

# Leeton Shire Council Housing Strategy

JULY 2024



LEETON  
SHIRE COUNCIL





## Prepared for

### **Leeton Shire Council**

23 — 25 Chelmsford Place,  
Leeton NSW 2705  
council@leeton.nsw.gov.au  
(02) 6953 0911

**Leeton.nsw.gov.au**

## Contact

### **Habitat Planning**

409 Kiewa Street  
Albury NSW 2640  
02 6021 0662  
habitat@habitatplanning.com.au

habitatplanning.com.au  
Habitat Planning Pty Ltd  
ABN 29 451 913 703  
ACN 606 650 837

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## Acknowledgements

Habitat Planning acknowledges  
Traditional Owners of Country  
throughout Australia and recognises the  
continuing connection to lands, waters  
and communities. We pay our respect  
to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
cultures; and to Elders past and present.



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# Executive Summary

## Council's vision for Leeton is to create a healthy, safe, and connected community that respects people and the environment.

The community aims to enjoy active lives in a strong local economy underpinned by quality, accessible infrastructure, reliable water supplies, and strong leadership.

The Leeton Shire Housing Strategy seeks to expand upon the vision for Leeton and contribute to the provision of a connected, inclusive, and enriched community that is safe, active, and healthy, set within a thriving regional economy and a quality environment while demonstrating strong leadership and civic participation.

Leeton is expected to see a steady increase in population, reaching an estimated population 12,700 residents by 2041. Council also recognises that the profile of the population is changing, with opportunities to attract new residents given a number of medium- to large-scale businesses that will require a significant increase in the workforce. An increase in the proportion of residents aged over 60 in the coming years also presents a need to consider diverse and adaptable housing.

Consequently, developing a strong housing strategy for Leeton Shire is crucial for achieving our community's social and economic goals. Implementing effective housing policies will ensure that both current and future residents can access the full range of social and economic opportunities available in our unique environmental and cultural surroundings.

This Strategy has identified and considered the variety of issues that impact housing in regional Australia, as well as those specific to Leeton, including:

- A diverse and changing population, including an increase in the proportion of persons aged over 60.
- A decline in the size of household groups.
- A mismatch between the existing housing stock and what will be required for the future population.
- Housing affordability, including the challenges in achieving home ownership, increase in rental costs due to limited availability and well as the rise in associated construction costs.
- Lack of housing to accommodate seasonal workforce and other developing industries.
- Addressing the drivers and mitigating the exigencies of climate change.
- Economic challenges from the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

This Strategy seeks to put in place for Leeton the foundations of the next twenty years of housing and its delivery.

It analyses the shifting demographics, existing land supply, residentially zoned land, the opportunities and constraints to future transformations.

It has been shaped by a comprehensive research and background report, stakeholder feedback, community and Council input.

By examining a variety of land use and non-land use planning recommendations to be considered and developed by the community, Council and State Government, this Strategy seeks to build a collection of implementable actions.



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SECTION

# 1

## Introduction

SECTION 1



Silos, Yanco.





## 1.1. Why does Leeton need a housing strategy?

Housing strategies are forward looking documents that help to prioritise Council actions and funding as well as provide certainty for residents, tenants, homeowners and housing developers alike.

From a policy perspective, The Leeton Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), a foundational local government strategy written in 2020, outlined the need for an updated Housing Strategy.

With an eye to the following twenty years, the Strategy is underpinned by the earlier completed background report, as well as community and stakeholder consultation. The recommendations in it balance Leeton as is now, the changes it has been undergoing, the challenges it faces and a vision for housing in the future.



## 1.2 . Positioning and Context

The Leeton Shire Council Housing Strategy sits within a series of Strategic documents prepared by Council and can be understood in a 'line of sight'.

The outcomes of this Strategy are supported by and can be read in conjunction with the background report. It sets the agenda for further technical work and detailed master planning.

Recommendations made by this Strategy will be addressed in ongoing, detailed technical work and master planning within the Leeton Integrated Land-Use, Infrastructure and Transport Strategy.

### Leeton Shire Housing Strategy Background Report

A comprehensive background report containing contextual demographic, social, economic and policy research relating to housing throughout Leeton .

### Leeton Shire Housing Strategy

Addresses the issues identified in the Background Report.

Develops a clear set of principles, achievable strategies and actions to enable a vision for housing for in Leeton.

Serves as the Strategic basis for ongoing technical work, eventual planning proposals and LEP amendments.

Identifies Key Investigation Sites to be comprehensively analysed in ongoing Strategic work.

### Leeton Integrated Land-Use, Infrastructure and Transport Strategy

Rigorous analysis and master planning of Key Investigation Sites identified in the Strategy.

Informs LEP amendments and Development Control Plan updates.

### 1.3. Objectives of the housing strategy

Land use planning is one of the structures that underpins a thriving community. It encompasses strategic, regulatory and spatial frameworks for the way we interact with our living and built environment.

At a broad level, the objective of the Strategy is to assess the current land use planning environment in regards to housing, balancing demographic research and forecasts with the aims of the community, giving consideration to:

- Policy Settings
- Environment and Climate Change
- Social Structures
- The Local Economy, Industry and Employment
- Tourism
- Education
- Housing
- Health and Amenity
- Cultural and Built Heritage

**This will be achieved by:**

- Understanding and analysing the context of Leeton Shire's current planning framework.
- Identifying the key demographic themes to address.
- Identifying opportunities for future innovation and growth.
- Establishing the principles to guide a housing strategy and any future planning proposals.





## 1.4. What are the key themes of the Strategy?

The three foundational ideas upholding the Strategy encompass the results of the background research and community feedback process.

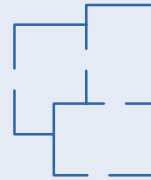
As housing is such a complex topic, there is no one solution or magic bullet that can address all the issues Leeton faces. Rather, a wide array of recommendations are made that each work towards the vision for the future of housing throughout Leeton.



### Diversity

Reflecting the diversity of the community in the types of housing available.

A diversity of tenures reflecting the diversity of needs and circumstances



### Accessibility

Physical accessibility through universal design.

Addressing the community's needs – how to access the appropriate housing at the right time.

Financial accessibility



### Sustainability and Resilience

Developing resilience in the built and natural environment; and

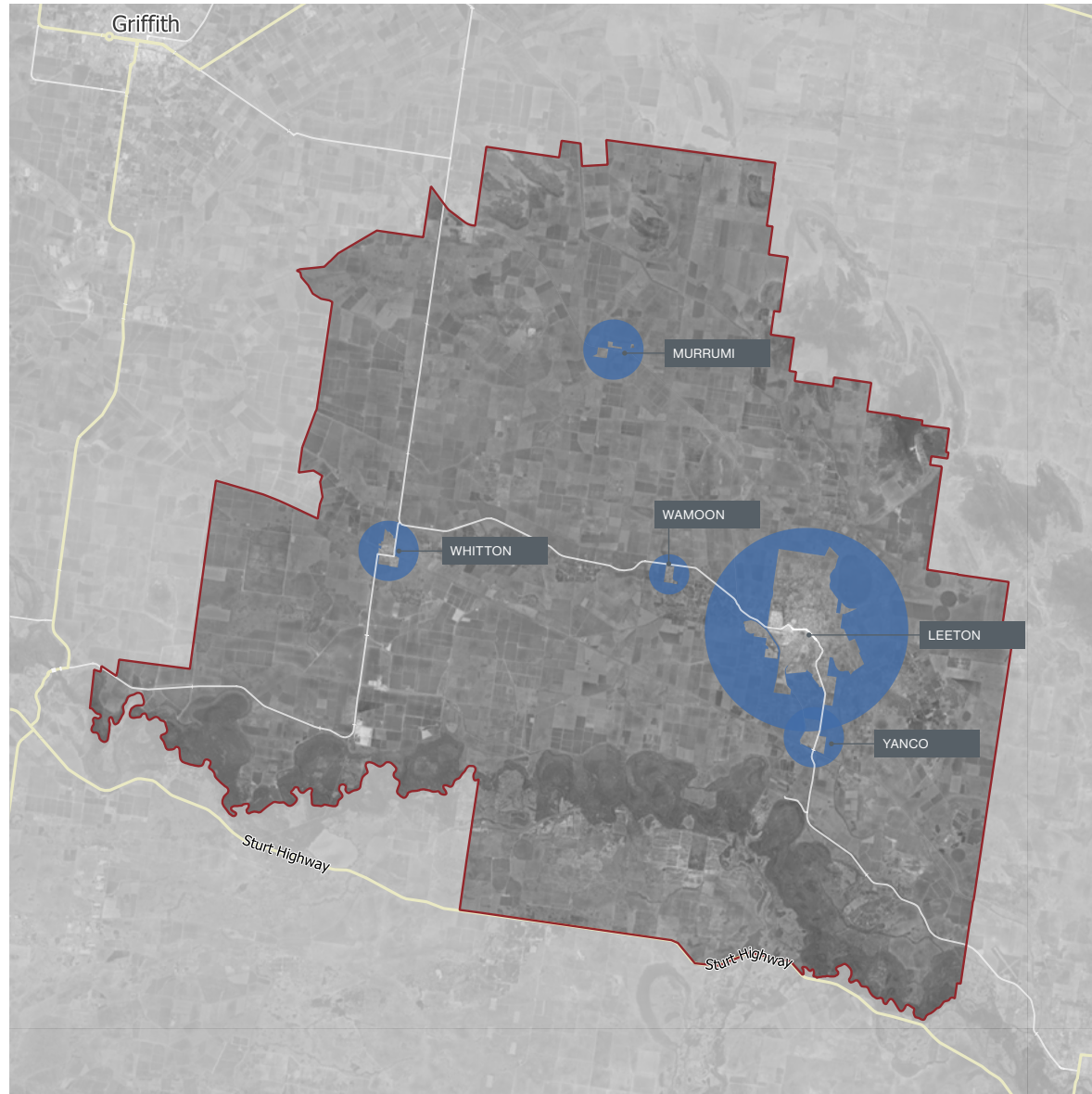
Resilience in the communities that live in it.

Resilience in built form / construction

## Study Area

The Study Area for this Strategy is the entire LGA of Leeton Shire, which comprises a total area of 1,167 km<sup>2</sup> in the south of New South Wales. It is located approximately 460km north of Melbourne, 340km west of Canberra and 560km west of Sydney.

The urban areas of the LGA are comprised of the town of Leeton, as well as the smaller villages of Murrumbidgee, Whitton, Wamoon and Yanco.



## Study Area

LGA Boundary



### 1.3.1. Leeton

The town of Leeton was established as the administrative headquarters of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) and was named after Charles Lee, the then Minister for Public Works.

The town was initially designed by the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Trust and established in 1913 when the first blocks were made available for sale.

In 1914 the American architect Walter Burley Griffin re-designed the town along similar designs to Canberra on an essentially circular design with four street precincts leading out from the town centre.

Whilst this original design has over time been modified following inevitable growth of the town, many basic elements of the Burley Griffin design remain, notably the circular streets of Palm and Acacia Avenues, the centre avenues of Pine, Kurrajong and Wade leading from the central business district and the water towers at Chelmsford Place.

The third and largest tower was constructed in the 1970s referencing the design of the original two.

*Leeton LSPS*





### 1.3.2. Yanco

Yanco was established in 1882 on the existing Yanko Station when the south west railway line from Hay to Junee was completed. The camp was established to load freight (principally wool) from Yanko and North Yanko Stations.

The development of Yanco as a town can be traced to 1908 with the establishment of the Yanco Experimental Farm in 1908 which undertook trials of rice production and the Yanco powerhouse in 1913 which was built to provide power to Sir Samuel McCaughey's irrigation scheme on Yanko Station.

Yanco is a fully serviced village, with reticulated water and sewer, a public school, parks, multi-use sports ground, a community hall, a central business area with a hotel, club, general store/café and post office. Yanco is zoned principally R2 Low Density Residential with an area of B2 Local Centre.

Yanco has an area of typical residential development with lots averaging 1,000m<sup>2</sup> and a larger area to the north and east of small 4,000m<sup>2</sup> to 8,000m<sup>2</sup> farms.

*Leeton LSPS*





### 1.3.3. Whitton

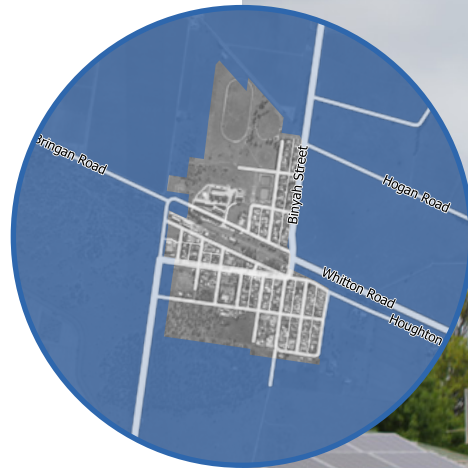
Whitton is a village approximately 20 kms to the west of Leeton on the intersection of Irrigation Way and the Whitton-Darlington Point Road. Initially called Hulong, Whitton grew from a small settlement that was established in the 1850s due to its proximity to a shallow crossing for stock at the Murrumbidgee River.

Whitton today can be described as a rural village and is fully serviced with reticulated sewer and water, a Council operated swimming pool, a public park, a community hall, weekly garbage and recycling service, a public school up to year 6, a general store/ cafe, post office, hotel and bowling club.

Whitton also has a community run museum that recognises the rail, irrigation and station history of the town and surrounds.

Under the Leeton Local Environmental Plan, Whitton is zoned RU5 Village with an area of land zoned IN1 General Industry. SunRice has established a number of rice receival and storage sheds in Whitton. The disused south west rail corridor also divides the village in half.

*Leeton LSPS*





### 1.3.4. Murrami

Murrami is a small village approximately 32 kilometres to the north west of Leeton. It consists of a main street and has 29 residential lots of approximately 1,000m<sup>2</sup> and 5 small farm lots of approximately 2 ha. Murrami is connected to a reticulated potable water supply.

The village is zoned RU5 Village. The Griffith-Junee railway line passes through Murrami and there is a major SunRice receival depot adjacent to this railway line. There is a community hall and playground in Murrami and a recreational reserve located adjacent to the village.

Murrami is also serviced by a general store and post office.

*Leeton LSPS*





### 1.3.5. Wamoon

Wamoon is a small village located adjacent to Irrigation Way approximately 10 kilometres west of Leeton. Wamoon was established to provide a place of residence for farm and cannery workers when the rice and fruit industries were being established in 1912.

The Wamoon Public School, which is still open today, was established in 1913, and is connected to a sewer. Wamoon is serviced with reticulated potable water, a public park, a weekly garbage and recycling collection, and dwellings in the village are connected to a reticulated sewer.

The village has 64 residential lots of approximately 1,000m<sup>2</sup> and 30 small farms ranging in size from 4,000 to 8,000m<sup>2</sup> and is zoned RU5 Village.

*Leeton LSPS*

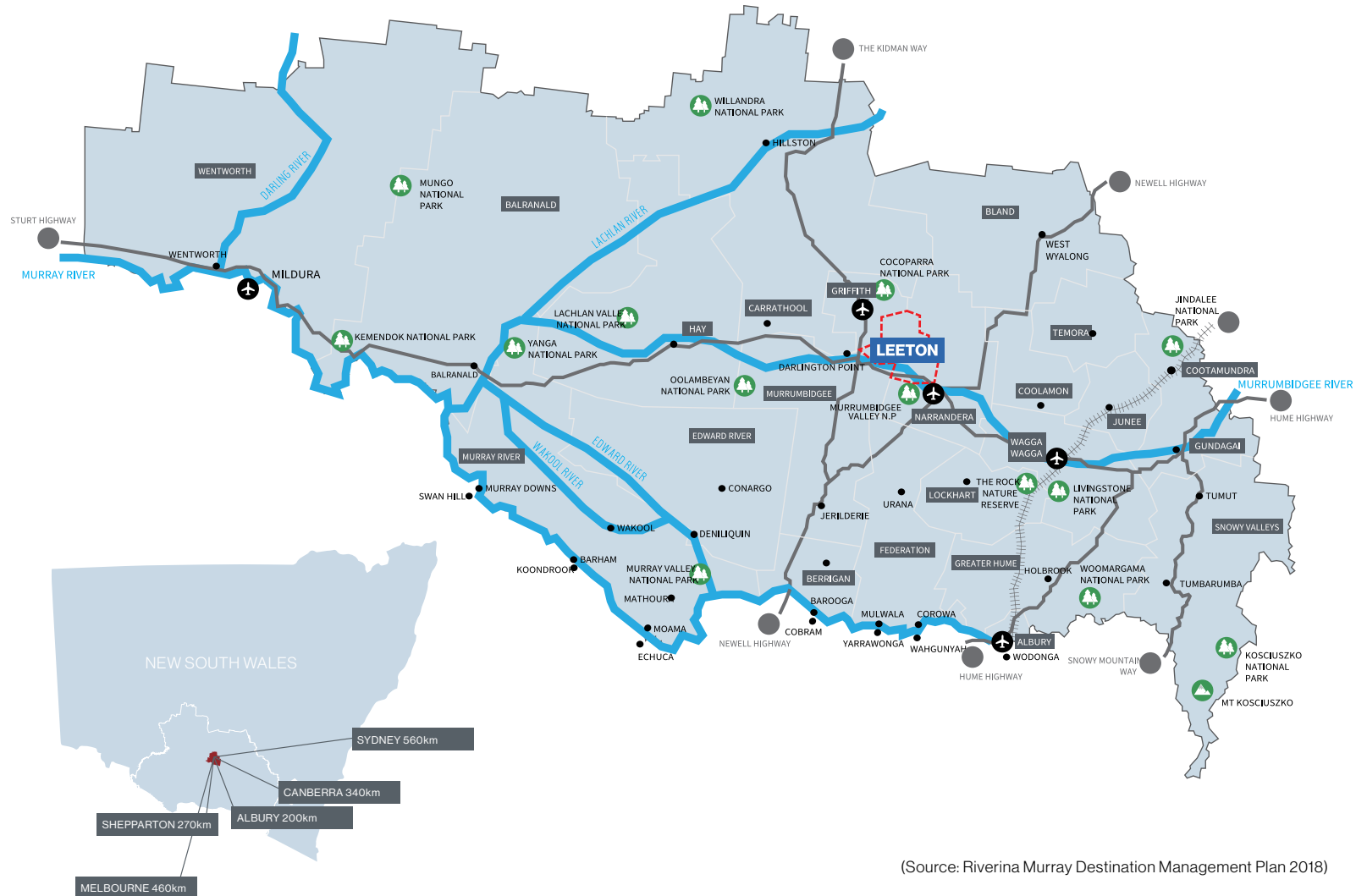


### 1.3.6. Riverina Murray Region

For the purposes of land use planning and administration, regional NSW is split into nine planning regions. Leeton LGA is situated in the Riverina Murray region, which sits in the Murray Darling Basin.

It includes the local government areas (LGAs) of Albury, Balranald, Berrigan, Bland, Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Snowy Valleys, Temora, Wagga Wagga and Wentworth.

The Riverina Murray comprises diverse natural environments, bioregions and is defined by the extensive waterways and river systems, including the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers.



(Source: Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2018)



SECTION

# 2

## Statutory & Strategic Policy Context





## 2.1. The Government in context

Local Government works the most closely with members of the community in the provision of housing throughout Australia. When advocating from a local level, it is important to recognise the three interrelated levels of government and their shared roles.

As a Local Housing Strategy, some actions (such as zoning) will be fairly easily achieved as they are within Council's immediate remit. Other broader policies such as taxation and social welfare are best addressed at state and federal levels and will require local capacity building, supporting advocacy to promote good regional housing outcomes.

### Local Environmental Plan



#### The Federal Government's role includes:

- Policy and funding allocation
- Financial assistance to states and territories
- Social housing programs and financial assistance
- Taxation policies
- National Housing and Homelessness Agreement.



#### The NSW State Government's role includes:

- Housing and land availability and supply
- Addressing homelessness and social housing
- Planning and development legislation
- Major infrastructure provision and funding
- Regulatory protection (ie. tenancy laws and construction standards)
- State and regional strategy provision
- The State planning context is provided by way of legislation, policies, directions (both under the EP&A Act and at a more general level) as well as guidelines and practice notes.



#### Local Government's role includes:

- Urban planning and zoning, including the development, implementation and administration of Local Environmental Plans (LEP) and Development Control Plans (DCP).
- Local strategies (including housing, and community)
- Rate setting and infrastructure contributions
- Development assessment
- Cultural and built heritage
- Infrastructure provision
- Community engagement

### 2.1.1. Legislation

- The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)
- The Crown Land Management Act 2016 (NSW)
- The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (the BC Act)
- The Local Land Services Act 2013 (LLS Act)
- Heritage Act 1977 (NSW)
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (“the NPW Act”)
- Water Management Act 2000 (“the WMA Act”)
- Fisheries Management Act 1994
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (PEO Act)

### 2.1.2. Ministerial Directions

Section 9.1 of the EP&A Act allows the Minister for Planning to give directions to councils regarding the principles, aims, objectives or policies to be achieved or given effect to in the preparation of draft LEPs.

Whilst it is not mandatory to address these directions during preparation of strategic documentation, it is considered appropriate to ensure that any recommendations made throughout the project have proper consideration for the directions.

Any relevant Ministerial Directions will be addressed in detail at the time of preparation of recommendations for land use changes in Leeton Shire.

### 2.1.3. NSW State Environmental Planning Policy

State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) are guidelines and controls relating to specific issues significant to the State. Commencing in March 2022, the 45 existing SEPPs were consolidated into 11 new “thematic” SEPPs.

The following are applicable to the Leeton Shire.

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Resources and Energy) 2021

#### 2.1.4. State Plans

- NSW State Plan 2011-2021
- A 20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW (2018)
- The NSW Government has prepared the Future Transport 2056 Plan ("the Transport Plan")
- NSW Right To Farm Policy (2015)
- Better Placed
- The Urban Design Guide for Regional NSW
- Design Guide for Heritage
- Greener Places Guide

#### 2.1.5. Regional Plans

Leeton Shire is included in the Riverina-Murray Region and is within the Riverina-Murray Regional Plan 2041 ("the Regional Plan").

The Regional Plan is the overarching guide to land use planning in the area. Divided into three parts (Environment, Communities and Places, Economy), the Regional Plan contains 18 Objectives, related strategies and actions.

A breakdown of the Regional Plan's applicability is provided in the supporting background paper.



Riverina-Murray Regional Plan 2041 ("the Regional Plan").



## 2.2. Local Statutory and Strategic Context

Local land use planning in NSW is generally administered by a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and supported by Development Control Plans (DCPs).

### 2.2.1. Local Environmental Plan

A Local Environmental Plan is a type of Environmental planning instrument (EPI) and a statutory plan. It is one of primary planning tools for a Local Government Area (LGA) which sets out the planning regulations as well as the criteria to assess any proposed development. It is written in a standardised format, common to all LGAs across New South Wales.

The LEP is an instrument where strategic intent is applied and is informed by a range of planning strategies and seeks to provide quantifiable criteria the whole community can understand and apply to their individual circumstances.

Leeton Local Environmental Plan 2014 ("the LEP") was gazetted on 10th June 2014.

The LEP is based on the Standard Instrument Order 2006 and contains provisions that reflect the local nature of Leeton.



## 2.3. Residential Zones

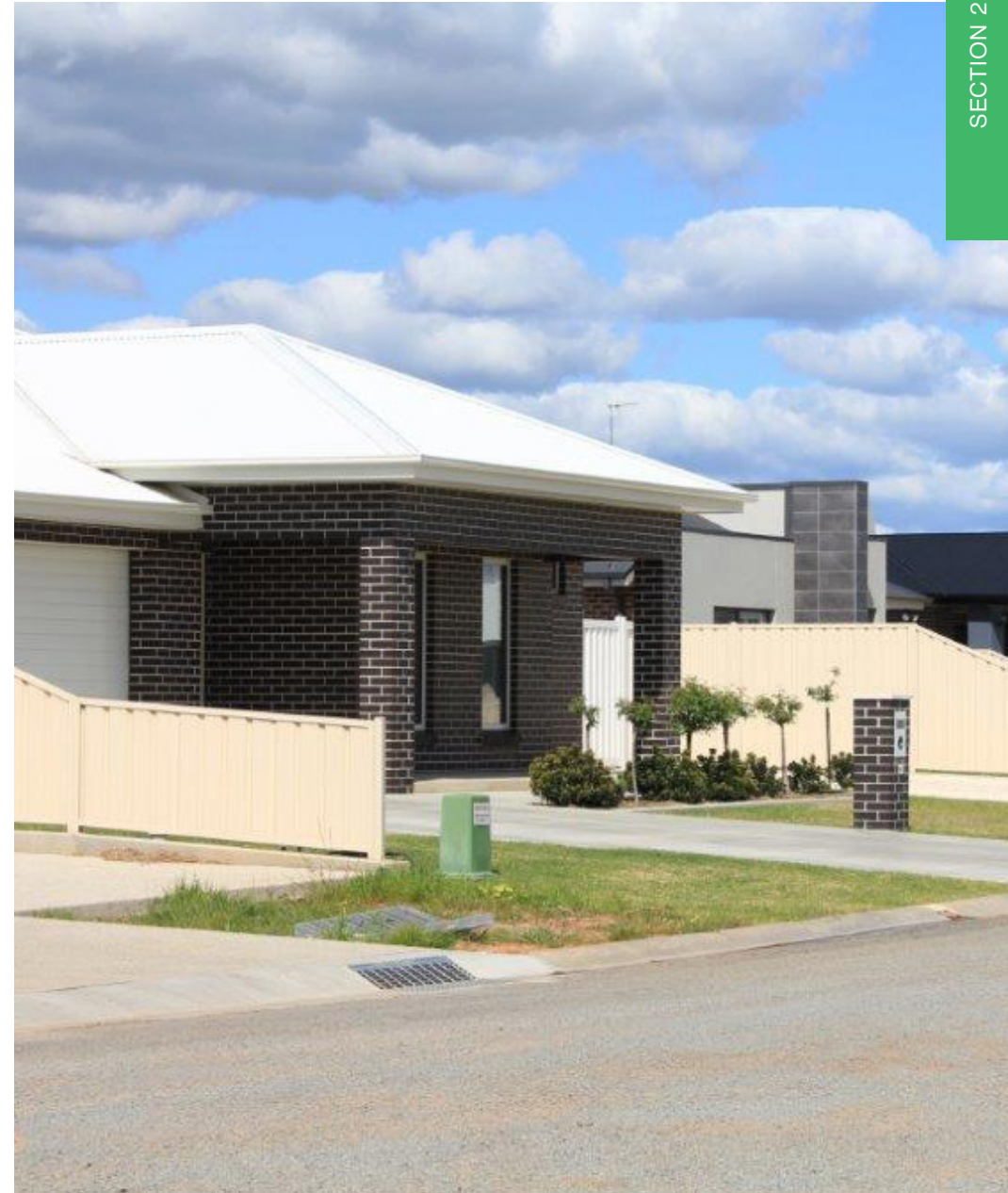
**The residential areas of Leeton LGA are assigned a range of zones:**

- R1 General Residential Zone
- R2 Low Density Residential Zone
- R3 Medium Density Residential Zone
- R5 Large Lot Residential Zone
- RU5 Village Zone.

The relationship between the residential zones is crucial; balancing the primary goal of housing with other complementary uses, the spatial context and density, and relationship to other land uses within the LGA.

Proximity to services and amenity is vital to all types of housing as is the efficient provision of infrastructure such as roads, footpaths, public spaces, water, gas, electricity and telecommunications, effluent and rainwater disposal.

One of the major attractions of regional and rural living is the desire to live on more spacious lots. That demand in Leeton LGA also needs to be balanced with primary production (avoiding its fragmentation and encroachment by residential use), as well as capitalising on the environmental, infrastructural and socio-economic benefits of compact urban forms.





### 2.3.1. R1 General Residential Zone

#### Zone Objectives

- To provide for the housing needs of the community.
- To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To facilitate development of social and community infrastructure to meet the needs of future residents.
- To enable sensitive infill development of other housing types.
- To allow people to carry out a reasonable range of activities from their homes, where such activities do not adversely affect the living environment of neighbours.
- To minimise the impact of non-residential uses and ensure they are in character and compatible with surrounding development.

### 2.3.2. R2 Low Density Residential

#### Zone Objectives

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a low density residential environment.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To ensure that a high level of residential amenity is achieved and maintained.

### 2.3.3. R3 Medium Density Residential Zone

#### Zone Objectives

- To provide for the housing needs of the community within a medium density residential environment.
- To provide a variety of housing types within a medium density residential environment.
- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.
- To ensure that a high level of residential amenity is achieved and maintained.
- To enable and enhance a high level of streetscape and urban design in the area.

### 2.3.4. R5 Large Lot Residential Zone

#### Zone Objectives

- To provide residential housing in a rural setting while preserving, and minimising impacts on, environmentally sensitive locations and scenic quality.
- To ensure that large residential lots do not hinder the proper and orderly development of urban areas in the future.
- To ensure that development in the area does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To facilitate and promote an increased range of residential opportunities by providing for low intensity residential development compatible with the characteristics of the locality.

Access to reticulated sewerage and water systems should be considered when determining appropriate minimum lot sizes. Lot sizes can be varied within the zone depending on the servicing availability and other factors such as topography, native vegetation characteristics and surrounding agricultural land uses.

### 2.3.5. RU5 Village Zone

The smaller villages of Murrarni, Wamoon and Whitton are all covered by the RU5 Village Zone.

This zone is a flexible zone for centres where a mix of residential, retail, business, industrial and other compatible land uses may be provided to service the local rural community.

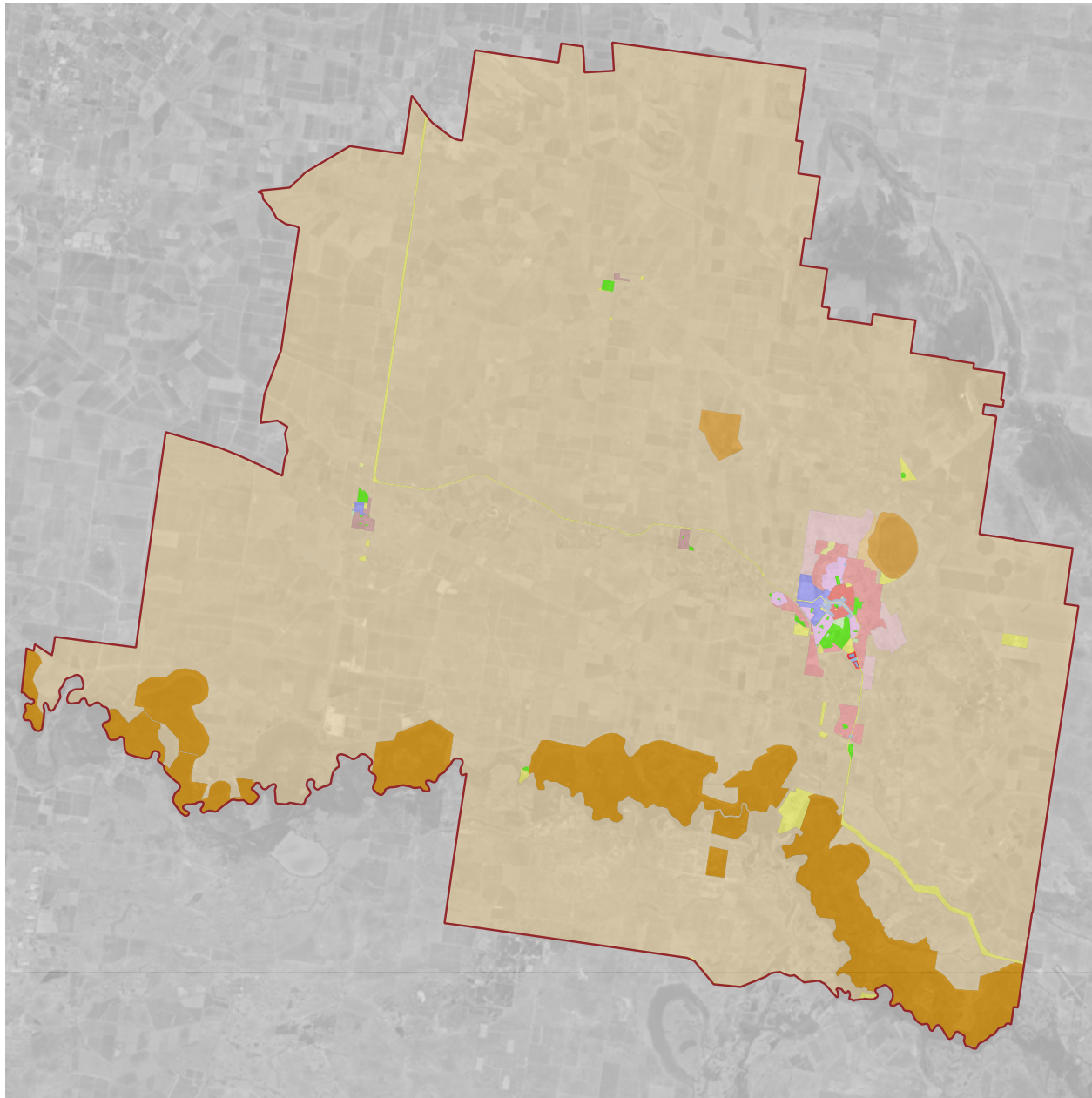
#### The RU5 zone caters for a variety of uses:

- Residential
- Commercial
- Health
- Retail
- Amenity
- Accommodation and Tourism
- Education

#### Zone Objectives

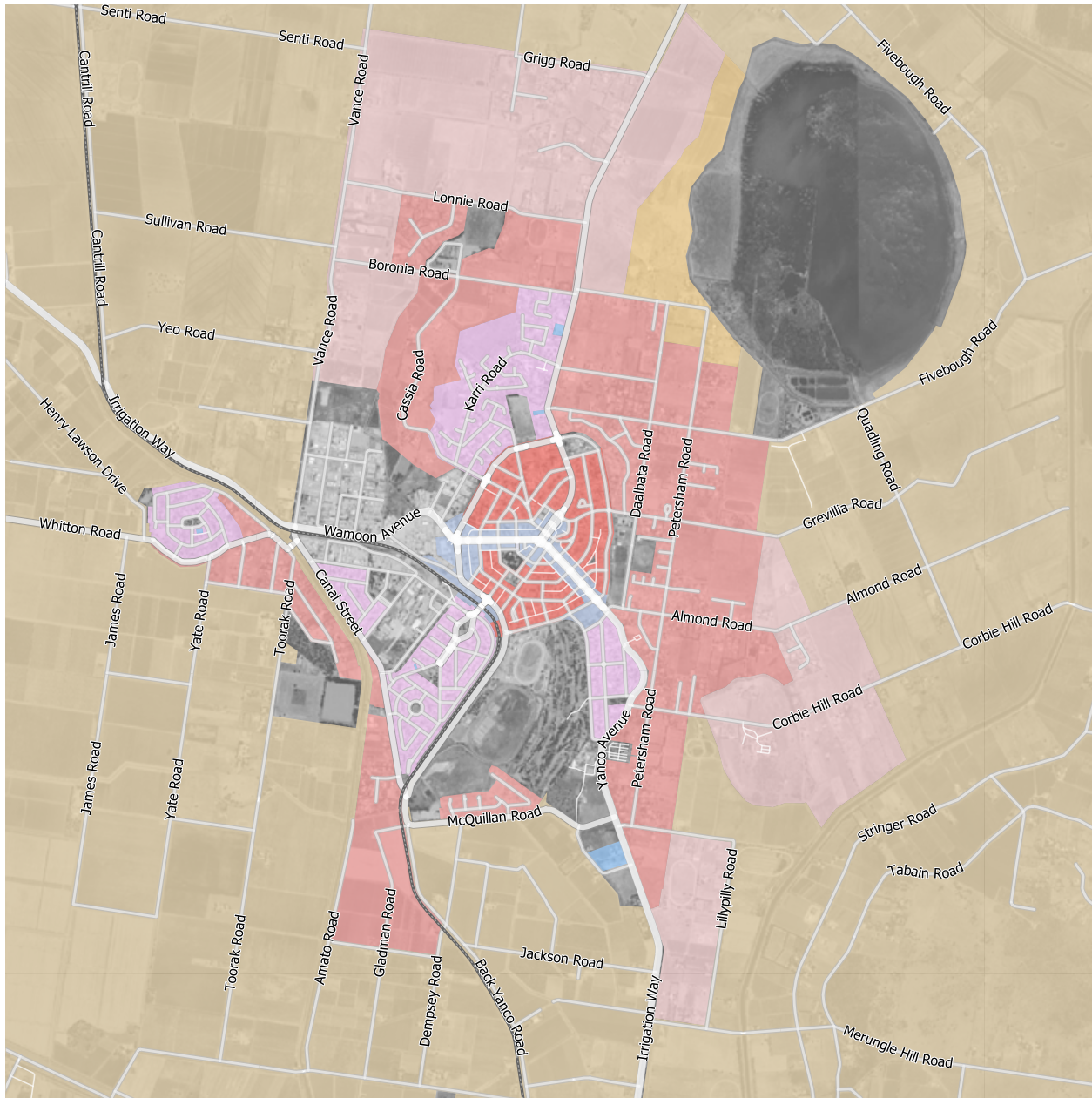
- To provide for a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village.
- To define the village boundaries of Murrarni, Wamoon and Whitton.
- To protect and conserve the rural atmosphere of village areas.
- To ensure that development in village areas is compatible with the environmental capability of the land, particularly in terms of the capacity of that land to accommodate on-site effluent disposal.





### Leeton LGA Zoning Map

- Local Government Area
- C1 - National Parks and Nature Reserves
- C2 - Environmental Conservation
- C4 Environmental Living
- E1 - Local Centre
- E2- Commercial Centre
- E3 - Productivity Support
- E4 - General Industrial
- R1 - General Residential
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- R3 - Medium Density Residential
- R5 - Large Lot Residential
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RE2 - Private Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU5 - Village
- SP1 - Special Activities
- SP2 - Infrastructure

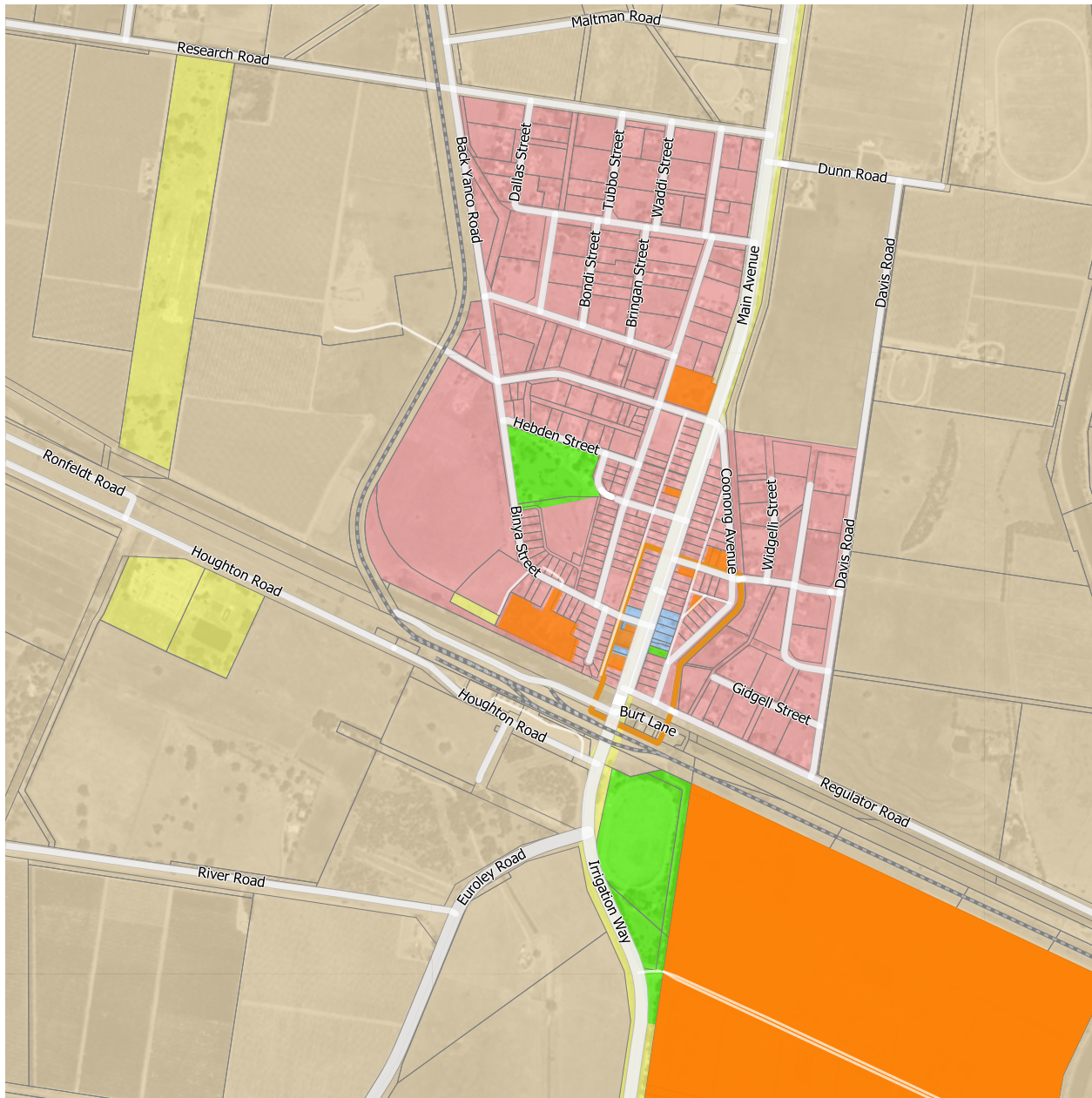


## Leeton LGA Zoning Map Residential Zones

### Leeton

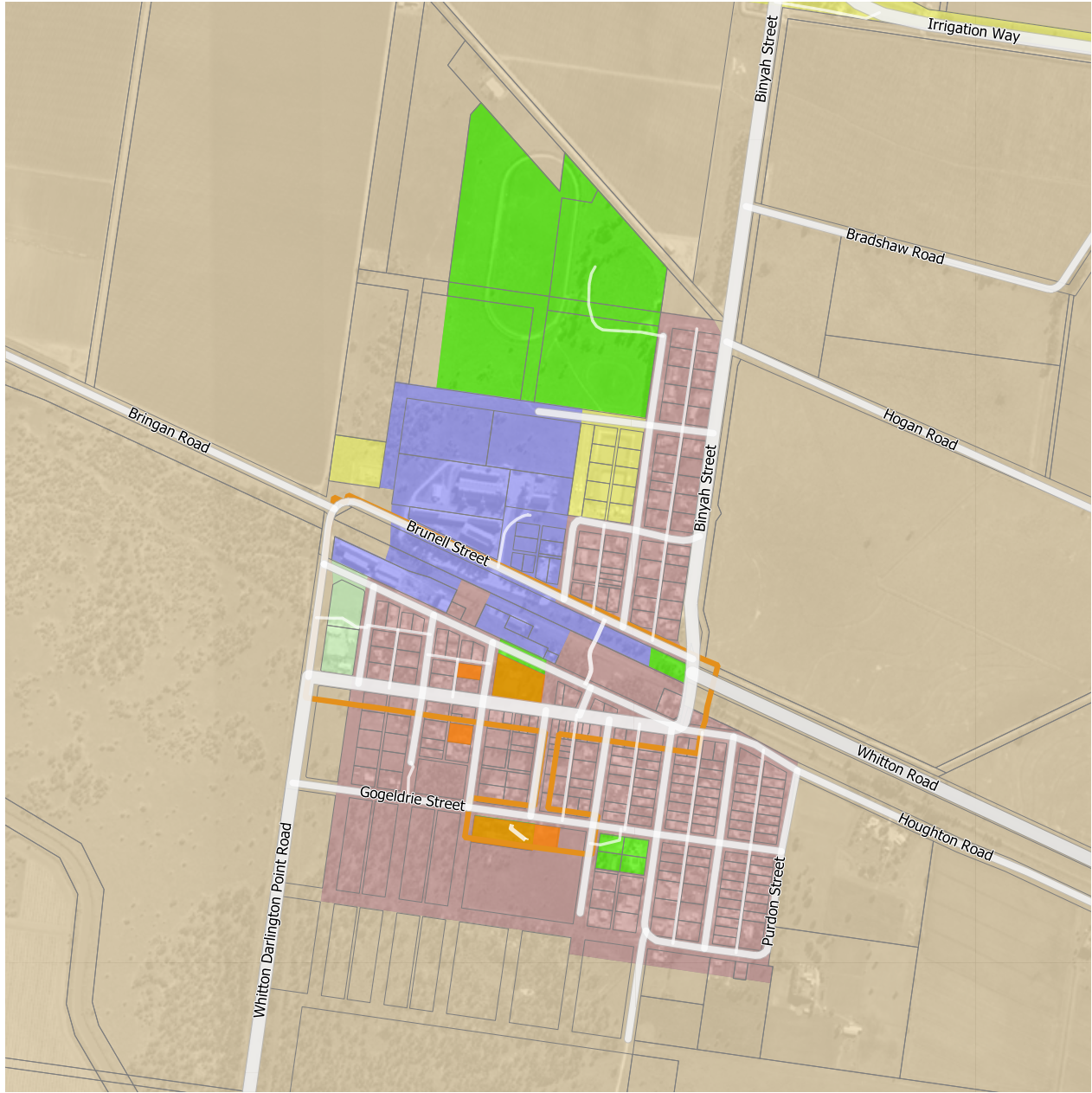
- R1 - General Residential
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- R3 - Medium Density Residential
- R5 - Large Lot Residential
- E1 - Local Centre
- E2 - Commercial Centre
- C4 Environmental Living





## Leeton LGA Zoning Map Yanco

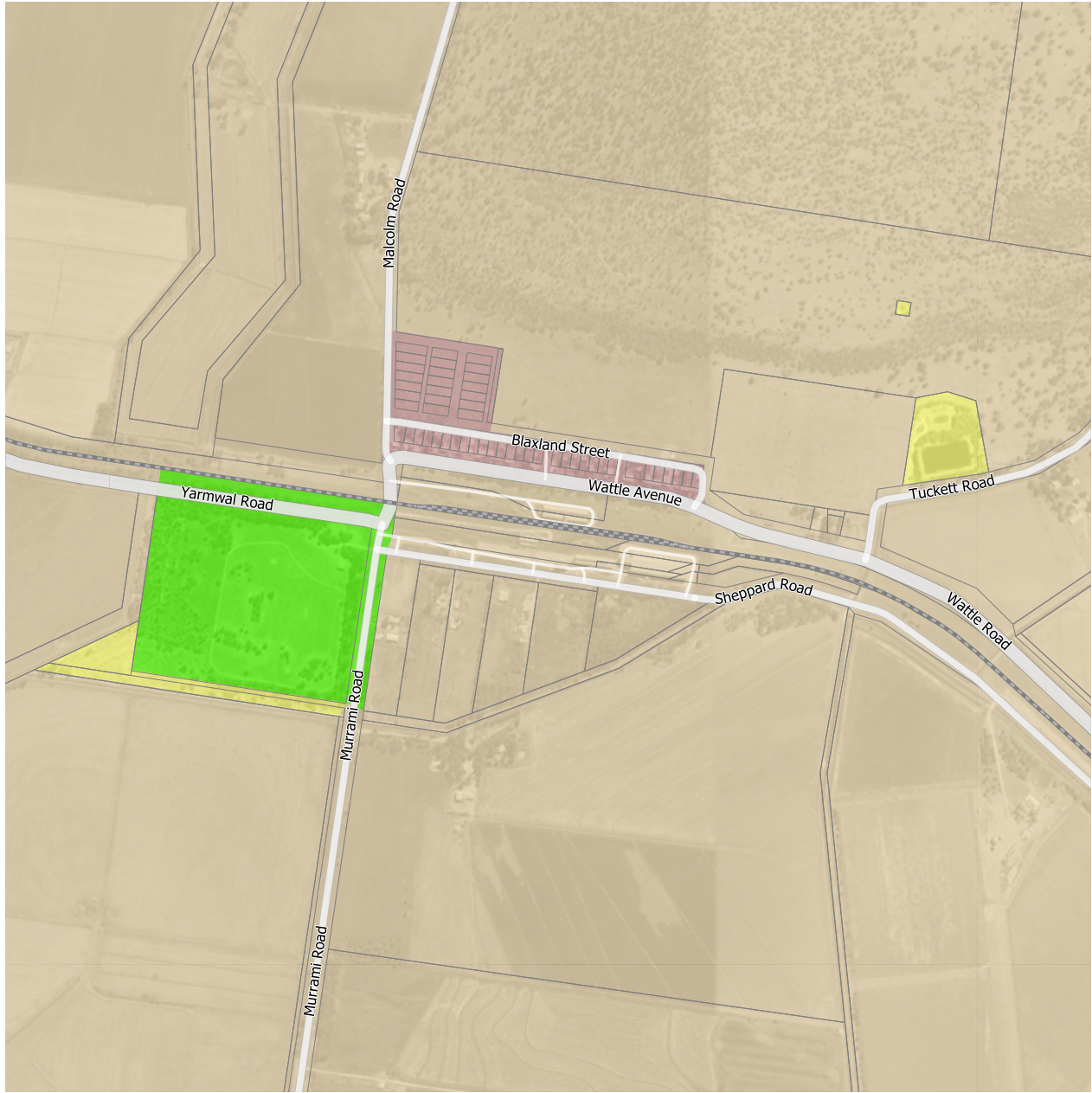
- E1 - Local Centre
- R2 - Low Density Residential
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- SP2 - Infrastructure
- Heritage - Local Item
- Heritage Conservation Area



# Leeton LGA Zoning Map Whitton

- E4 - General Industrial
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RE2 - Private Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU5 - Village
- SP2 - Infrastructure
- Heritage - Local Item
- Heritage Conservation Area





**Leeton LGA Zoning Map**  
**Murrumbidgee**

- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU5 - Village
- SP2 - Infrastructure





# Leeton LGA Zoning Map Wamoon

- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU5 - Village
- SP2 - Infrastructure

## Key Issues for Discussion

The key issues in relation to zoning for the Shire include:



Identification of township boundaries to avoid encroachment on productive land.



Locations for the low density residential land to be utilised for most efficient existing infrastructure and access.



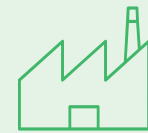
Consider minimum lot sizes to reflect the nature and context of Leeton and applied zones.



Consider a township growth boundary to limit the spread of inefficient residential land uses. Where low density residential use is spread, the infrastructural cost to the community is greater, as an initial cost and an ongoing maintenance cost.



Considering productive and non-productive rural areas and whether there is opportunity for enabling low density dwellings in appropriate areas.



Ensuring industrial land is in the right place, to take advantage of strategic transport networks and catchment areas for potential employee base.

## 2.4. Minimum Lot Size

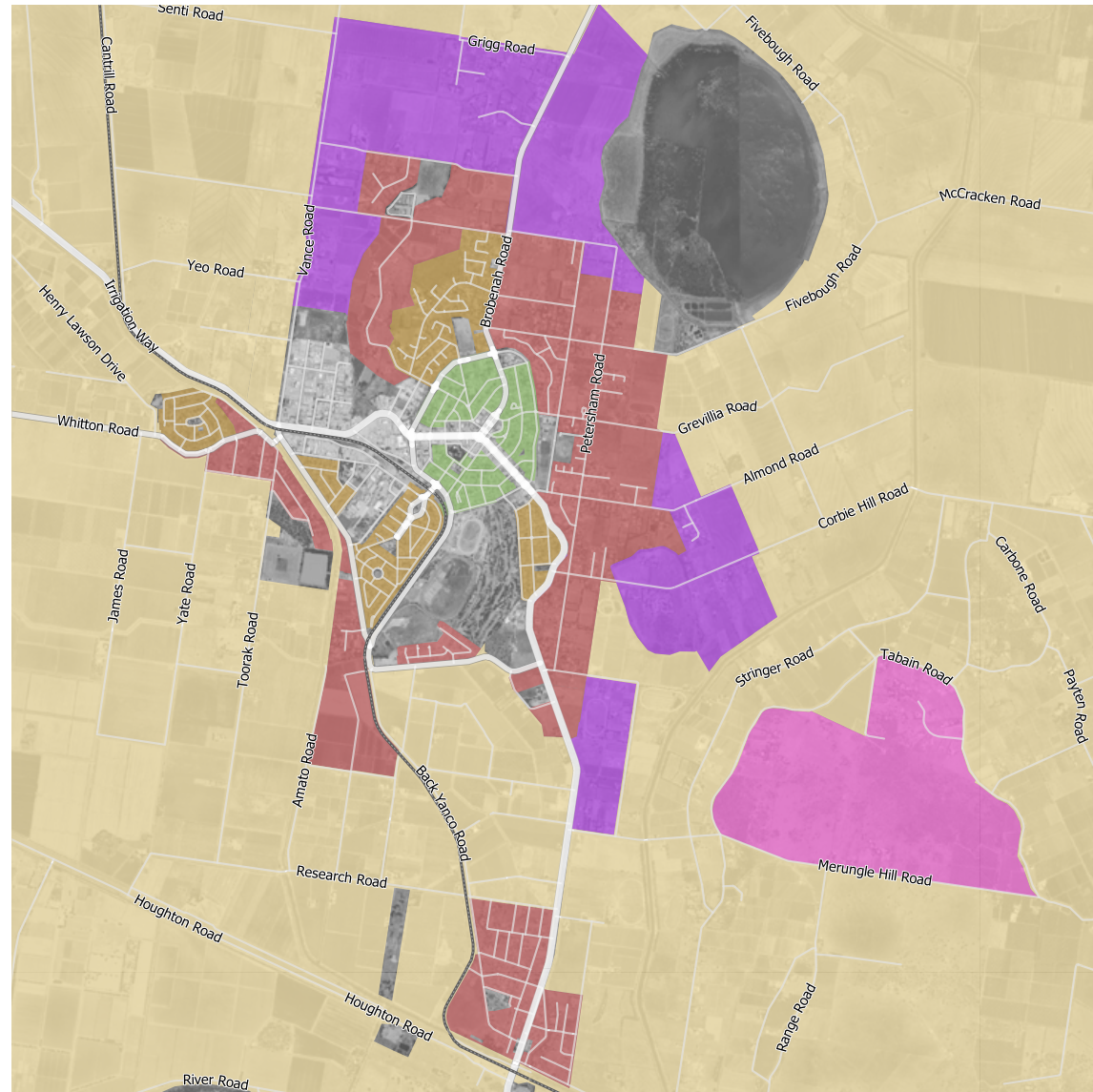
The minimum lot size is an additional control that can affect the density, allowable development and resulting character of an area. Resulting in different outcomes and effects, it applies to RU1 Primary Production lots, where there is a 150 hectare minimum, down to a 500m<sup>2</sup> minimum in the R3 Medium Density Residential Zone.

Consideration must be given to the “in-between” zones, which perform an important transitional purpose from the more urbanised town centres to productive, broadacre agricultural use.

The minimum lot size can seek to encourage or discourage development at a particular density and works in tandem with land use zoning. For a torrens title, a minimum lot size also dictates an entitlement of one dwelling per lot.

Where the zone permits, individual lot sizes can be effectively reduced through strata or community subdivisions.

To encourage infill development throughout Leeton, a reduction or abolition of the minimum lot size in urban areas could be considered.



### Minimum Lot Size Leeton





## 2.5 Local Strategies and Plans

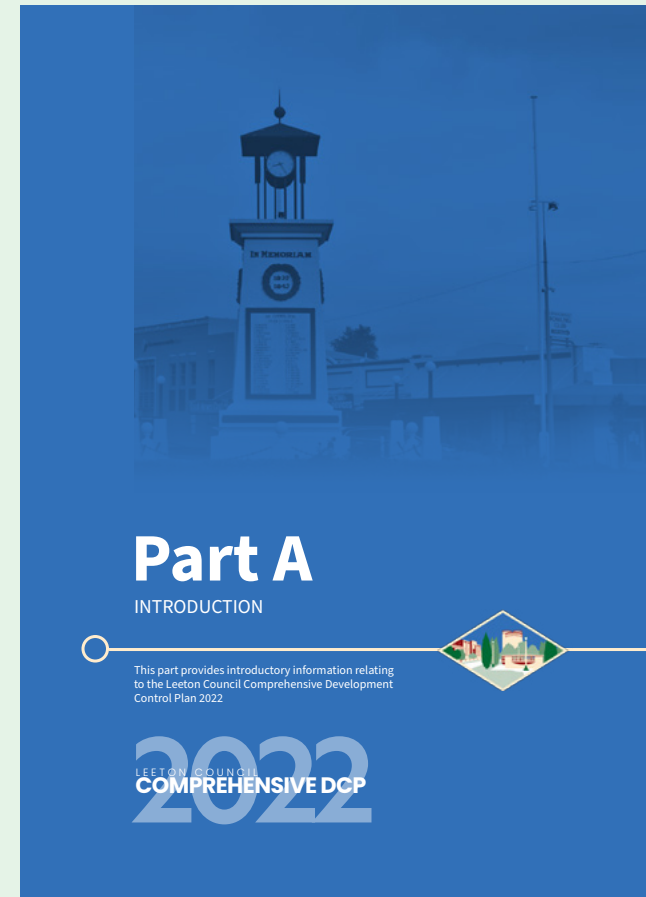
Other local policies and plans that influence land use planning within the Shire include the following.

### 2.5.1 Development Control Plan

The Development Control Plan (DCP) is a non-statutory document produced by each LGA that guide and facilitate development. The DCP contains local planning controls, implemented by individual Councils, and assists in providing certainty on the aims and objectives set out in the respective Local Environmental Plans.

Unlike the State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP's) and Local Environmental Plans (LEP), the DCP is not a legally binding document, and provides opportunity for variation where appropriately justified. Regardless, it is a fundamental component of the suite of documents that inform land use planning in NSW.

The *Leeton Shire Development Control Plan 2022* ("the DCP") contains additional matters that are required to be considered for developments to reflect the objectives of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979, assist in the administration of the LEP and to provide good planning outcomes for development in the Shire.



Leeton Development Control Plan

### 2.5.2 Leeton Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement

As of 2018, all LGAs throughout NSW must prepare and endorse a Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The LSPS is a unifying strategic document that brings together the planning priorities and planned actions for a particular LGA. Importantly, the priorities and actions outlined in the Leeton LSPS help to shape the Strategy.

The Leeton Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (LSPS) sets out a 20 year vision for land use planning throughout Leeton Shire. It seeks to balance the principles and objectives of the higher order regional strategies with local plans and provide a contextual future-driven approach to planning within the Shire.

Leeton Shire's LSPS has outlined some of the fundamental planning and land use issues that the region faces. It will align with strategic objectives from guiding documents and legislation.



Local Strategic Planning Statement (2020)

### 2.5.3 Developer Contributions Plans

Local contributions plans levy new developments to contribute to infrastructure and other community costs. The Leeton S94A Fixed Levy Plan (Section 7.12) and applies to all development throughout the shire valued at over \$100,000.

Following the NSW Productivity Commission's "Review of Infrastructure Contributions", changes to the system will be progressively rolled out throughout the state in the coming years.

Leeton Shire's LSPS has outlined some of the fundamental planning and land use issues that the region faces. It will align with strategic objectives from guiding documents and legislation.



#### **Planning Priority 1**

### **Agriculture**

Protect agricultural land functions and support the diversification and value-adding opportunities of agriculture.



#### **Planning Priority 2**

### **Employment**

Protect key employment lands and access to markets.



#### **Planning Priority 3**

### **Tourism**

Promote tourism opportunities.



#### **Planning Priority 4**

### **Retail**

Enhance Pine, Kurrajong and Wade Avenues to promote retail opportunities and a vibrant place for the community.



#### **Planning Priority 5**

### **Housing**

Ensure the community has access to diverse housing options.



#### **Planning Priority 6**

### **Community**

Ensure the community has access to liveable neighbourhoods and quality open space.



#### **Planning Priority 7**

### **Environment**

Protect the region's environmental assets and increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change.



SECTION

# 3

## About Leeton Shire

Sunrise, Fivebough Wetlands



Yanco Agricultural High School



### 3.1. Administrative History

Leeton Shire was originally named Willembong Shire, created in 1928 under the provisions of the Irrigation Act and renamed Leeton Shire in 1946 after Charles Lee, the then Minister for Public Works.

Leeton is the birthplace of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA). It was first declared a town in 1913 and was originally administered by the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission. Early development of Leeton was carried out during the 1920s and 1930s, with Art-Deco styled buildings throughout the urban area standing as an enduring legacy of this early establishment.

Along with Griffith, 57km to the west, the town of Leeton was developed as an important urban centre within the MIA, and irrigated agriculture continues to be the driver of Leeton's economy.

The Shire comprises an area of 1,167km<sup>2</sup> and includes the town of Leeton and the villages of Whitton, Yanco, Wamoon and Murrumbidgee.



## 3.2. Indigenous Context

Leeton Shire sits within the land of the Wiradjuri Nation. The Local Aboriginal Land Council is the Leeton and District Aboriginal Land Council (LALC).

The Wiradjuri nation is the largest cultural footprint in NSW and geographically the second largest aboriginal nation in Australia (See Table 2).

Some mapped sites of significant Aboriginal cultural importance within Leeton Shire include the Koonadan Historic Site, a Wiradjuri ceremonial and burial ground, around 9km north west of Leeton.

The major importance of Koonadan Historic Site lies in its value to the Aboriginal community. This value is based upon the following: - Aboriginal skeletal material associated with two skeletons has been found in the dune. The local Aboriginal community believes that Koonadan is an ancestral Wiradjuri burial ground. The area therefore has very high significance to the community because of the deep respect of Aboriginal people for their dead.

Koonadan is adjacent to Tuckerbil Swamp. The swamp and surrounding land was a traditional hunting/fishing area for the Wiradjuri people and was linked to a corroboree site at Yanco. Participants would go there to gather food after a corroboree. The swamp was originally extensive with abundant wildlife, in an area where water is a scarce resource. It was an important source of food for local Aboriginal families during the 1930's depression and was used until recent years by them when the swamp was drained and the area cleared.

Local Aboriginal knowledge maintains a bora ground, used for ceremonial purposes, was located between the Koonadan dune and Tuckerbil Swamp.

The historic site has both traditional and contemporary significance with continuity of Aboriginal association from pre-European times to the present day. The site was instrumental in the cultural re-awakening of the local Aboriginal people following their return from missions earlier this century and has been the focus of heightened awareness of cultural tradition and unity within the community in the past decade.


The historic site has considerable educational value as it contains a number of significant Aboriginal sites which can be interpreted to explain the traditional and spiritual life of the Aboriginal people. Its location close to a number of towns in a popular tourist area and its easy access add to its educational value.

*From Koonadan Historic Site Plan of Management*





**Heritage Listings -  
Aboriginal**

 Koonadan Historic Site

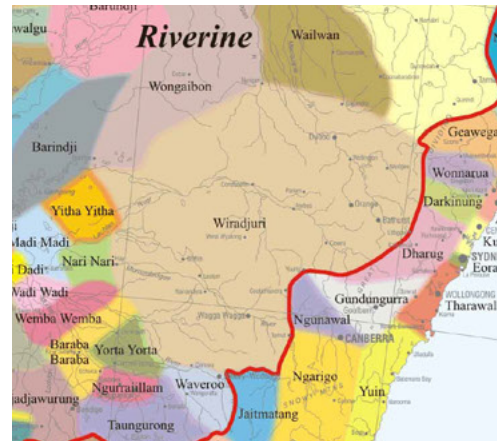
## Connecting With Country

The NSW Government Architect has published an introductory guide for understanding the value of Aboriginal knowledge in the design and planning of places.

**“Connecting with Country will support design and planning industry engagement with Aboriginal culture and heritage. Its principles for action will help to realise projects that:**

- protect the health and wellbeing of Country and therefore of Aboriginal communities, and by extension all communities
- embed Aboriginal knowledge into the design and planning of our built environment to make NSW a better place for all its citizens”

Considering the importance of natural systems to supporting the economic and environmental welfare of Leeton Shire (ie agriculture, the Murrumbidgee River System), it is an extraordinary opportunity to incorporate different systems of knowledge and understanding of place.



**Table 2** Extract from the AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia





### 3.3. European Settlement and Heritage

Leeton was conceived and constructed as the birthplace of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA).

Leeton Shire owes its existence, economy and culture to the provision of water from the Murrumbidgee River for irrigated agricultural. The origins of what is now the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) can be attributed to noted pastoralist, Sir Samuel McCaughey, who in the late 1800's convinced the NSW State Government that land around his North Yanko holding (principally what is now the Leeton Shire) was suitable for irrigation. In response, the NSW Government commenced the construction of the Barren Jack Dam (now called Burrinjuck Dam) in 1906, following the severe drought of 1902, to dam the waters of the Murrumbidgee River to provide a regulated water supply downstream of the dam to drought proof inland NSW.

At the completion of Burrinjuck Dam and the supporting network of canals and channels the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area was officially opened with a turning on of the water ceremony at Yanco on the 13th July 1912.

Since these early beginnings Leeton Shire has grown to a population of 11,445 with the major town of Leeton and rural villages at Whitton, Yanco, Wamoon and Murrumbidgee.

*Leeton LSPS*



Leeton Visitor Information Centre



Within the town of Leeton,  
is a rich collection of  
art-deco buildings.

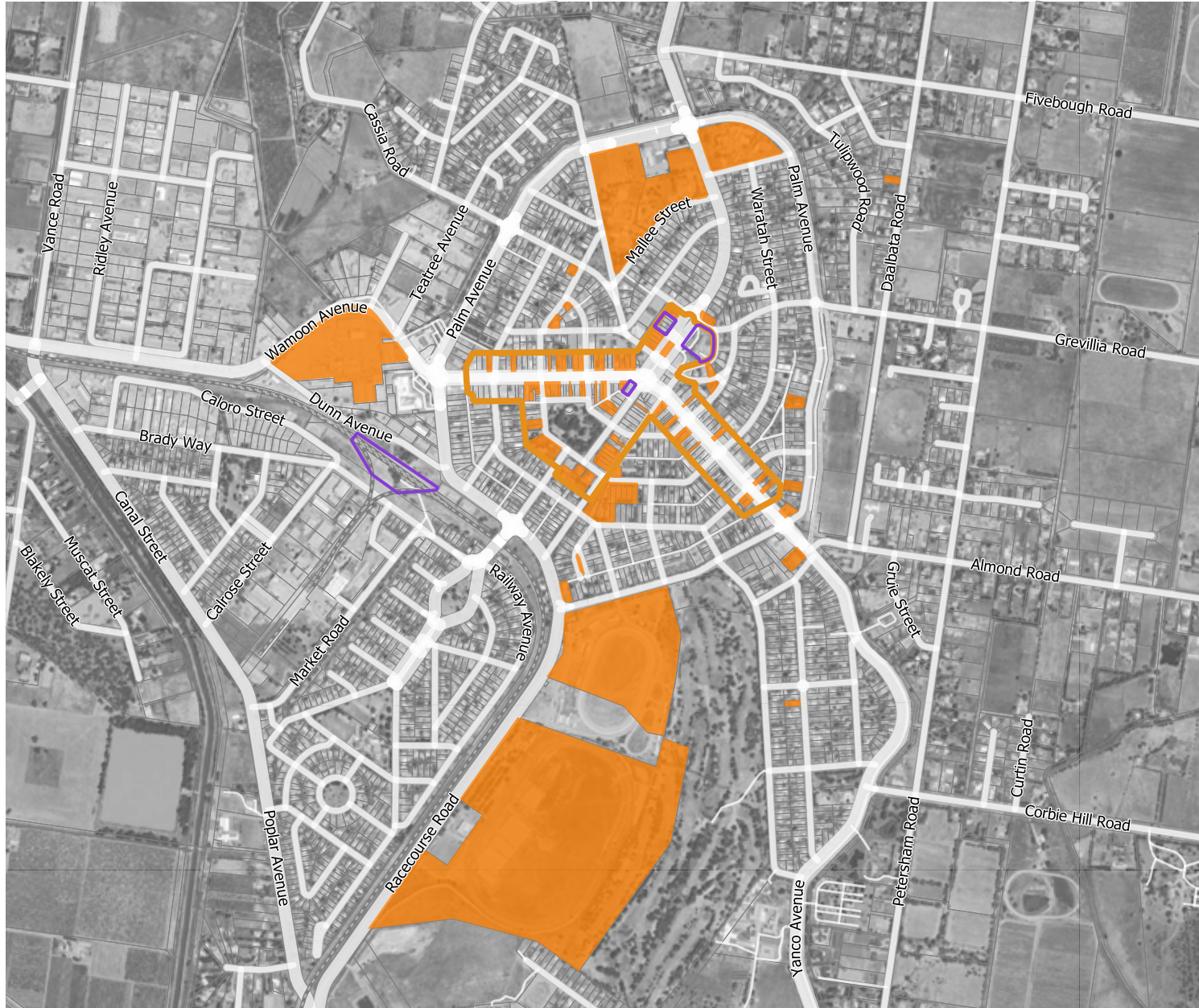
The town of Leeton contains a number of listed structures of State heritage significance, including the Hydro Hotel, Roxy Community Theatre, Leeton Railway Station and Yard Group and Leeton District Lands Office.

The Leeton LEP also has a list of buildings of local significance, including heritage precincts.

Further afield includes the Gogeldrie Weir and Yanco Weir, reflecting the irrigation related history of the Shire.



The Roxy Theatre



### Heritage Listings — Leeton

- Heritage - Local item
- Heritage - State item
- Heritage - Conservation Area



SECTION

# 4

## Demographics





## 4.1. Population

### 4.1.1. Population

The Leeton LGA supports an estimated residential population of 11,452 persons (ABS, 2021) (based on usual place of residence), with an almost even split between males and females of 49.28% and 50.72% respectively.

Leeton Shire's population is concentrated in the town of Leeton and the smaller villages of Yanco, Whitton, Murrumbidgee and Wamboona.

Of the total population, 7.18% of the Shire identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Note: The nature of the Census data is such that a proportion of the seasonal and migrant workforce, including the PALM scheme, is excluded from this data. It should be noted that the actual population is further inflated once these workforce populations are taken into consideration.



11,452

Residential population



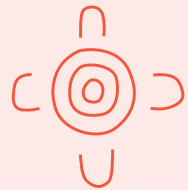
49.28%

Female



50.27%

Male



7.18%

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Figure 1 ATSI Population Percentage 2021

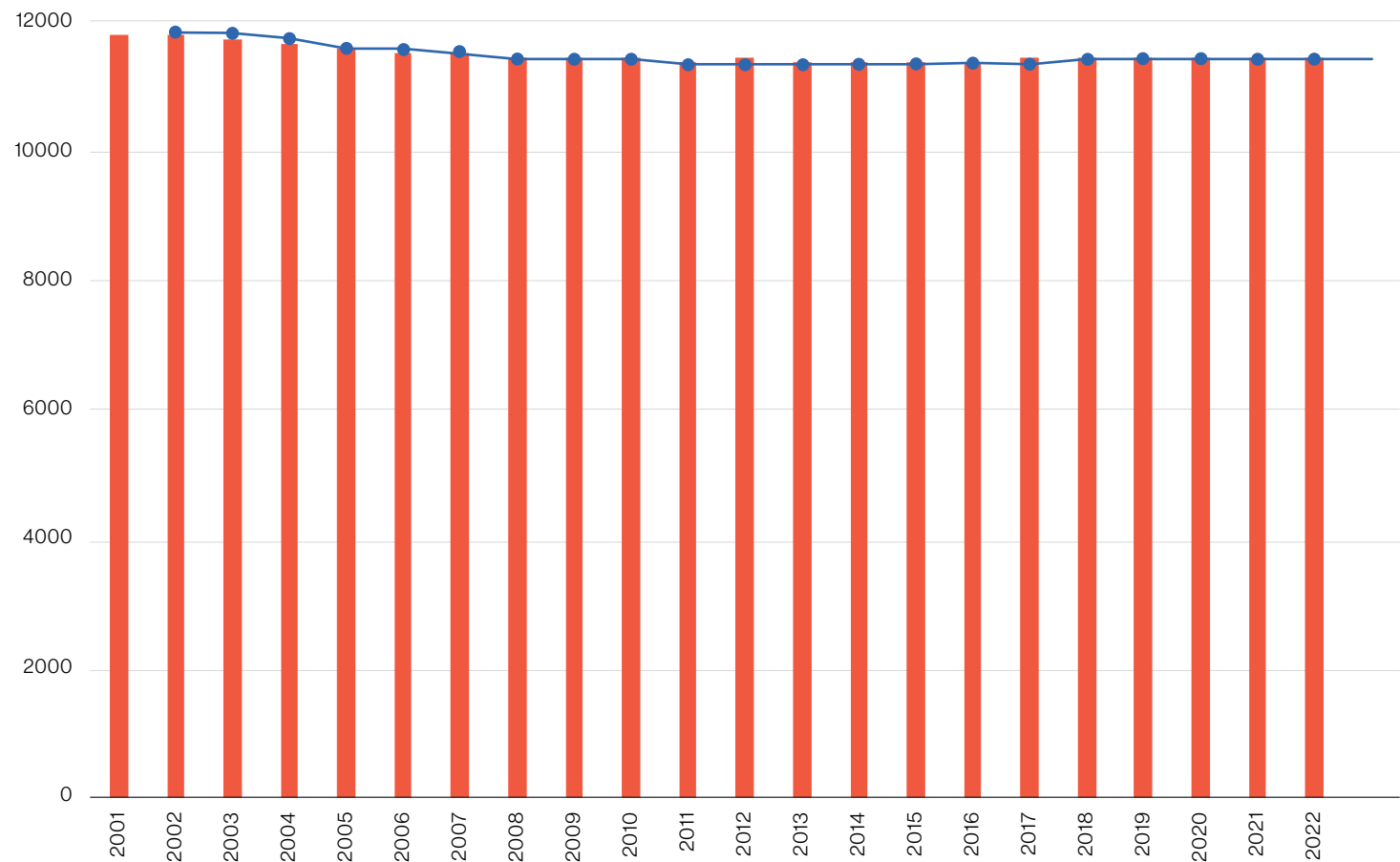


The makeup and location of the population, their preferences and requirements will inform future land use and planning strategies.

While over the last twenty years, the population has remained fairly steady, its makeup and distribution has fluctuated. Projections from NSW DPE indicate the population is like to remain steady.

Regardless, any future population change is not likely to be evenly distributed. The majority of future residents are expected to consolidate closer to the town of Leeton for the lifestyle, employment, services, healthcare and amenity.

**Figure 2** Estimated Residential Population (2001-2022)





#### 4.1.2. Population Changes and Distribution

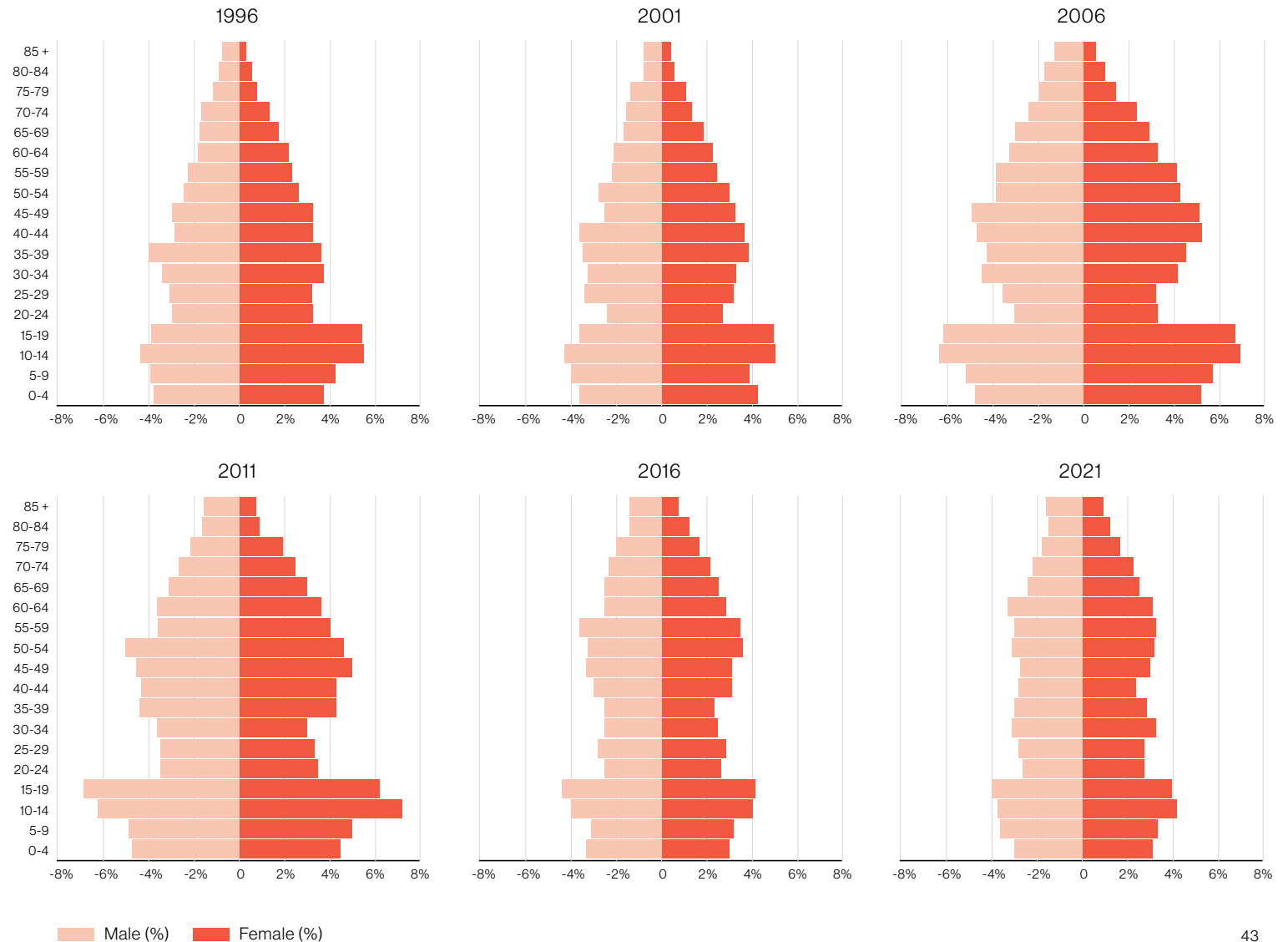
Overall, Leeton Shire's population has been fairly steady since the turn of the century, averaging around 11,500.

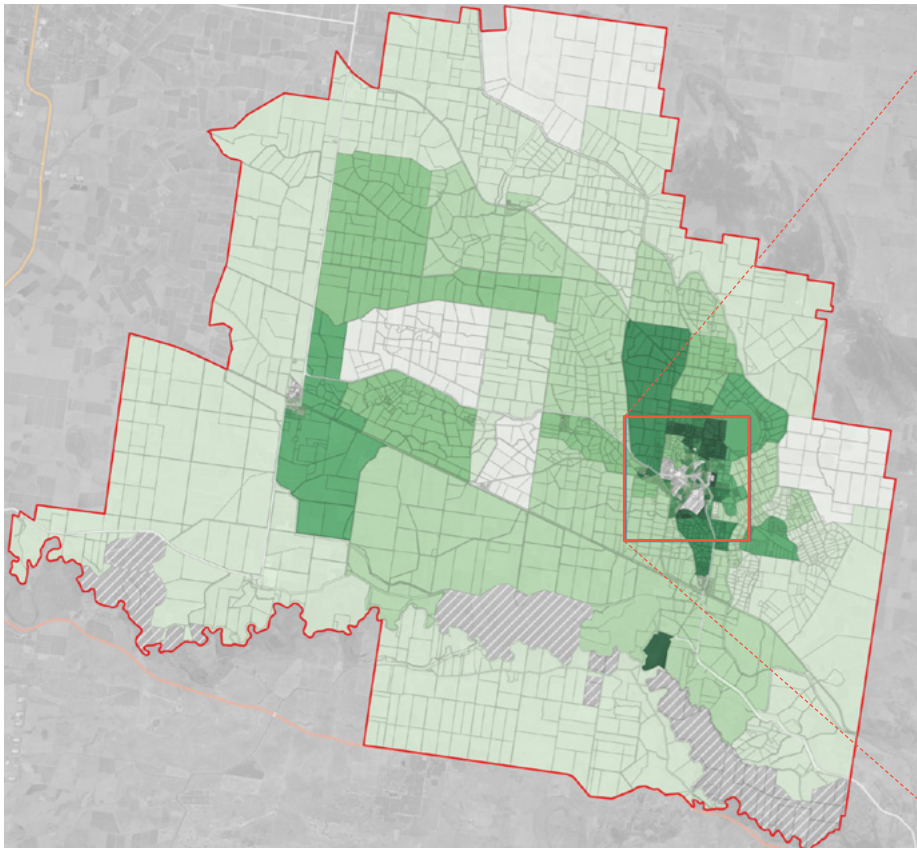
While the population is steady, the profile of Leeton is changing, particularly a shift toward an aging population, which is a trend fairly common to regional Australia.

As can be seen from the series of population pyramids spanning from 1996 to 2021, Leeton Shire has an aging population, which will affect community requirements for healthcare, amenity and land use planning.

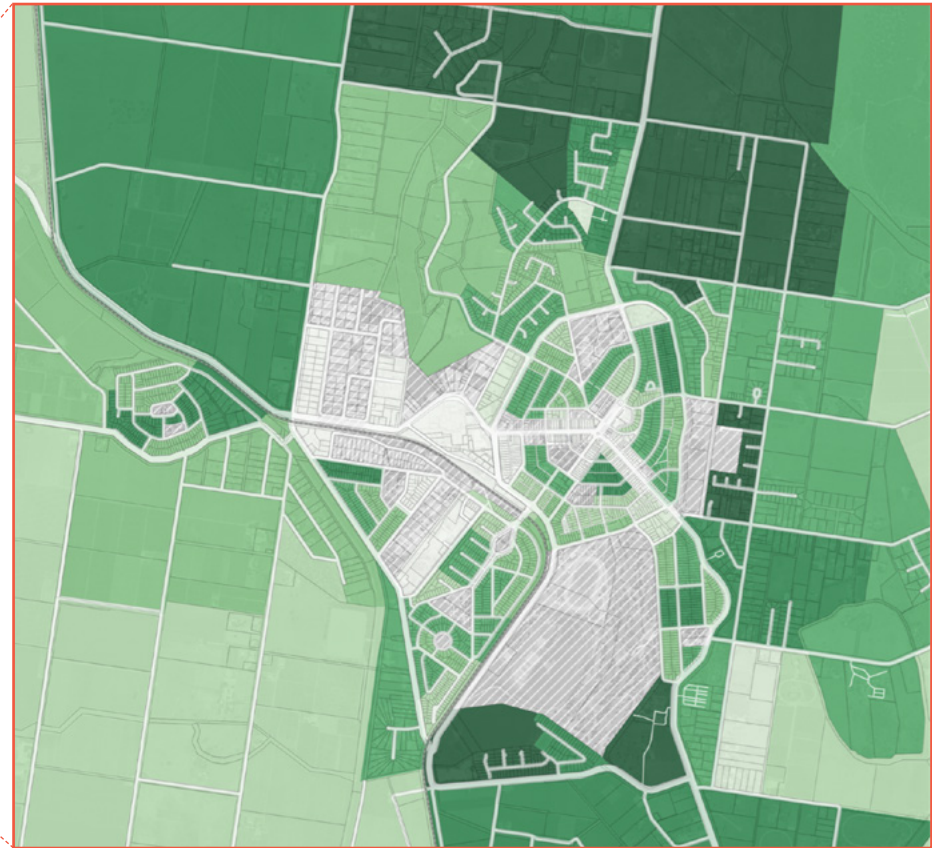
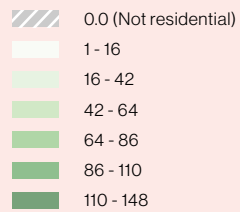
While the population is ageing, there is a relatively stable cohort of 20-50 year olds within the Leeton Shire that represents the majority of the Shire's workforce. Council's vision for Leeton remains to attract and retain the population within these age brackets.

*A local note on population distribution. Yanco is home to the Yanco Agricultural High School and St. Francis De Sales Regional College, which takes boarders who are counted in the five-yearly Census (enumerated population). The presence of enrolled students from year 7 to 12 (ages 12-17) is reflected in the larger 10-14 and 15-19 year age cohorts.*

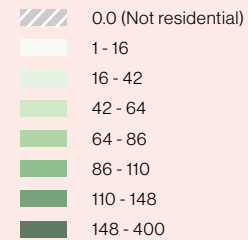




**Leeton LGA  
Population  
distribution 2021**



**Leeton Population  
distribution 2021**





#### 4.1.3. Population Density

The population density for the whole of Leeton shire is 9.79 people per square kilometre.

The average density for Regional NSW is 3.62 people per square kilometre (this number also accounts for non-residential uses).

It is important to note population density is not evenly spread throughout the shire.

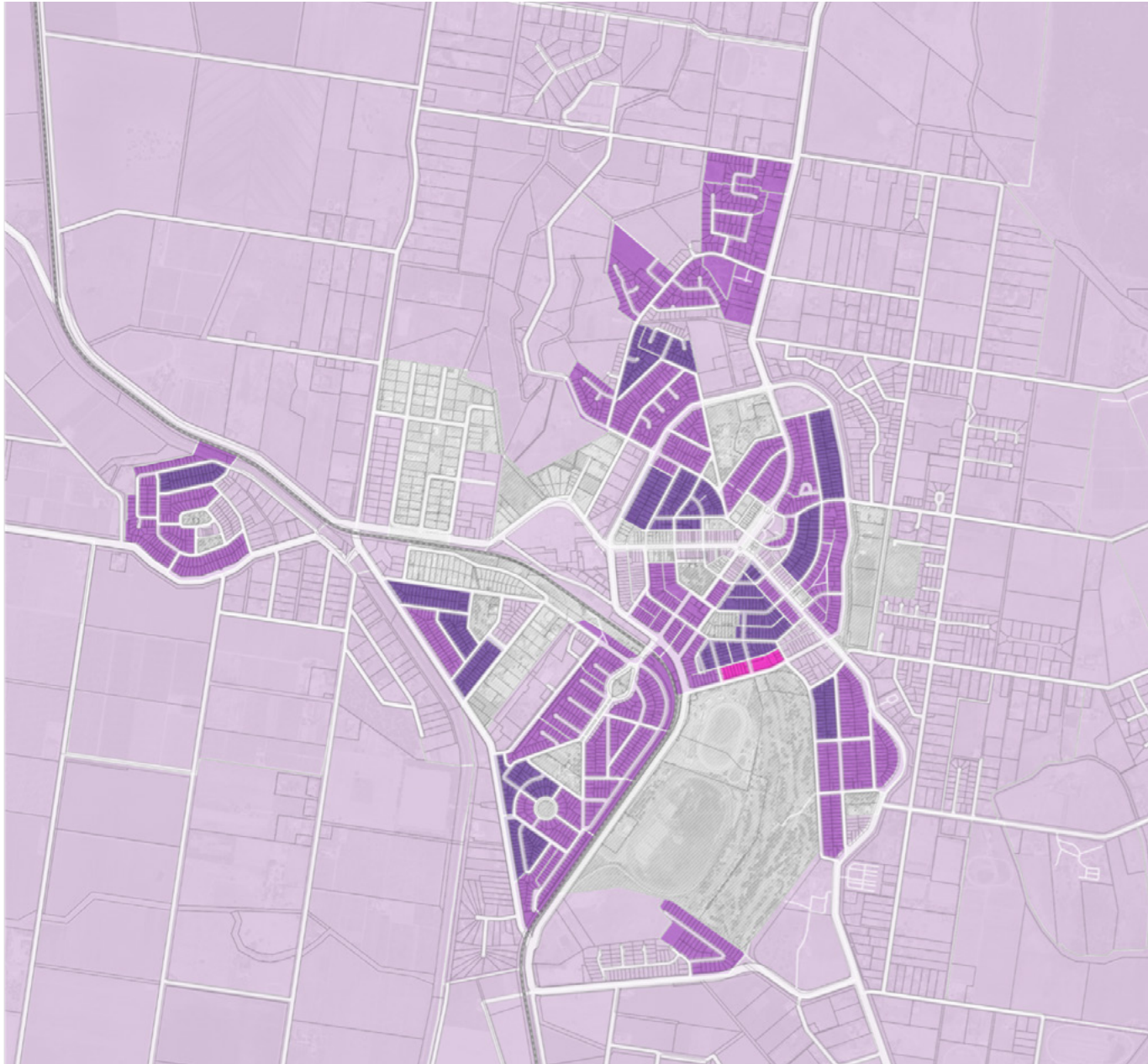
There are some concentrated pockets of relatively high density within the township of Leeton (see next page).

While low density living is often part of the appeal of a regional lifestyle, and a reason for many who choose to live there, it is important to balance this with inefficient land uses, such as embedding car dependency due to long travel distances by maintaining that low density.






Leeton Farmers Market





### 2021 Population Density People/km<sup>2</sup>

-  0.0 (Not residential)
-  1 - 1000
-  1000 - 2001
-  2000 - 3001
-  3000 - 4001

#### 4.1.4. Distribution by Age

Understanding where particular cohorts are choosing to live can give an indication of the types of housing that are required for certain areas.

Understanding the needs of different age groups and family groups can help to cater to their requirements.



**Younger people** have less want for large dwellings or space and may prioritise accessibility, walkability and amenity. Though likely not to the same extent as urban areas, younger people are driving less than previous generations.



**Families** seeking larger dwellings and lots will move further away from amenity and services to get that at a manageable cost.

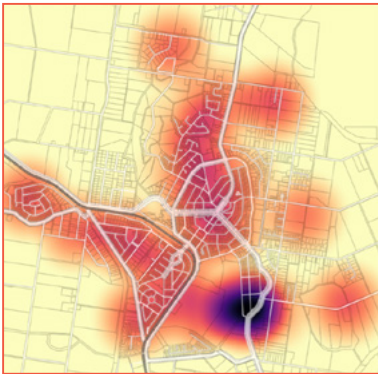


**Retirees, empty nesters and couples without children** may choose to be closer to services, healthcare and amenity.

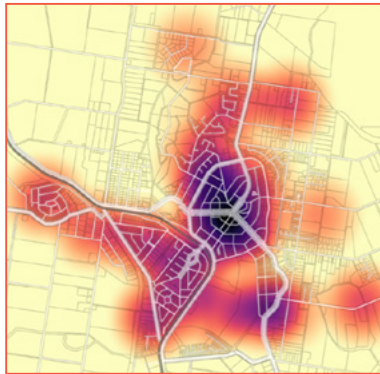


**Older people** seeking to downsize will do so, as long as there are viable options for higher density living which align with lifestyle and access to the aforementioned services.

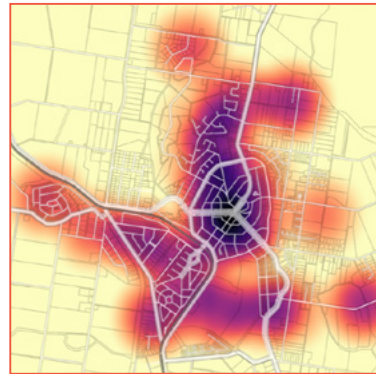
**Heatmap** Population Distribution by Age Group



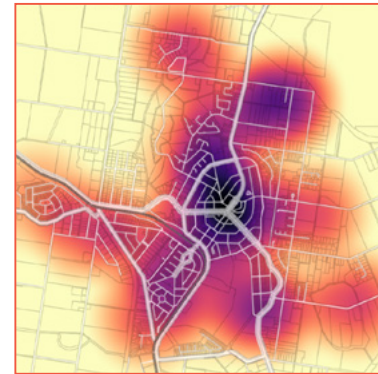
0 - 19 Years



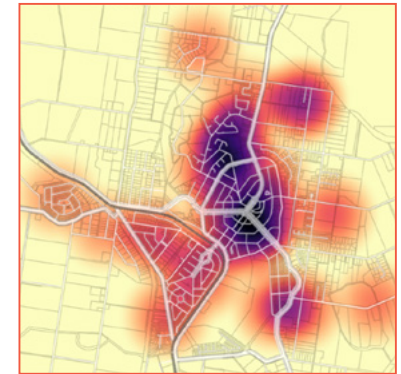
20 - 34 Years



35 - 44 Years



45 - 64 Years



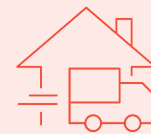
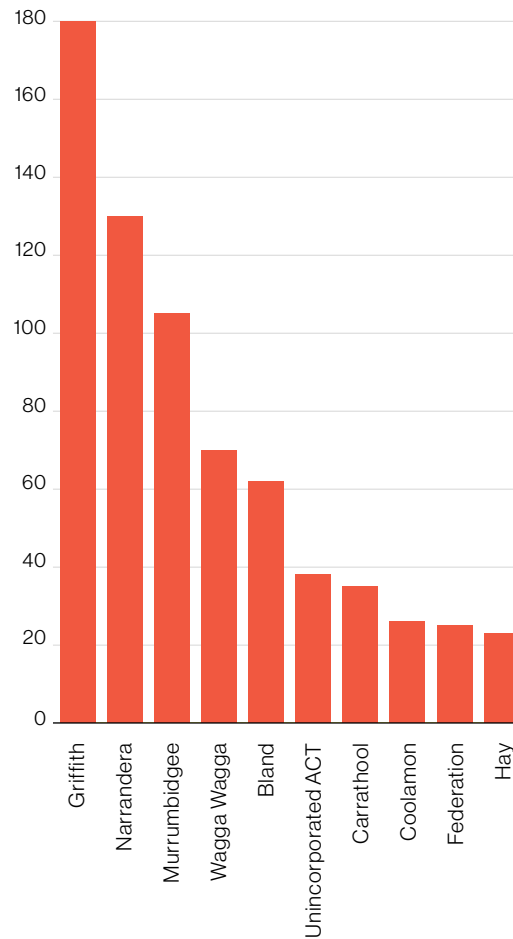
65+ Years

#### 4.1.5. Population Migration



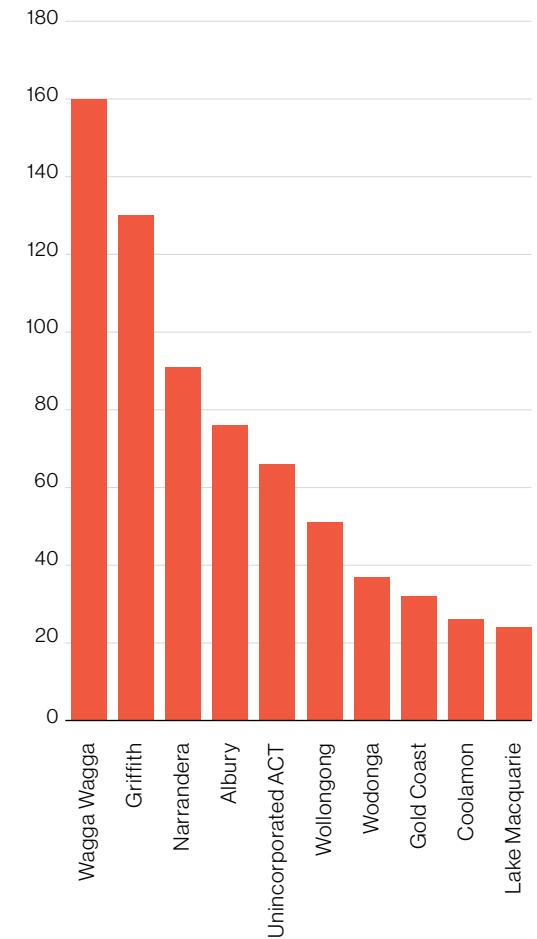
##### In Migration

The ten largest LGA sources of internal in-migrants are all regionally based.



##### Out Migration

The ten most popular LGAs for internal out-migration are also mostly quite close, though the size of the locations people are migrating to might indicate people may be moving for employment or greater opportunity.







### Local Population Movement

From the neighbouring LGAs of Griffith, Narrandera and Murrumbidgee, Leeton has experienced high amounts of both in and out migration, indicating people moving around the region.



### Migration by Age group

A loss of young adults (18-24 year cohort) is the most significant outward migration trend.



### External migration

For a small regional LGA, Leeton has a relatively high proportion of the population born outside of Australia.

In the immediate region, Leeton (10.74% or 1,229 people) is comparable to Wagga Wagga (11.36%), Griffith (22.45%) and Carrathool (13.92%).

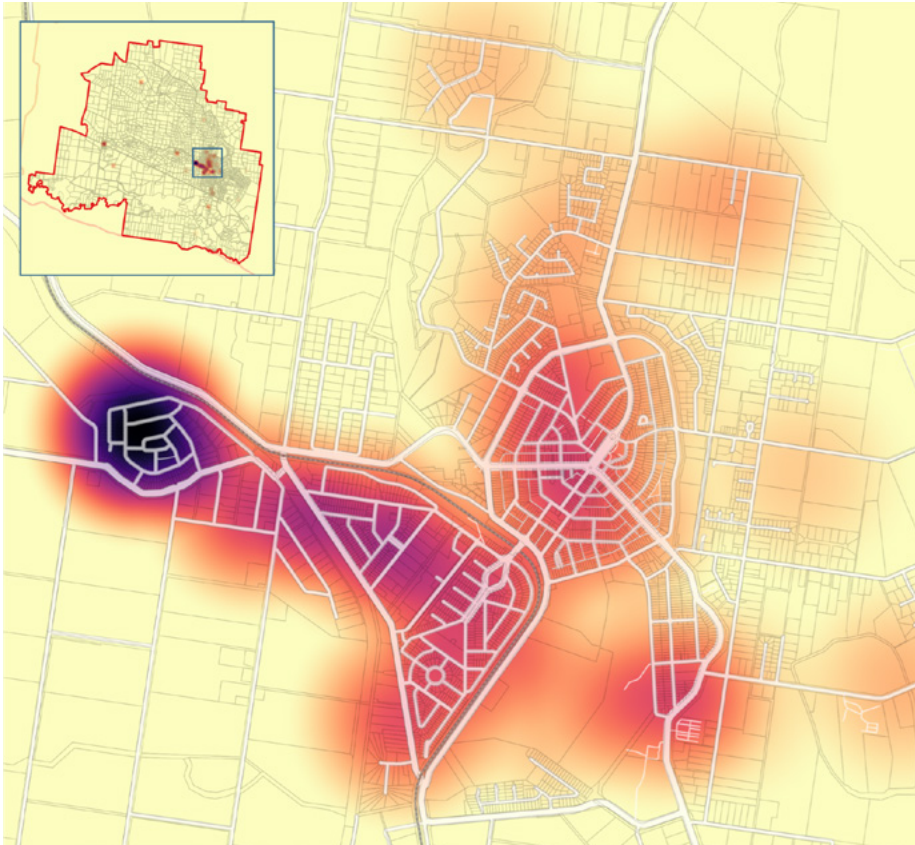
*ABS (Country of Birth by Person)*



### Cultural diversity

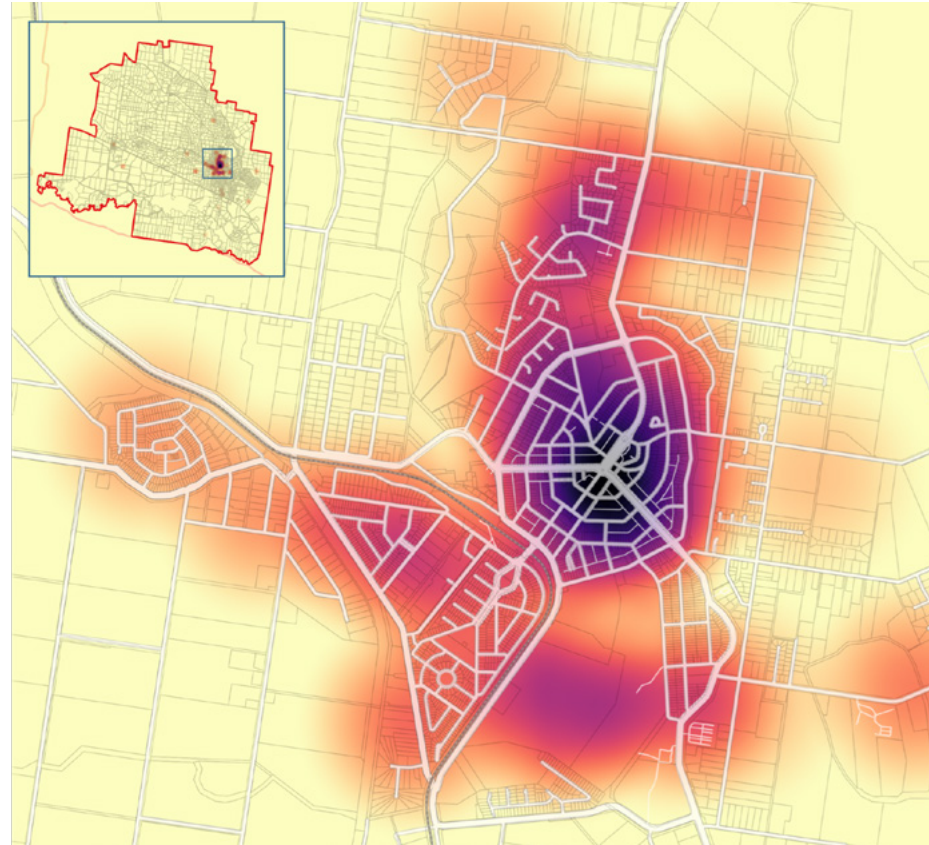
Leeton has earned a reputation as an accommodating community for migrants. Some further analysis on understanding the diverse housing and cultural requirements of different groups will be a foundational piece of research.

For instance, the concentration of migrants in the town of Leeton is a phenomenon that may be useful to unpack – the reasons for settlement, community, affordability can be investigated, as highlighted by the analysis within the following section.



**ABS - 2021 Census**

**Heatmap - ATSI  
Population SA1 Area**



**ABS - 2021 Census**

**Heatmap - People  
born outside  
Australia SA1 Area**

#### 4.1.6. Housing

Housing is one of the most influential factors in determining how the planning instruments should be framed for the future.

Demand for housing is high in the main town of Leeton with particularly strong demand for rental stock and affordable housing. Housing activity is not necessarily a result of historical planning or decisions made by Council though is more likely linked to larger scale migration flows locally, regionally and nationally.

The changes to the makeup of the population will place significant demands on housing stock in the future, particularly;

- The capability of the existing dwelling types to cater to changing household types
- The rise of lone person households
- Smaller family units and one parent families
- Housing stock suitable for an aging population
- The suitability of the minimum lot sizes, and lack of medium density developments
- Working housing (Temporary)



**At the 2021 Census, there were 3961 occupied private dwellings recorded in Leeton Shire:**



**85.3%**

Separate houses



**3.3%**

Semi-detached, row/terrace house, townhouse etc



**7.8%**

Flat, unit or apartment



**3.6%**

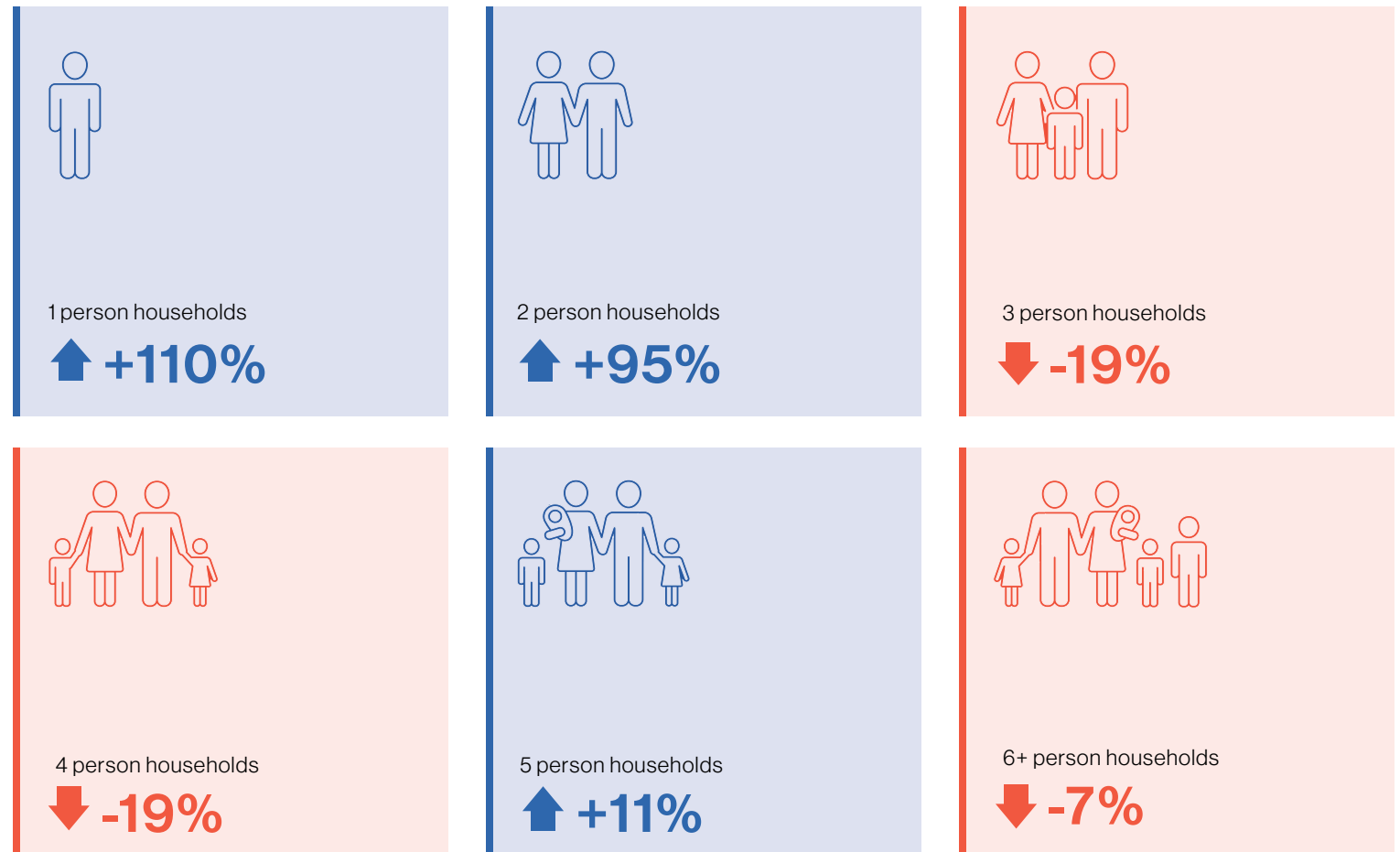
Other dwellings



#### 4.1.7. Household composition

**Table 3** Change in Household Size 2006 – 2021

The change in household size, showing an increase of lone person households, should be analysed in conjunction with the change in age groups (see Population pyramids).



The change in household size, showing an increase of lone person households, should be analysed in conjunction with the change in age groups (see Population pyramids).

**Table 4** Change in Household Type (2006 - 2021)



Couples with children

**↓ -85%**



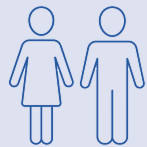
Couples without children

**↑ +123%**



One parent families

**↑ +16%**



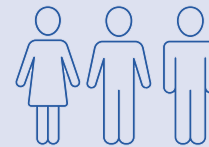
Other not classifiable household

**↑ +71%**



Other families

**↑ +6%**



Group household

**↑ +15%**



Lone person

**↑ +113%**

#### 4.1.8. Dwelling Types

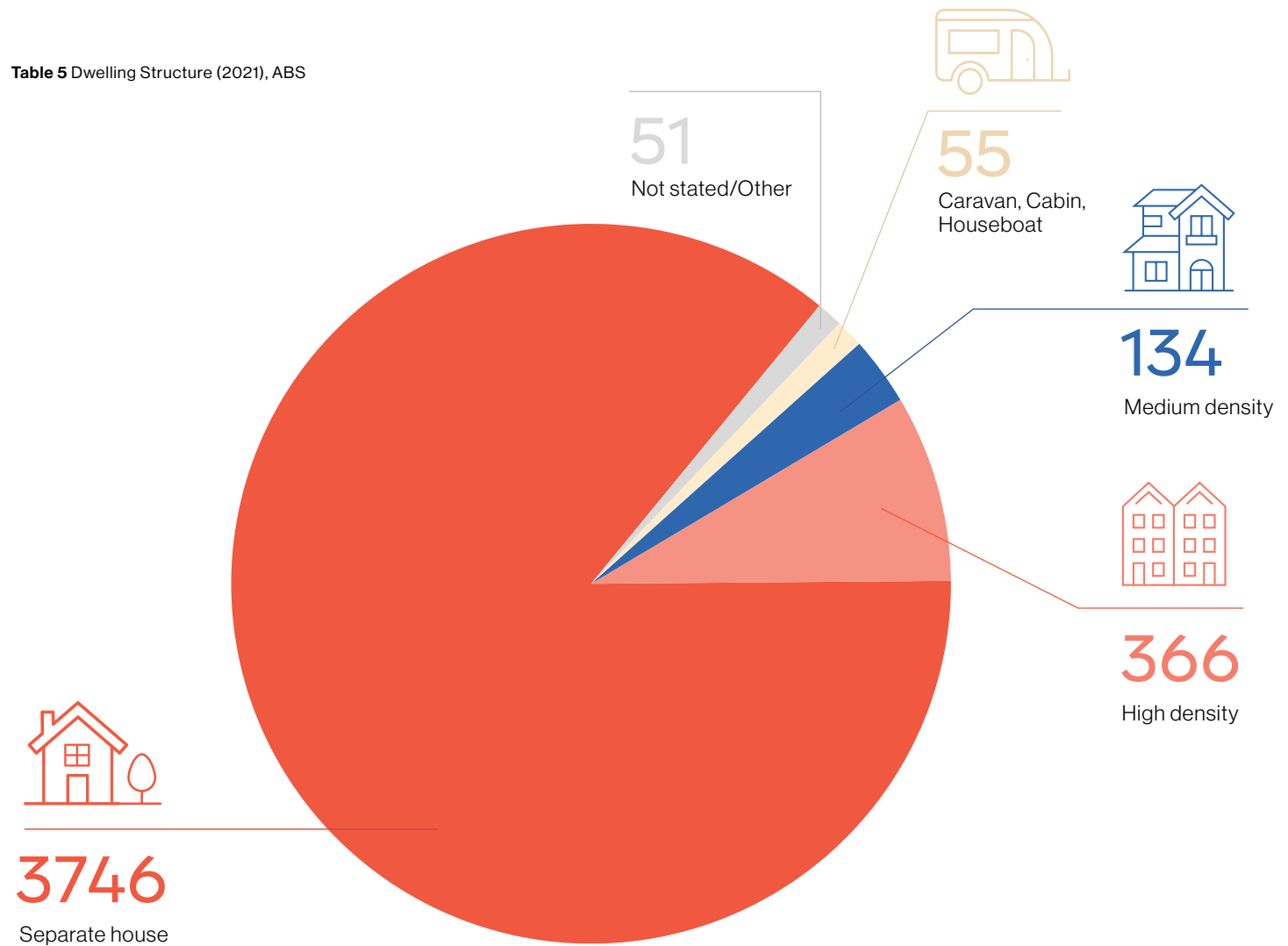
Throughout the Leeton LGA, the dominant housing type is a detached three-bedroom dwelling. There is also a high proportion of four, five and over bedroom houses, and a small number of one and two bedroom dwellings, which is increasingly mismatching with the changing household compositions.

At the time of the 2021 census – there were 803 lone person households, residing in separate dwellings.

In 2021, of a total of 4,296 private dwellings, 330 are considered unoccupied – 7.68%

This is for a range of reasons including absent owners, dwellings for sale, the homes are rentals (but not occupied), or are newly completed and yet to be occupied.

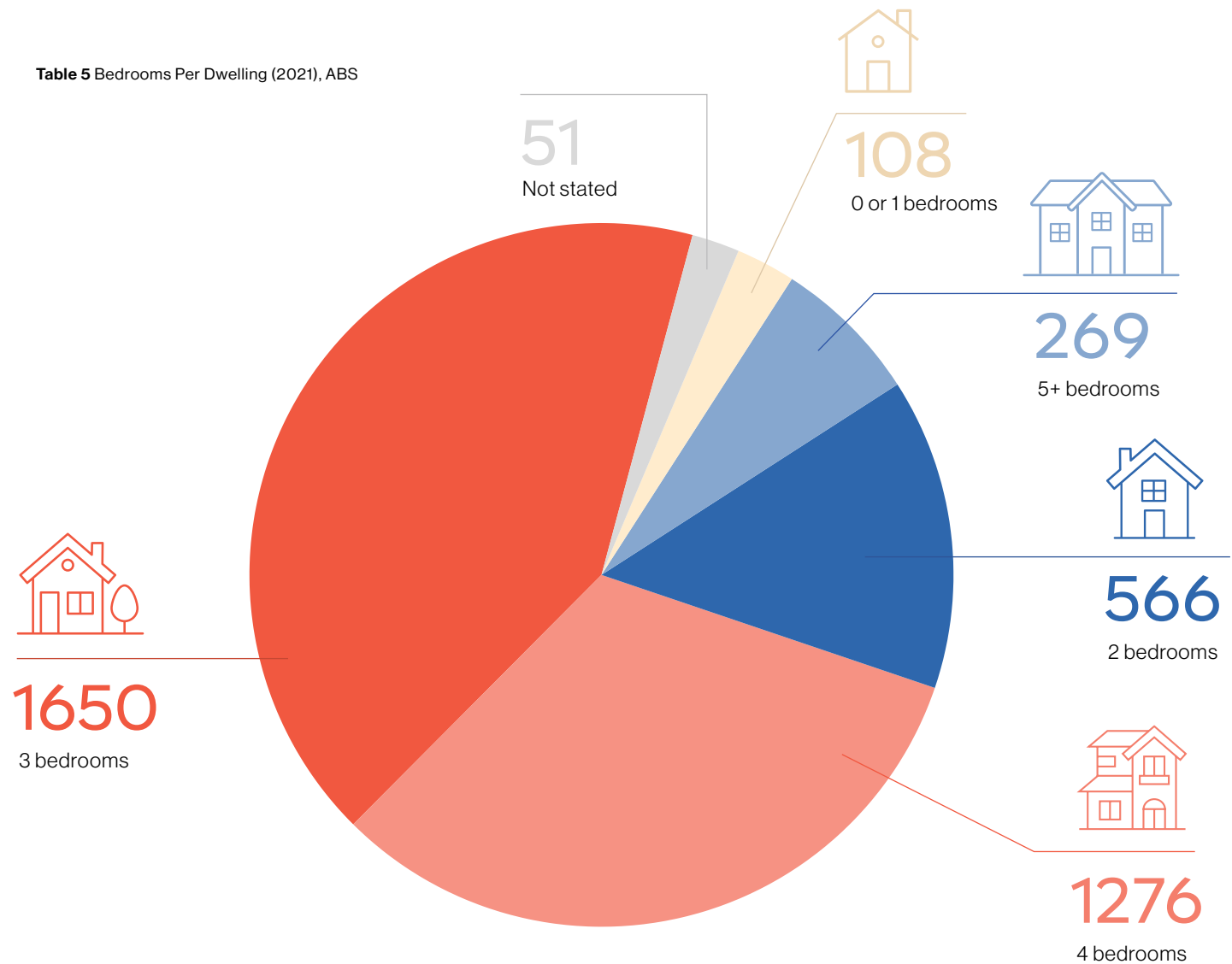
**Table 5** Dwelling Structure (2021), ABS





Like much of regional New South Wales, changes in population distribution have occurred relatively rapidly compared to the pace of housing provision, turnover and urban development throughout the Leeton LGA.

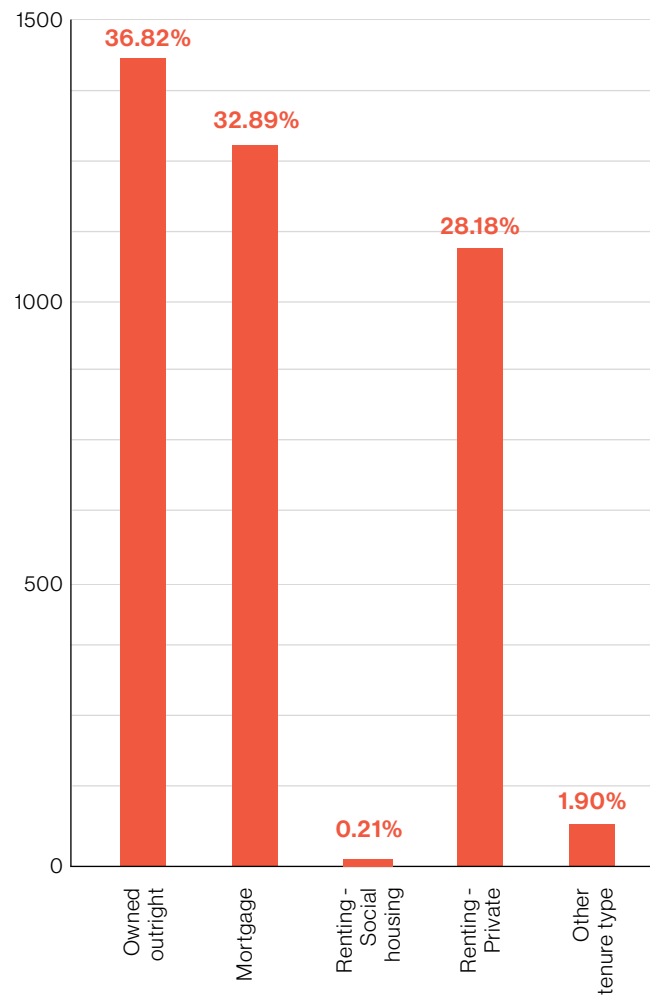
**Table 5** Bedrooms Per Dwelling (2021), ABS



#### 4.1.9. Housing Tenure

Due to the low population numbers, it can be hard to identify clear trends in housing tenure though it may be instructive to analyse them in conjunction with population dynamics.

**Table 7** Housing Tenure, Leeton (2021)

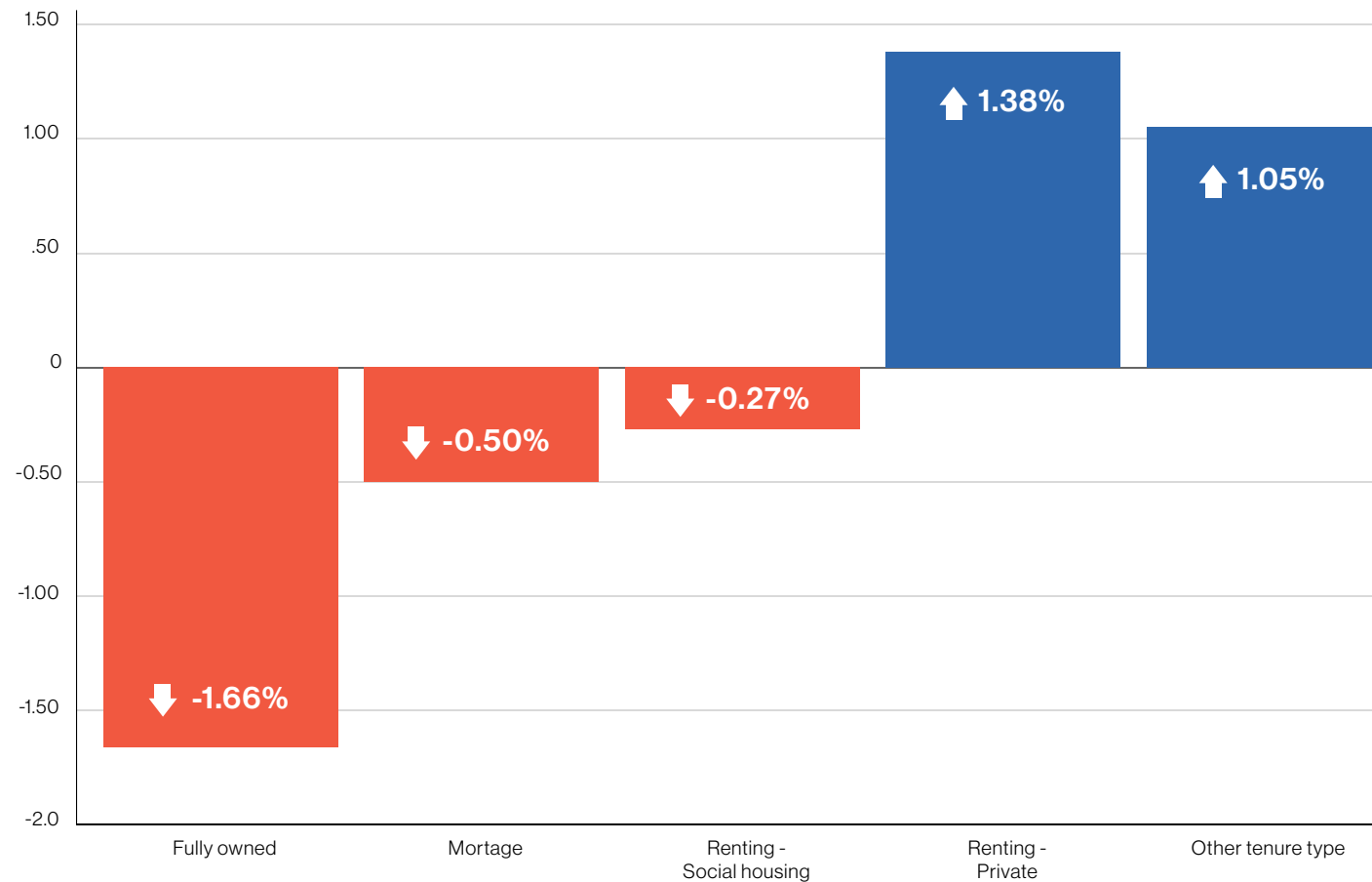


Changes between 2006 and 2021 show the number of fully owned properties has decreased slightly and mortgages increased, however this can't be considered a simple transition of one tenure to another.

As a percentage of the dwellings, fully owned and mortgaged properties, as well as social housing has decreased; and private renting has increased.

Housing stress can be measured in a number of ways, though is often gauged against income, where mortgage or rental payments of over 30% of income is generally considered as facing housing stress.

**Table 8 – Change in Housing Tenure %, Leeton (2006-2021)**



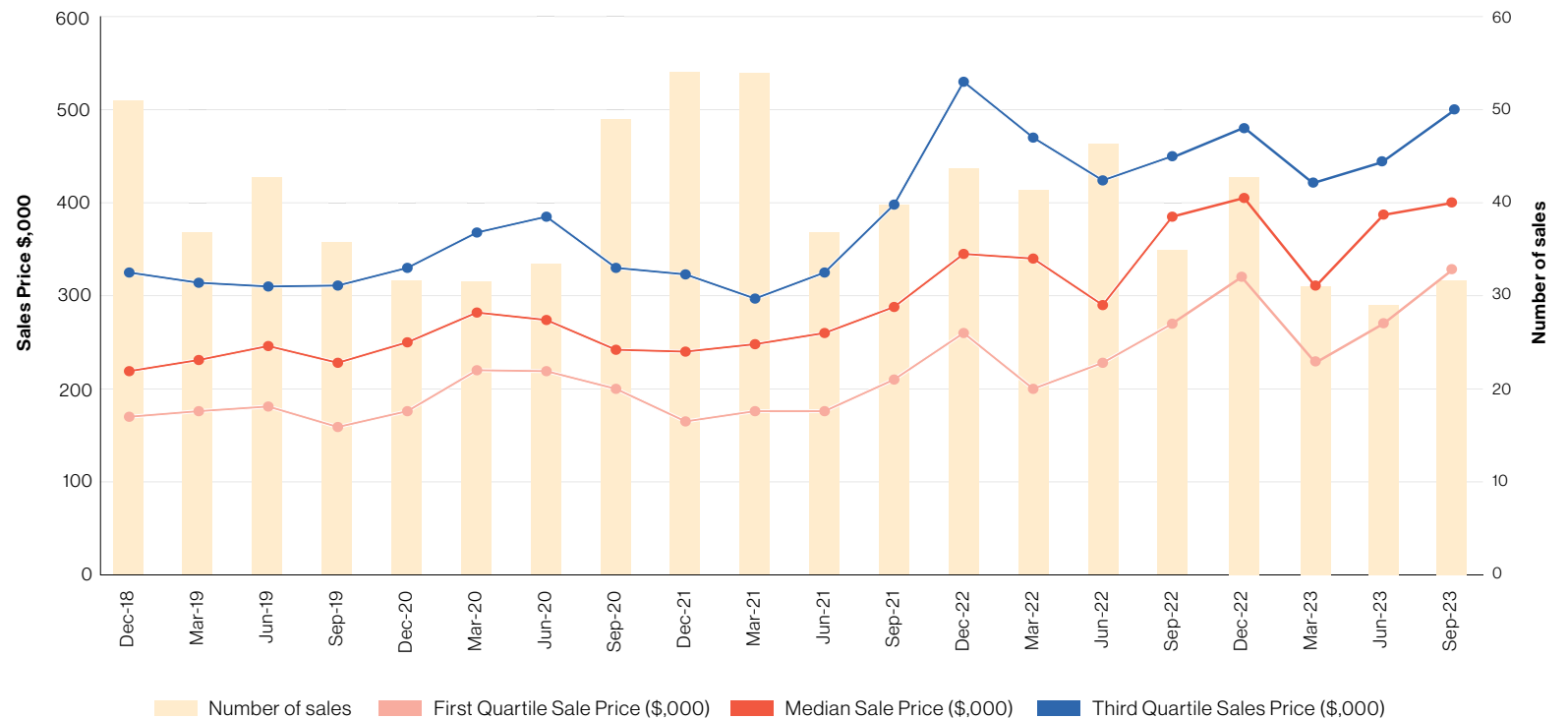


#### 4.1.10. Housing Sales

**Table 9** Leeton LGA House Sales (2018-2022)

Access to affordable housing is perhaps as important culturally as it is economically, in Australian society. As a fundamental human right, housing is important for shelter as well as security. This often clashes with property's standing as asset class, due to its potential for capital gains.

Within Leeton LGA, house prices have risen over the past few years, which also has flow on effects to rental markets. The number of houses sold per month has fluctuated, while a noticeable spike occurred during the COVID pandemic. Current research indicates regional housing price increases are beginning to slow following the resumption of regular internal migration patterns.

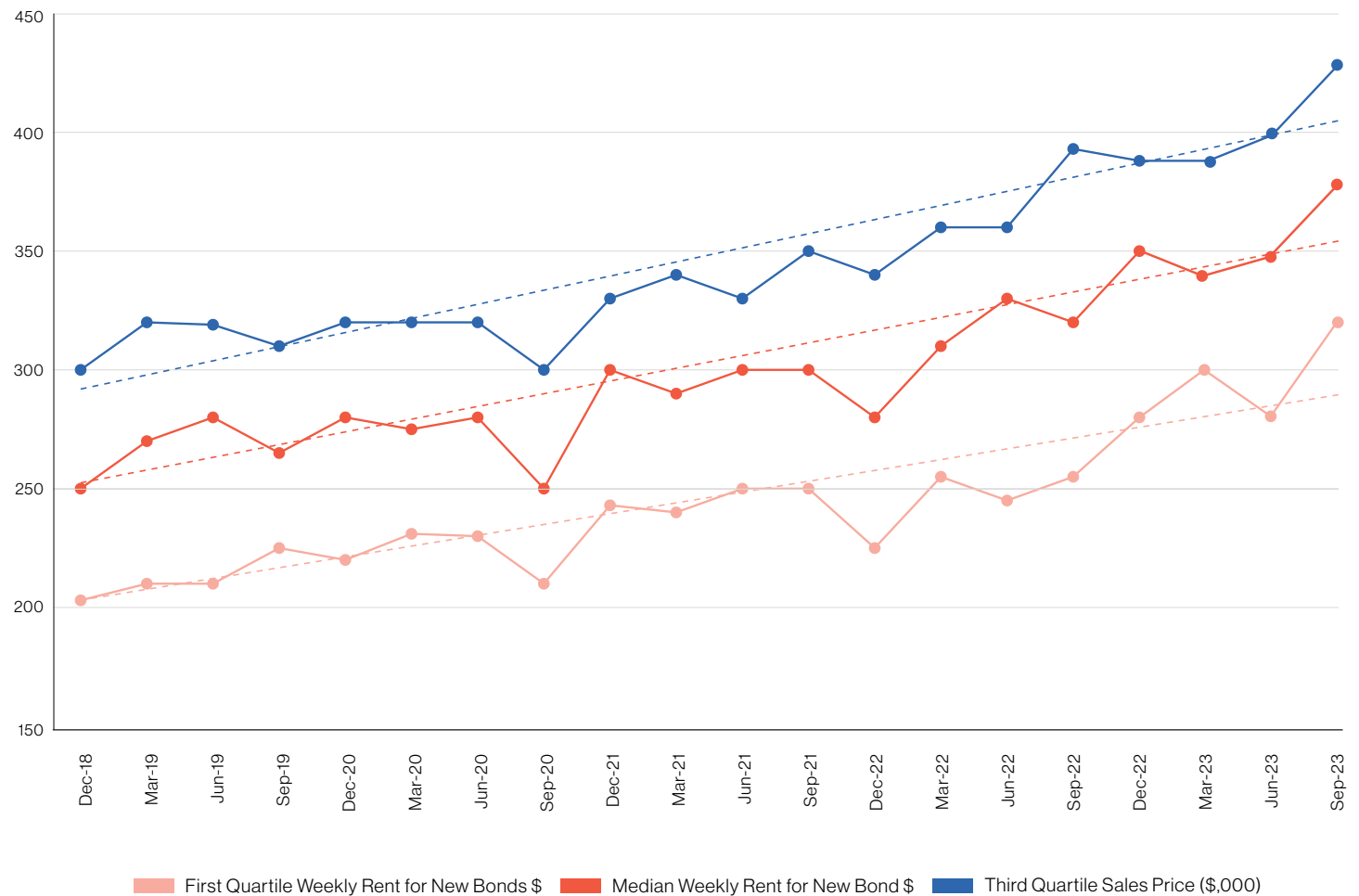


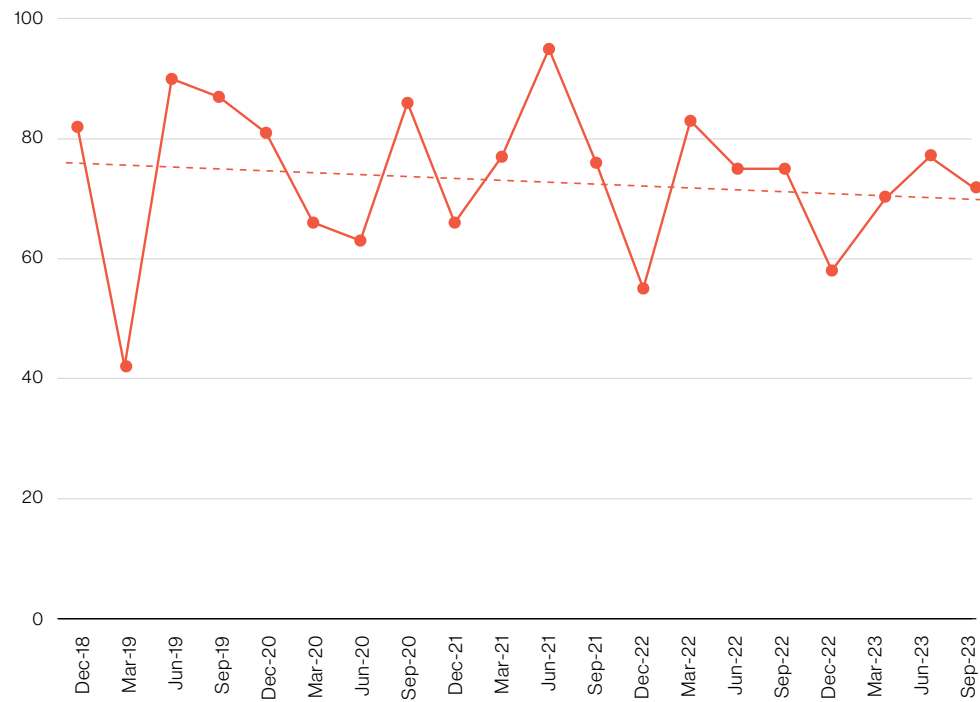
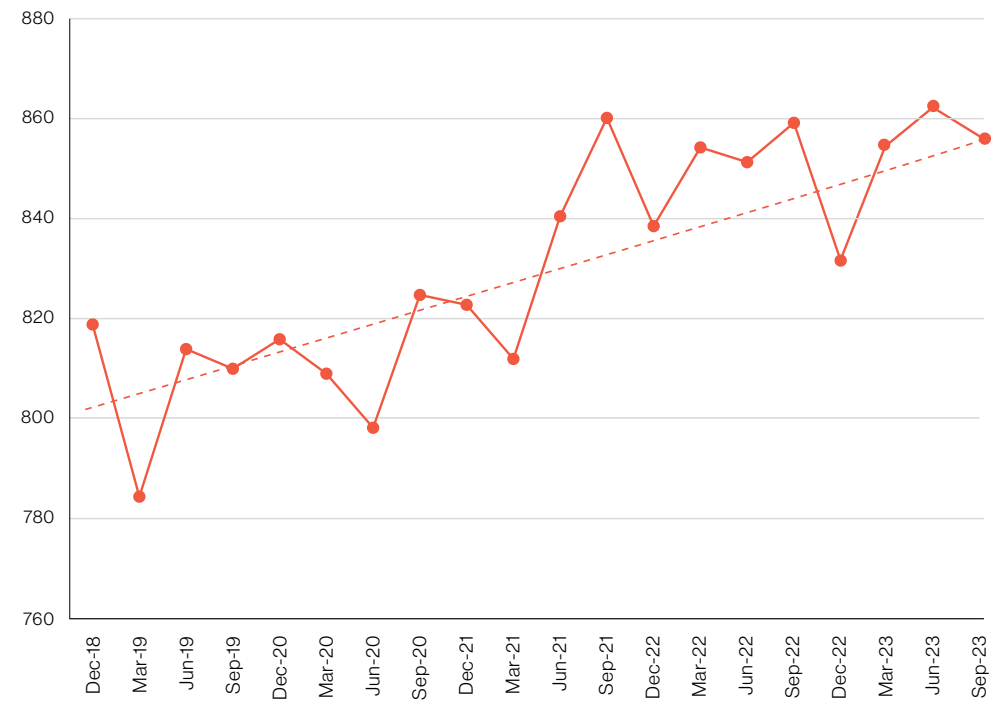
Housing availability is also decreasing as the net population of Leeton Shire has increased, putting pressure on a strained and mismatching housing supply.

The increase of private renting as a proportion of housing tenure is rising as well as the cost to rent those houses.

Figures held by the NSW Dept of Communities and Justice show the number of new bonds are decreasing but the total number of bonds held is increasing, this is an indicator that people are staying in their rental properties, and there is less housing stock turning over and becoming available for rent.

**Table 10** Leeton LGA Weekly Rent (2018-2022)



**Figure 4** New Bonds Lodged (NSW Dept. Communities and Justice)**Figure 5** Total Bonds Held (NSW Dept. Communities and Justice)



#### 4.1.11. Key Issues for Housing

The key issues in relation to housing include:



Lone person households are growing substantially.



Balancing the need for diverse housing to accommodate seasonal workers and housing for short term workforce associated with infrastructure projects and businesses.



Dwelling types are overwhelmingly three bedrooms and over – there is a disproportionate balance between household size and dwelling size.



Consideration of typical lot size, relative to minimum lot size, can make gentle increases in density (for example, by subdividing a lot into two torrens titled lots) difficult.



Affordability is increasingly becoming an issue. Leeton Shire has traditionally been relatively affordable, which has been a drawcard for retirees and young families.



The number of private renters is increasing. This is a common pattern in regional Australia, from the COVID pandemic where people stayed in place and the addition of a recent upswing in migration.



Correlation of housing tenure with age and employment, especially considering the rise in renting.



Rate Of land development in the LGA and the need to avoid instances of 'land-banking' that prevents new land and housing



Cost of developing and releasing new urban land in comparison to seeking new infill development of the townships.



Housing for aging populations and the availability of services in the towns, including lifestyle villages to accommodate retirees seeking to live in Leeton.



Consideration as to whether the housing stock suitable for the age profile of the community, including housing types.

#### 4.1.12. Planning Approvals and Development

Demand for residential land use is strong, particularly in the township of Leeton. Approvals for development have been steadily increasing over the past ten years.

The distribution of development approvals is a strong indicator of where land is more sought after, for what uses and to understand the pressures that an area may be experiencing. New dwelling approvals, alterations and additions for instance, are heavily weighted toward Leeton.

The average number of DAs determined (by FTE), has grown steadily to 163 in FY21/22, taking an average of 35 days to be determined.

**Table 11** Approved Residential Development Applications (2012-2022)

SUBURB	NEW DWELLINGS	ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS	RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS (LOTS CREATED)
Corbie Hill	0	7	0
Cudgel	1	3	2
Euroley	1	1	4
Gogeldrie	1	2	5
Leeton	261	677	320
Merungle Hill	19	31	1
Murrumbidgee	3	9	6
Stanbridge	2	6	3
Whitton	3	23	3
Yanco	12	44	12

(Local Development Performance Monitoring)

## 4.2. Socio-economics

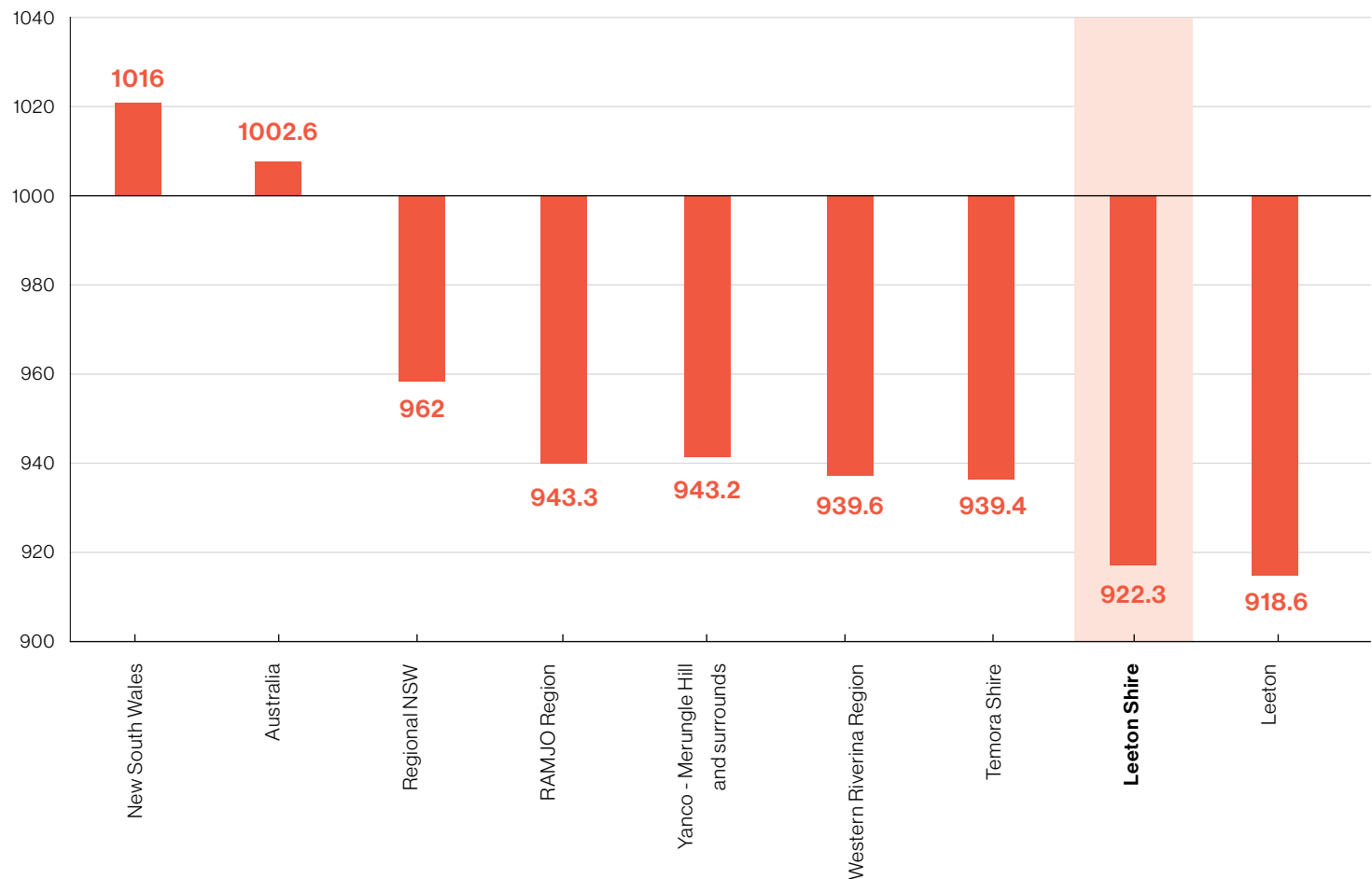
### 4.2.1. SEIFA

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) is a measure of relative advantage and disadvantage. It's not an absolute figure and can be a good indicator of accessibility to employment, education, amenity, healthcare, higher order regional towns, or where funding might be required.

1000 is the national, median rating for the index where the further deviation from 1000 indicates the relative advantage or disadvantage.

Listed in the 19th percentile (where only 19% of the areas are considered more disadvantaged), Leeton LGA's rating for the 2021 index is 922.

2021 SEIFA index





### 4.3. Social Assistance and Housing

Leeton sits within the Murrumbidgee Family and Community Services (FACS) District.



# 405

Disability Support Pension Recipients



# 1355

Aged Pension Recipients



# 495

Commonwealth Rent Assistance Recipients



# 350

Carer Allowance Recipients



# 405

Job Seeker Recipients

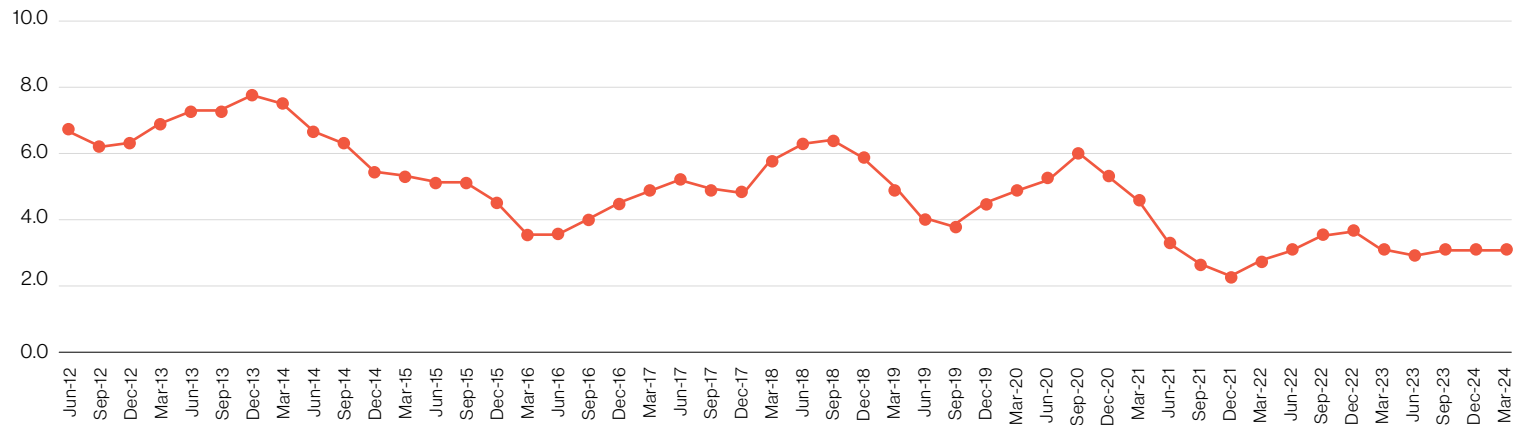


As shown in section 4.1.9, the small amount of social housing within the LGA has also declined. Much of the direct control for social housing sits outside of Council's remit, such as the rates of rent assistance and income support.

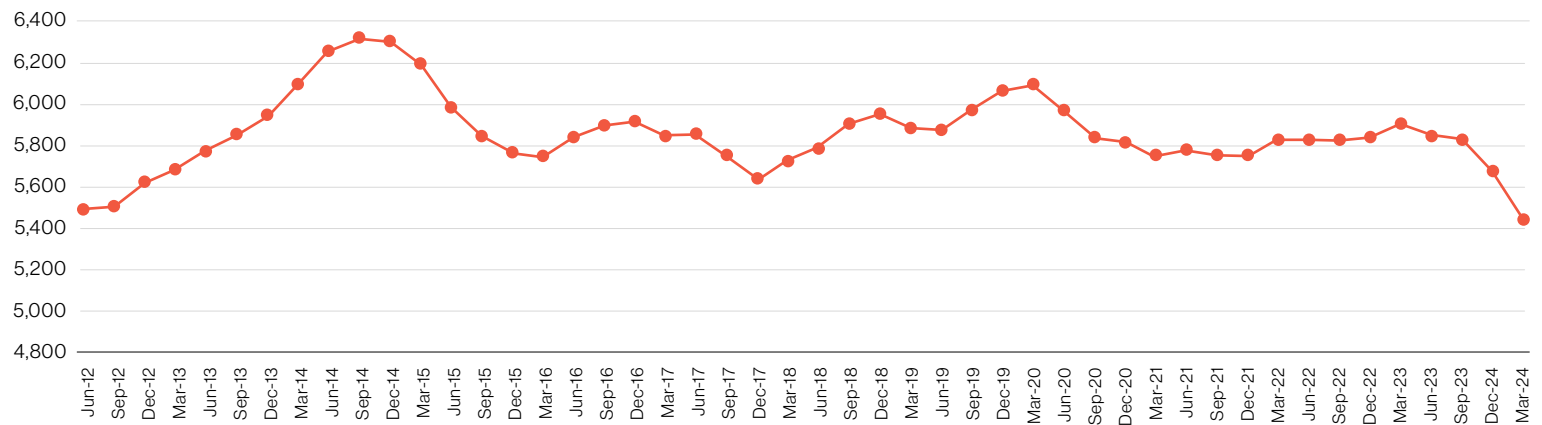
The current wait time for social housing in Leeton ranges from five to ten years, depending on the size of the house required.

At a minimum, effective advocacy to all levels of government will be required from Council to support housing for vulnerable groups in the community.

**Figure 6** Leeton Unemployment rate (Small Area Labour Markets, 2022)



**Figure 7** Labour Force Participation (Small Area Labour Markets, 2022)



\*Note: does not include Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

## 4.4. Housing stress

Housing Cost and Affordability analysis, by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, shows Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA) recipients at the 2021 census were considered in rental stress.

A higher income doesn't necessarily indicate a better level of rental accessibility. In the 'low income' bracket, almost 40% of renters were considered in stress. This bracket may indicate a cohort earning too much for rental assistance, though not enough to ease the burden of increasing housing costs.

Median rental prices in the Riverina SA4 area have risen by 27% in the past three years to \$445 per week.

### Mortgage affordability

At the 2021 Census, around 20% of low income earners and 13% of moderate income earners were considered in mortgage stress.

At the time of writing, housing affordability is a major issue at a national scale, and while Leeton LGA would be considered affordable, compared to the region, as well as nationally, the proportion of the community experiencing housing stress will have increased, due to rate and rent increases and the cost of living, more generally.



# 27.4%

of Commonwealth Rental Assistance recipients were considered in rental stress.



# 27%

27% increase in rental prices over the past 3 years.



# 20%

of low income earners were considered in mortgage stress.



# 13%

of middle income earners were considered in mortgage stress.



## 4.5 Education

There are a number of public and private schools providing primary and tertiary options through Leeton, including Yanco, Wamoon and Whitton.

Leeton Shire has three major high schools, six primary schools, an independent school, a support school, two long day care centres, one pre-school and several family day care providers. Two high schools offer boarding facilities which draw students from a wide area across the region and further afield. A new Christian-based school is currently under development.

TAFE NSW has a campus in Leeton though students need to travel for an on campus university education.

The Country Universities Centre is located within Leeton, as well as nearby Griffith, which provides a physical location for any enrolled tertiary student to access study spaces and internet. The CUC Western Riverina is government funded and provides an essential hub for students who may be studying externally, online and live in the area.

In 2021, 428, or 3.7% of Leeton's population were attending tertiary education (TAFE or university).



Leeton High School

## 4.6. Employment

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and Manufacturing sectors have for a long time been the most populous employers in Leeton and, while this is still the case, each is slowly declining.

**As a rural LGA, the reasons for this include:**

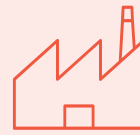
- Farm lot consolidation
- General improvements in technology and efficiency
- Water pricing
- Drought and climate change

There has been a steady growth in other industry sectors, that aligns well to the population including Health Care and Social Services, Education and Training and Construction.

Where people are employed has an impact on land use planning. The service based emerging industries benefit from co-location with other amenities and services in town centres, and within proximity to where the people are who require those services.



↓ **Agriculture, forestry and fishing**



↓ **Manufacturing**



↑ **Health Care**



↑ **Social Services**



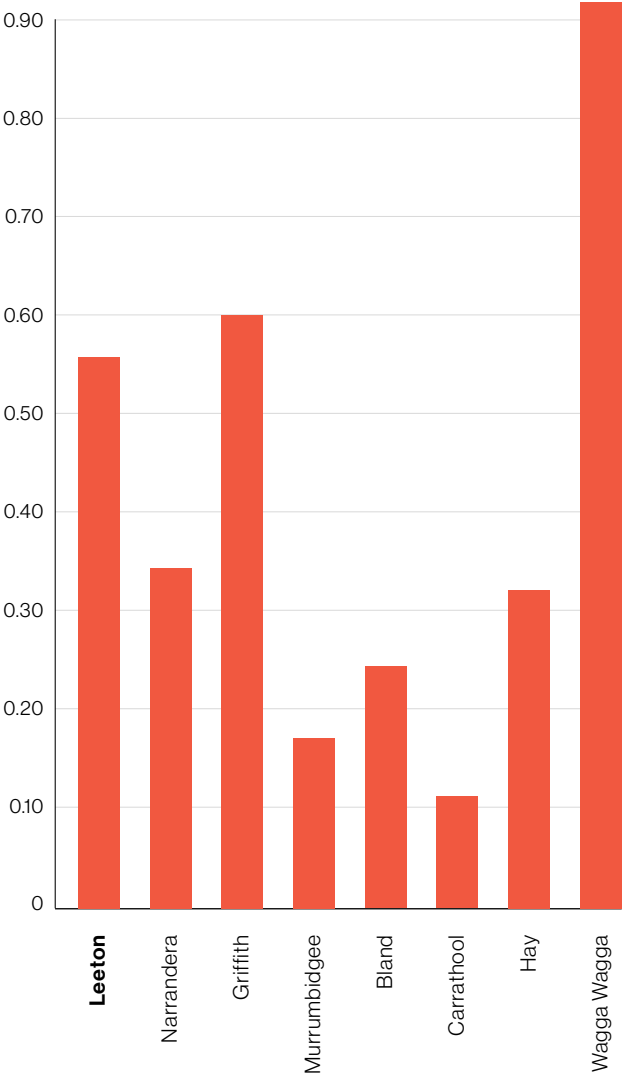
↑ **Education/Training**



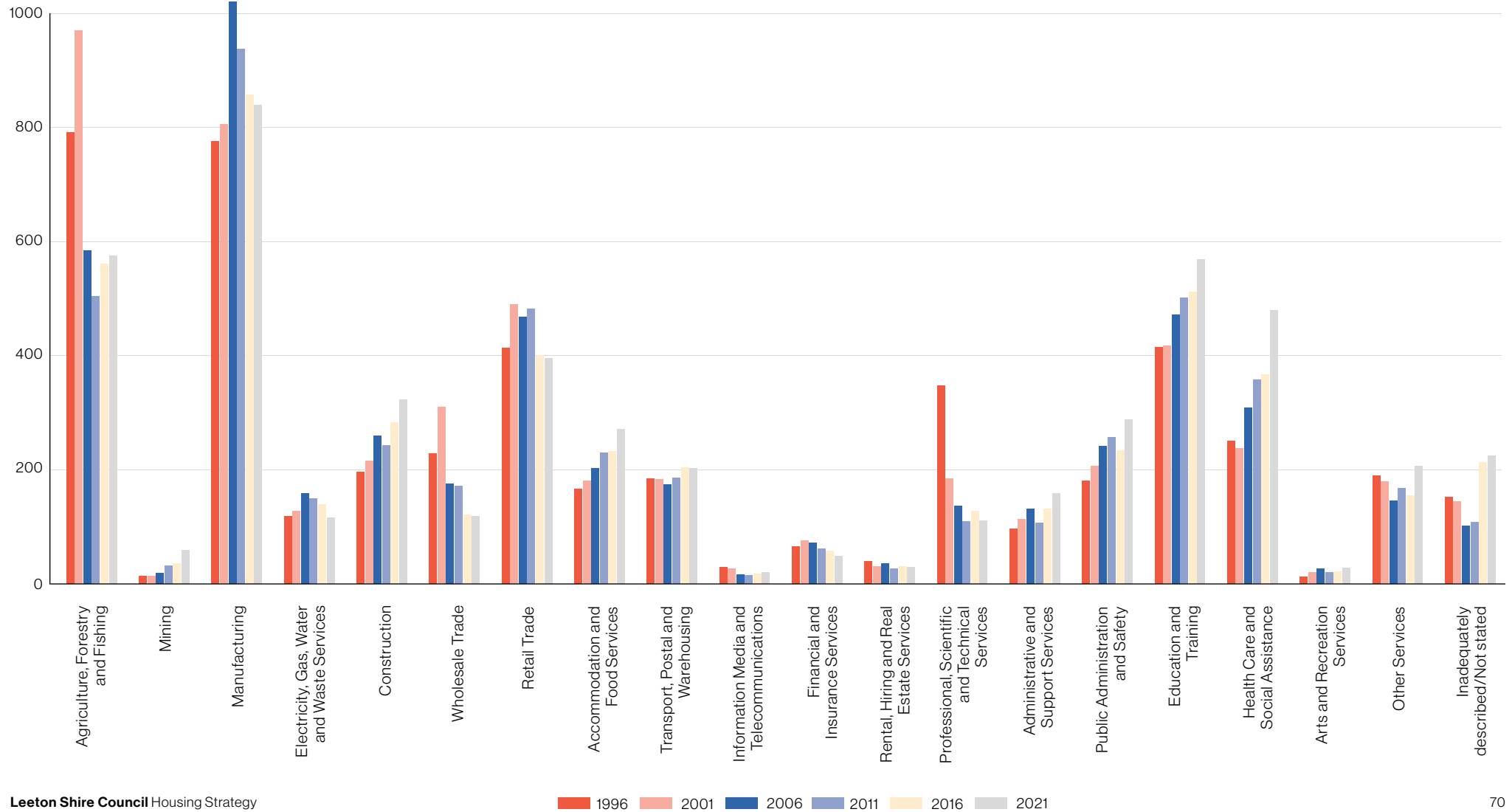
↑ **Construction**



The Regional Australia Institute classifies the diversification of Leeton's economy as 0.56 (where zero indicates no diversity and one indicates a very diverse economy), relative to the rest of Australia. Neighbouring LGAs include Narrandera 0.43, Griffith 0.60, Murrumbidgee 0.17, Bland 0.24, Carrathool 0.11, Hay 0.32 and Wagga Wagga 0.92. Diversity can be classified as a loose proxy for resilience – the more diverse, the better prepared an economy is to systemic shock.





**Figure 8** Employment Fields - Leeton LGA

## 4.7. Journey to work

The spatial relationships between where people live and work are vital to land use planning structures. The geographic spread of both housing and employment lands, how far people travel and by what mode of transport all contribute to the urban and socio-economic structures.

By far, the most dominant transport mode is the private car. Public transport is for all intents, non-existent and there is a small cohort of people who cycle or walk to work.

Post COVID and reported in the 2021 Census, there has been a growing quota of workers performing their jobs from home. This has implications for the spaces people live, as well as those they work in.

As a consequence, people may seek extra bedrooms in a dwelling for office or work space. As there is currently the combination of 3+ bedroom homes with shrinking family units, this is unlikely to create a substantial problem for housing supply in the short term.

At the 2021 Census, 88.23% of the 4040 people of Leeton's working population worked and lived in the Leeton LGA. The remainder came mostly from the neighbouring Narrandera (6.55%/300 people) and Griffith (3.36%/154 people).

Leeton workers who travelled outside of the shire also commuted to Griffith (502 people) and Narrandera (208 people).



# 88.23%

of Leeton's working population worked and lived in the Leeton LGA





SECTION

# 5

## Environment





This section of the strategic review addresses the environmental aspects that will influence the preparation of a housing strategy.

Areas of analysis in this section include climate, vegetation, environmentally sensitive land, threatened species, flooding and bushfire hazards, air, noise, water, salinity, waste management, effluent disposal, land use conflict, heritage, local state of the environment reports as well as the implications and issues for planning.

The Leeton Shire LSPS vision pays particular attention to a “healthy and natural environment” seeking to “..preserve and enhance our wetlands and river system.”

The Leeton LGA sits at the boundary of the Riverina Bioregion.

“The Riverina bioregion lies in southwest NSW, extending into central-north Victoria. It goes from Ivanhoe in the Murray Darling Depression Bioregion south to Bendigo, and from Narrandera in the east to Balranald in the west.

The Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers and their major tributaries, the Lachlan and Goulburn Rivers, flow from the highlands in the east, westward across the Riverina plain.

The climate is dry and semi-arid with hot summers and cool winters. Most rain falls in winter.

Vegetation ranges from river red gums, along river channels, to saltbush on the plains. There are several threatened species of both plant and animal in this bioregion. Several significant wetlands occur in the Riverina bioregion, including NSW Central Murray Forests and Fivebough and Tuckerbil Swamps, and these support many waterbirds, including migratory species.”

*Riverina Bioregion Snapshot, NSW DPE*





## 5.1. Climate

Climate modelling for the Murray Riverina region is important for the Leeton LGA, especially as it relates to agriculture, water availability, bushfire risk as well as human, flora and fauna health. Projections include:

- Maximum and minimum temperatures are projected to increase.
- Number of hot days will increase.
- Number of cold nights will decrease.
- Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) - Average fire weather as well as severe fire weather days to increase in Spring and Summer.

“The long-term temperature trend indicates that temperatures in the region have been increasing since approximately 1950, with the largest increase in temperature variables coming in the most recent decades.”

*Murray Murrumbidgee Climate Change Snapshot*

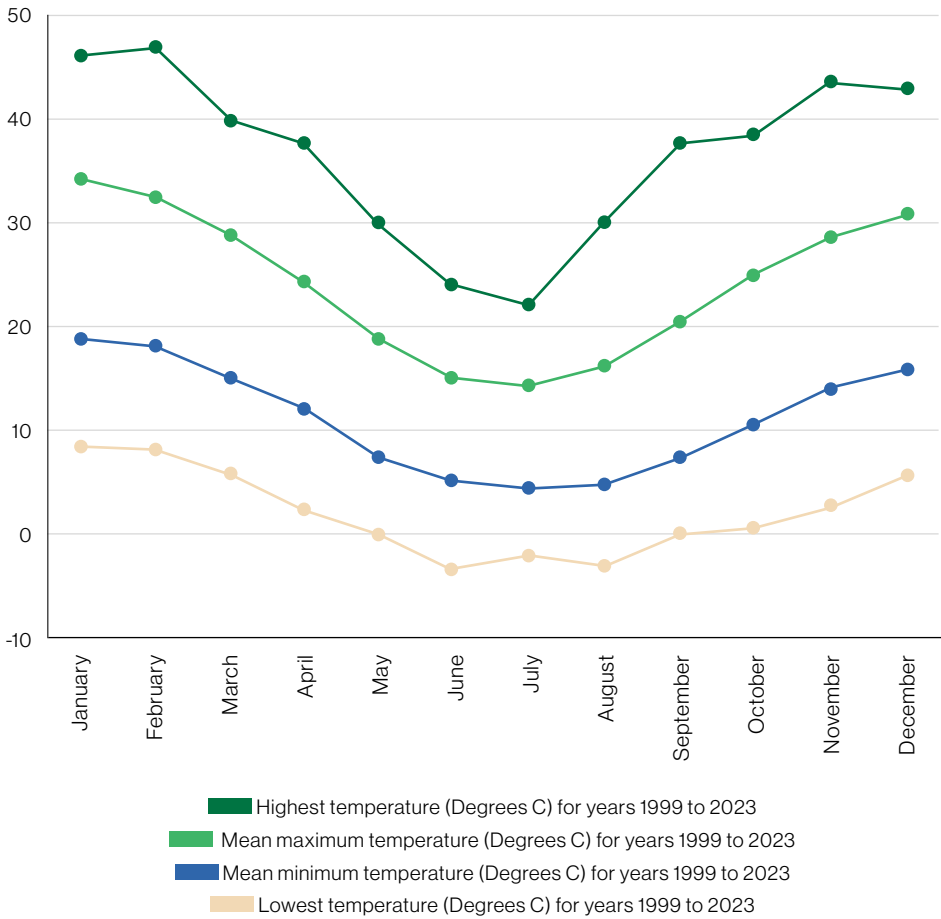
“People aged 65 years and over are at increased risk of heat-related illnesses and need special care in hot weather.

Risk factors include living alone, chronic medical problems and certain medications.”

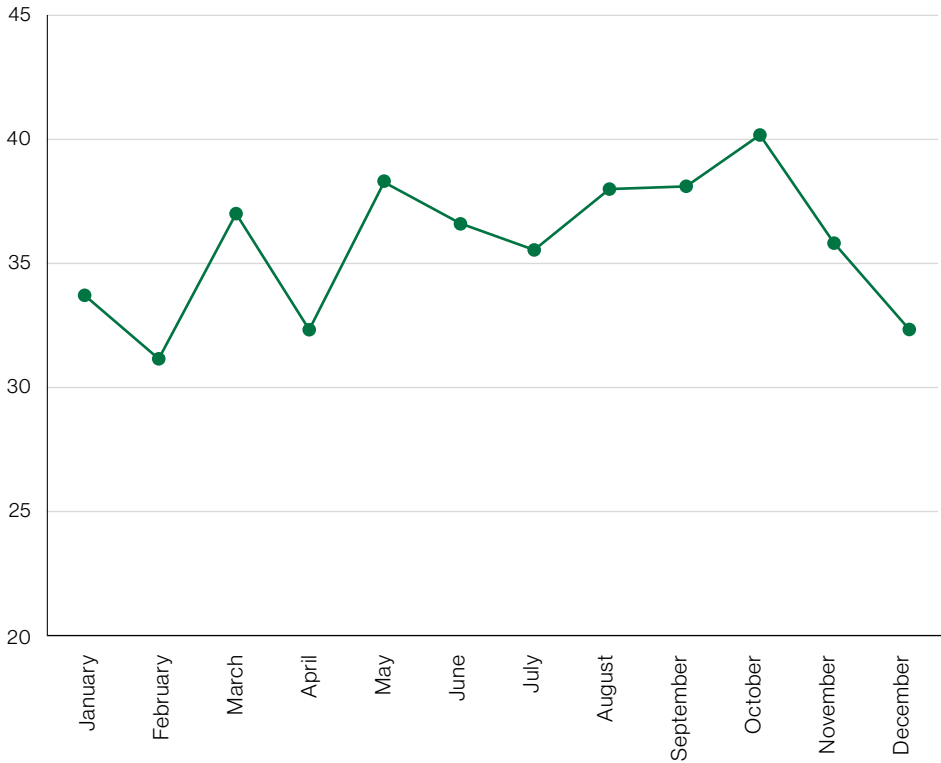
*Heat stress and older people – [betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://betterhealth.vic.gov.au)*



Annual Temperatures



Mean Rainfall (mm) 1897 to 2022





### 5.1.1. Flooding and Water

The impacts of climate change will result in more extreme weather events. Flooding has the potential to be more devastating than previously modelled or planned for.

In certain geographic areas, insurance premiums are already beginning to rise in accordance with the increased risk.

As the average temperature increases, so too does the atmosphere's capacity to hold water, and precipitate larger volumes. While the Murrumbidgee River is a highly controlled environment (through systems of levees, locks and weirs), Leeton is at risk from overland and riverine flooding, which can be widespread. As a result of the Leeton Shire Flood Study (2015), houses are built to a minimum 300mm above freeboard. Increasing density and the intensity of development will affect drainage behaviour throughout flood storage areas.

Leeton's Flood Study is currently being reviewed and updated to reflect the changes that have occurred throughout the shire since it was first prepared.



Gogeldrie Weir (Image credit: Sandi Smith)



SECTION

# 6

## Principles, Strategies and Actions



Palm Avenue, Leeton

Housing is a complex issue and there is no one solution to addressing the vision of Leeton's housing future.

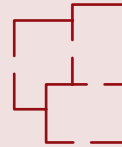
This Strategy is built on three inter-connected and encompassing principles, further strategies and actions that each contribute to a multifaceted approach.



### Diversity

Reflecting the diversity of the community in the types of housing available.

A diversity of tenures reflecting the diversity of needs and circumstances.



### Accessibility

Physical accessibility through universal design.

Addressing the community's needs – how to access the appropriate housing at the right time.

Financial accessibility.



### Sustainability and Resilience

Developing resilience in the built and natural environment; and

Resilience in the communities that live in it.

Resilience in built form/construction.



### Action before Advocacy

Building community and local capacity.

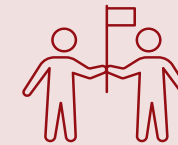
Fostering readiness.



### Incremental Change

Small, consistent steps towards common goals.

Building resilience and participation.



### Triple Bottom Line

Rethinking the value proposition.

A new framework for measuring success.



## 6.1 Supporting Concepts

### 6.1.1 Action before Advocacy

The principle of “Action before advocacy” in local government prioritises demonstrating solutions before pushing for external support. This approach aims to bolster local credibility and effectiveness when advocating for changes or resources, seeking grant or funding from State and Federal Government.

It is important to acknowledge the position that Local Government holds in the land use planning environment and while advocacy is a vital part of Local Government’s role, this Strategy encourages Council to build the capacity to better advocate and present “shovel ready” projects for funding consideration.



#### Building Internal Strength

Instead of immediately seeking change from higher levels, local governments first focus on internal capacity, building expertise and managing resources efficiently. This responsible approach strengthens their future funding cases.



#### Demonstrating Effectiveness

By successfully tackling local issues with existing resources, local governments showcase their capabilities. This track record serves as powerful evidence when advocating for additional support.



#### Empowering Local Solutions

This approach prioritises local initiative and innovation. By tackling challenges head-on, local communities build self-reliance while highlighting the need for potential external support when necessary.



#### Fostering Collaboration

Taking action first allows local governments to collaborate effectively with other stakeholders. This builds stronger partnerships, creating a more receptive environment for future advocacy efforts.



#### Avoiding Premature Demands

By demonstrating proactive problem-solving and ownership of local challenges, local governments build credibility and trust, strengthening their future advocacy efforts.

### 6.1.2 Revaluating the value proposition — Triple bottom line viability — Environmental, Social and Economic.

Economic lenses have for a long time been the basis for measuring the costs, benefits and outcomes of land use planning strategies and legislation.

By building a comprehensive portrait of land use planning throughout Leeton that encompasses a wide range of criteria, it is important to be able to drive change and measure it with a similarly comprehensive model.

A triple bottom line (TBL) considers three main aspects:

- Environmental
- Social
- Economic

The TBL approach to land use planning considers the environmental, social, and economic impacts of development, seeking solutions that benefit all three.

#### 1. More Balanced and Sustainable Development:

**Environment:** TBL focuses on minimising environmental impact by promoting sustainable practices, such as protecting natural areas, encouraging energy-efficient development, and minimising waste generation.

**Social:** It prioritises equitable and inclusive communities by fostering walkable neighbourhoods, affordable housing options, and public spaces that cater to diverse needs.

**Economy:** TBL ensures development fosters economic prosperity by encouraging mixed-use development, attracting businesses and jobs, and promoting long-term economic viability.

#### 2. Long-Term Thinking and Risk Reduction:

TBL encourages planning for the long-term well-being of the community, ensuring environmental sustainability and social cohesion alongside economic growth. This reduces the risk of future problems like environmental degradation, social unrest, or economic instability.

#### 3. Improved Decision-Making and Stakeholder Engagement:

By considering all three aspects of the TBL, decision-making becomes more transparent and accountable, allowing for better consideration of potential trade-offs and ensuring diverse voices are heard.

This fosters greater stakeholder engagement, as communities and individuals understand the broader societal and environmental implications of proposed land use decisions.

#### 4. Increased Public Support and Investment:

By demonstrating a commitment to sustainability and social well-being, TBL approaches can garner stronger public support and attract investments from entities aligned with responsible and sustainable development practices.

#### 5. Adaptability and Resilience:

A TBL approach encourages flexibility and adaptability in planning, allowing communities to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities, such as climate change or changing demographics. This fosters a more resilient community that can adapt and thrive in the face of change.

### 6.1.3 Incremental Change — towards a gentle density.

In between what Leeton's built and natural environment is now, and the vision for the next twenty years, will be a number of small, interrelated steps that are all working towards the same goal of providing housing for a changing community. Building towards that vision must be consistent, over time and the results can be transformative.

In regional areas, where lifestyles are often synonymous with large open spaces, increasing density will be entirely contextual to the area. Council's role will include leadership, to assume some risk, to take the community with it on that journey.

For Leeton, this can take the form of medium density "missing middle" outcomes, ranging from smaller lots, dual occupancies and granny flats, low rise density or terrace developments that address the shortfall of smaller dwellings required by an ageing community and one with shrinking families, couples, and lone persons.

#### Resilience

Small, iterative projects with lower upfront costs reduce risk and allow for adjustments based on real-time feedback and needs.

#### Organic growth

Incremental change supports mixed-use neighbourhoods that evolve over time, becoming more walkable, vibrant, and economically sustainable.

#### Community participation

Incrementalism encourages active community input in each step, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring development aligns with actual community preferences.





#### 6.1.4 Incremental Change — strategies for infill development

Infill development refers to the process of developing vacant or underutilised land within existing urban areas, as opposed to expanding outward into undeveloped or greenfield areas, which historically has been the accepted and preferred way to create housing opportunities in Leeton.

**There are many benefits to encouraging infill development:**

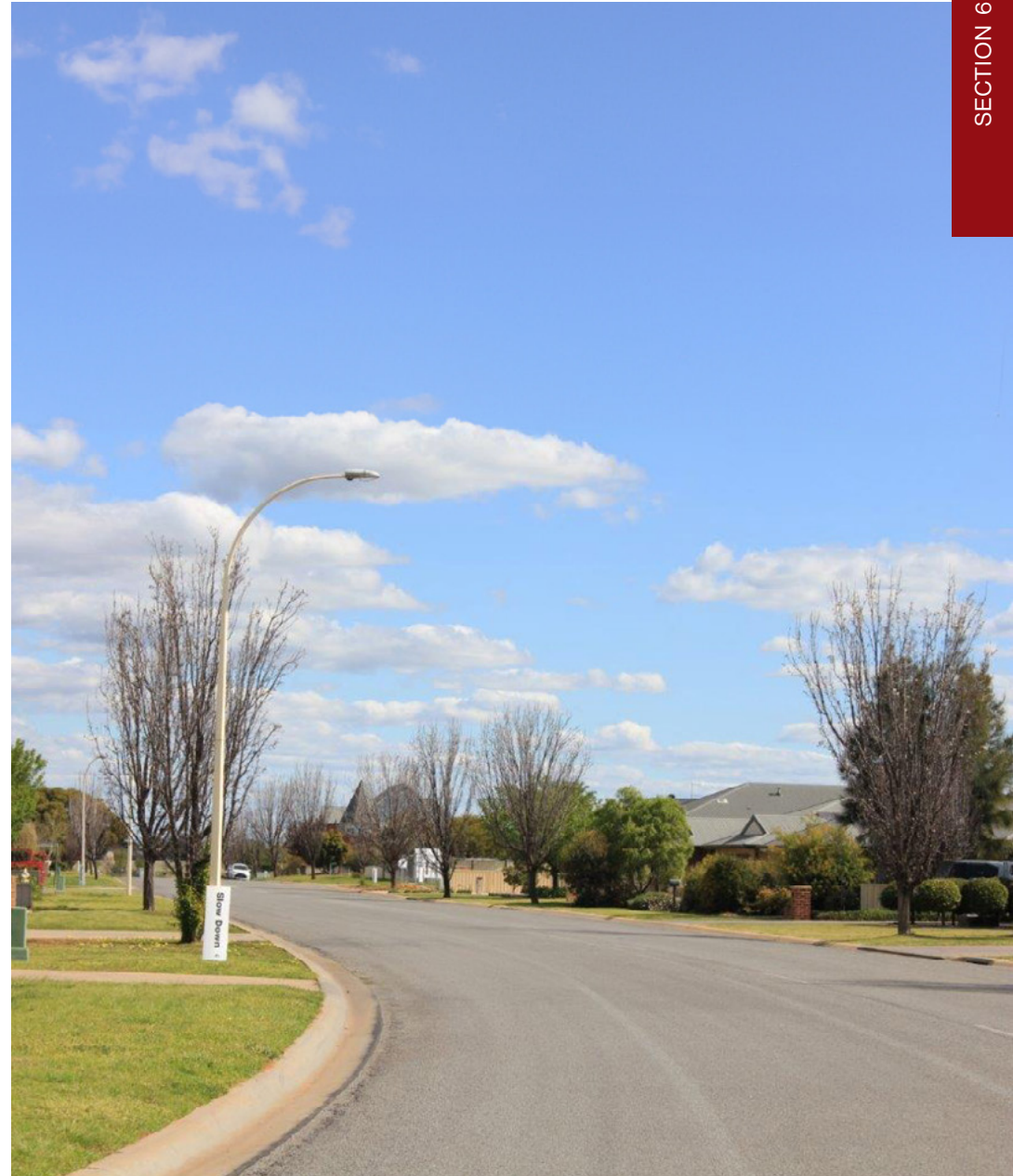
It maximises the use of existing urban infrastructure, services, and amenities. It allows for the efficient use of land within established communities, and leverages existing infrastructure, reducing the need for additional expansion and maintenance, which is a costly burden for the community.

By building in already built up and serviced areas, infill development can take advantage of existing transportation and road networks, reducing barriers to varied and more sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, cycling and walking.

It can contribute to the revitalisation of existing areas by bringing new life, attracting new residents, businesses, and investments. It also increases the catchment for businesses seeking to attract investment and a stable employment base.

Infill development helps to slow the spread of inefficient land use by utilising available space within existing residential zones. It can help to avoid the fragmentation and erosion of prime agricultural land, and environmentally significant spaces in the surrounding areas (such as the Fivebough Wetlands).

Infill development allows for the creation of a variety of housing options, including multi-family dwellings, townhouses, and mixed-use developments. This diversity contributes to a more inclusive and resilient housing market that can meet the needs of different demographic groups, one of the changes occurring within the Leeton community.



## 6.2 Actions

### 6.2.1 Minimum Lot Size

Like many regional towns throughout Australia, Leeton has traditionally larger lots, one of the perceived advantages of regional living. While that pattern of development has been historically preferable, as Leeton grows it risks becoming exponentially inefficient as costly infrastructure is required to support that spread.

House prices, construction and infrastructure costs, shrinking household groups and a housing mismatch means smaller and more affordable alternatives are increasingly valuable and sought after.

There is enough turnover of residential land within Leeton that means land isn't being overly held on to by private land owners.

**Density done well and infill can be encouraged by reducing the minimum lot size requirements for housing and residential land.**

Incrementally decrease the minimum lot size across the residential zones, including:

1. Consider removing the minimum lot size in the R3 Medium Density Zone, and applying provisions of the DCP to consider appropriate lot size on a case-by-case basis.

2. Consider reducing the minimum lot size in the R1 General Residential Zone from 750m<sup>2</sup> to 450m<sup>2</sup>.
3. Subject to land capability, consider reducing the lot size in R2 to a) R2 to 2000m<sup>2</sup> and b) R5 to 5000m<sup>2</sup>
4. Consider suitability for some R2 lots to be rezoned to RE1.

Amendments will be subject to land capability and infrastructural capacity as the housing stock increases.

Additionally, the Development Control Plan should be reviewed to ensure tree canopy and access to open spaces are retained and encouraged.

An increase in density will also alter flood and drainage behaviour as well as requirements for infrastructure. Suitable flood modelling should be undertaken to ensure this is done without providing extra risk to existing or new housing.

#### Action

Review minimum lot size restrictions to encourage compact urban form and residential development.

Review Flood and drainage models to identify appropriate opportunities for residential density.



### 6.2.2 Land Use Zoning

Land use zoning throughout Leeton is generally quite permissible – it does not obstruct innovation.

Within the LEP for example, the land use tables do not prevent innovative types of developments (such as mixed use) from being built in preferred areas.

Any changes to zoning are to increase the permissibility of use, incrementally increasing density.

A review and update to relevant sections of the development control plan, including mapping and master planning of specific places, will help provide certainty for development within infill areas.





### 6.2.3 Floor Space Ratio

Floor Space Ratios (FSR) can play an important role in land use planning. They control the density and scale of buildings by dictating the maximum allowable floor area relative to a site's land area.

#### FSRs are crucial for:

- Managing urban growth and preventing overcrowding
- Ensuring developments fit within the character of existing neighbourhoods
- Influencing development potential.

Throughout residentially zoned land in Leeton, FSRs have played an important role in maintaining the character of built form. Now the strategy of infill development is growing in importance, FSRs risk becoming restrictive to “density done well.”

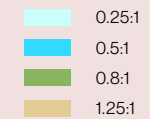
#### Actions

Remove Floor Space Ratio from planning maps.

Review and ensure Development Control Plan communicates a preferred vision for urban character.



#### Floor Space Ratio



### 6.2.4 Laneways and rear-lot developments

Stakeholder feedback indicated a desire to develop laneways and rear-lot style developments.

While the LEP does not obstruct rear of lot or laneway development types, a review and update of the Development Control Plan may be instructive for potential developers and landowners.

Attempted on an ad-hoc basis, constraints to development may include the quality of laneways, drainage, service provision and rubbish pickup.

For laneway style developments to flourish, a detailed analysis and stocktake of potentially developable lots should be prepared, followed by a master planning exercise that encompasses a housing vision for suitable areas, centred around “density done well”, to avoid overcrowding or over exploiting the land.

An initial study might factor in an area within 800m (or 10 minute walk) distance from services and amenity. The street hierarchy within the bounds of the Town Circle (Palm and Acacia Avenues), and the centre of Leeton lends itself well to laneway and rear lot development.



#### Walkability

- E2 Commercial Centre Zone
- Leeton Town Circle
- 400m walk (5min)
- 800m walk (10 min) from commercial centre

#### Action

Perform an audit of the street and infrastructure network within walkable distances to the town centre, informing a town Structure Plan for medium and higher density development.

# Housing for anyone, at any time.

## Strategies for accessibility, diversity and inclusion.

A diverse community needs diverse housing.  
It should reflect different living situations,  
family and household groups, cultural groups  
and changing circumstances.

**When the problem is solved for the  
most vulnerable, it is solved for everyone.**



## 6.2.5 Funding Pathways

Acknowledging that the bulk of funding and delivery of accessible housing is driven by State and Federal governments, there are ways for Local Government to participate directly.

The Federal Government established the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) in November 2023 with a \$10 billion investment to address the critical shortage of social and affordable housing. The HAFF aims to deliver 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes within the first five years.

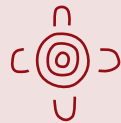
It prioritises vulnerable groups, including:



**Women and children escaping family violence and older women at risk of homelessness**



**Frontline workers**



**Indigenous communities**

Local Government can contribute in a number of ways:

### 1. Directly Applying for Funding:

- Local governments and local-government-owned corporations are eligible to apply directly for funding from Housing Australia to deliver and/or operate social and affordable housing.
- Council and Community housing providers can form a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)
- The first round of funding prioritises projects that are already completed, under construction, or ready to commence construction within 18 months of receiving funding

### 2. Supporting Delivery:

Local governments can play a crucial role in supporting the delivery of social and affordable housing even without direct funding applications. This can be achieved through:

- Offering accelerated approval processes and potential planning bonuses for social and affordable housing projects.
- Providing grants and other forms of support to encourage affordable housing development.

### Action

Council can work with specialist housing providers, including aged care, disability, Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to develop delivery models and applications for HAFF. Grants from Federal and State Government will often prioritise developments that are “shovel ready.”

## 6.2.6 Universal Design Principles for new and renovated dwellings

Universal design for housing aims to foster an equitable and built environment and homes usable by everyone, regardless of their age or physical abilities. It focuses on removing barriers and incorporating features that make daily living accessible and comfortable for all.

Instead of relying on adaptations or specialised solutions, universal design builds in flexibility and inclusivity from the start. This includes:

- No-step entrances and wide doorways for easy access.
- Adaptable features like adjustable countertops and levers instead of doorknobs.
- Clear sightlines and nonslip flooring for enhanced safety.
- Accessible bathrooms with grab bars and roll-in showers.
- Flexible layouts that can accommodate changing needs and future modifications.

### Universal design can enhance:

- Safety for all age groups, preventing falls and injuries.
- Comfort and independence for people with diverse abilities.
- Future-proofing homes as residents age or their needs change.
- Market value due to broader appeal and potential for easy modifications.

### Actions

Review and ensure the Development Control Plan includes a guide to Universal Design

Educate staff and developers (of all scales) and the community on how to construct and renovate housing that embraces these principles.

Housing that includes investigate universal design may be eligible to be subsidised through a contributions plan.

### The eight goals of Universal Design

#### Body fit

Accommodating a wide range of body sizes and abilities.

#### Comfort

Keeping demands within desirable limits of body function and perception.

#### Awareness

Ensuring that critical information for use is easily perceived.

#### Understanding

Making methods of operation and use intuitive, clear and unambiguous.

#### Wellness

Contributing to health promotion, avoidance of disease and protection from hazards.

#### Social Integration

Treating all groups with dignity and respect

#### Personalisation

Incorporating opportunities for choice and the expression of individual preferences.

#### Cultural Appropriateness

Respecting and reinforcing cultural values, and the social and environmental contexts of any design project.

### 6.2.7 Unused building and land register

In the 2021 Census, 330 private dwellings were listed as unoccupied in Leeton. This is for a range of reasons including absent owners, dwellings for sale, homes are rentals (but not occupied), or are newly completed and yet to be occupied.

As these are privately owned, utilising the stock may present difficult negotiations. Brownfield sites may present more readily available opportunities.

The Housing Australia Future Fund (and any other State or Federal housing grants) will prioritise projects that are ready to commence.

Knowing sites that are potentially ready to develop will be an important first step towards that readiness.

Short Term Rentals are increasingly scarce as the private rental market tightens exacerbated by the increase of temporary and seasonal workers. Council could facilitate a short term rental register to audit and understand the extent of the perceived problem.

### 6.2.8 Public Land Audit

A comprehensive study of all publicly owned and managed land will help to provide a fuller picture of available land supply, within the urban areas of Leeton.

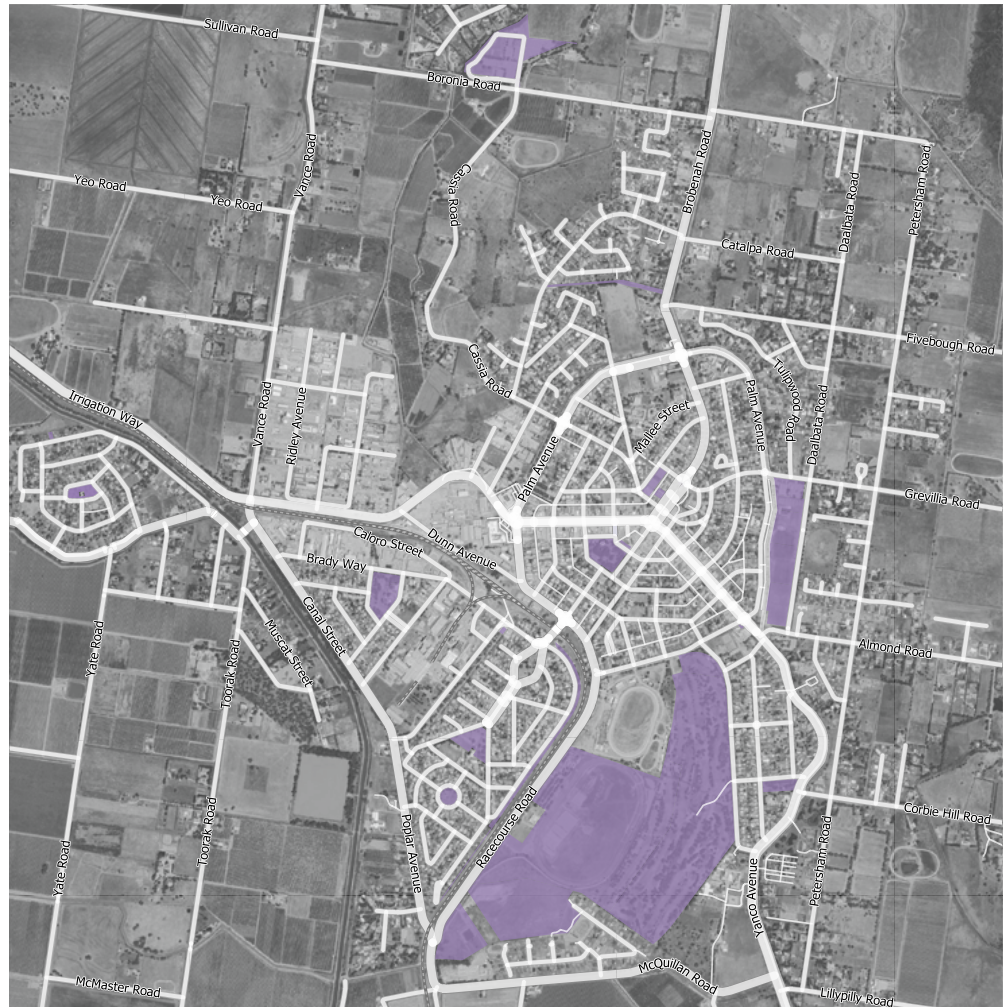
In 2023, the NSW State Government has indicated a state-wide Crown Land audit should occur to identify available, publicly owned lots that have the potential to be dedicated and developed for social and community housing.

Adding some complexity to the situation will be the ongoing assessment by the State Government of Native Title claims, which has a backlog of many years. Council may be able to work with local LALCs to gain a better understanding of Crown Land and ongoing claims.

#### Action

Consider undertaking a comprehensive public land audit

Consider preparing or updating and Plans of Management.



#### Crown Land

 Crown Land



### 6.2.9 Council as developer – an affordable housing portfolio

The appetite for risk amongst developers within the region is understandably low, especially where it involves exploring new housing types, not historically catered for in the area.

Where Council is the developer, success can be measured in ways other than financial gain and the outcomes can be designed to be both flexible and specific e.g. medium density developments designed and constructed with universal design principles. Developments could be managed by community housing providers and made available to approved residents or key workers.

It may benefit the community for Council to act as a developer for pilot projects, to explore, educate and promote new types of development for under served members of the community.

The factors that define a community driven project, rather than a developer led project are vastly different.

#### **Increased control over housing development:**

Local governments can directly shape housing development within their area, ensuring it aligns with community needs and planning objectives. This could include factors like housing type, affordability, and sustainability.

**Addressing specific housing needs:** Local governments have a deep understanding of their community's housing needs, allowing them to tailor development projects to address specific gaps, like affordable housing for key workers or seniors.

**Potential for cost savings:** By eliminating the profit margin of private developers, local governments could offer more affordable housing options.

**Community engagement and ownership:** Local government involvement can foster a sense of community ownership and participation in the development process, potentially leading to better outcomes.

**Innovation and experimentation:** Local governments could experiment with innovative housing models and construction methods, potentially leading to better and more sustainable housing solutions.

#### **Risks:**

- **Lack of expertise:** Local governments may not have the necessary expertise in large-scale development, leading to cost overruns, delays, and poor quality construction.
- **Conflicts of interest:** There is a risk of conflicts of interest arising between the local government's regulatory role and its developer role.
- **Financial risk:** Unsuccessful development projects could lead to significant financial losses for the local government, impacting other services.
- **Existing policies and regulations:** The feasibility and potential success of this model would depend on existing policies and regulations governing local government involvement in development.
- **Public support and community engagement:** Strong public support and inclusive community engagement are crucial for the success of this approach.

#### **Action**

Subsequent to a land audit, Council may explore options for modest pilot projects to demonstrate alternative housing models required by the community.

### 6.2.10 Contributions Schemes

Following the completion of the Strategy, council can review the contributions for infrastructure. A contributions scheme can help deliver critical components for future development.

### 6.2.11 Infrastructure Contributions

Council's infrastructure contribution rates and policy has not been reviewed for some time, including the projects it would fund as well as the rates to be charged.

This includes mapping of the areas to be covered, as well as the types of development eligible for contribution.

As a major part of the Strategy is centred on densifying urban and suburban areas, the provision and servicing of public land and community land is known to developers of all scales.

The costs to the community to develop and service land are not inconsiderable and Council can in effect, subsidise the types of development it wants to promote, and seek contributions from development commensurate with the cost on community resources.

#### Action

Review infrastructure contributions scheme



### 6.3 Key investigation sites. Identifying spaces to grow.

Key investigation sites have been nominated in this Strategy which can provide further land for brownfield and greenfield development opportunities within the already residentially zoned areas of Leeton. As has been considered within this Strategy, rezoning more land at the periphery or "spreading out" is not an efficient use of land nor is it cost effective for the community, despite its perceived expedience.

There are a number of factors to consider when determining the most appropriate land for future development.

Key environmental constraints will have to be considered, especially flood risk. Any intensification of development will alter flood behaviour and change the ability for land to adequately drain during a flood event. Irrigation channels, both in use and disused have engineered a landscape with site specific drainage qualities.

Landscape forward master plans, that consider environmental flows can be beneficial especially where a more detailed design response can consider the synthesis of each subject site.

Positively, there is a plentiful supply of land within the key investigation sites which will allow the time for Council to consider a well-designed outcome.

At the current rate of consumption, around 24 dwellings are being developed per year in Leeton.

An indicative timeframe has been added, which aligns to the Strategy principles and a preferred sequencing of site investigation. These will be subject to further analysis in ongoing technical work.

KEY INVESTIGATION SITE	SITE AREA M <sup>2</sup>	PREFERRED LAND USE ZONE	INFRASTRUCTURE % AND EXISTING DEVELOPMENT	LOT SIZE M <sup>2</sup>	POTENTIAL LOT YIELD	YEARS' SUPPLY (COMMON GROWTH SCENARIO)	YEAR'S SUPPLY (HIGH GROWTH SCENARIO)	TIMEFRAME
1	407,015	R1	30	600 (option a)	474.00	18.96	13.54	1 Short
1	407,015	R1	30	450 (option b)	633.00	25.32	18.09	1 Short
2	119,473	R1	30	600	139.00	5.56	3.97	2 Short
3	51,894	R1	30	600	60.00	2.40	1.71	3 Short
4	47,616	R1	30	600	55.00	2.20	1.57	4 Short
5	382,948	R2	40	2000	114.00	4.56	3.26	5 Medium
6	120,316	R1	30	600	140.00	5.60	4.00	6 Medium
7	14,934	R3	30	300	34.00	1.36	0.97	7 Short
8	640,000	R2	40	2000	192.00	7.68	5.49	8 Long
9	1,488,644	R2	30	2000	521.00	20.84	14.89	9 Long
					<b>1888.00</b>	<b>75.52</b>	<b>53.94</b>	



### Action

Council can develop master plans to aid certainty of development outcomes by exploring opportunities with landowners and the community, and acknowledging the range of appetites to develop land.

### Key investigation site have been chosen on a balance of criteria:

- Proximity to employment, business and amenity
- Environmental risk; flooding, bushfire, buffers from sensitive land
- Proximity to infrastructure (reticulated water, sewer, electricity, roads, etc)

A common growth scenario and a high growth scenario have been calculated for future lot consumption and land requirements.



Common growth =  
25 lots consumed per year

High growth =  
35 lots consumed per year

Lot yield assumptions are shown in previous table.



### Key Investigation Sites

-  Large Lot Residential
-  General Residential

## 6.4 It's not just about the house. Understanding strategic inter-relationships.

While this strategy is focused on housing, one of the most vital land uses in Leeton, it is only one part of many that contributes to the overall economy, environmental health, and community wellbeing.

One of the benefits of increasing density is the potential to concentrate infrastructure spending, which economises and increases the quality of the outcome. A suite of comprehensive, and inter-related local strategies and plans ensure that it is done in an orderly manner and avoids the pitfalls of overcrowding.

First among the important next work for Council will be Structure and Master Planning in the Town Centre (bounded by Palm and Acacia Avenues) and the Key Investigation Sites proposed in this Strategy. Building with the community a vision for alternative housing models and the infrastructural network that supports them will set Leeton up to address the shortfalls identified throughout the development of this Strategy.

### **Other work to review and update will include:**

- Open Space Strategy
- Employment Land Strategy
- Leeton Shire Playground Strategy
- Active Transport Strategy
- Community Strategic Plan
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Ageing Well Strategy
- Transport and Movement Strategy
- Plan of Management





SECTION

# 7

## Conclusion



SECTION 7



## 7.1 Summary of key actions

	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Local Environmental Plan and Mapping</b>		
Review and reduce minimum lot size restrictions to encourage compact urban form and residential development.	Short term	Council
Remove Floor Space Ratio from planning maps.	Short term	Council
<b>Key Investigation Sites and Town Circle</b>		
Structure and master planning of key investigation sites to inform development control plan mapping, future zoning, lot size and preferred outcomes, infrastructural requirements	Short term	Council
Perform an audit of the street and infrastructure network within the Town Circle and walkable distances to the town centre, informing a Structure Plan for medium and higher density development.	Short term	Council
<b>Development Control Plan</b>		
Review and ensure Development Control Plan communicates a preferred vision for urban character	Medium term	Council
<b>Social, Affordable and Specialist Housing</b>		
Work with specialist housing providers, including aged care, disability, Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), industry and agriculture to develop delivery models and applications for Housing Australia Future Fund.	Short term	Council

	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Auditing and Readiness</b>		
Undertake a comprehensive public land audit, and update Plan of Management.	Short term	Council
<b>Council as Developer</b>		
Subsequent to a land audit explore options for modest pilot projects to demonstrate alternative housing models required by the community.	Long term	Council
<b>Universal Design</b>		
Consider development control plan to include principles and guide to Universal Design	Medium term	Council
Provide education to staff, developers, landowners and the community on how to construct and renovate housing that embraces universal design principles	Medium term	Council
<b>Contributions</b>		
Review and develop infrastructure contributions scheme.	Short term	Council
<b>Environment</b>		
Update bushfire mapping to reflect NSW policy changes and mapping categories.	Medium term	Council

## 7.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Council will undertake regular monitoring and reporting of this Strategy.

The success of this Strategy's implementation can be measured by the delivery, or the working towards it, of housing missing from Leeton's supply and the underservicing of different family groups, age cohorts and tenures.

What are the types of housing this Strategy has recommended, and has it been delivered?

What parts of the community don't currently have access to appropriate housing and how have they been supported?

**What does success look like in one, five, ten and twenty years?**

- Annual reviews of housing delivery and supply against the implementation and delivery plan to ensure that the Strategy and the LEP are delivering the Strategy's objectives in a timely manner;
- Five-yearly reviews of the evidence base and housing stock against the broader aims of the Riverina Murray Regional Plan to ensure that the Strategy is aligned with the housing needs; and
- Ten-year review of the Strategy to ensure the community vision statement, the evidence base and the strategic and planning contexts are aligned with the goals of the community, the broader aims of the Riverina Murray Regional Plan and the Strategy implementation and delivery plan.

### Action

Triple Bottom Line Assessment.

Develop an evaluation framework for assessment, that considers environmental, social and economic outcomes.



## 7.3 Information Sources

This Strategy Report has been informed by a wide range of resources and data sets, to accurately render Leeton Shire, its community and establish them in a contemporary planning context.

Information for the purposes of the report has been obtained from a wide range of sources including:

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NSW State Environmental Planning Policies

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NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)

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State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPPs)

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Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041

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Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) Strategic Regional Priorities

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Newell Highway Corridor Strategy

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Adapt NSW – Western Enabling Regional Adaptation – Riverina Murray region report

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Leeton Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)

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Leeton Shire Community Strategic Plan (CSP)

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Leeton Shire Ambition (Economic Development, Tourism and Events Strategy) 2030

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Leeton Shire Ageing Well Strategy (2021-2025)

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Leeton Local Environmental Plan (2014)

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Leeton Development Control Plan (2022)

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NSW Department of Communities and Justice

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NSW Department of Primary Industries

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Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Informed Decisions

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Leeton Shire Flood Study

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LEETON  
SHIRE COUNCIL

23 — 25 Chelmsford Place,  
Leeton NSW 2705  
[council@leeton.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@leeton.nsw.gov.au)  
(02) 6953 0911  
**[Leeton.nsw.gov.au](http://Leeton.nsw.gov.au)**