Uralla Shire
Local Housing Strategy
2025 – 2045 (Draft)

Uralla
URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

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This project has been conducted by REMPLAN on behalf of Uralla Shire Council.

February 2025

Contents

Uralla Shire Council Acknowledgement of Country

Uralla Shire Council acknowledges the Anaiwan Traditional Custodians.
We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Message from the Mayor

[PLACEHOLDER: message from the Mayor]

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Uralla Shire Local Housing Strategy aims to shape the future of housing in Uralla by addressing short-, medium-, and long-term housing needs and supporting housing security, supply, suitability, and quality for everybody who lives in Uralla.

Uralla Shire Council is committed to working toward realising the community's vision for a housing future that supports the needs of residents while ensuring that accommodation for itinerant workers leaves a positive legacy for the community.

The Uralla Shire Local Housing Strategy 2025-2045 (the Strategy) outlines a comprehensive plan to support a sustainable housing future for Uralla Shire.

Strategy Development

This Strategy is the product of a suite of work including the *Uralla Shire Local Housing Strategy: Key Issues Report* and a range of stakeholder engagement activities. Engagement activities involved Council representatives, local business leaders, renewable energy developers, State Government departments, and elected members of Uralla Shire Council.

Implementation

The Strategy includes an implementation plan detailing activities and initiatives to be undertaken that focus on achieving the outlined strategic objectives, contributing to a positive housing future for Uralla Shire. The implementation plan includes some recommended projects, the delivery of which may be subject to third-party funding.

Review and reporting of Council's progress in implementing the Strategy is essential not only to monitor progress but to ensure key priority areas remain relevant as Council work toward achieving the community's aspirations.

Figure 1 Uralla Housing Strategy Goals

Diverse housing for all residents
Foster housing development that meets the diverse needs of Uralla Shire, including family homes, an increased number of smaller accessible homes, and a focus on affordability through innovative partnerships and tenure models.

Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments
Facilitate construction workers accommodation associated with REZ projects in a way that manages short-term demand and allows for seamless repurposing of assets that support long-term community needs.

Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes
Adopt a proactive, customer-centred approach to housing development, ensuring the council is open, consistent, and responsive in its planning and facilitation roles.

Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements
Preserve Uralla Shire's unique village atmosphere by guiding housing development in ways that respect its heritage, scale, and natural environment.

Glossary

Acronyms

AEMO - Australian Energy Market Operator. Oversees the operation of the national electricity and gas markets in Australia.

DCP - Development Control Plan. A planning document that provides guidelines for development to ensure alignment with local objectives.

DPIE - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

GW/GWH – Gigawatts - a measure of electricity equal to 1 billion watts. Gigawatt Hours –electricity generation of 1GW produced over one hour.

LEP - Local Environmental Plan. A statutory document that guides land use and planning decisions in local government areas.

LGA - Local Government Area.

LSPS - Local Strategic Planning Statement. A document outlining a council's land use and planning vision.

REDS - Regional Economic Development Strategy. A framework for fostering economic growth in regional areas.

REZ - Renewable Energy Zone. A designated area for renewable energy projects, like wind or solar farms, to connect to the grid efficiently.

RET - Renewable Energy Target. A policy designed to encourage additional renewable energy generation in Australia.

SEPP - State Environmental Planning Policy. Policies that provide planning guidelines and controls on a statewide level.

ZNET - Zero Net Energy Town. A program aiming for communities to meet their energy needs sustainably.

Specific Terms

Affordable Housing - Housing that is priced so that people on low to moderate incomes can afford to live in it without financial stress.

Benefit Sharing Scheme - A program associated with renewable energy projects that channels financial benefits back into local communities.

Community Benefit Sharing Funding - Funds provided by renewable energy developers to enhance community infrastructure and amenities.

Construction Worker Accommodation - Housing facilities established to accommodate construction workers for a short period of time, typically linked to large infrastructure or energy projects.

Development Capacity - The potential for land to support new housing or other developments, considering current zoning and land use constraints.

Housing Affordability - A measure of how accessible housing is in terms of cost relative to household income.

Infrastructure Servicing Strategy - A plan outlining the provision and maintenance of essential services such as water, sewerage, and stormwater systems to support development.

Median Lot Size - The middle value in the range of lot sizes in a given area, used to estimate development potential.

7.11 Development Contribution Plans - Plans under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) that allow councils to levy contributions from developers for public infrastructure.
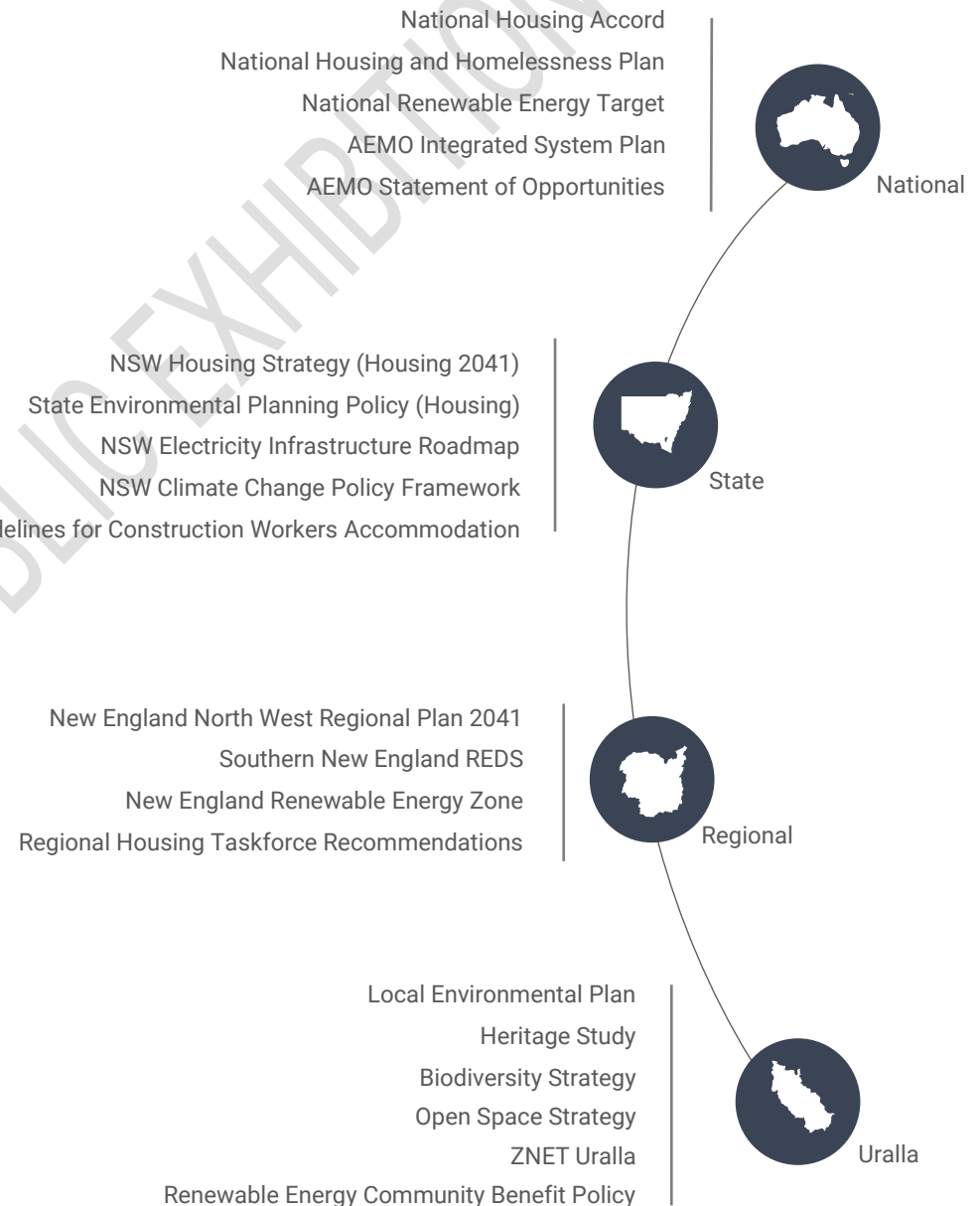
Context

Policy Context

Local, regional, state, and national policies significantly influence Uralla Shire's development, particularly in housing and energy. While state and national strategies often cater to broad or metropolitan contexts, smaller councils like Uralla Shire are typically peripheral to their focus.

The New England North West Regional Plan highlights housing affordability, diversity, and renewable energy opportunities but offers limited guidance on managing housing demand for workers linked to renewable energy projects. Uralla is identified as a third tier "centre" in the regional hierarchy, with its current housing policies focused on preserving local character. However, with major renewable energy investments under the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), including substantial public and private projects, Uralla faces challenges in addressing the housing needs of a growing workforce.

The New England REZ strengthens Uralla's role in renewable energy, promising economic growth, job creation, and infrastructure development. Construction workforce accommodation needs, though acknowledged in local strategies like the Southern New England Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) and Uralla's LSPS, are not yet effectively addressed through statutory mechanisms such as Local Environmental Plans (LEPs). This gap underscores the need for a robust housing strategy to balance permanent and temporary housing demands, align with broader policy objectives, and sustain Uralla's environmental and cultural values. A comprehensive approach is essential to ensure that renewable energy developments benefit local communities while managing their social and economic impacts.

National

National Housing Accord
National Housing and Homelessness Plan
National Renewable Energy Target
AEMO Integrated System Plan
AEMO Statement of Opportunities

State

NSW Housing Strategy (Housing 2041)
State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing)
NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap
NSW Climate Change Policy Framework
Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation

Regional

New England North West Regional Plan 2041
Southern New England REDS
New England Renewable Energy Zone
Regional Housing Taskforce Recommendations

Uralla

Local Environmental Plan
Heritage Study
Biodiversity Strategy
Open Space Strategy
ZNET Uralla
Renewable Energy Community Benefit Policy

New England Renewable Energy Zone

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) is a significant initiative by the NSW Government to transform the New England region into a major renewable energy hub. Declared as Critical State Significant Infrastructure, the New England REZ is set to play a crucial role in NSW's transition to clean energy.

The New England REZ has an intended network capacity of 8 gigawatts (GW) and is expected to attract up to $10.7 billion in private sector investment. It aims to support around 1,250 operational jobs and 6,000 construction jobs in the region. The project's scope includes new network infrastructure, such as transmission lines and energy hubs, to connect renewable energy generators to the grid.

The New England region was chosen for its excellent natural energy resources, including strong wind potential and suitable sites for pumped-hydro development. The REZ's geographical area stretches from the Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area (LGA) to the Walcha LGA, with Armidale at its centre.

Although Armidale sits at the geographic centre of the REZ, Uralla's strategic position places it at the heart of much of the construction activity, particularly the transmission infrastructure. As a result, Uralla will play a pivotal role in the rollout of the New England REZ.

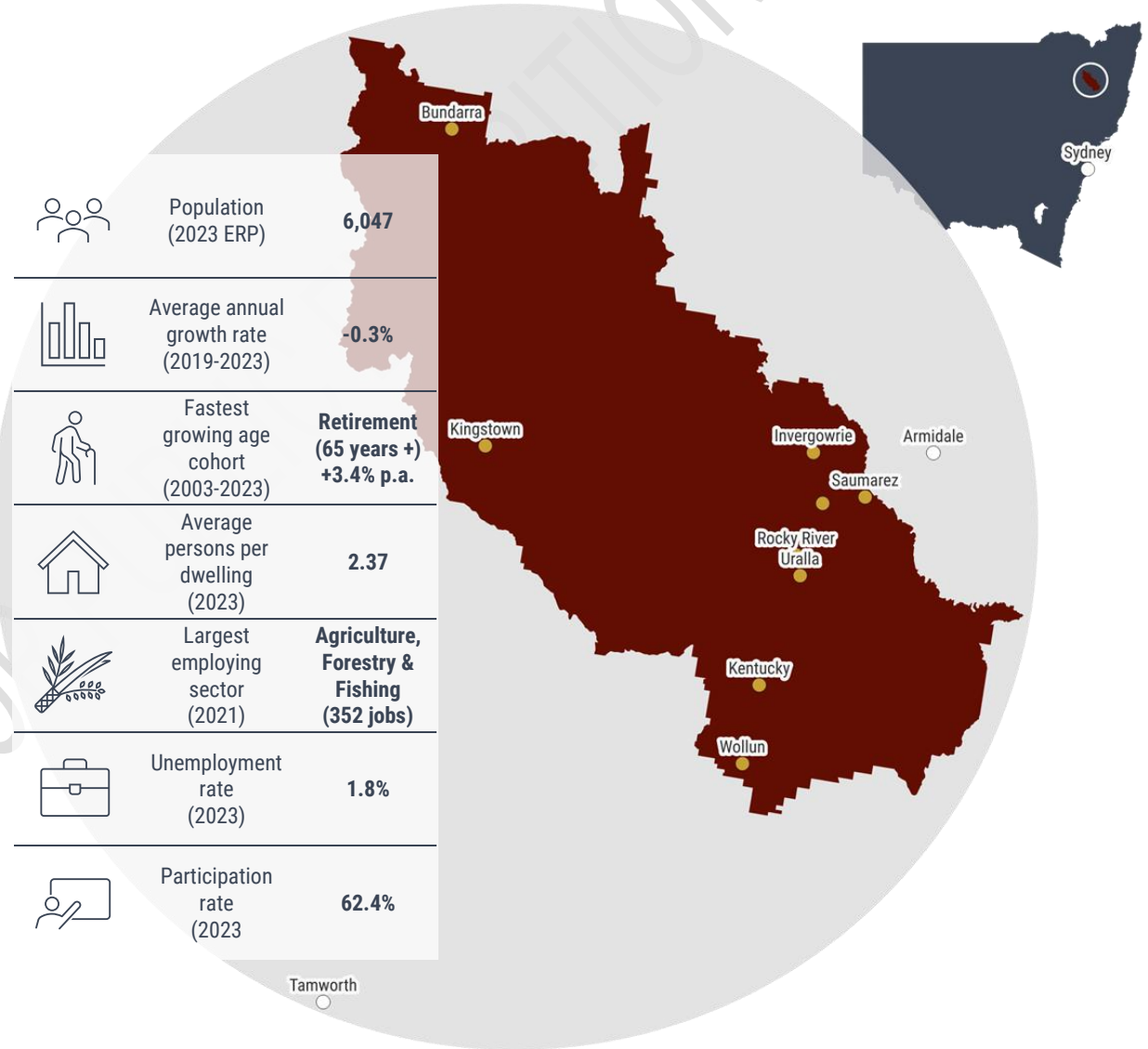*Figure 2 New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)*

LGA Snapshot

The Uralla Shire covers an area of approximately 3,230 square kilometres and is situated in the New England region between the major regional centres of Tamworth and Armidale.

As of 2024, the population of Uralla Shire was over 6,000 residents. This population is spread across several local communities, each with its own distinct history and character. While most of the Shire's residents live in the township of Uralla, a significant portion of the population resides in other centres, including Invergowrie, Saumarez, Arding, Bundarra, and Rocky River, as well as the rural villages of Kentucky, Kingstown, and Wollun.

Uralla is known for its rich history and heritage, creative community, and picturesque rural landscapes. These appeals have made tourism a significant draw card for the town, significantly contributing to the local economy.

Uralla Shire is part of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), which is set to play a significant role in the region's future development. The REZ aims to attract large-scale renewable energy projects, including wind and solar farms, to the area. This initiative is expected to bring new economic opportunities and job creation to the Shire.

The major industries in Uralla Shire include agriculture, particularly sheep and cattle farming, as well as wool production. The region is also known for its boutique breweries and distilleries. With the development of the New England REZ, the renewable energy sector is emerging as a potential major industry for the area.

Metric	Value
Population (2023 ERP)	6,047
Average annual growth rate (2019-2023)	-0.3%
Fastest growing age cohort (2003-2023)	Retirement (65 years +) +3.4% p.a.
Average persons per dwelling (2023)	2.37
Largest employing sector (2021)	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (352 jobs)
Unemployment rate (2023)	1.8%
Participation rate (2023	62.4%

Housing Vision

Diversified housing options for a growing community

Uralla Shire will offer a diverse range of housing options that support a growing, vibrant community, with renewable energy projects contributing to a lasting, positive housing legacy for the Shire.

The Uralla Shire housing vision has been developed through a widespread engagement process with residents, community and non-government organisations, local businesses and government bodies. Overwhelmingly, the Uralla community wanted to see the once-in-a-generation REZ opportunity harnessed for positive long-term outcomes in Uralla. In the short-term, the community wanted to see greater diversity in housing to support the changing population and to ensure that local residents were protected from any potential negative impacts that the REZ projects might have on housing affordability and availability.

Evidence Base

Summary

There are a number of key considerations for the future of housing in Uralla which have been informed by data analysis and stakeholder engagement throughout the development of the Strategy. These considerations impact how the Strategy should encourage the type, amount, and tenure of housing delivered in Uralla Shire.

There is an anticipated influx of workers who will be required to deliver the broad range of renewable energy projects. At its peak, there is an anticipated maximum workforce requirement of around 1,100 workers who will potentially look to be accommodated in Uralla Shire. Most of these workers are anticipated to be temporary, but some are likely to permanently move to the region. These workers are expected to peak in around 2029-2030 as EnergyCo's New England REZ Transmission Line project is commissioned.

Affordability is at risk in Uralla Shire which has historically experienced high levels of housing affordability. This is resulting in a permanent displacement of some local residents who are being priced out of Uralla. A recent spike in rental prices appeared to coincide with the construction of Stage 1 of the New England Solar Farm, potentially foreshadowing future rental spikes as the New England REZ rolls out.

Like many parts of regional Australia, dwelling sizes in Uralla are no longer well-suited to the smaller households. There is an increasingly large number of households having two, three, or four spare bedrooms and a lack of smaller low-maintenance homes.
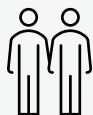
Uralla has been experiencing an ageing population, with the fastest growing demographic being retirement aged (65-79) and elderly (80+) residents. The rollout of the New England REZ is anticipated to increase the size of younger demographics as workers move to Uralla, some bringing their younger children.

There is an adequate supply of land which is already zoned appropriately for housing development in Uralla Shire which can support forecast housing demand over the next 20 years. This means that there will be little need for new land releases in Uralla Shire through the 20-year strategy timeline, with most housing being delivered within the existing settlement boundaries.
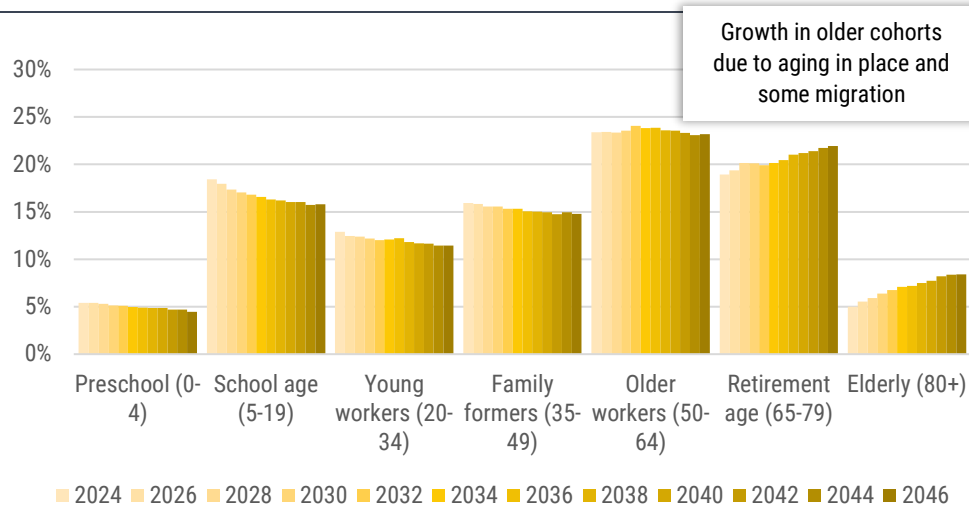
Demographic Overview

Growth in older cohorts due to aging in place and some migration

Figure 3 Uralla Shire forecast population age profile (Source: REMPLAN Forecast)

+167

The largest difference is in 2029 during peak construction.

The growth trajectory is slightly higher in the growth scenario as there are a greater proportion of family aged households.

Figure 4 Base population forecast vs growth scenario, Uralla LGA

Uralla's base population is forecast to experience reductions in the proportion of residents that are school age, young workers, and family formers, while retirement-age and elderly demographics are forecast to grow significantly – putting pressure on services and reducing the proportion of residents who are working age.
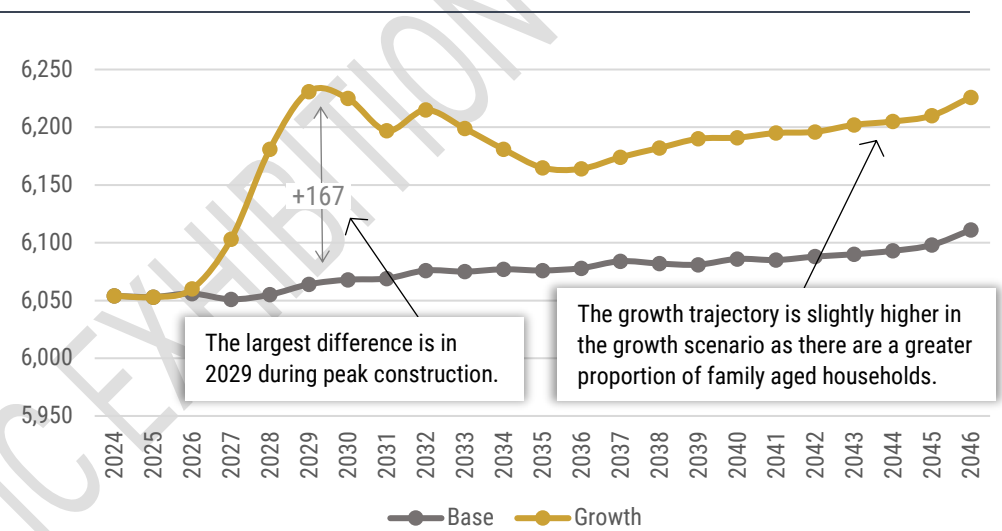
Under a growth scenario where New England REZ projects worker demands are included, Uralla is anticipated to see a temporary spike in total population in 2028-30 before experiencing a slight reduction followed by steady growth. Under the base scenario, Uralla is still anticipated to experience steady growth through to 2046.

While this spike in population will put strain on local services, infrastructure and supply chains, the rollout of new renewable energy projects in the region will provide meaningful revenue for the community through the Benefit Sharing scheme for the development of infrastructure and community services.
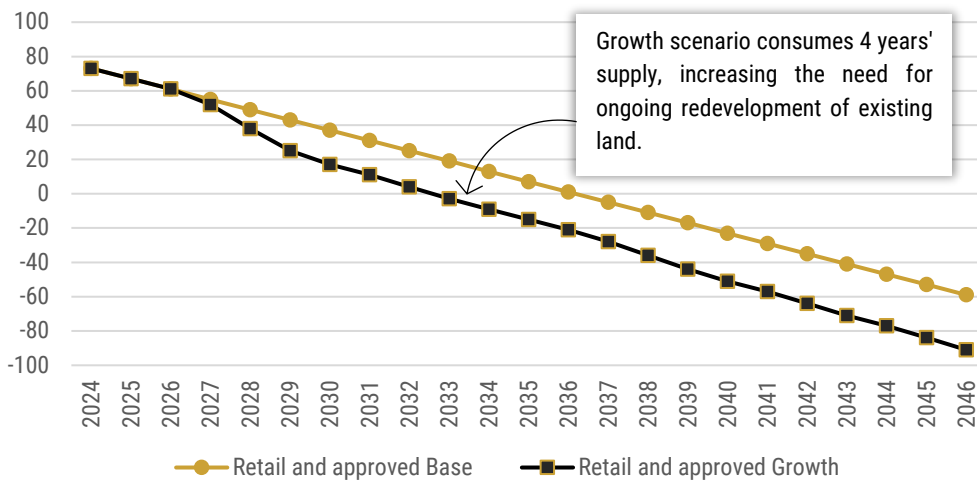
Housing Demand

Growth scenario consumes 4 years' supply, increasing the need for ongoing redevelopment of existing land.

Figure 5 Demand under base and growth scenario on retail and approved sites, Uralla Township

Uralla now has the most expensive median sale price of the LGAs in the New England region.

Figure 6 Median sale price, houses (Source: REMPLAN Housing)

Uralla is anticipated to exhaust its existing retail and approved land supply by 2036/37 under the base scenario, while the growth scenario would consume this land supply by 2032/33 – four years sooner. Uralla does, however, have a very high quantity of underutilised land which can be unlocked for future residential development.
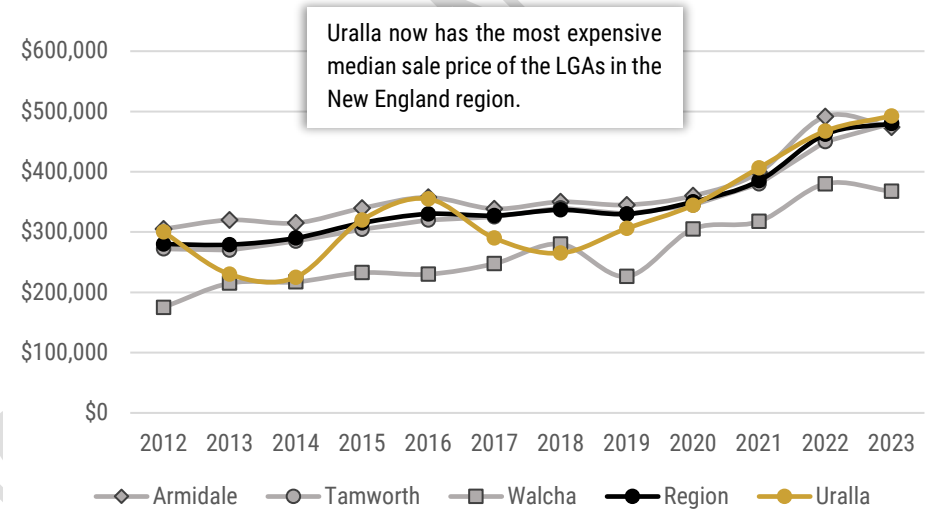
Uralla has historically been among the more affordable LGAs in the New England region to purchase a house over the last decade. In 2013-14, Uralla's median house prices were approximately on par with Walcha for the least expensive in the region at $225,000. Since then, Uralla's median house price has increased significantly to become the most expensive in the region at $492,500 in 2023.

Housing Supply

Table 1 Estimated land supply yield by forecast area, 2024

	Retail	Approved	Subdividable	Underut.	Total	Retail	Approved	Subdividable	Underut.
Uralla Township	32	41	135	457	665	5%	6%	20%	69%
Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds	9	27	11	304	351	3%	8%	3%	87%
Uralla Balance	19	1	33	31	84	23%	1%	39%	37%
Uralla LGA	**60**	**69**	**179**	**792**	**1,100**	**5%**	**6%**	**16%**	**72%**

The supply of land for residential development is not uniform across the Uralla LGA, with significantly more land available in the Uralla Township and Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds than in the smaller townships, comprising the Uralla Balance region. Importantly, the vast majority of land supply for future development in Uralla will be derived from currently underutilised land rather than through the release of new growth areas.

This presents an advantageous opportunity for Uralla to develop all the housing required for the coming decades of growth while maintaining Uralla township's compact and walkable urban form. This underutilised land has highly fragmented ownership, so this potential land supply will necessarily be realised through many small developments rather than few large developments as is more common in urban growth areas.

Land which is already occupied, constrained by significant environmental, cultural, geographical or regulatory considerations, or already designated for other uses has been classified as '**unavailable**' in the land supply assessments for the Uralla Township, Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds, and Bundarra settlements below.

Supply category definitions

- **Retail:** A retail parcel is an existing vacant parcel that is not of a size that can accommodate further subdivision based on the calculated median lot size.
- **Approved:** Approved yield applies to properties with a DA that has been approved since 2017. Where DAs are for staged subdivision, yields only include lots yet to be developed. Where a property has an existing dwelling, yields discount the existing dwelling. Approved supply excludes subdivisions classified as boundary realignments as well as any subdivisions proposed outside of the residential zones forming part of the analysis.
- **Subdividable:** A property that is vacant and also has a land area that could accommodate two or more lots (accounting for development takeouts such as access) based on the median lot size.
- **Underutilised (Underut.):** This classification is allocated to properties that are developed with a single dwelling improvement and have a land area that could accommodate two or more lots (accounting for development takeouts such as access) based on the median lot size. Yields for these properties discount the existing dwelling.
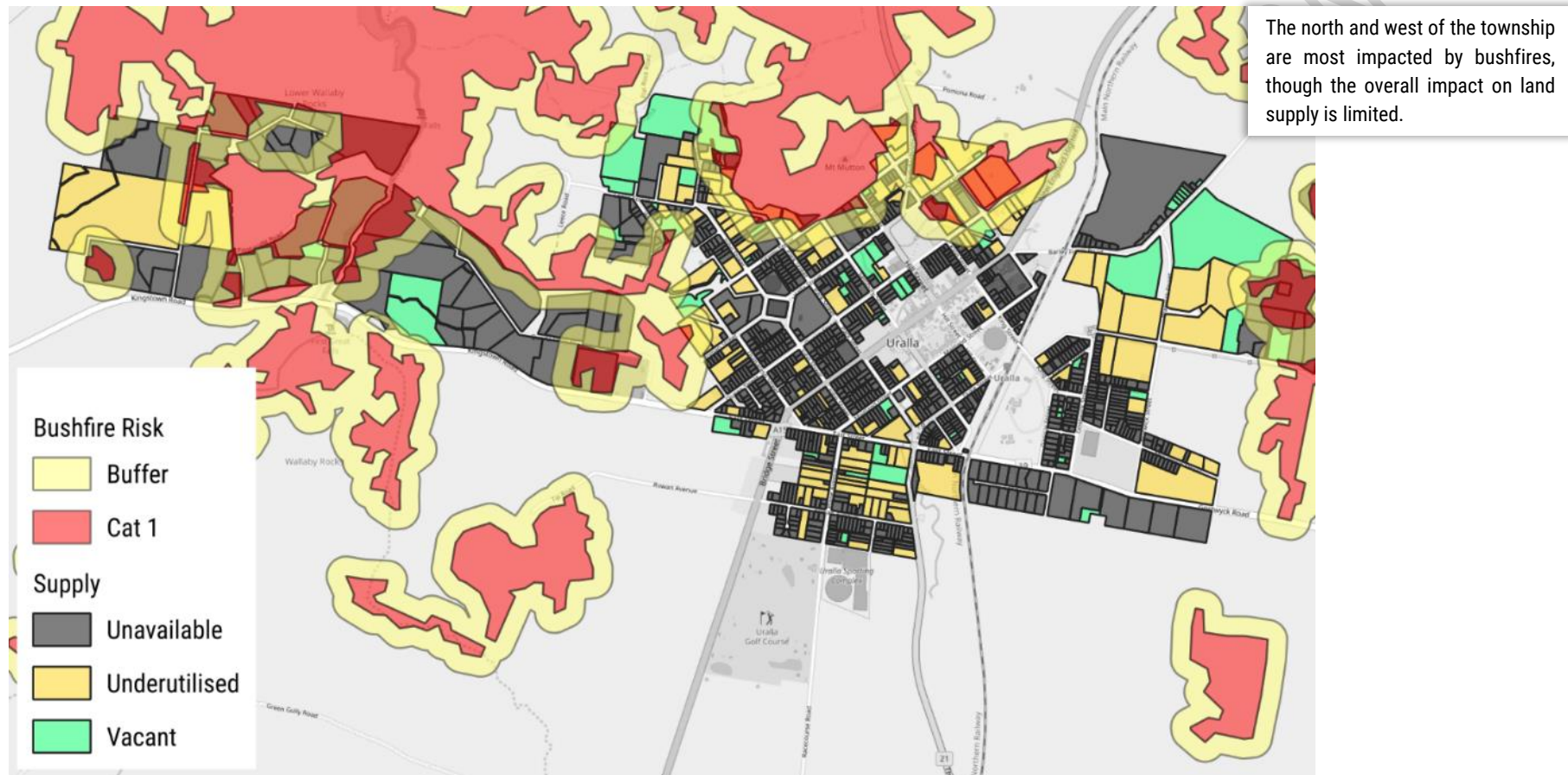
Land Use Opportunities and Constraints

The north and west of the township are most impacted by bushfires, though the overall impact on land supply is limited.

Bushfire Risk
- Buffer
- Cat 1

Supply
- Unavailable
- Underutilised
- Vacant

Figure 7 Bushfire prone areas, Uralla Township

Maintaining the existing Uralla Township boundary is a key goal of the Strategy, and this is further supported by the evident land use constraints that are present particularly on the Township's northern, western and eastern boundaries where significant amounts of land are subject to Category 1 bushfire risk. While some vacant and underutilised land on the Township's outer edges is subject to some bushfire risk, most of the vacant and underutilised land supply is unaffected – limiting the potential yield loss. It is also recognised that some areas of the Uralla LGA are subject to flooding or inundation, and further studies should be undertaken to better understand this risk and how it may affect appropriate land development and total available land supply in Uralla.
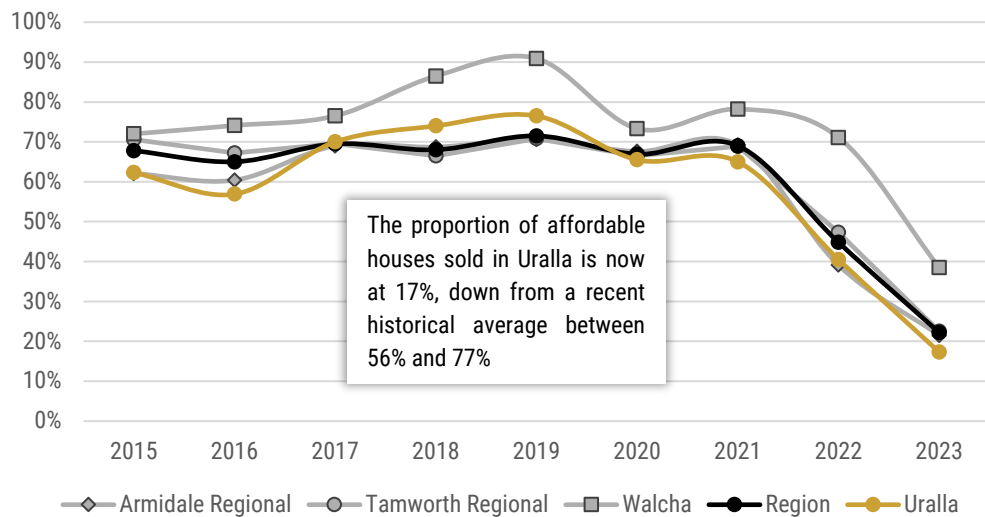
Analysis of the Evidence-Base

The proportion of affordable houses sold in Uralla is now at 17%, down from a recent historical average between 56% and 77%

Figure 8 Affordable houses sold in Uralla Region (Source: REMPLAN Housing)

The entire New England region has been severely affected by a reduction in housing purchase affordability, with steep decreases since 2021 – coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic and the establishment of Stage 1 of the New England Solar Farm.

Notably, housing purchase affordability has not recovered since the conclusion of construction for the New England Solar Farm Stage 1.
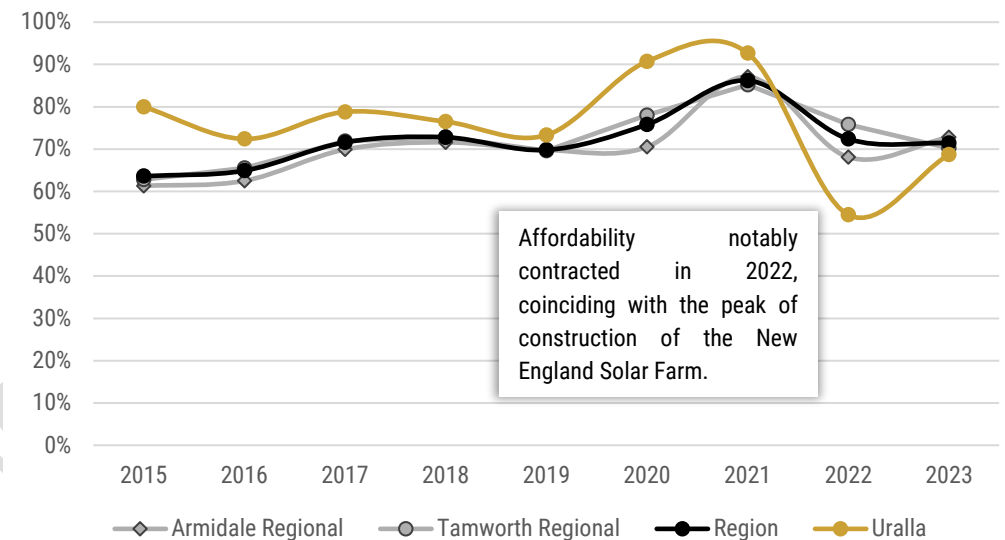

Affordability notably contracted in 2022, coinciding with the peak of construction of the New England Solar Farm.

Figure 9 Affordable rentals in Uralla Region (Source: REMPLAN Housing)

The 2022 reduction in rental affordability demonstrates the meaningful impact that REZ projects can have on the local rental market in Uralla.

While the remainder of the New England region experienced a simultaneous reduction in rental affordability, the impact in Uralla Shire was more significant – likely due to a small existing rental market and close proximity to the New England Solar Farm.

Household size and composition

Household composition has been changing in Uralla Shire. While housing development itself has been tending towards larger dwellings with more bedrooms, household size has been moving in the opposite direction, with a noted shift towards one and two person households and a shift away from larger households of four, five, and six people. In 2021 one- and two-person households accounted for two-thirds (67%) of all households in Uralla.

This has resulted in growing cases of excessive spare bedrooms – with 340 households reporting three spare bedrooms and 79 households reporting four spare bedrooms in 2021.

Not only is there an increase in spare bedrooms, but there is also a lack of small, low-maintenance housing in Uralla. Existing residents have highlighted a need for downsizing options within the town, while real estate agents report demand from newcomers seeking smaller homes near the town centre—options that are currently unavailable.
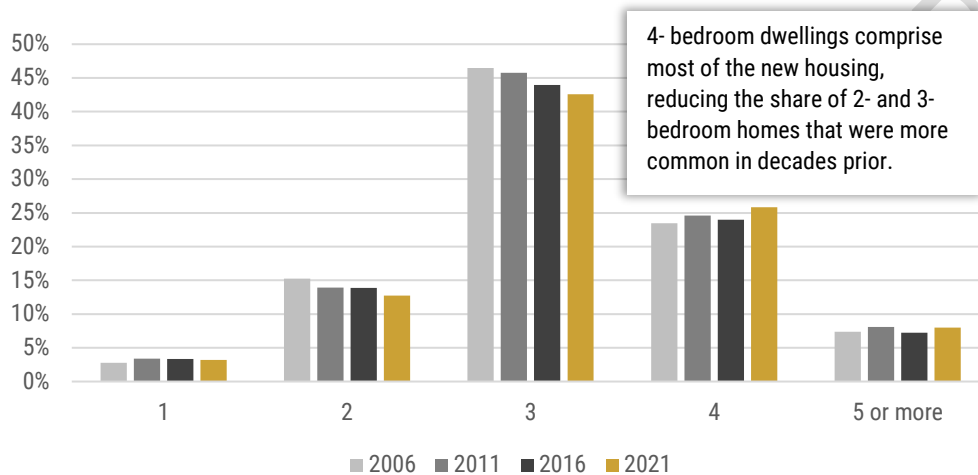
> The proportion of one- and two-person households is increasing. Larger households are not only declining in share but also in number.

Figure 11 Persons per dwelling 2006-2021 (Source: REMPLAN Community)

> 4- bedroom dwellings comprise most of the new housing, reducing the share of 2- and 3-bedroom homes that were more common in decades prior.

Figure 10 Dwellings by number of bedrooms in Uralla Shire 2011-2021 (Source: REMPLAN Community)
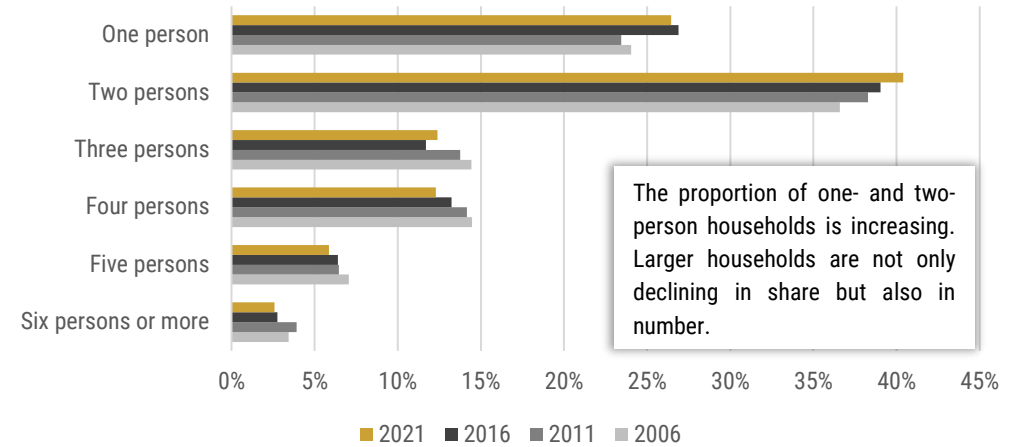*Note: Excludes bedsits and 'not stated' responses*

> A growing number of Uralla households have excessive spare bedrooms – reflecting smaller households and larger houses.
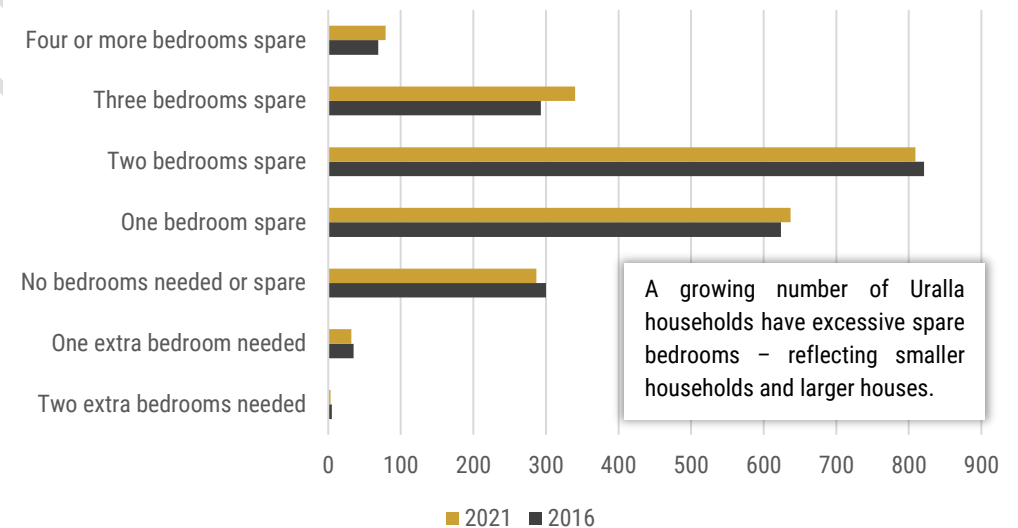
Figure 12 Dwellings by number of spare bedrooms in Uralla Shire 2016-2021 (Source: REMPLAN Community)

Housing Supply Gaps

Small infill housing in well-connected locations

There is a notable shortage of small infill housing options, particularly in areas that are well-connected to essential services and amenities. As household sizes continue to shrink and demand for low-maintenance living grows, the lack of appropriately sized and located housing restricts opportunities for younger residents, singles, and small families seeking affordable, convenient living arrangements. Addressing this gap is essential to create the diversity which supports varied needs, improves affordability, encourages growth, and reduces inequality.

Retirement and independent living options for older residents

Uralla's ageing population underscores the growing need for tailored housing solutions for older residents who wish to remain in the community. Currently, the availability of suitable retirement and independent living options is limited, forcing many elderly residents to seek housing outside the Shire. This not only disrupts community ties but also puts strain on external services. Expanding the supply of accessible, age-friendly housing within Uralla is crucial for supporting older residents to age in place.

Affordable housing for low-income residents

Housing affordability has become a significant concern for Uralla residents, particularly those on low incomes. Rising property prices and competition from itinerant workers, who often have greater purchasing power, have exacerbated challenges in accessing affordable housing. These dynamics risk marginalising long-term residents, increasing housing stress, and exacerbating social inequalities. Policies and initiatives are needed to preserve and expand affordable housing stock to ensure Uralla remains inclusive and accessible.

Construction worker accommodation

While some REZ workers may find housing in Uralla's existing and future housing stock, low vacancy rates, limited development capacity, rising housing costs, and the short stays of many workers make temporary construction worker accommodation necessary.

Identifying areas with development capacity

Clear housing gaps must be addressed to ensure a sustainable and equitable housing future for Uralla residents, with identifying suitable areas for development being a key focus of the Uralla Local Housing Strategy.
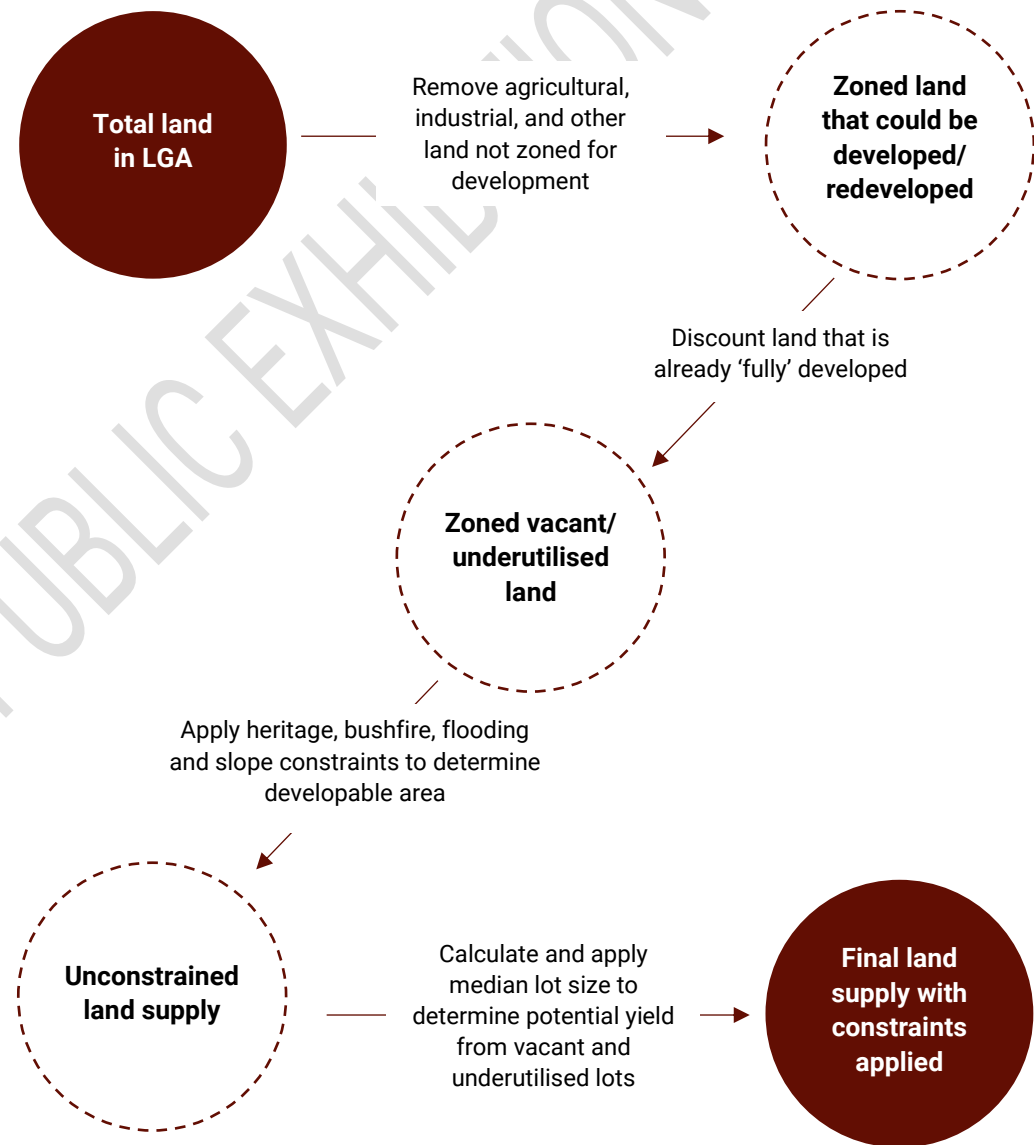
Development capacity takes two main forms:

- Vacant land that is already zoned for residential development, denoted as **'Vacant'** in the subsequent analysis. This includes retail (potential for only one dwelling) and vacant subdivisible (potential for multiple dwellings)
- Land that already has one dwelling on it but has the capacity for one or more additional dwellings to be developed on it, denoted as **'Underutilised'** in the subsequent analysis.

In rural and regional contexts like Uralla, most housing capacity is found on underutilised land where dwellings occupy lots much larger than the minimum or median lot size. This allows for subdivision and the development of additional dwellings while maintaining relatively standard densities.

By contrast, in suburban growth areas of cities, development capacity is typically concentrated on entirely undeveloped vacant land along growth corridors, where new detached housing can be developed.

In developed urban areas, housing capacity is often derived from redeveloping underutilised lots with existing low-density housing—such as detached dwellings and duplexes—into higher-density housing like townhouses and apartments.

Total land in LGA → Remove agricultural, industrial, and other land not zoned for development → **Zoned land that could be developed/ redeveloped**

Discount land that is already 'fully' developed → **Zoned vacant/ underutilised land**

Apply heritage, bushfire, flooding and slope constraints to determine developable area → **Unconstrained land supply**

Calculate and apply median lot size to determine potential yield from vacant and underutilised lots → **Final land supply with constraints applied**

Uralla Township Land Supply

The Uralla Township is characterised by significant amounts of smaller, underutilised lots on the boundaries of the central area, and larger vacant and underutilised lots on the outskirts of the township.

Retail: 32

Approved: 41

Vacant Subdividable: 135

Underutilised: 457

Total lots available for development: 665

See 'Supply category definitions' for more detail on land supply categories.
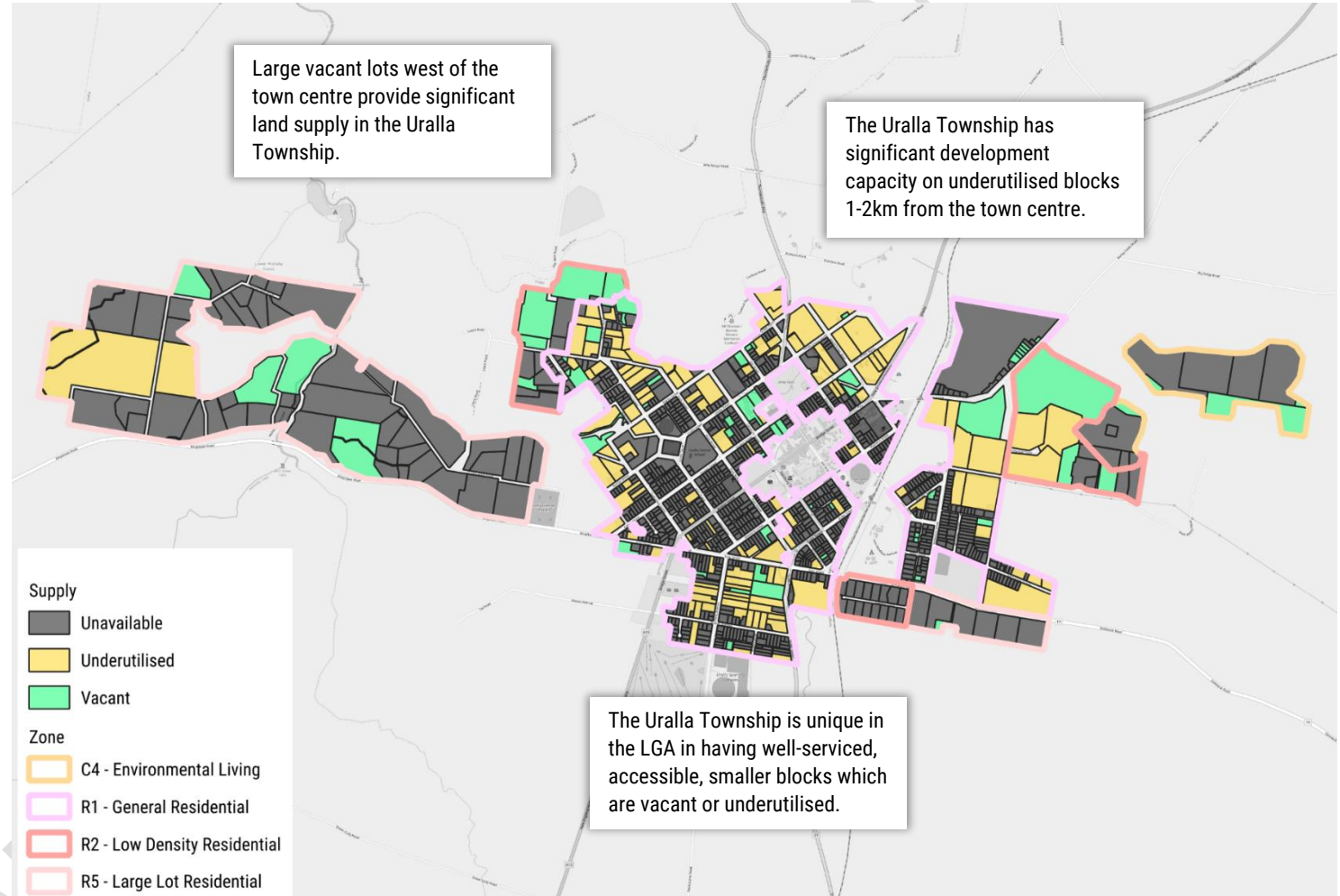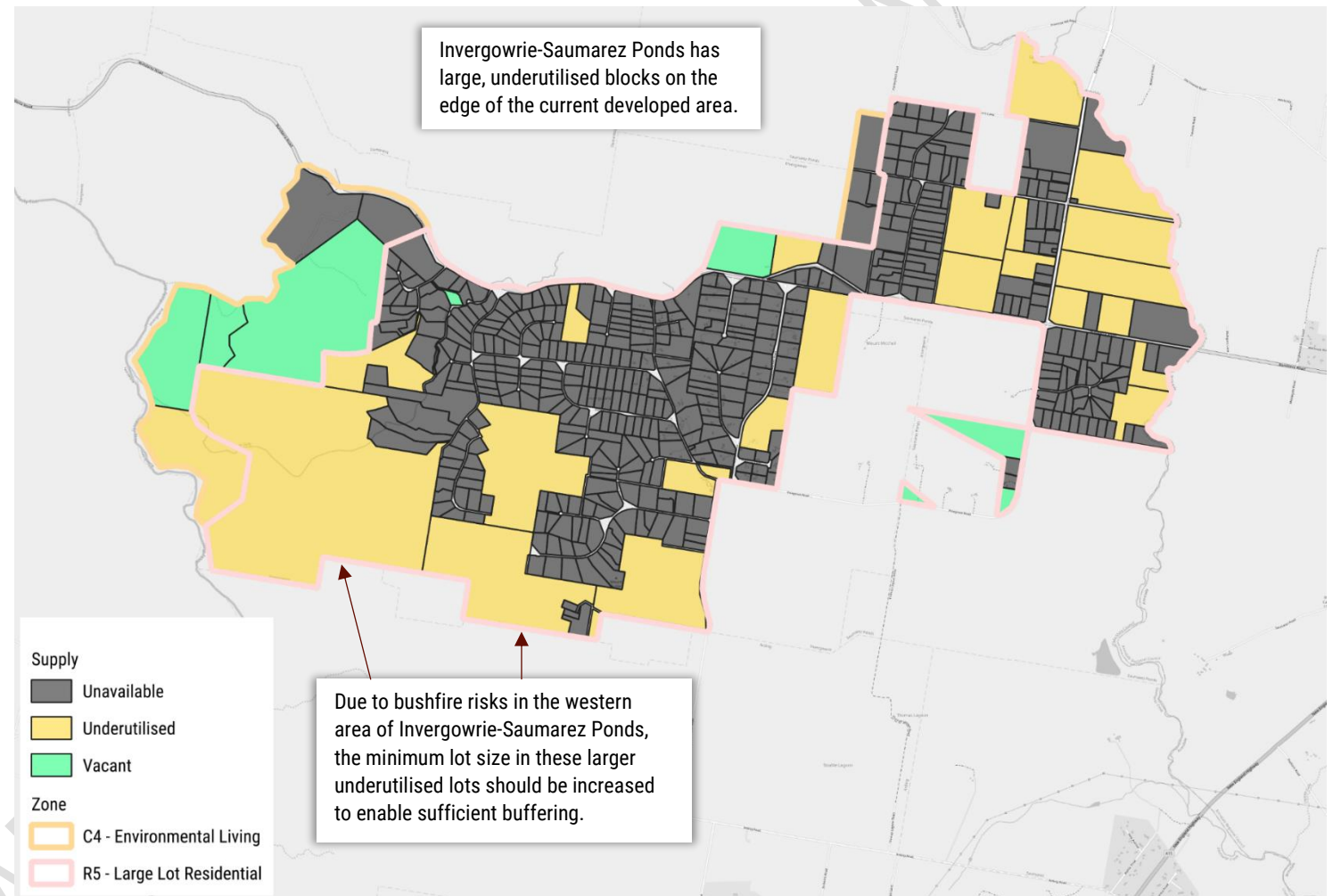
Large vacant lots west of the town centre provide significant land supply in the Uralla Township.

The Uralla Township has significant development capacity on underutilised blocks 1-2km from the town centre.

The Uralla Township is unique in the LGA in having well-serviced, accessible, smaller blocks which are vacant or underutilised.

Supply
- Unavailable
- Underutilised
- Vacant

Zone
- C4 - Environmental Living
- R1 - General Residential
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- R5 - Large Lot Residential

Figure 13 Supply status, Uralla Township

Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds Land Supply

Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds is characterised by large, underutilised blocks on the outskirts of the developed area. These blocks are somewhat constrained by bushfire risk, and minimum lot sizes should be larger in these areas to enable appropriate bushfire management practices and reduce risk to life and property.

Retail: 9

Approved: 27

Vacant Subdividable: 11

Underutilised: 304

Total lots available for development: 351

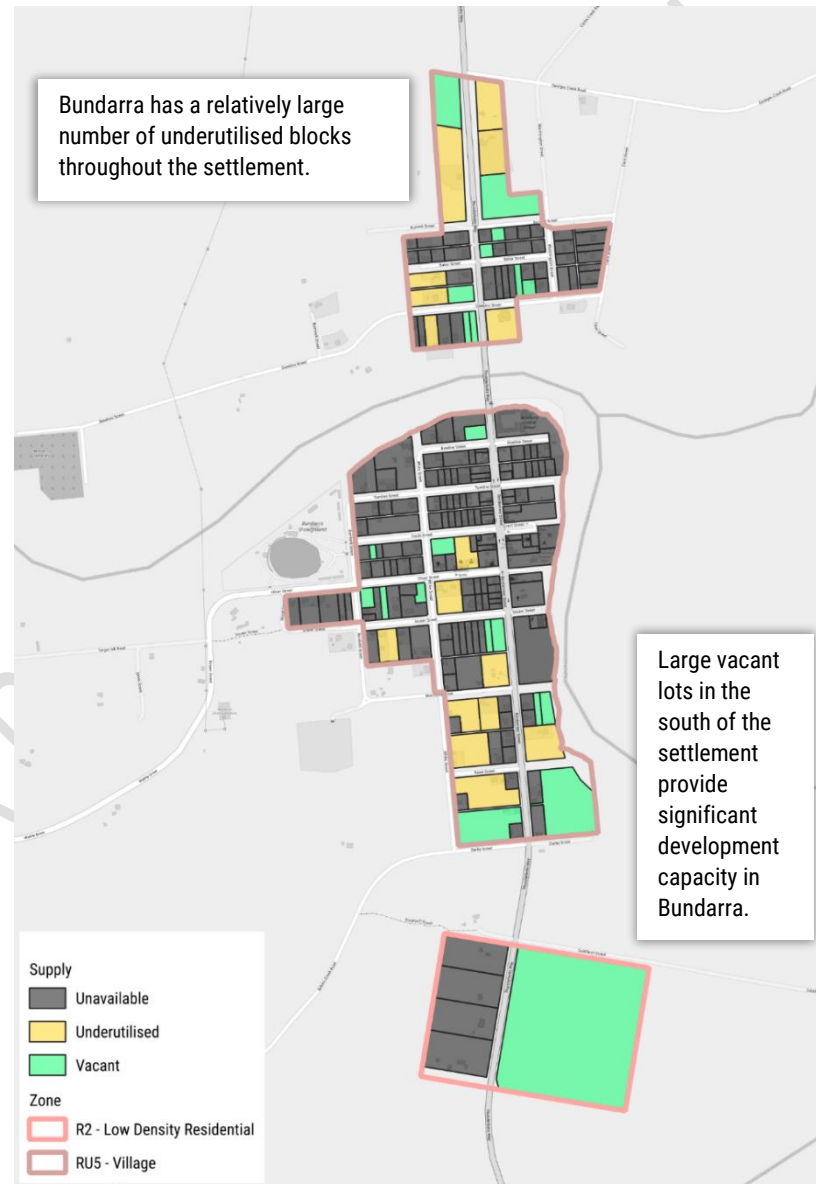*See 'Supply category definitions' for more detail on land supply categories.*

Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds has large, underutilised blocks on the edge of the current developed area.

Due to bushfire risks in the western area of Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds, the minimum lot size in these larger underutilised lots should be increased to enable sufficient buffering.

Supply
- Unavailable
- Underutilised
- Vacant

Zone
- C4 - Environmental Living
- R5 - Large Lot Residential

Figure 14 Supply status, Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds

Bundarra Land Supply

Bundarra is the only village with residentially zoned land and makes up almost all supply in the defined 'Uralla Balance' area. With a very high median lot size applied, there is still considerable supply of land in the township. With very low demand, vacant and underutilised supply.

Retail: 19

Approved: 1

Vacant Subdividable: 33

Underutilised: 31

Total lots available for development: 84

See 'Supply category definitions' for more detail on land supply categories.

Bundarra has a relatively large number of underutilised blocks throughout the settlement.

Large vacant lots in the south of the settlement provide significant development capacity in Bundarra.

Supply
- Unavailable
- Underutilised
- Vacant

Zone
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- RU5 - Village

Figure 15 Supply status, Bundarra

Engaging with the Uralla Community

Uralla Shire engaged with key stakeholders, State government departments, renewable energy developers, housing providers, neighbouring councils, and local community members over three weeks in August and September 2024 to understand housing needs and what the vision for housing in Uralla should be for the next 20 years.

This engagement also helped Uralla Shire Council understand the major regulatory, environmental and financial opportunities and constraints for housing development in Uralla. The Strategy incorporates the findings of this engagement throughout the overview, objectives, priorities and actions to ensure recommendations are highly informed by the desires of the community. Key findings from engagement are summarised below.

Renewable energy projects have overlapping timelines, and there's concern about how the local community will manage them.

There are opportunities to repurpose worker accommodations as permanent housing – particularly for retiree housing.

The retiree population in Uralla is growing, creating demand for suitable low-maintenance housing and aged care facilities.

Residents have experienced rising housing demand from renewable energy projects which has driven up rents and displaced local residents.

The growth of short-term rentals has reduced long-term housing availability, worsening affordability.

Uralla's character should be maintained, and sustainable development should be encouraged to fund needed infrastructure improvements.
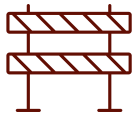
Perception that Council's historical service delivery and resistance to development has hindered growth and development.

The community should be involved in the future of housing and in creating a positive legacy from renewable energy projects.

Housing development is constrained by infrastructure limitations and incorrect zoning.

The Strategy

The Role of Council in Local Housing

Uralla Shire Council does not directly develop housing. However, it does play a vital role in facilitating housing delivery across the Shire. Most housing is provided by the private sector, supplemented by contributions from government and non-government organisations.

The Council's responsibilities include planning, zoning, delivering enabling infrastructure, and supporting social and affordable housing. It also serves as a central conduit, fostering collaboration between developers, NGOs, and State government agencies, while advocating for funding and policy support. Community engagement, provision of information, and promotion of innovative housing models are other methods by which Council addresses local housing needs.

The Strategy provides a framework to guide planning, development, and advocacy, ensuring sustainable and inclusive housing outcomes for Uralla Shire.

Facilitation
Bringing stakeholders together to enable collaborative housing solutions.

Planning
Setting strategic land use and zoning policies.

Investment Attraction
Promoting opportunities to attract private and public investment in housing projects.

Investigation
Conducting research to understand housing needs or to derisk specific key sites.

Advocacy
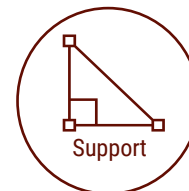Championing local housing priorities to higher levels of government and other stakeholders.

Service Provision
Delivering traditional or new services to support sustainable housing development.

Lead
Setting a vision to drive initiatives and leading specific housing projects and initiatives.

Support
Supporting housing initiatives that are led by other government and non-government organisations.

Information Provision
Providing accurate and accessible housing data to guide stakeholders.

Uralla Local Housing Strategy Overview

Housing Vision	Diversified housing options for a growing community: Uralla will have a diverse range of housing options that accommodate for a reinvigorated local population, with renewable energy projects creating a positive housing legacy for the Shire.

Council Commitment	*Lead:* Council will lead initiatives and priorities in pursuit of our objectives. *Collaborate*: Council will proactively partner with stakeholders and community groups to pursue and deliver priorities. *Facilitate*: Council will assist others to pursue and deliver their priorities that are aligned to our objectives. *Advocate*: Council will communicate our community's interests and priorities to government and other decision makers.

Strategic Goals	Diverse housing for all residents	Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments	Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes	Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements
Key Actions	1.2 Investigate and facilitate options for retirement and independent living within the Uralla township. 1.4 Investigate opportunities for Council owned sites to be utilised for social and affordable housing.	2.1 Identify large site(s) for well-located worker accommodation. 2.2 Establish agreements for future use of construction worker accommodation.	3.2 Establish a regular landowner and developer forum. 3.4 Implement clear, consistent, and transparent procedures for approvals, standards and communication.	4.1 Develop a Township Framework Plan for Uralla to inform planning policies and controls. 4.2 Undertake a zoning review of the Rocky River settlement.

Goals and Objectives

The Uralla Shire Local Housing Strategy identifies key housing challenges and opportunities, providing a framework to guide housing development that aligns with the needs and aspirations of the community.

Grounded in strong evidence and informed by local priorities, the Strategy sets out clear objectives to ensure diverse, accessible, and affordable housing options for all residents, while preserving the unique character of the region.

These objectives will shape planning policies, guide future development, and support collaborative efforts to achieve sustainable and inclusive housing outcomes for Uralla Shire.

Diverse housing for all residents
Foster housing development that meets the diverse needs of Uralla Shire, offering smaller, accessible homes while ensuring affordability through innovative partnerships and tenure models.

Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments
Facilitate construction workers accommodation associated with REZ projects in a way that manages short-term demand and allows for seamless repurposing of assets that support long-term community needs.

Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes
Adopt a proactive, customer-centred approach to housing development, ensuring the council is open, consistent, and responsive in its planning and facilitation roles.

Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements
Protect the essence of Uralla's townships by ensuring new development occurs within existing settlements and is sympathetic to local character.

Land use planning approach

The goals and objectives of the Strategy can be put into two broad categories:

1. Addressing underlying housing needs of residents.
2. Managing the short-term spike in demand from the REZ projects.

The land use planning approach to achieve the objectives of the Strategy for these two categories will vary, as they are inherently distinct in their nature and requirements.

These approaches ensure that both long-term and short-term objectives are met while maintaining the liveability and sustainability of Uralla. By leveraging existing resources and planning proactively for temporary demands, the Strategy aligns with community's needs and growth patterns.

In addition to the land use planning approaches outlined here, there will be a range of other non-planning mechanisms intended to achieve the objectives of the Strategy.

Addressing underlying housing needs of residents (Now – Long Term)

Context: Given the character, scale, demand, and capacity of Uralla's residential locations, consolidation and better utilisation of existing zoned land is essential.

Approach: This will primarily be delivered through a diverse mix of low-density housing types, including detached houses, semi-detached houses, terraces, and multi-dwelling developments.

Benefits:
- Supports gradual growth while retaining the town's character.
- Ensures efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- Provides housing options suited to an ageing population and changing household sizes.

Managing the short-term spike in demand from REZ projects (Now – Medium Term)

Context: The REZ projects will generate a short-term spike in housing demand, necessitating the provision of construction worker accommodation.

Approach: Temporary accommodation solutions will be located in suitable areas, ensuring minimal disruption to existing residential zones, compatibility with local land use policies, and potential for infrastructure to catalyse future development. Where feasible, these structures can be designed for repurposing after the demand subsides, contributing to long-term housing or community uses.

Benefits:
- Addresses immediate demand without overextending permanent housing supply.
- Provides a flexible solution that aligns with the temporary nature of REZ-related demand.

Goal 1 Diverse housing for all residents

Objective

Foster housing development that meets the diverse needs of Uralla Shire, offering smaller, accessible homes while ensuring affordability through innovative partnerships and tenure models.

The demographics of Uralla are changing – and there is a heightened demand for new housing typologies which support the changing needs of the community. In particular, Uralla has an ageing population that does not have many opportunities to downsize. There is a very low number of rentals available throughout the township – limiting opportunities for demographics who are more prone to renting. The lack of diversity can also be an inhibitor for new residents.

Challenges and opportunities

- ✓ Uralla can accommodate substantial amounts of infill development through low-density forms of housing that is compatible with local character.
- ≈ Uralla has become the least affordable location in the region with many households being on relatively low incomes. A current lack of social and affordable housing puts pressure on locals wishing to remain in Uralla.
- ✓ Increased house prices can be an issue but they can also improve the economics to undertake smaller format housing development and may therefore support additional delivery of this form of housing.
- ≈ Uralla's housing stock is dominated by larger detached dwellings, which shape market expectations and buyer preferences. There is a lack of incentives for delivering smaller housing formats - discouraging developers from pursuing such projects and further limiting housing diversity.
- ✓ Leveraging Council-owned land for social and affordable housing presents an opportunity to increase diversity and affordability while also allowing Council to guide development outcomes to best meet community needs.
- ≈ Limited construction in recent decades means the industry is slow to respond to demand, with limited experience delivering the new housing types needed in Uralla.

Actions

- – Support social and affordable housing providers in the delivery of housing in Uralla.
- – Investigate and facilitate options for retirement and independent living within the Uralla township.
- – Introduce a streamlined approval process for infill development that complies with local planning controls and design standards.
- – Investigate opportunities for Council owned sites to be utilised for social and affordable housing.
- – Facilitate collaboration between local landowners and developers to support the consolidation of adjacent underutilised properties, enabling coordinated infill development and maximising land potential.
- – Continue to support the delivery of standard detached dwellings in existing zoned land.
- – Investigate opportunities and implement mechanisms for cost recovery of capital investment in infrastructure that benefits and unlocks underutilised land. through Development Servicing Plans for identified precincts where large underutilised and vacant properties are present.
- – Update the DCP to incorporate updated design guidelines for low density development.

Goal 2 Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments

Objective

Facilitate construction workers accommodation associated with REZ projects in a way that manages short-term demand and allows for seamless repurposing of assets that support long-term community needs.

Temporary construction workers and their families are expected to drive housing demand in Uralla in the near future. This spike in demand will impact the housing market, as seen during the construction of Stage 1 of the New England Solar Farm. Developing construction worker accommodation in Uralla can help mitigate these effects while supporting the delivery of REZ projects. With forward planning, partnerships, and coordination, this development can also leave a positive legacy for the community.

Challenges and opportunities

- ≈ It is difficult to determine the exact demand for construction workers accommodation over time across multiple projects to ensure there is an appropriate - but not oversupplied - amount of accommodation.
- ✓ Delivery of construction workers accommodation in desirable locations can create opportunities for utilisation for other uses at the conclusion of REZ project development as the utility infrastructure may easily enable the development of more permanent housing.
- ≈ If not adequately managed, the significant influx of workers from multiple overlapping projects will put pressure on the housing market, driving up prices and restricting supply.
- ✓ Utilising existing dwelling with spare capacity (e.g. lone person in a 4-bedroom home) can benefit local homeowners as well as absorb some of the short-term spikes in demand to minimise rental market impacts.
- ≈ A lack of adequate permanent housing may act as a deterrent to potential new working residents and their families moving to the region.
- ✓ The state government is implementing standardised changes to permit construction worker accommodation, particularly in response to REZ project demand. Council can introduce local provisions to tailor development controls, such as specifying location, design, infrastructure requirements, or decommissioning plans.

Actions

- – Engage with local landowners, EnergyCo and renewable energy developers to identify large site(s) for well-located construction worker accommodation.
- – Establish agreements for future use of construction workers accommodation and/or sites once the construction phase winds down (see Action 2.7).
- – Incorporate preferred outcomes for construction worker accommodation into the DCP.
- – Encourage the use of Community Benefit Sharing funding for enhancements to the public realm that support the needs of an ageing population, such as improved accessibility, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and amenities.
- – Facilitate options for REZ developers to construct permanent housing for new working residents.
- – Explore and support options, such as a local online marketplace, where temporary construction workers can find lodging or boarding with local residents.
- – Implement future use agreements for construction workers accommodation (see Action 2.2).

Goal 3 Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes

Objective

Adopt a proactive, customer-centred approach to housing development, ensuring the council is open, consistent, and responsive in its planning and facilitation roles.

Uralla Shire Council has a renewed commitment to facilitating the development of housing for local residents and the workers that will be required for the development and operation of renewable energy projects. Council will work collaboratively with local residents, landholders, housing developers, community housing providers, renewable energy developers, state and federal agencies, and community groups to support great housing outcomes in Uralla Shire.

Challenges and opportunities

- ≈ Developers report inconsistent guidance, delays, and unclear requirements from staff previously at council, impacting project timelines and trust.
- ✓ Implementing clear, consistent, and transparent procedures for development approvals, engineering standards, and communication with stakeholders.
- ≈ Aging infrastructure, poor maintenance, inadequate engineering standards, and unresolved stormwater issues are considered to hinder development and planning efforts.
- ✓ Improved infrastructure planning through a comprehensive audit of existing assets and establishing a forward looking infrastructure servicing strategy will enable the council to prioritise upgrades, address capacity constraints, and support sustainable growth while providing clear guidance to developers and ensuring cost-effective service delivery for future housing needs.
- ≈ As a small council, Uralla Shire has limited resources to deliver the types of projects and services that are provided in larger centres.
- ✓ Council can act as a leader in housing provision by leveraging existing assets and resources through effective partnerships with other organisations.

Actions

- – Develop a standardised engineering code to improve consistency, efficiency and clarity for the development sector working in the region.
- – Establish a regular forum (e.g. 2 per year) for local landowners and developers to provide a platform to share updates on policies, infrastructure projects, and Council processes, while also allowing developers to provide feedback.
- – Conduct an audit of existing council-owned land to identify opportunities for supporting diverse housing types or showcasing exemplar developments that demonstrate the potential for innovative housing solutions within the Shire.
- – Implement clear, consistent, and transparent procedures for development approvals, engineering standards, and communication with stakeholders.
- – Create development guides or toolkits for subdivisions and multi dwelling developments to assist local developers with the process.
- – Develop a comprehensive map of infrastructure assets, including water, sewer, stormwater, and power and make this information publicly accessible through the Council's GIS platform to support transparency and informed decision-making for development.
- – Undertake a detailed survey of the Shire's townships to a 1-metre contour level, providing accurate topographical data to enhance planning processes and guide infrastructure improvements.
- – Review the minimum subdivision lot size in the Lot Size Map in the western portion of the Invergowrie R5 land to reflect the environmental risk factors in the area.

Goal 4 Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements

Objective

Protect the essence of Uralla's townships by ensuring new development occurs within existing settlements and is sympathetic to local character.

Uralla Shire is home to diverse local communities, each with its unique history and character. Most of the Shire's residents live in the township of Uralla, however many others reside in smaller settlements like Invergowrie, Saumarez, Bundarra, and Rocky River, among others.

There is a substantial amount of capacity within existing residentially zoned areas of Uralla Shire, even if developed at low densities. Ensuring future development strengthens the existing scale and character of each location will be important.

Challenges and opportunities

- ≈ The vast majority of developable land within the Uralla township is in underutilised lots which already have a dwelling on them. As this capacity is dispersed among many small landholders, unlocking this capacity will require many smaller developments rather than few larger developments which may be easier to develop.
- ✓ Rocky River is an existing historic settlement that accommodates around 5% of the Shire's population, but is within a rural zoning that does not reflect the scale or character of the area. Rezoning Rocky River could open up additional, well-located, low density development and Uralla Shire should prioritise reviewing the zoning in the settlement. While other settlements, like Invergowrie, Saumarez, Arding, Bundarra, Kentucky Kingstown and Wollun are home to many other residents in Uralla, their relative inaccessibility and development pattern is more suited to rural zoning.
- ≈ There is no strategic framework plan to guide the future development and management of the Uralla township in a cohesive manner. One-off development proposals, such as new commercial precincts on the outskirts of town, can permanently undermine the town centre.

- ✓ Increased house prices may incentivise infill development that was previously not financially viable.
- ≈ Infrastructure assets within established areas are constraining development in certain areas of existing zoned land.

Actions

- – Develop a Township Framework Plan for Uralla to inform planning policies and controls around how the town will grow and develop its commercial, residential, industrial areas, and public spaces.
- – Undertake a zoning review of the Rocky River settlement which reflects its highly accessible location between Armidale and Uralla and its existing pattern of development.
- – Develop a 'Good design guide' for infill development that is tailored to the Uralla context and supports local developers to make improved design choices.
- – Review underutilised and unconstrained land within and on the edge of the existing Uralla township that is inappropriately zoned to encourage well-located residential development.
- – Develop a local infrastructure plan to prioritise infrastructure upgrades in areas with significant infill development potential to ensure they are "shovel-ready" for new housing projects.
- – Update the DCP to incorporate new design guidelines for low-density development.
- – Focus on the efficient use of existing residential land within established settlements, prioritising the development of vacant and underutilised land before considering rezoning for new residential purposes.
- – Prepare a residential development monitor to track levels and locations of development as well as estimated land supply to understand need and timing of LEP changes in the future.

Implementation and Delivery Plan
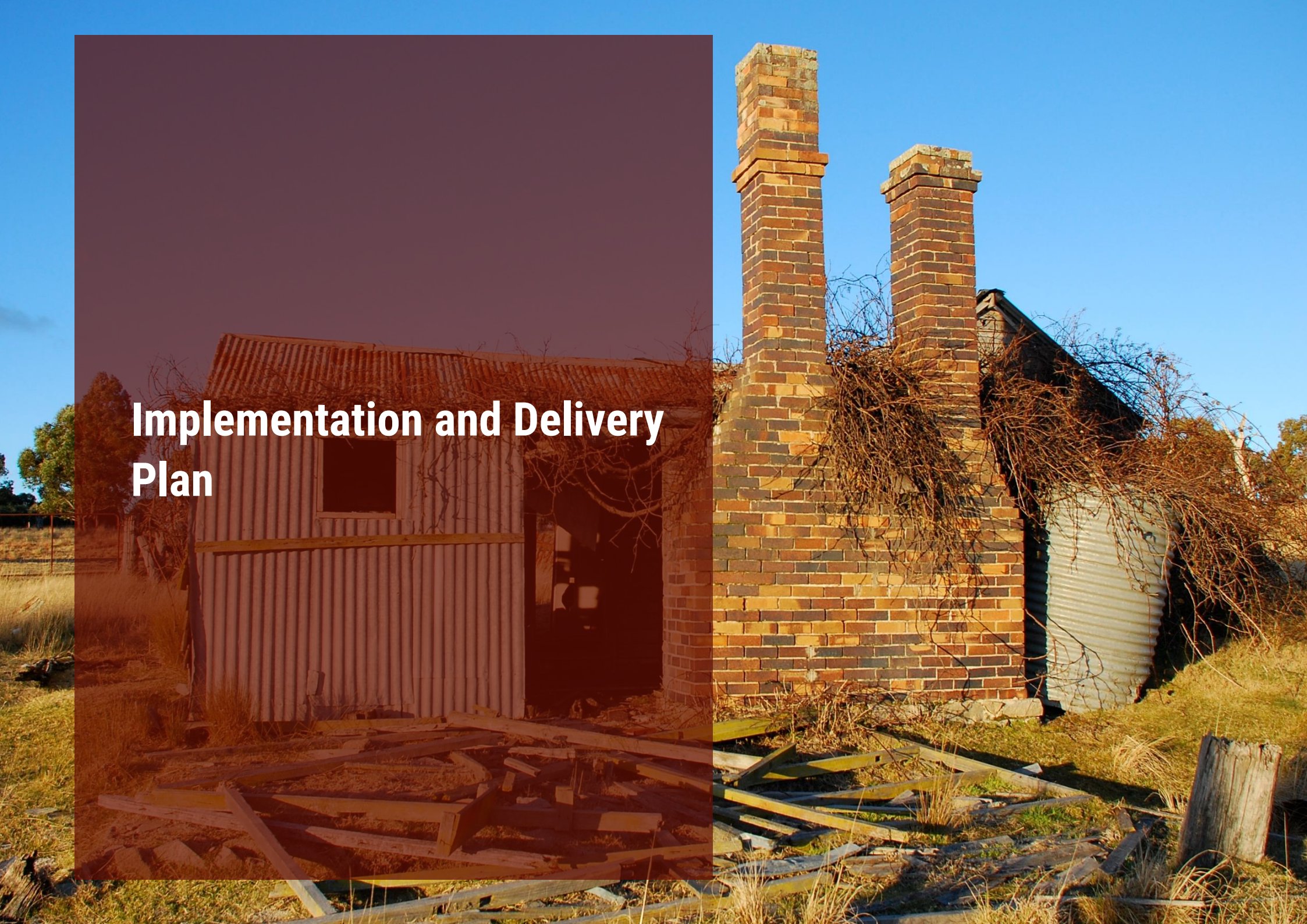
Implementation and Delivery Plan

This Local Housing Strategy has been developed within Uralla Shire Council's existing strategic framework, the foundation of which is the Local Strategic Planning Statement (2021).

Activities outlined in this Implementation and Delivery Plan align with the following state, regional and local policies:

- New England North West Regional Plan 2041, (2022)
- Government Response to the Regional Housing Taskforce, DPIE, (2022)
- Uralla Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031, (2022)
- Uralla Shire Council Operational Plan 2023-2024, (2024)
- Southern New England High Country Regional Economic Development Strategy, (2023)
- NSW Housing SEPP (State Environmental Planning Policy) (2021)
- Uralla Local Environmental Plan (2012)
- Uralla Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (2021)
- NSW Housing Strategy: Housing 2041(2021)
- Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW 2016-2025 (2015)
- Land and Housing Corporation Portfolio Strategy (2020)
- National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (2024)
- Uralla Shire Council Biodiversity Strategy (2012)
- Draft Benefit Sharing Guideline (2024)
- Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation (2024)

Ongoing Responsibilities

The following activities reflect the day-to-day function and role of Uralla Shire Council to supporting the development of housing within the Shire. In addition to those listed below, a number of project oriented actions will become an ongoing responsibility once they have been established.

Role	Activity
Advocacy	• Lobby state and federal governments for funding to support affordable housing initiatives – including through successive rounds of the Regional Housing Fund. • Promote Uralla Shire's housing opportunities to potential residents and investors. • Champion sustainable housing practices to align with the Shire's environmental goals. • Represent community housing needs at regional planning forums.
Statutory planning	• Review and update the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) to support housing diversity. • Develop specific Development Control Plan (DCP) provisions for housing types. • Streamline development application processes for priority housing projects. • Implement zoning changes to facilitate appropriate housing development. • Enforce building codes and standards to ensure quality housing outcomes.
Strategic planning	• Identify potential sites for future housing developments. • Integrate housing strategy with other Council strategic documents, such as the Community Strategic Plan. • Prepare Development Servicing Plans. • Review developer contributions.
Partnerships	• Collaborate with local community groups to understand diverse housing needs. • Engage with neighbouring councils on regional housing initiatives. • Partner with local businesses to address workforce housing requirements. • Work with Community Housing Providers to increase amount of housing available to people on low incomes.
Industry Engagement	• Engage with local housing developers, modular home builders, and renewable energy developers to coordinate desirable short-, medium- and long-term housing solutions. • Coordinate with renewable energy developers and EnergyCo to enable supply of construction workers accommodation.
Infrastructure Development	• Determine and deliver the required infrastructure to support the development of housing and construction workers accommodation in desirable locations.

Action Plan

The following actions represent project-focused activities that have been prioritised for the strategy timeframe (2025-2045). These actions have been selected to concentrate Council efforts and accelerate the achievement of the four housing goals:

- Diverse housing for all residents
- Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments
- Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes
- Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements

The following actions have been identified as having the greatest priority and greatest impact on housing in Uralla within the capacity of Uralla Shire and within the Strategy's timeframe.

Project oriented actions include detail for each initiative, Council role, potential partners, and timing.

The following timeframes has been allocated to each delivery:

- Now (Short: undertaken in approximately 1-2 years).
- Next (Medium: undertaken in approximately 2-5 years).
- Later (Long: undertaken in approximately 5+ years).

A number of project oriented actions will become an ongoing responsibility for the Uralla Shire Council once the activity has been undertaken and this is indicated in the last column of each action table.

Diverse housing for all residents

Objective

Foster housing development that meets the diverse needs of Uralla Shire, offering smaller, accessible homes while ensuring affordability through innovative partnerships and tenure models.

Outcomes

- **Increased availability of social and affordable housing**
  Collaborative partnerships with housing providers, utilisation of Council-owned sites, and streamlined processes lead to the delivery of social and affordable housing within Uralla.

- **Enhanced housing options for an ageing population**
  Retirement and independent living opportunities are expanded through targeted investigations and facilitation within the Uralla township.

- **Improved housing diversity and infill development**
  Greater housing diversity is achieved by enabling secondary dwellings in rural zones, supporting low-density housing forms, and introducing mechanisms to facilitate better use of underutilised properties.

- **Streamlined planning and infrastructure support**
  Updated LEP and DCP frameworks, along with mechanisms for infrastructure cost recovery, support efficient development approvals and the unlocking of underutilised land.

- **Engaged developers and landowners driving sustainable development**
  Active engagement with developers and landowners fosters innovative solutions, better infill outcomes, and sustainable development aligned with local needs.

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Now Next Later	Ongoing Following action completion
1. Diverse housing for all residents				
1.1. Support social and affordable housing providers in the delivery of housing in Uralla.	Partner	Community Housing Providers, Homes North	Now	✓
1.2. Investigate and facilitate options for retirement and independent living within the Uralla township.	Support	Property developers, McMaughs	Now	✓
1.3. Introduce a streamlined approval process for infill development that complies with local planning controls and design standards.	Lead	NSW Government	Now	
1.4. Investigate opportunities for Council owned sites to be utilised for social and affordable housing.	Partner	Community Housing Providers, Homes North	Now	
1.5. Facilitate collaboration between local landowners and developers to support the consolidation of adjacent underutilised properties, enabling coordinated infill development and maximising land potential.	Partner	Local land owners	Now	✓
1.6. Continue to support the delivery of standard detached dwellings in existing zoned land.	Support	-	Now	✓
1.7. Investigate opportunities and implement mechanisms for cost recovery of capital investment in infrastructure that benefits and unlocks underutilised land. through Development Servicing Plans for identified precincts where large underutilised and vacant properties are present.	Lead	-	Next	
1.8. Update the DCP to incorporate updated design guidelines for low density development.	Lead	-	Next	

Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments

Objective

Facilitate temporary construction workers accommodation associated with REZ projects in a way that manages short-term demand and allows for seamless repurposing of assets that support long-term community needs.

Outcomes

- **Well-planned temporary construction worker accommodation**
  Strategic partnerships with landowners, EnergyCo, and renewable energy developers result in the identification and establishment of well-located construction worker accommodation sites.

- **Long-term legacy use of infrastructure**
  Agreements ensure that temporary construction worker accommodation is repurposed effectively to meet community housing or infrastructure needs post-construction.

- **Enhanced public realm and accessibility**
  Community Benefit Sharing funding supports public realm improvements, particularly accessibility and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, benefiting Uralla's ageing population.

- **Integrated planning frameworks**
  Local planning instruments, including the LEP, are updated to incorporate controls for temporary construction worker accommodation and explore permanent housing options for new residents linked to REZ projects.

- **Increased community engagement in housing solutions**
  Initiatives such as a local online marketplace connect temporary construction workers with lodging opportunities offered by local residents, fostering community collaboration.

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Now Next Later	Ongoing Following action completion
2. Ensuring a positive legacy from REZ investments				
2.1. Engage with local landowners, EnergyCo and renewable energy developers to identify large site(s) for well-located construction worker accommodation.	Partner	Local landowners, EnergyCo, renewable energy developers, property developers	Now	
2.2. Establish agreements for future use of construction workers accommodation and/or sites once the construction phase winds down (see Action 2.7).	Partner	Renewable energy developers, property developers	Now	✓
2.3. Incorporate preferred outcomes for construction worker accommodation into the DCP.	Lead	NSW Government	Now	
2.4. Encourage the use of Community Benefit Sharing funding for enhancements to the public realm that support the needs of an ageing population, such as improved accessibility, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and amenities.	Partner	Uralla Shire community	Next	✓
2.5. Facilitate options for REZ developers to construct permanent housing for new working residents.	Support	Renewable energy developers	Next	✓
2.6. Explore and support options, such as a local online marketplace, where temporary construction workers can find lodging or boarding with local residents.	Support	Uralla Shire community	Next	✓
2.7. Implement future use agreements for construction workers accommodation (see Action 2.2).	Partner	Renewable energy developers, property developers, aged service providers	Later	

Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes

Objective

Adopt a proactive, customer-centred approach to housing development, ensuring the council is open, consistent, and responsive in its planning and facilitation roles.

Outcomes

- **Enhanced development support and guidance**
  Developers and landowners benefit from standardised engineering codes, development toolkits, and regular forums, fostering clarity, efficiency, and collaboration in the housing development process.

- **Improved infrastructure transparency and planning**
  A publicly accessible GIS platform with comprehensive infrastructure mapping and detailed topographical data enables informed decision-making and supports strategic development through better understanding of hazards, infrastructure needs, and development feasibility.

- **Environmentally responsible land use**
  Revised subdivision lot sizes in areas such as Invergowrie-Saumarez Ponds reflect environmental risks, promoting sustainable land use practices in the Shire.

- **Innovative and diverse housing opportunities**
  An audit of Council-owned land identifies opportunities to support diverse housing types and showcase innovative housing solutions that align with local needs.

- **Streamlined and transparent development processes**
  Consistent and transparent procedures for approvals, engineering standards, and stakeholder communication enhance trust and efficiency in achieving housing outcomes.

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Now Next Later	Ongoing Following action completion
3. Proactive council supporting great housing outcomes				
3.1. Develop a standardised engineering code to improve consistency, efficiency and clarity for the development sector working in the region.	Lead	Armidale Regional Council	Now	
3.2. Establish a regular forum (e.g. 2 per year) for local landowners and developers to provide a platform to share updates on policies, infrastructure projects, and Council processes, while also allowing developers to provide feedback.	Partner	Local landowners, property developers, renewable energy developers	Now	✓
3.3. Conduct an audit of existing council-owned land to identify opportunities for supporting diverse housing types or showcasing exemplar developments that demonstrate the potential for innovative housing solutions within the Shire.	Lead	-	Now	
3.4. Implement clear, consistent, and transparent procedures for development approvals, engineering standards, and communication with stakeholders.	Lead	-	Now	✓
3.5. Create development guides or toolkits for subdivisions and multi dwelling developments to assist local developers with the process.	Lead	-	Next	
3.6. Develop a comprehensive map of infrastructure assets, including water, sewer, stormwater, and power and make this information publicly accessible through the Council's GIS platform to support transparency and informed decision-making for development.	Lead	Utilities providers	Next	✓
3.7. Undertake a detailed survey of the Shire's townships to a 1-metre contour level, providing accurate topographical data to enhance planning processes and guide infrastructure improvements.	Lead	-	Next	✓
3.8. Review the minimum subdivision lot size in the Lot Size Map in the western portion of the Invergowrie R5 land to reflect the environmental risk factors in the area.	Lead	-	Next	

Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements

Objective

Protect the essence of Uralla's townships by ensuring new development occurs within existing settlements and is sympathetic to local character.

Outcomes

- **Optimised use of existing residential land**
  Development is prioritised on vacant and underutilised land, minimising the need for rezoning and preserving the existing village character of Uralla's settlements.

- **Informed and strategic planning decisions**
  A residential development monitor provides accurate data on development trends and land supply, guiding timely and evidence-based LEP updates.

- **Enhanced design standards for development**
  Updated DCP design guidelines for low-density development and streetscape amenity ensure that new housing aligns with the scale and character of local communities.

- **Improved infill development outcomes**
  A tailored 'Good Design Guide' equips developers with practical tools to create high-quality, context-sensitive infill housing, maintaining the charm of Uralla's townships.

- **Overarching settlement strategy for the Uralla township**
  A township framework plan for the Shire's primary township will guide future growth, land use, and infrastructure planning to ensure sustainable development while preserving Uralla's character.

Actions	Council Role Lead Partner Support	Potential Partners	Timeframe Now Next Later	Ongoing Following action completion
4. Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements				
4.1. Develop a Township Framework Plan for Uralla to inform planning policies and controls around how the town will grow and develop its commercial, residential, industrial areas, and public spaces.	Lead	-	Now	
4.2. Undertake a zoning review of the Rocky River settlement which reflects its highly accessible location between Armidale and Uralla and its existing pattern of development.	Lead	-	Now	
4.3. Develop a 'Good design guide' for infill development that is tailored to the Uralla context and supports local developers to make improved design choices.	Lead	Uralla Shire community, property developers	Now	
4.4. Review underutilised and unconstrained land within and on the edge of the existing Uralla township that is inappropriately zoned to encourage well-located residential development.	Lead		Now	
4.5. Develop a local infrastructure plan to prioritise infrastructure upgrades in areas with significant infill development potential to ensure they are "shovel-ready" for new housing projects.	Lead	-	Next	✔
4.6. Update the DCP to incorporate new design guidelines for low-density development.	Lead	-	Next	
4.7. Focus on the efficient use of existing residential land within established settlements, prioritising the development of vacant and underutilised land before considering rezoning for new residential purposes.	Lead	-	Later	
4.8. Prepare a residential development monitor to track levels and locations of development as well as estimated land supply to understand need and timing of LEP changes in the future.	Lead	Armidale Regional Council and Walcha Shire Council	Later	

Monitoring our success

Monitoring and evaluation of the Local Housing Strategy is required to understand the performance and success of actions taken to achieve Uralla's housing objectives.

The Local Housing Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years but may be reviewed more regularly if considered necessary. More regular reviews may be required if considerable changes in the local conditions occur which would alter the underlying information that was relied upon to make recommendations. Reviews should include an update of the key evidence base of land supply and demand, renewable energy developments, as well as updates to any regional strategies or plans.

Uralla Shire Local Housing Strategy 2025-2045
February 2025 (Adopted March 2025).

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