyle. Oberon has its own alpine lake and enjoys a great sense of community spirit.

Given its natural attractions and the expanding tourism event market it is anticipated that the tourism sector will also grow.

Oberon Current Growth Rate

Oberon is currently experiencing a growth rate of around 1.8% which equates to the provision of 22 new dwellings per year. At persons per household of 2.5, to accommodate an additional 1242 people in the period of the LSPS approximately 500 new dwellings need to be created over the life of this plan.

In the past couple of years there has been an increase in the multi-unit and dual occupancy applications with granny flats and affordable housing adding to the dwelling mix in the LGA.

Context

Oberon Socio-Economic Indexes

The Socio-Economic Index is produced by ABS and ranks areas in Australia by relating social-economic advantages and disadvantages. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly census. The service variables used cover a number of domains including household income, education, occupation, unemployment rate etc.

Latest figures from the 2016 census Relative Socio-Economic Diversity for Oberon are 969 (decile 5) with 1000 being standard or average in the system. Oberon's current socio-economic position is therefore slightly under the Australian average.

Oberon Infrastructure Requirements

It is anticipated that Oberon's population will increase by 1242 by 2038. From an infrastructure perspective the projected population increase derived from the development projects and tourism sector identifies the need for consideration of infrastructure requirements (including the amplification of the Oberon Sewerage Treatment Plant) to meet the increase in demand on infrastructure and services.

Oberon Tourism and Economy – Table 5

House Price Median: \$355,000 (2019)	Approvals Dwellings 2017/18: 26	Rental Properties Commercial: 520 Residential: 45 (\$330 per week 2019)
Corrections Facilities: Oberon Correctional Centre Capacity: 140 persons	Health Care Hospital: 50 Bed Hospital Aged Care Facility: 1 (low, high & dementia care)	Emergency Services Police Fire and Rescue RFS Ambulance SES
Free Public Facilities Facilities: The Common Skate Park Oberon Council Library	Pay to Use Facilities Facilities: Golf Course Pool Complex Indoor Tennis	Heritage & Museums Facilities: Oberon & District Museum Skoda & Tatra Museum Oberon-Tarana Railway Oberon Military Museum

Towns and Villages

Oberon

Oberon was proclaimed a village in 1863 and has grown to an estimated resident LGA population of 5,301 of whom around 2,700 live in the Oberon township. Map 1 and 2 show the zoning and industrial buffers respectively.

Oberon has good shopping facilities with most goods and services available in the town. It has a number of restaurants, cafes and takeaways while visitors staying in self catering accommodation are well serviced by supermarkets, butchers and bakeries. Shops selling clothing, accessories, fishing gear, gifts, books and collectables may also interest the visitor. Most professional and trades services are available in Oberon. Visitor accommodation ranges through hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, self contained cottages, farm stay and caravan parks. There are also several camping grounds in the LGA.

Oberon is named after the King of the fairies in Shakespeare’s *“A Midsummer Night’s Dream”*

The 2011 Oberon Land Use Strategy identified potential growth drivers as:

- Maintaining the heritage conservation area
- Low-intensity agriculture areas suitable for residential

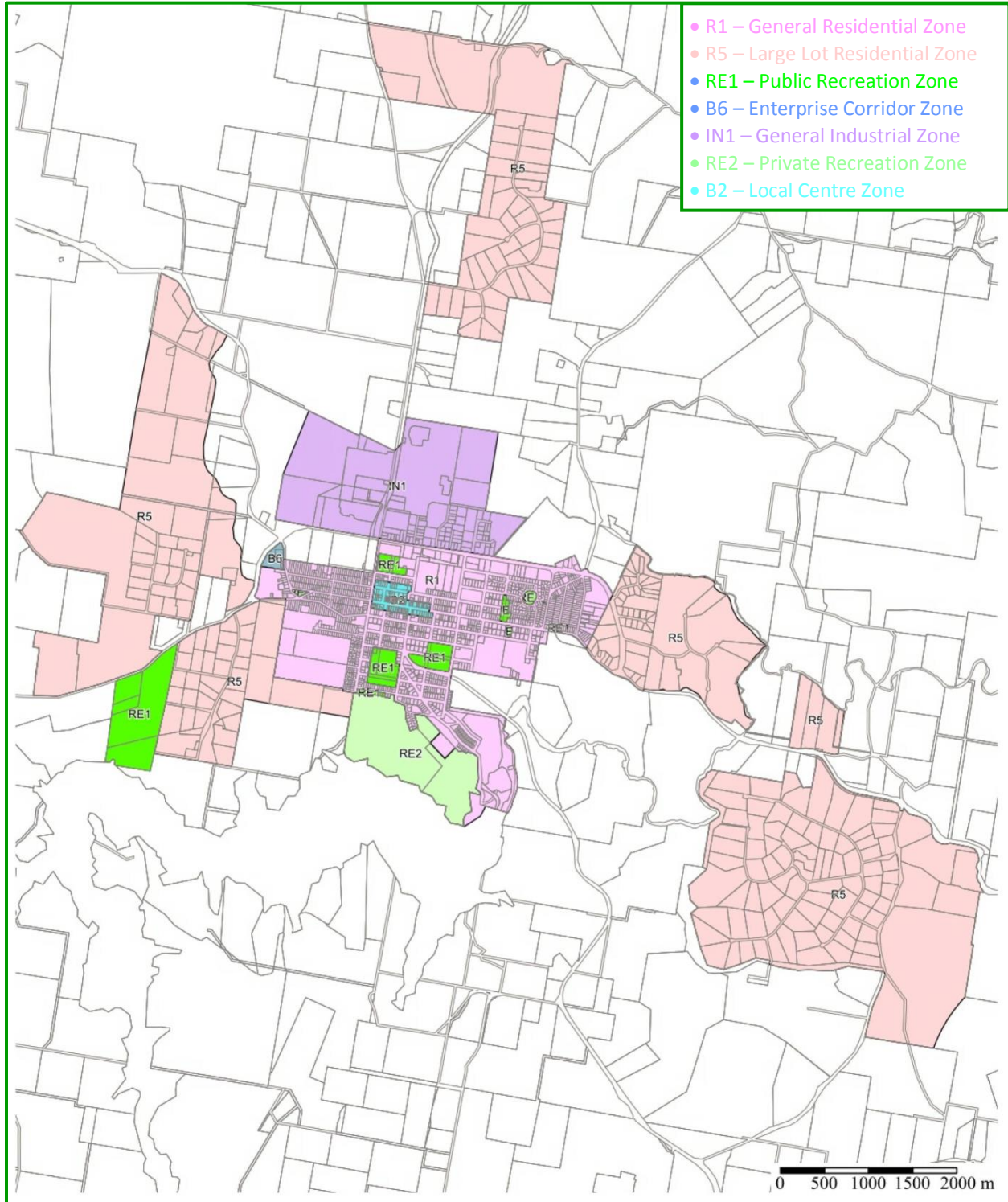
As part of the Community Strategic Plan project undertaken in 2019, an analysis was undertaken with the following “big ideas” generated:



Figure 3 – “Big Ideas” Oberon Community Strategic Plan

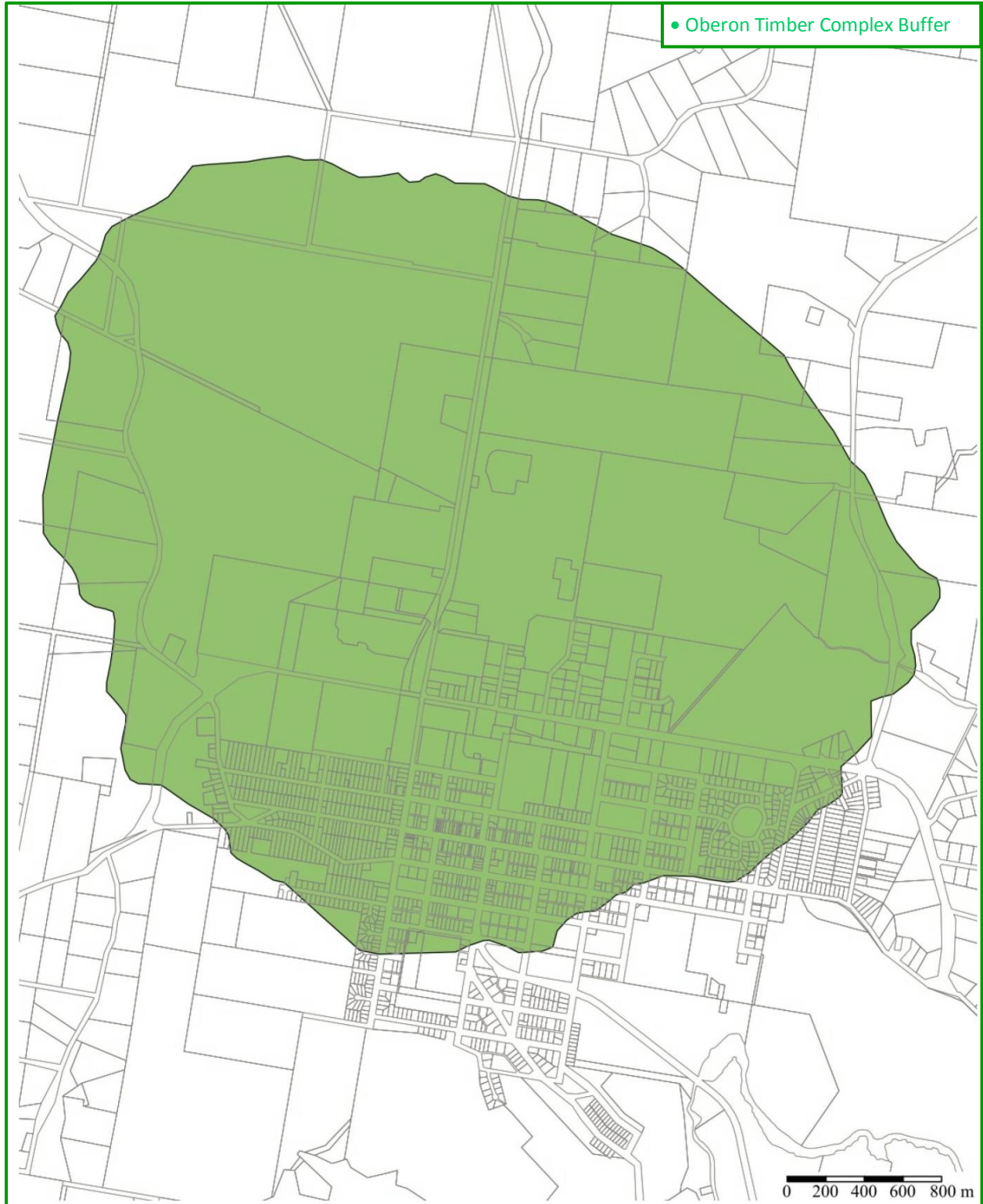
Towns and Villages

Map 1 - Urban Zoning within the Oberon Township



Towns and Villages

Map 2 - Oberon Timber Complex (Industrial) Buffer within the Oberon Township



Towns and Villages

Burruga

Burruga is located 47 kilometres southwest of Oberon and is situated amongst farming and forestry lands. Map 3 shows the land use zoning for Burruga. The major industry in the area is Australian United Timbers. Burruga Dam Reserve is a lovely picnic, camping and fishing spot just north of the village. The remains of the old Burruga Copper mine can be seen from the outskirts of the village. It was one of the largest copper mines in the state and historical records and memorabilia can be seen at the Mill Museum in Rockley.

The 2011 Oberon Land Use Strategy identified potential growth drivers as:

- Additional residential – three areas were identified for investigation for residential purposes. The sites are all expansions of the existing village and encompass existing small lots that will require consolidation
- Value add industrial – expansion around existing industry

At the consultation for the LSPS held in early March 2020 the following SWOT Analysis was conducted as part of the process for formulating the Burruga Village Plan.

Strengths

- Good events
- Good Community Hall
- Dam (water supply, picnic area and recreation)
- Timber Industry
- Own Water Supply (Burruga Water)
- Good Locality
- Safety
- Road width
- Heritage
- Parks

Weaknesses

- Access to local education
- Messy
- Google in wrong place
- Locality, workforce access/availability
- Communication, connectivity
- Lack of small blocks
- No sewer
- Services, medical, shops,
- No landscaping in streets
- No street lighting
- Condition of waste transfer station.

Towns and Villages

Opportunities

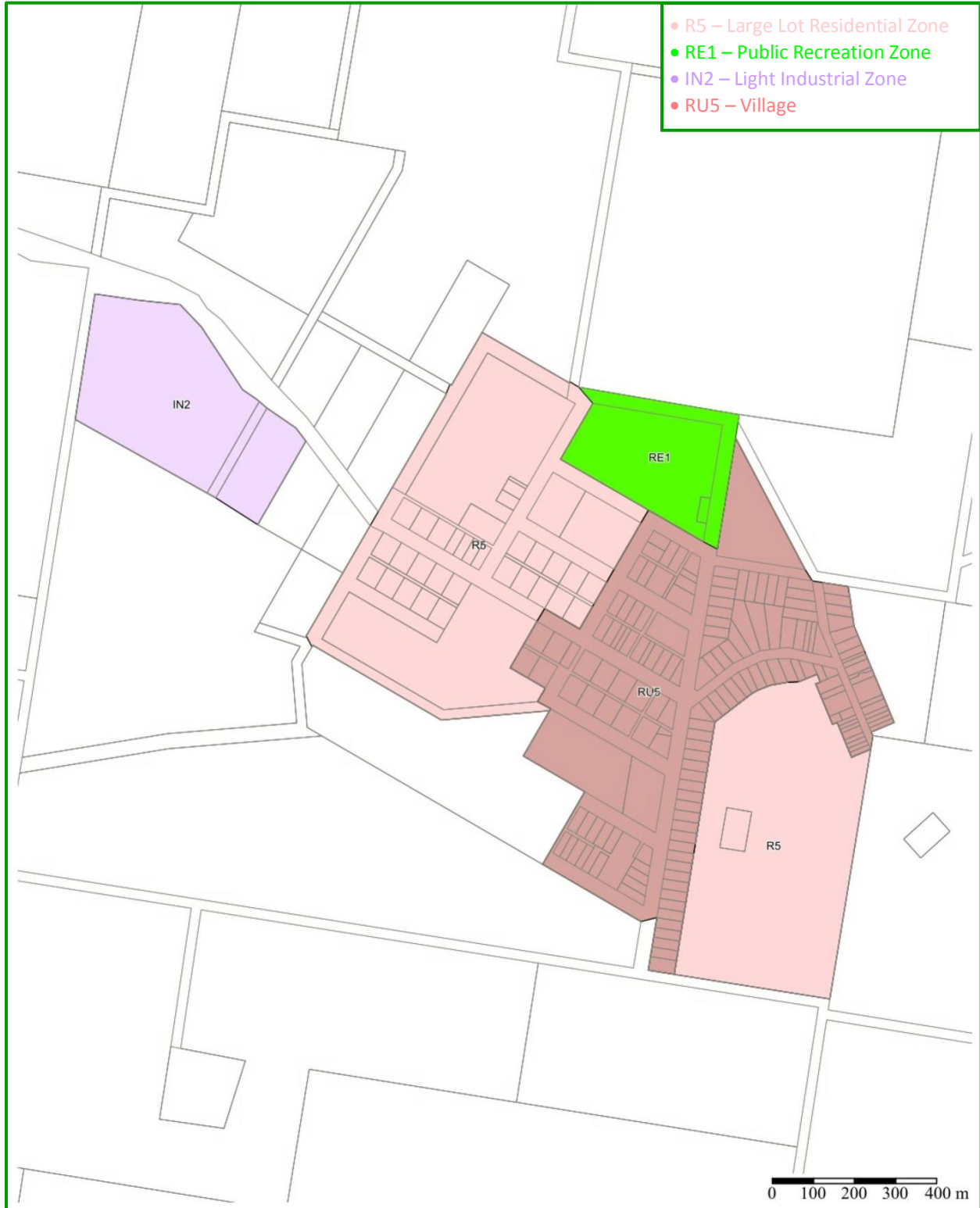
- Timber Mill
- Land availability
- Own water supply
- Resources, copper, gold
- Tourism e.g. old church, chimney
- Value adding industries, pine pallets
- Community spirit

Threats

- Nothing for young people to do, so they leave when they can
- Weeds
- Impact on the road network by large trucks
- Getting roads built, need wider roads difficulties in trucks passing e.g. Campbell River Road and in town itself
- Look of town (aesthetics/appearances)
- Reducing population (older people leaving to gain access to medical services)
- Lack of medical services and distances required to get medical services
- Police response time due to distance they have to travel
- Increasing isolation issues

Towns and Villages

Map 3 - Urban Zones within the Burraga Village



Towns and Villages

Black Springs

Black Springs, 24 kilometres from Oberon on the Abercrombie Road, is a tidy village with good facilities. The tennis courts, recreation ground and community hall are located opposite the Forestry Reserve camping area, which has toilets and fireplaces. The historic stone Avoca Catholic Church and Shrine is in a lovely setting south of the village built in 1888. There is also an historic cemetery. Fossicking is popular at Sapphire Bend, off Riverview Road in Vulcan State Forest. Map 4 shows the land use zoning for Black Springs.

The 2011 Oberon Land Use Strategy identified potential growth drivers as:

- Maintaining the character of Black Springs as a village
- Expanding the residential opportunities within the village
- Large lot residential potential opportunities to the north of the village

At the consultation for the LSPS held in early March 2020 the following SWOT Analysis was conducted as part of the process for formulating the Black Springs Village Plan

Strengths

- Vibrant Industries e.g. Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism
- Village is attractive, good appearance it promotes a green image
- Historical/heritage values
- Strong community with a good social hub
- Good school
- Two churches, both active
- Forestry Headquarters
- RFS Station

Weaknesses

- No shop, pub and cannot purchase fuel
- Communication issues
 - No mobile phone reception
 - Little or no internet
- Road to Goulbourn needs upgrading particularly the other side of Abercrombie River
- Lack of available land to develop
- Lack of opportunity
- Park doesn't accommodate a variety of age groups
- Lack of public facilities e.g. toilets
- Lack of footpaths which if available could enable better movement around the village
- Weeds around entry to village
- Feral animals
- No public transport
- Lack of signage e.g. "Excavation Site" not displayed properly
- Lack of disaster management planning
- Condition of waste transfer station

Towns and Villages

Opportunities

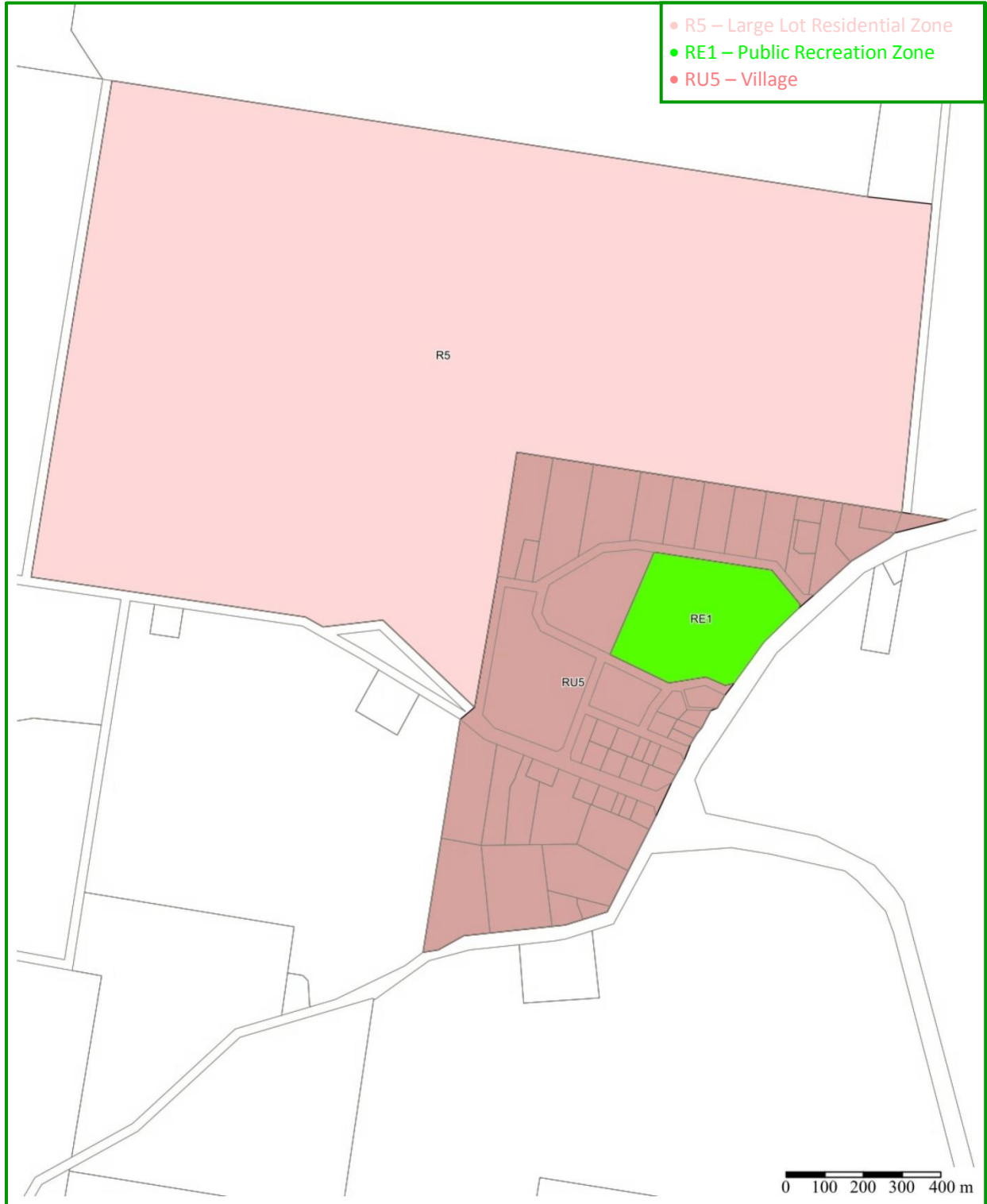
- Shops, pub, petrol
- Tourism including:
 - Camping
 - Fossicking
 - Outdoor activities
 - Tourism hub for these type of activities
 - Day tours to caves and historical places
 - Concerts including:
 - Held in hall
 - Outdoor entertainment
 - Community concerts
 - Sporting events
 - Mural displays
- Use of natural building materials e.g. basalt
- Improve roads
- Construct a Roundabout at the Cross Roads
- Improve street lighting
- Improved refuse facility (better recycling and longer opening hours)
- Installation of a park at the Cross Roads to make it more “visitor friendly” with toilets, seats and tables, play equipment and fire pits (fire rings)

Threats

- Poor roads e.g. Shooters Hill Road
- Speed control of vehicles, can Highway Patrol be asked to increase presence
- Population decline e.g. young people leaving area
- Lack of tourism facilities (e.g. no barista)
- Decline in timber products
- Disease affecting the forestry and agriculture industries
- Drought
- Lack of community spirit
- Emergency response to vital calls slow

Towns and Villages

Map 4 - Urban Zones within the Black Springs Village



Towns and Villages

O'Connell

O'Connell is a locality/village situated 23 kilometres north of Oberon on the O'Connell Road and forms one of the two Urban Conservation Areas identified within the Oberon Council local planning instrument. It is also classified by the National Trust as an historic village. Maps 5 and 6 show the current land use zoning as well as the Urban Conservation Area.

The village has a long history, having been situated on the original road between Bathurst and Sydney. The present hotel was built in 1865 and today is a popular meeting place in pleasant surroundings. Near O'Connell, on the Mutton Falls Road, is the Flat Rock picnic and camping area. This is a popular spot for fishing and swimming. Another popular picnic area is Hassall Park situated on the Fish River. O'Connell has a small school, several bed and breakfasts and a cafe. The O'Connell Avenue of Trees is a memorial dedicated to those who fought in World War One.

At the consultation for the LSPS held in early March 2020 the following SWOT Analysis was conducted as part of the process for formulating the O'Connell Village Plan.

Strengths

- History/Heritage including a Heritage Conservation Area
- Farming
- School
- New Sports Ground
- Natural Landscape/Beauty
- Memorial Avenue
- Strong Community Spirit
- Events
- Location/entry to Oberon
- Waterways with natural beauty that are not polluted
- Good community infrastructure e.g. new RFS Station

Weaknesses

- Poor pedestrian/bike access with limited walking paths
- Heavy truck traffic
- No community hall
- Uncompleted intersections e.g. Lagoon and Beaconsfield Road
- Lack of land for school to expand
- Overdevelopment, current ability to subdivide leading to cluster development
- Fragmentation of valuable agricultural land
- Water issues including:
 - Protection of the aquifer
 - Development threatening water quality
 - Development effective bores
- School bus interchange on main road at Beaconsfield
- Positioning of housing on allotments e.g. along the ridge lines

Towns and Villages

- No overarching plan
- Lack of village atmosphere
- Fragmentation of historic sights
- Drive through between Bathurst and Oberon

Opportunities

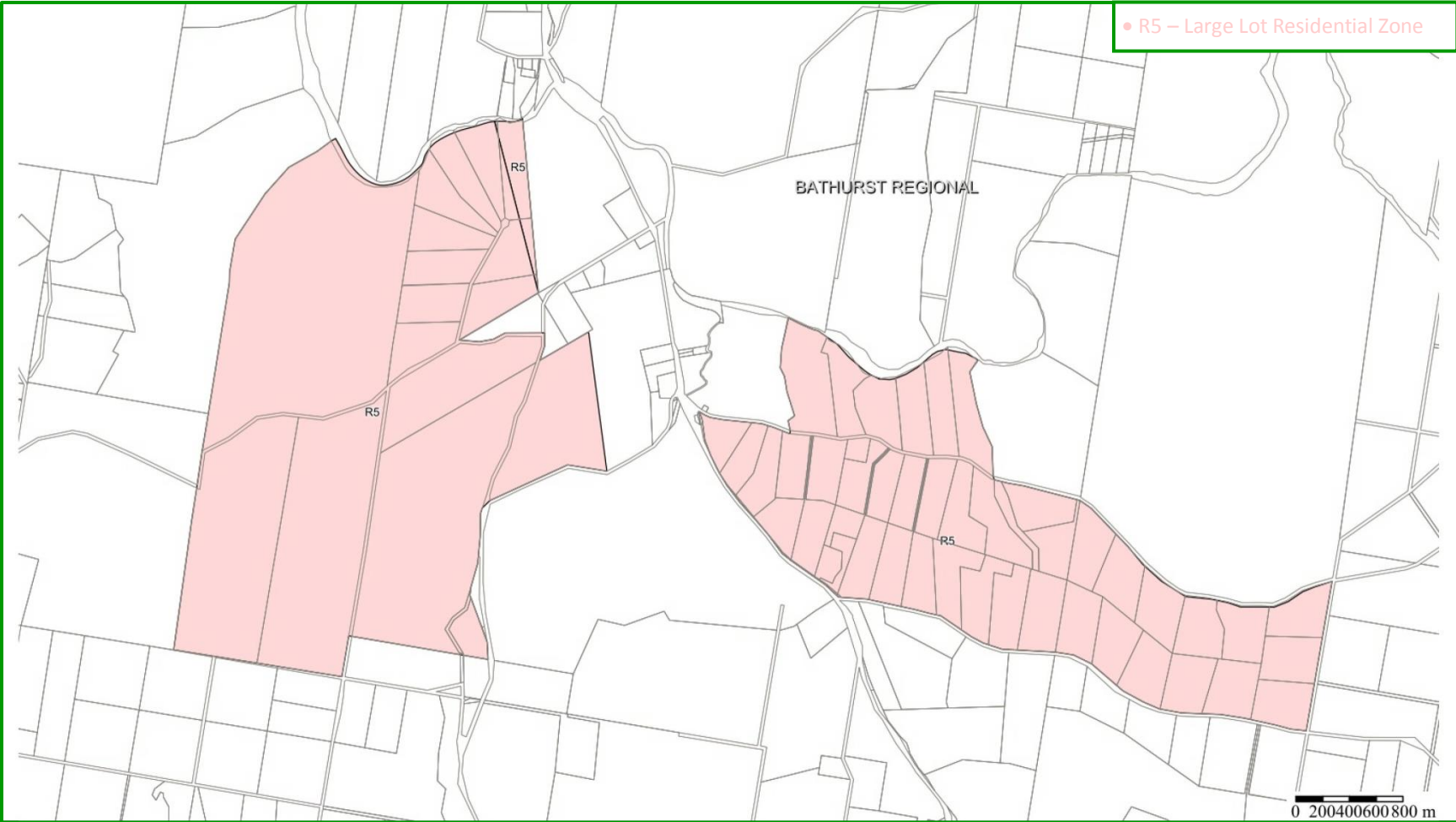
- Village plan that provides for linkages (bike riding and walking) and plan for future development and how it fits together
- Plans that can be implemented
- Strong community cooperation facilitated by fair and thoughtful regulation
- Purchasing the church hall for the community
- Tourism including:
 - More access to the river
 - Western Walk and preserving Cox's Route
 - Bike riding tours, but improved bridge access crossing is needed
- Buffers for waterways (Fish River and creeks and work with Bathurst City Council for a coherent plan on both sides of Fish River
- Tree planting to build the koala population
- Develop flora and fauna to attract Australian species on vacant land including natural and man made corridors
- Protecting Booroolong Frog's at Alicks Creek and flood plains
- Educational signage, with Aboriginal heritage
- Entry statement at new sports ground
- Protecting heritage buildings
- More proscriptive housing stock
- Create a true village atmosphere with a range of amenity and services
- Involved community with activities for all ages

Threats

- Overdevelopment
 - Higher densities
 - Out of character
 - Height, size, bulk and scale
- Spread of weeds
- Poor water quality
- Speed limit throughout the village
- Lack of support infrastructure for current village and growing village
- Making promises that cannot be kept e.g. water and impact of climate change
- Overpopulation e.g. development that is out of character leading to a loss of rural identity, development needs to be sustainable
- Loss of productive farm land, regulated to small blocks
- Declining population with an ageing demographic
- Escaped spending

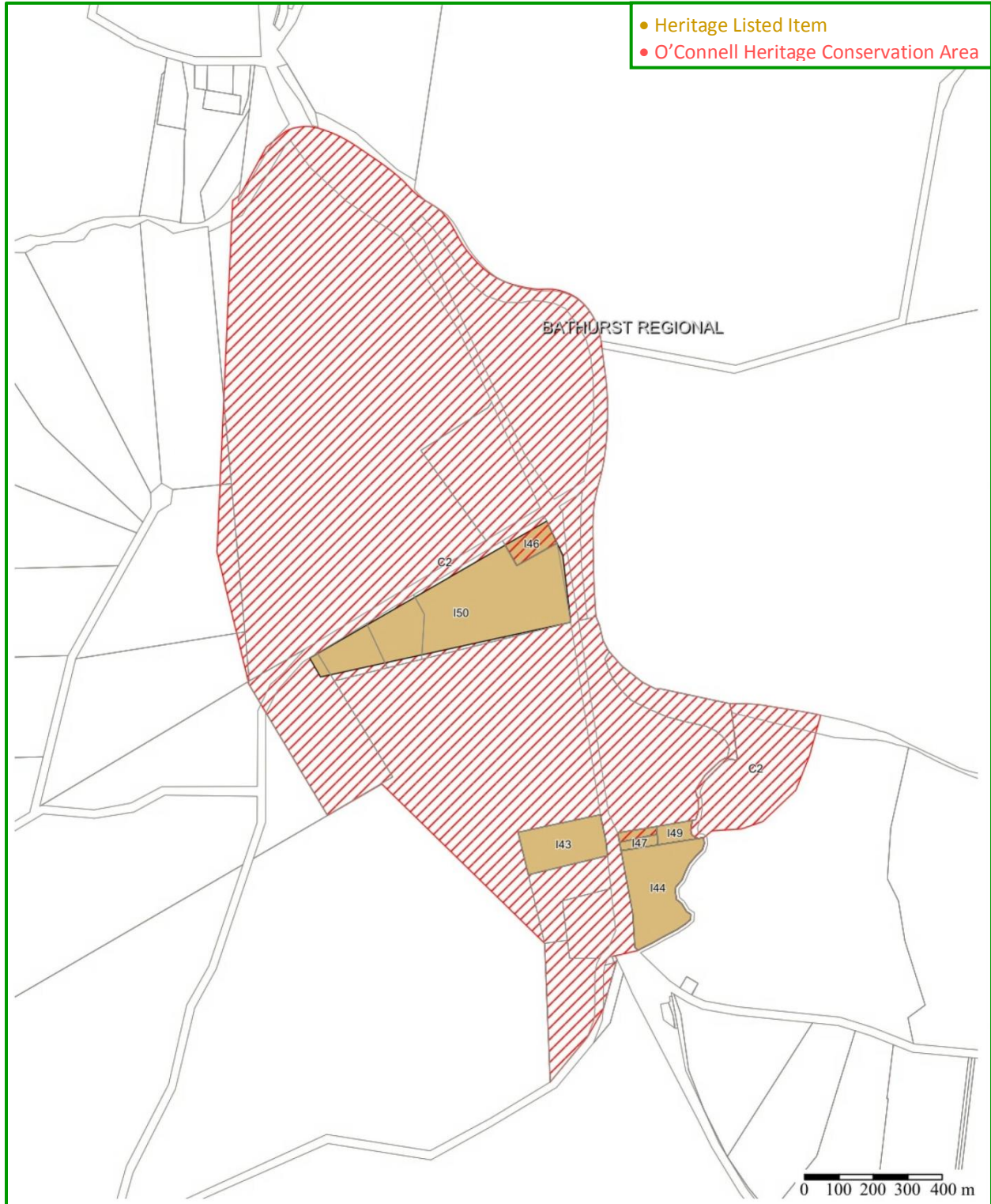
Towns and Villages

Map 5 - Urban Zones within the O'Connell Locality



Towns and Villages

Map 6 - O'Connell Heritage Conservation Area & Heritage Items



Towns and Villages

Edith

Edith is a locality situated 14.3 kilometres south east of Oberon. At 1080 metres above sea level, it provides the visitor with a true mountain climate of cool summers, balmy autumns, cold, crisp winters and lush springs. During the winter months the occasional snow fall can be expected.

Edith is ideally located half way between Oberon and the World Heritage listed Jenolan Caves and Kanangra Boyd National Park.

Edith also provides opportunities for mountain or road bike activity with some of the most spectacular cycling country Australia has to offer. Sweeping downhill single tracks, meandering paths through native and pine forests, quiet country roads and more challenging routes encompass the area.

Mount David

Mount David, 43 kilometres from Oberon is zoned as a village with a population of 44 residents in the locality and has is surrounded by traditional low-intensity agriculture. Map 7 shows the Zoning in the Mount David locality.

The 2011 Oberon Land Use Strategy identified potential growth drivers as:

- Retain the village zoning
- Minor residential extensions to the north of the village and amalgamate existing small lots

Jenolan

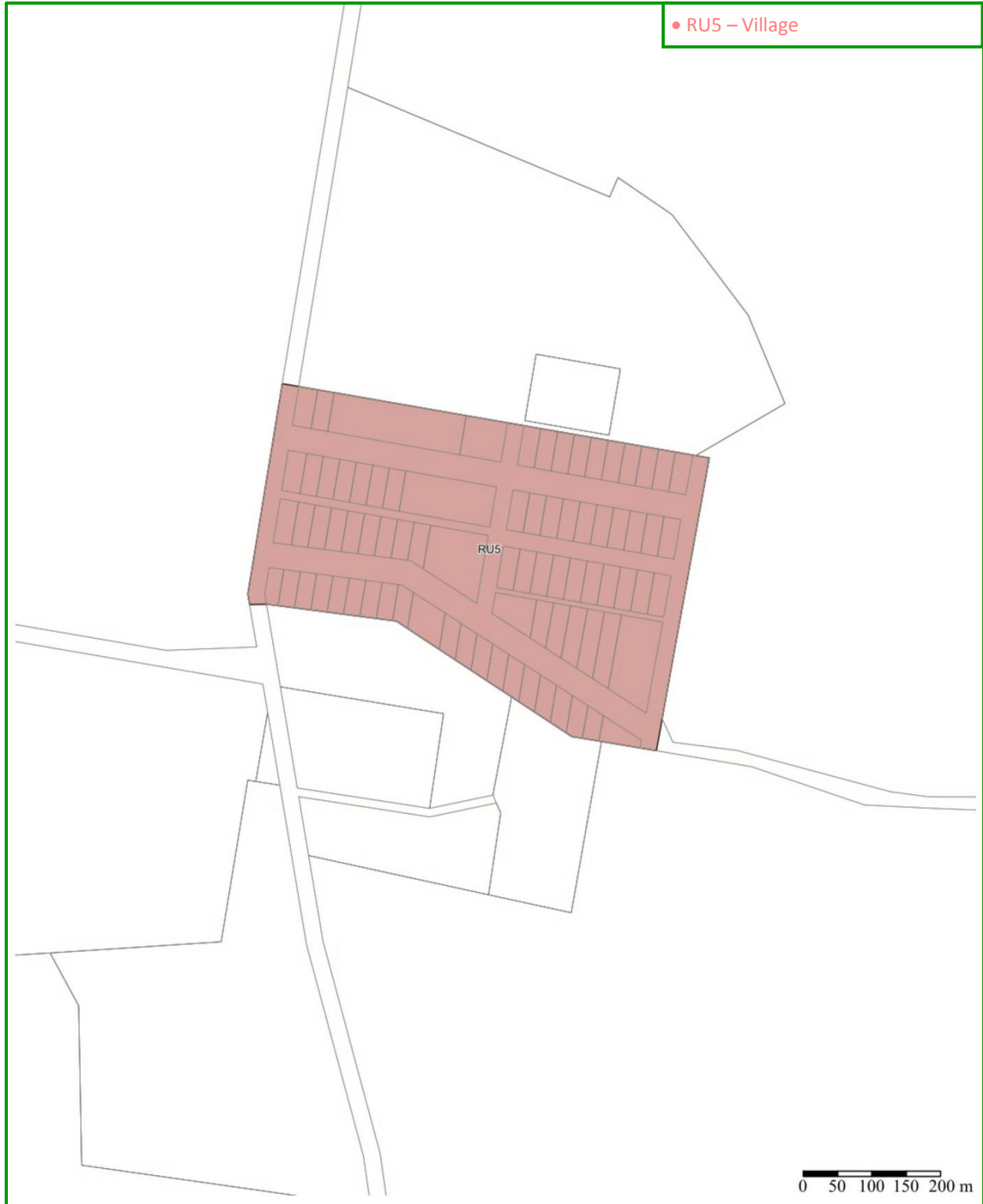
The spectacular Jenolan Caves are located 30 minutes from Oberon by car, and is a major tourist attraction. The caves are estimated to attract over 200,000 people annually and the conservation reserve is one of the eight protected areas that were inscribed in 2000 to form part of the UNESCO World Heritage listed Greater Blue Mountains Area. Map 8 shows the Jenolan Caves Heritage Conservation Area and heritage items.

Minor Localities

The smaller localities around Oberon have their own distinctive personality and charm with their individual history, blended with stunning landscapes and a traditional agricultural base. They include Essington, Isabella, Duckmaloi, Shooters Hill, Porters Retreat and Arkstone.

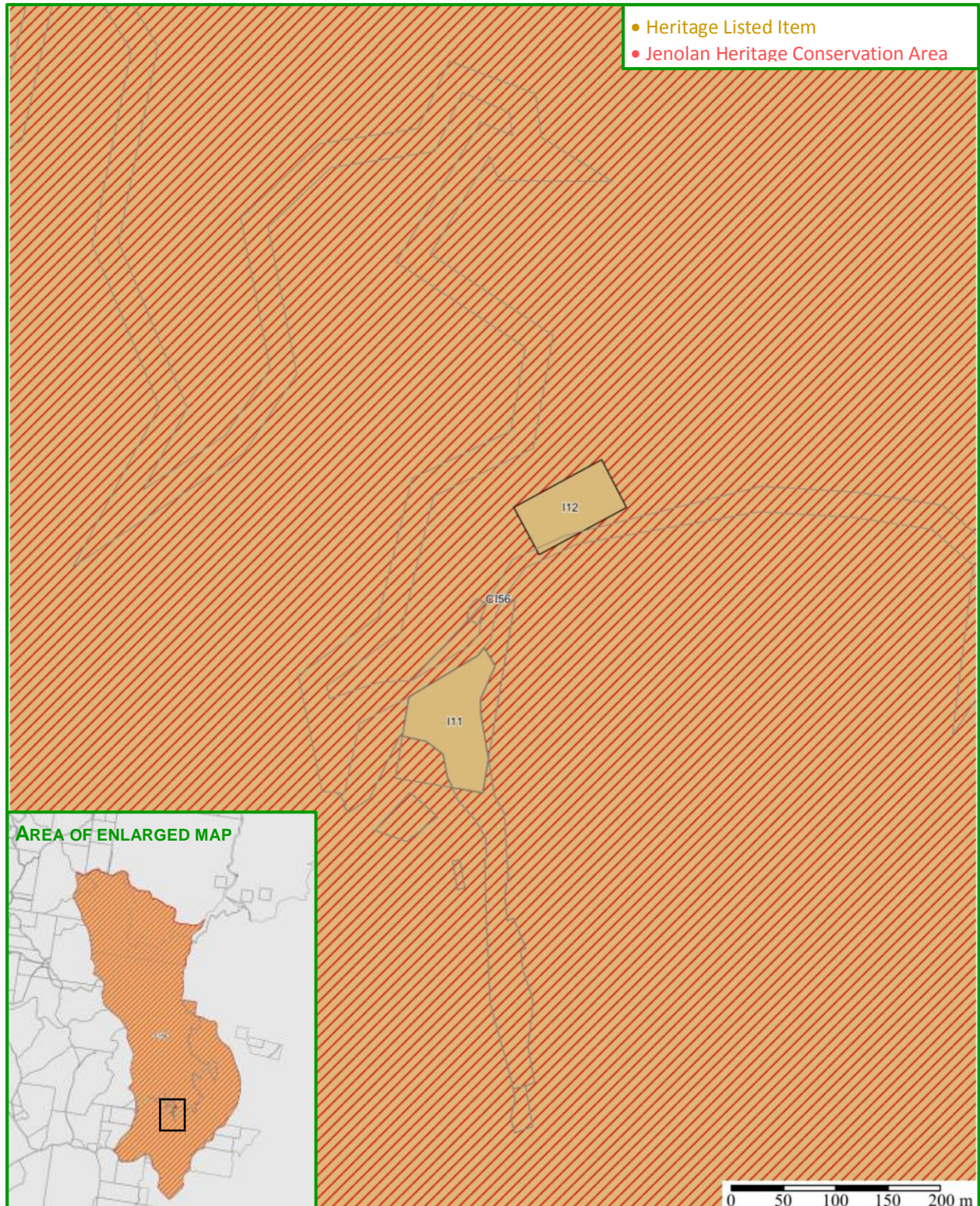
Towns and Villages

Map 7 - Urban Zoning within the Mount David Locality



Towns and Villages

Map 8 - Jenolan Caves Heritage Conservation Area & Heritage Items



Strategic Vision, Actions and Monitoring

Vision

Over the next 20 years Oberon will leverage the area's agricultural, locational (proximity to Sydney, Bathurst and Lithgow), environmental, tourism and manufacturing strengths to generate economic and social growth opportunities, while continuing to recognise the importance of agriculture and our rural assets.

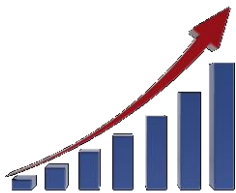
Agriculture will continue to drive prosperity in Oberon as the area capitalises on its favourable climatic conditions and fertile soils to attract a diversity of high end, top quality agricultural practices and enterprises.

Our natural environment will be fully understood and appreciated. Our existing environmental assets, national parks, river and water bodies will be leveraged off, and there will be an opportunity to connect these areas through biodiversity corridors.

Significant environmental areas adjoining our development areas will be identified, understood and protected. Our new development areas will respect the environmental values and will also leverage off these features to make Oberon a great place to live, work and visit.

Achieving Our Vision

To achieve its 20-year vision Oberon's CSP has identified the following five Planning Priorities to indicate the focus of future strategic planning.



Growth



**Community
Well-being**



Infrastructure



Environment



Leadership

Strategic Vision, Actions and Monitoring

These priorities are consistent with the:

- Directions of the *Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2036*
- *Abercrombie Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022*

Actions

Oberon's Planning Priorities will be delivered through actions and policy commitments which will be delivered by Council. These include ensuring future development is consistent with current policies, research of identified planning issues, preparation of strategies or policies, implementation of specific projects, or amendment to existing Council plans such as the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013, Oberon Land Use Strategy 2011 and Oberon Development Control Plan 2001.

Implementation, monitoring and reporting

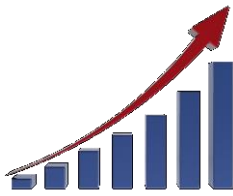
Council will monitor and report on the implementation of the actions to ensure that the planning priorities are being achieved. This will, as much as possible, be aligned to other reporting processes of Council's:

- Land Use Strategy
- Local Environmental Plan
- Development Control Plan

This approach is consistent with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework under the *Local Government Act 1993*, which recognises that council plans and policies are interconnected.

This Statement will be reviewed at least every seven (7) years pursuant to section 3.9(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.

Planning Priority One – Growth



Growth

Gives effect to the following Central West and Orana Regional Plan Directions:

Direction 25: Increase housing diversity and choice

Direction 26: Increase housing choice for seniors

Direction 28: Manage rural residential development

Council will strive to provide opportunities in the townships and their surrounds that offer diversity of housing choice that meets the needs of the growing and changing community.

Housing in Oberon's towns and villages is dominated by single dwellings, with the majority of housing containing 3 or more bedrooms. Home ownership is also important to the LGA with 41.1% of homeowners owning their property outright and 31.8% owning with a mortgage. Oberon and areas zoned for new residential and large lot residential development (such as O'Connell) is likely to experience the majority of the continued growth. It has experienced the approval of 26 new dwellings over in 2017/18 financial year as well as average house prices rising from approximately \$240,000 to \$340,000 over the previous 10 years.

Housing in Oberon is predominately separate houses and sheds on generous proportioned standard residential allotments within townships and villages. Development on large lot residential or larger rural allotments that are located on the fringes of townships and villages is also common. Rural and semi-rural dwellings can have adverse effects on agriculture, it will be important for Council to consider planning controls to prevent agricultural land conflict and fragmentation, as discussed in Planning Priority 4.

Oberon Council supports seven (7) villages and localities that provide localised services to residents and are the centre of a diverse rural economy. It is anticipated that the very manageable commuting distance from both Bathurst and Sydney, the variety of housing choice, heritage streetscapes and buildings, access to aged and health care in Oberon and diversifying the local economy will drive the towns and villages ability to attract new residential development.

The Oberon Land Use Strategy – draft June 2011 and Amendment 2012 that was endorsed by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on 16 January 2013 identifies land release areas. The Oberon LEP 2013 is based on this Strategy. Council plans to review this Strategy in the near future and future land releases will be based on that work.

Key considerations in undertaking further investigation include understanding the potential impacts on areas with landscape values; protecting important agricultural land; maximising infrastructure investments; and avoiding natural hazards including flood and bushfire. It will be important that Council consider these and other issues when rezoning land for rural residential development in particular.

Planning Priority One – Growth

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

Monitor the uptake of residential land in the towns and villages and investigate future residential areas as part of the Oberon Land Use Strategy – draft June 2011 and Amendment 2012 review.

These areas will:

- Be located to avoid areas that are identified as important agricultural land or areas that create potential for land use conflict;
- Align with the utility infrastructure network and its capabilities;
- Avoid or mitigate the impacts of hazards, including the implications of climate change;
- Protect areas with high environmental value and/or cultural heritage value and important biodiversity corridors;
- Not hinder development or urban expansion and will contribute to the function of existing townships;
- Create new neighbourhoods that are environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, easy to get to, healthy and safe.
- Investigate a mixture of smaller and larger residential lots in the towns' and villages' to create opportunity, respond to future demand, and to provide a range of housing options.

Actions:

1. Continually review and update the Oberon Land Use Strategy on a 5 yearly basis.
2. Continually review and update the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013 on a 5 yearly basis.
3. Undertake the development of a brand new Oberon Development Control Plan to reflect the existing and desired built form within our residential areas. Biennial reviews and updates of the Oberon Development Control Plan are to be undertaken to ensure that the document remains relevant to the fast changing environment.
4. Investigate and identify future potential for varied housing options.
5. Review the Oberon Timber Complex buffer to ensure that is achieving its intent to protect both the industrial and residential zones without unnecessarily obstructing development. Investigate opportunities to minimise any potential obstructions from the buffer on non-habitable development.

Planning Priority Two – Community Well-being



Gives effect to the following Central West and Orana Regional Plan Directions:

Direction 5: Improve access to health and aged care services

Direction 16: Respect and protect Aboriginal Heritage Assets

Direction 17: Conserve and adaptively re-use Heritage Assets

Direction 22: Manage growth and change in regional cities and strategic and local centres

Direction 23: Build resilience of towns and villages

Direction 29: Deliver healthy built environments and better urban design

The towns and villages of Oberon play a significant role in supporting a high quality of life that is valued by visitors and locals and attracts new residents to the LGA. These places are characterised by local commercial areas that provide basic services to rural communities and are home to iconic heritage buildings such as historic hotels and memorial halls and parks. Maintaining and expanding the values and services provided by the towns and villages is a key consideration for Council to provide economic and social benefits to the community.

As the population demographics of Oberon continues to change it will be necessary for Council to accommodate the change by ensuring that suitable open space, sporting and community facilities are provided. Council have committed to upgrading public pools, toilets, recreation grounds, skate parks and playground facilities across the LGA and will actively pursue funding opportunities so that as development occurs, community facilities will also be improved. Key projects that Council is currently seeking to fund include those identified in the SWOT Analysis of each village.

It is a unique characteristic of Oberon that the population is dispersed throughout the LGA in towns, villages and in the rural setting. The individuality of each setting brings with it the opportunity for variety and the possibility of varied experiences. Council will endeavour to enhance the uniqueness of each setting by providing infrastructure that responds to the local setting and is different to the adjacent townships or villages. This will encourage visitation from within the LGA to utilise the varied infrastructure which could include parks and swimming pools.

Planning Priority Two – Community Well-being

Understanding how Oberon's towns and villages operate, how they relate to each other and to nearby places such as Bathurst, Goulburn and Sydney are important so that they remain attractive locations for local retail and services. As these areas grow and change, there is the potential for the demand for housing to come into conflict with the retail and service offering which is why Council will not only protect these areas yet also will take a flexible approach to encourage a range of retail and commercial uses to support the community.

New retail and services will be encouraged in the towns and villages to increase vitality, enhance the value of the public realm and attract complementary uses. Council will seek to facilitate the innovative reuse of heritage buildings and provide inviting areas for residents and tourists.

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Protect the function of core commercial areas and provide opportunity to generate additional services and offerings.
- Promote the active reuse of heritage buildings that maintain the integrity of the historic character of the townships.
- Provide accessible pedestrian areas within main commercial areas, while maintaining the character of main streets.
- Actively seek opportunities/funding to upgrade/provide community facilities throughout the LGA.
- Provide and review the adequate supply of community infrastructure to cater for the changing population.
- Finalise the respective village plans

Actions:

6. Undertake access masterplans for our commercial core areas to provide accessible public and commercial spaces that attract and retain visitors to the area.
7. Undertake analysis of sporting facilities and community facilities to ensure planned upgrades have capacity to service demands of a changing population.
8. Wherever possible provide or encourage the provision of infrastructure that is different to adjacent towns and villages so that variety is maintained and to encourage people from nearby townships to visit.
9. Review and investigate the opportunity to fund the upgrade of community facilities.
10. Use the SWOT Analysis identified in the village plans as the basis for delivering improvements in the local villages.

Planning Priority Three – Infrastructure



Infrastructure

Gives effect to the following Central West and Orana Regional Plan Directions:

Direction 11: Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities

Direction 12: Plan for greater land use capability

Direction 18: Improve freight connections to markets and global gateways

Direction 19: Enhance road and rail freight links

Direction 21: Coordinate utility infrastructure investment

Infrastructure is critical to the proper functioning and wellbeing of the community both now and in the future. As the towns and villages continue to grow within the Oberon LGA it is important to provide infrastructure in the right place at the right time.

Understanding the current capacity and planned investments in utility infrastructure in the towns and villages will enable Council to capitalise on opportunities for economic and housing growth. Critical infrastructure investments will be identified as Council conducts more detailed analysis on the identified investigation areas so that growth is aligned with upgrades to town water, wastewater, electricity and telecommunication facilities. Aligning these utility infrastructure projects with future growth opportunities and *Councils Delivery Program (2017-2021)* and *Operational Plan (2019-2020)* is a key initiative of this planning priority.

To meet the future needs of the community the following projects are currently earmarked at a local and regional level. These include:

- Upgrading the Oberon Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP)
- Upgrading the Oberon Water Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Advocating opportunities for improved water security for Oberon township and rural customers
- Advocate for improved voice and data connectivity

Essential Energy is the local electricity network provider and provides adequate electricity to the townships and villages of Oberon LGA. The existing electricity network capabilities provide no constraints to providing electricity to future growth and development areas.

There are significant black spots regarding mobile phone and internet usage within the LGA. Lack of such services hinders growth and educational opportunities as well as lessens the amenity of the area affected. Most villages and localities outside of the Oberon Township all experience issues within maintaining a high level of connectivity due to the mountainous terrain.

Planning Priority Three – Infrastructure

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Align residential and commercial growth with water and waste water capabilities.
- Progress the upgrade of the Oberon Sewerage Treatment Plant.
- Investigate funding opportunities to upgrade existing utility infrastructure facilities to cater for our growing population.
- Advocate on behalf of the community for improved telecommunications (mobile phone/internet) services.

Actions:

11. Complete an integrated water management plan to ensure future water and sewerage aligns with future growth
12. Complete identified upgrades and construction projects within *Councils Delivery Program (2017-2021)*, *Operational Plan (2019-2020)* and *Abercrombie Regional Economic Development Strategy (2018-2022)*.
13. Complete the upgrade to the Oberon Sewerage Treatment Plant.

Planning Priority Four – Environment



Environment

Gives effect to the following Central West and Orana Regional Plan Directions:

Direction 1: Protect the region’s diverse and productive agricultural land

Direction 2: Grow the agribusiness sector and supply chains

Direction 9: Increase renewable energy generation

Direction 13: Protect and manage environmental assets

Direction 14: Manage & conserve water resources for environment

The Oberon LGA has good connections to the national freight network, favourable climate conditions and fertile soils to support a diverse agricultural sector.

Oberon Council takes proactive steps in managing land use conflicts and impacts on primary producers, through its local planning instruments.

Oberon Council aspires to support its agricultural identity and to ensure a strong local economy that leverages the favourable climate and connectivity to domestic and international markets via regional freight routes. Council is committed to being open to facilitating intensive agricultural uses that provide positive social, environmental and economic outcomes to the community.

It is anticipated that a strong agricultural economy; including forestry operations, and technological advances will continue to provide an opportunity to attract boutique, innovative and more intensive agribusinesses to the Oberon LGA. These operations provide opportunity for Oberon, through higher earning employment opportunities for local residents and will provide an invaluable contribution to the area’s Gross Domestic Product.

Managing these types of developments will be best undertaken by embracing new technological innovation that creates a positive change for the agricultural industry. Associated with the co-location of related industries, Council will work alongside the agribusiness sector to maximise infrastructure, decrease supply chain costs and manage conflict between existing land uses and community expectations.

The Oberon LGA has a diverse natural environment that is valued by residents and visitors alike. National Parks, Nature Reserves, State Forests and other features provide significant wildlife habitat with ecosystems supporting a range of native flora and fauna. These areas provide opportunities for the council area to attract visitors, with many of the national parks providing great places to camp, hike and undertake 4WD touring, all within close proximity to Sydney.

Planning Priority Four – Environment

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Protect important agricultural lands in local planning controls, particularly avoiding agricultural land fragmentation by maintaining existing minimum lot size provisions in the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013.
- Continue to advocate for the *NSW Right to Farm Policy*.
- Manage land use conflict on agricultural land by:
 - In the case of nuisance complaints supporting pre-existing, lawfully operating agricultural land uses.
 - Avoid locating incompatible land uses in and adjacent to agricultural production areas whilst also restricting the encroachment of incompatible land uses;
 - Ensure that land use standards for minimum subdivision sizes in the LEP reflect trends and enable a productive agricultural sector.
- Encourage complementary value-add agricultural opportunities through flexible planning provisions in local strategies and local planning controls.
- Locate agri-business development in areas that capitalise on key freight networks.
- Ensure planning provisions accommodate changing needs of agriculture and the development of intensive agriculture, agribusinesses and value-adding activities
- Promote and preserve our natural environment and wildlife habitat
- Liaise with NSW Government agencies to further develop and provide opportunity for the natural areas of the local government area
- Seek (funding) opportunities to undertake environmental management studies in consultation with government and community to update and inform new biodiversity mapping layer in the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013.

Actions:

14. Investigate the creation of a Council Right to Farm Policy.
15. On review of the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013 investigate the appropriateness of minimum lots sizes rural zones through undertaking a strategic analysis.
16. Undertake a review to find locations suitable for industries that require a buffer zone and good access to power, gas and water.
17. Continually review and amend the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013 as required, seeking to maximise opportunities and protect sensitive areas.
18. On review of the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013 investigate the suitability of existing biodiversity layers and associated controls and consider whether less coarse biodiversity mapping should be provided.
19. To better identify land with high conservation attributes and undertake a review of road and public space biodiversity mapping.
20. Investigate alternative opportunities on rural land with minimal agricultural or environmental value.

Planning Priority Five – Leadership



Leadership

Gives effect to the following Central West and Orana Regional Plan Directions:

Direction 4: Promote and diversify regional tourism markets

Direction 10: Promote business and industrial activities in employment opportunities

Direction 15: Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change

Direction 20: Enhance access to air travel and public transport

A diverse industrial sector is vital for the sustainability of the Oberon LGA and there is the opportunity to capitalise on its strategic location to attract a variety of industrial operations. Council will need to provide leadership to realise this opportunity.

Connections to the national freight network, productive agricultural lands, flexible industrial precincts, provide a support network for a productive industrial sector. Oberon is able to leverage this opportunity by offering small industrial precincts that are more affordable when compared to Bathurst and Sydney.

Council can enable this opportunity by allowing a flexible industrial precinct that is supported by Council owned utility infrastructure with strong connections into Bathurst and the Sydney basin. Council will investigate the expansion of industrial land whilst ensuring compatibility with existing and future residential developments.

Tourism is also an important industry for the LGA. There are many and varied reasons to visit this beautiful part of the world. The tourism industry centres on the spectacular scenery, Jenolan Caves, Mayfield and other cool climate gardens, winter snow, adventure sports and activities and rural lifestyle experiences. Oberon has its own alpine lake. Given its natural attractions and the emerging tourism event market it is anticipated that the tourism sector will also grow.

Planning Priority Five – Leadership

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Support existing industrial land uses and precincts for freight and logistics, industry, warehousing and similar activities in locations that minimize amenity impacts.
- Investigate opportunities for the expansion of existing and new industrial precincts in our townships that do not impact on residents.
- Protect and recognise existing industrial precincts and uses to avoid any land use conflicts from future residential development
- Encourage the co-location of complementary industry alongside agricultural enterprises that enhance the efficiency of the agricultural land use.
- Protect native and plantation forests in the Oberon Council Area from the encroachment of inappropriate and incompatible land uses.
- Support and minimise impacts on productivity of agricultural land, Aboriginal cultural heritage, biodiversity, and the amenity of residents.
- Continued support of the tourism industry via the Visitors Information Centre and Oberon Council Tourism and Economic Development Manager.
- Actively promote event type tourism of small, medium and large scales.
- Continue to proactively promote the aims and objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Oberon Business and Tourism Association.

Actions:

21. On review of the Oberon Local Environmental Plan 2013 Council will investigate the practicalities of providing industrial zoning where appropriate. This measure will minimise the risk of land use conflict posed by non-compatible land uses being permissible development in zone RU5 Village.
22. Identify key regional forestry freight corridors that contribute to the broader regional viability of the forestry sector and seek funding to ensure these roads have the capacity to support existing forestry processes.
23. Identify the freight networks that are utilised by Oberon's extractive industries and to ensure these roads have the capacity to support the extractive industries.
24. Investigate whether there are opportunities in the planning system to encourage better land management by the timber industry.
25. Investigate opportunities to secure community contributions from the development of industry through the review of Council's contribution plans.
26. Update Councils Bush Fire Lands Prone Map in conjunction with latest RFS information.
27. Actively promote economic development initiatives leveraging off existing and emerging industries.
28. Encourage collaboration between educational facilities and local businesses.
29. Investigate more event opportunities linking to the distinct seasons in Oberon and leveraging off the successful Spartan event that was held in March 2020.