

What We Heard

Draft Uralla Shire Growth Management Strategy

17 August 2026

About this report

This report sets out what our community and stakeholders told us during the public exhibition of the draft Growth Management Strategy, what was asked, and the changes officers are considering in response.

The two ways of taking part — written submissions and the online survey — are reported separately throughout. They reached different people and were collected in different ways, so we have not added them together. The numbers show how widely something came up. They are not a vote, and where people asked for opposite things, both asks are recorded side by side.

Only high-level recommendations can be made at this stage. Detailed recommendations must be considered holistically and will be reported with the amended Strategy.

Redacted submissions will be published on Council's Have Your Say page. The full material, with identifying details removed will be provided to Council and consultants, so that every point can be considered in the redrafting.

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How to read the numbers in this report

The numbers show how widely something came up. They are not a ranking, and they are not a vote. Something raised once can matter as much as something raised thirty times — one person pointing out an error in the Strategy changes the document, while thirty statements of preference may not.

Where people asked for opposite things, both asks are shown next to each other. They are never netted off against one another, and no majority is declared.

Written submissions and survey responses are counted in separate columns everywhere. They reached different people and were collected in different ways, so a combined total would be misleading.

Not everyone answered every survey question, so the number of people behind each figure changes. Wherever we give a proportion, we say how many people it is out of.

Where we asked a question about a subject, more people responded on it. That is how surveys work, and we say so at the start of each theme so you can weigh the numbers accordingly.

1 At a glance

The draft Growth Management Strategy was on public exhibition for 28 days, closing on 23 July 2026. Council received 52 written submissions and 75 survey responses. Of the survey respondents, 54 asked that their response be treated as a formal submission.

52 written submissions 51 of them contained at least one ask	75 survey responses 73 of them contained at least one ask	93 distinct asks grouped into 15 themes	5 drop-in sessions About 100 people attended across the shire
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The subjects that came up most

Subject (the eight that came up most; all fifteen are at Section 3)	Written submissions	Survey responses
Temporary workforce accommodation	29	46
Housing supply and land delivery	27	39
Employment land and local economy	14	40
Town centre and public realm	7	37
Town character and lot size	13	35
Infrastructure and services	11	32
Rural land and settlements	23	26
Water security	14	22

Each person is counted once per subject. The written column is out of 51 people, the survey column out of 73. The two are not added together. Section 3 says, for each subject, whether the survey asked about it — where it did, more people responded, and the number should be read with that in mind.

Three things that came through clearly

Water came before everything else.

We did not ask a single question about water, and it came up in both channels regardless. The most common request was not for a particular solution. It was for the demand figures to be worked out and published against what the town can supply, and for that answer to come before land is released.

Workforce accommodation is contested at every level.

Some of you asked that no site be identified anywhere in the Shire. Others asked that particular sites be preferred and brought forward. The various positions are recorded side by side at Theme 1.

Where the Strategy was read differently from what was meant, the document was usually the reason.

We checked the statements people made about what the draft says. Far more often than not, where a reading did not match our intention, it was because the document did not say the thing clearly or did not say it at all. The gap between what the strategy intended and what the community understood was most pronounced around workforce accommodation and lot sizes. Section 4 sets out what we need to fix.

2 How we consulted, and who responded

The draft Strategy was endorsed for exhibition at the June 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council and placed on public exhibition for 28 days, closing on 23 July 2026.

How people could take part

Your Say page. Council's Your Say page was the primary platform for downloading and engaging with the draft Strategy. Frequently asked questions posted there were updated through the exhibition period as matters needing clarification emerged from the information sessions.

Survey. An online survey was hosted on the Strategy's Have Your Say page. Its results are reported separately throughout this document.

Letters to landholders. Selected landholders were contacted by direct mail: those within identified Core Growth Areas and Future Residential Growth Areas, those within potential temporary workforce accommodation sites, and those on land flagged in the Strategy for a zone or lot size change.

Community drop-in sessions. Five four-hour sessions were held across the Shire, scheduled on different days and at different times so that people had more than one opportunity to attend. Collateral produced for these sessions included fact sheets and map boards.

Market stall. Council held a stall at the July High Country Markets with material on the Strategy.

Stakeholder briefings. Provided to Uralla Business on request, and to the Rural Fire Service planning team and the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

Media. The exhibition was promoted through Council's communication channels, with links directing to the Your Say page. Elements of the communication and engagement strategy included:

- Media release to all local media, including TV, print and radio, as well as through local schools and businesses in key locations.
- The release was also uploaded to the Council website, as well as posted to Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Release included FAQs and Talking Points, which were also circulated to all Council staff.
- A poster was produced for display on community noticeboards throughout the Shire.

Drop-in session attendance

Session	Attendance
Uralla Bowling Club	~60–80
Kentucky Memorial Hall	~15
Uralla Courthouse	~15
Invergowrie Store	~10
Bundarra School of Arts	2

Community briefings. At the request of attendees at the Courthouse session, the Uralla Bowling Club session was adapted into a two-part community information session: officers gave two verbal presentations of the Strategy and took questions and comments from the floor.

Two things that went awry, recorded here

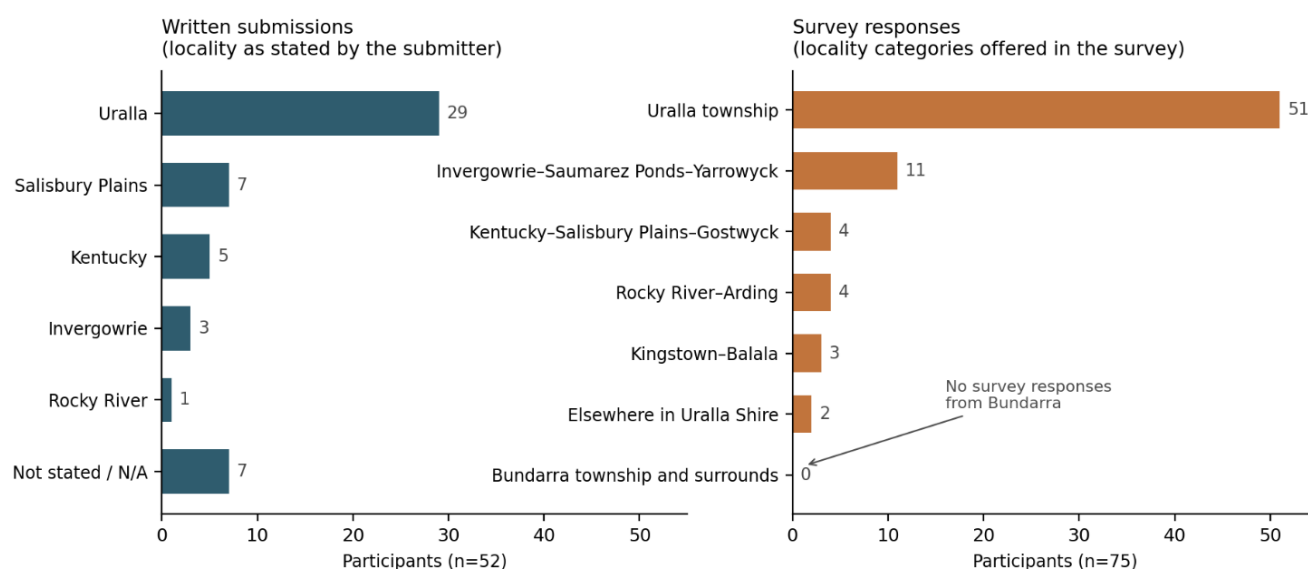
Landholder letters were not received consistently. Residents reported that neighbouring properties meeting the same criteria did not receive a letter. This was caused by an error in Council's internal mapping system, which was identified only after the exhibition had begun. Direct notification of affected landowners was the most-repeated procedural ask of the whole consultation (Theme 3), and this is part of the reason why. Feedback was nonetheless that direct mail is an effective way of reaching residents, and that Shire-wide direct mail should be considered for future Shire-wide strategies.

The exhibited maps at pages 24–25 carried no street or road names. Three written submitters and seven survey respondents said they could not identify which land was being discussed and could not answer the map-based survey questions as a result.

Who responded

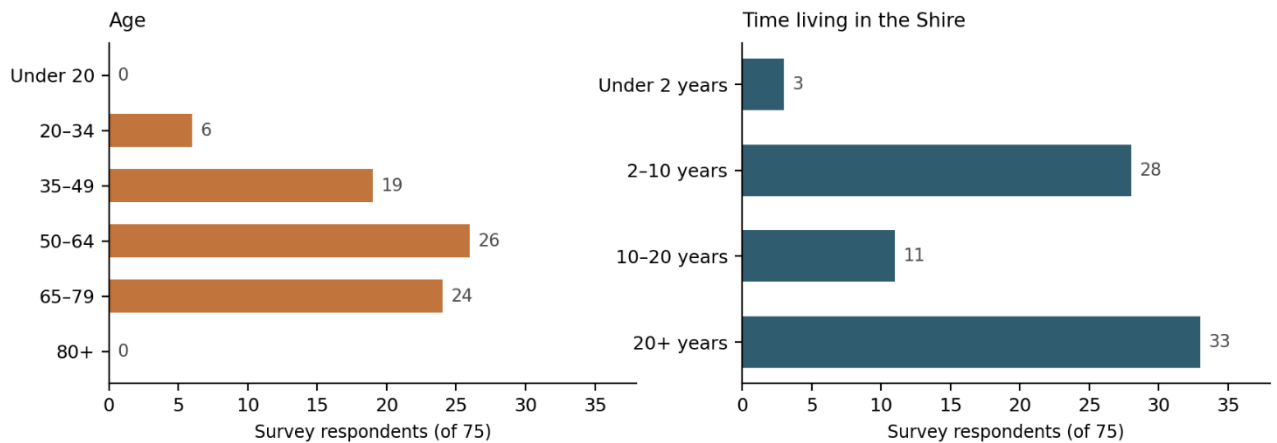
Fifty-two written submissions were received. Of 76 survey responses, one was withdrawn at the respondent's request before analysis, leaving 75.

Figure 1 Where people responded from



The two channels are counted separately and are not added together. Each is shown the way it was collected: people writing to us named their own locality, while the survey offered a fixed set of options.

Figure 2 Who answered the survey



All 75 respondents answered both questions. Nobody under 20 or over 79 took part. Written submitters were not asked their age or how long they had lived here, so there is no equivalent picture for that channel.

Where the coverage is thin

Consultation reports like this one can sometimes be read as if representative of the community in the way population sample data might be. It is important to name who is not represented in the submissions and responses.

No survey responses from Bundarra. Bundarra township and surrounds was offered as a locality option and was selected by nobody, and the Bundarra drop-in session drew two attendees. This matters more than the other gaps, because the Strategy proposes a rezoning direction for Bundarra. Nothing in this report should be read as a Bundarra view of that proposal.

No survey responses from anyone under 20, and none from anyone 80 or over. The survey's respondents were concentrated in the 50–79 range (50 of 75). One respondent raised this directly, asking for more representation from a younger cohort. Housing need over a twenty-year horizon falls substantially on people who are not represented here.

Only Uralla township can be read on its own. Every other survey locality is in single or low double figures, so locality breakdowns appear only where the numbers support them. This means we can't assess preferences or concerns by locality based on the spread of responses, except for Uralla township.

Referral. One submission raising potential conflict of interest matters has been referred to the General Manager and Council's legal advisers and excluded from the tables, counts and quotations in the attached report. The submission with the relevant sections redacted will be published.

The matter raised relates to Invergowrie only. The Officer direction as noted in this report proposes to defer the nomination of a 25ha minimum lot size for part of Invergowrie pending further investigation. This investigation will include the matter raised by the submitter. We have noted the exclusion at Section 2 so that the gap is visible.

The exclusion is recorded here for transparency.

3 What you told us

We read every submission and every survey answer and grouped what we found into fifteen themes. Across the two channels we recorded 93 distinct asks. An ask is something you wanted Council to do to change Strategy — remove something, amend something, add something, or attach a condition. Amendments ranged from small corrections to major changes of direction.

The last column says where each ask is dealt with. Most sit with the Strategy and are for officers to consider in making recommendations to Council. Others belong to the LEP Review process, which is where zones, permitted uses and lot sizes actually change. Some sit in other areas of Council policy and need further work. A few can only be advocated for, and a small number cannot be delivered by any Council process as the planning system currently stands.

Each person is counted once per ask. The numbers show how widely an ask was made, not how important it is. The report has not weighted them. Where someone expressed a view without asking for anything, it is not in these tables; those views are reflected in Section 4.

Each subject below starts by saying whether the survey asked a question about it. Where we asked, more people answered (that is how surveys work), and it is worth knowing before reading the numbers. Where we did not ask, people raised the subject while answering something else, and those numbers tell us something on their own.

What you value about Uralla

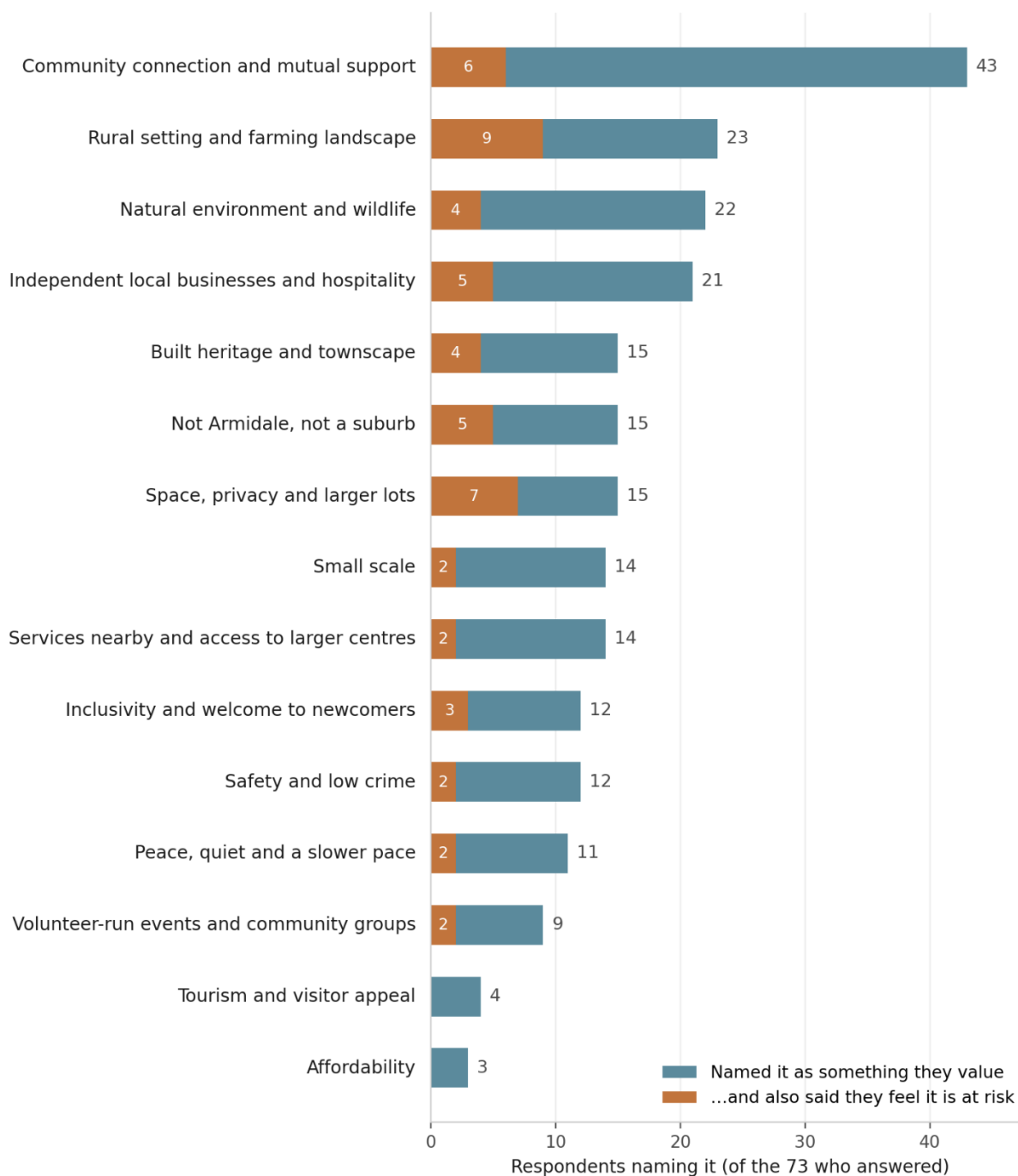
Before asking about anything in the Strategy, the survey asked an open question: what makes Uralla, Uralla, and what do you value most about living here? Seventy-three people answered, most of them naming several things. It is the plainest statement in the consultation of what the Strategy is meant to protect.

Community connection was named by more people than anything else, and by a wide margin. But the values people most often said they felt were at risk were different ones: the rural setting and farming landscape, and space, privacy and larger lots. That gap between what is treasured and what is feared for runs through the asks that follow.

“Small town. Big heart. Newcomers are generally accepted as valued members of the community, people genuinely care about each other and are willing to help. The town seems to be evolving while maintaining much of its character.” — a Uralla township respondent (R021)

“Natural rural environment, heritage, sense of place. At the same time, willingness to embrace change if well-planned and aligned with community values.” — a Uralla township respondent (R037)

Figure 3 What you value about Uralla

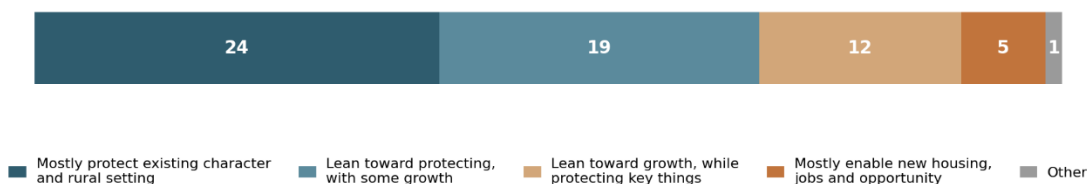


Most people named several things, so the numbers do not add to 73. The darker portion of each bar is the number who named that value and also said they felt it was at risk — a smaller group, but the one that tells us where the worry sits.

Strategic planning involves trade-offs; often the stated aims of the Strategy sit in tension with one another. In the survey we asked where the balance should sit between protecting what Uralla already has and enabling new housing, jobs and opportunity.

Of the 61 who answered, 43 leaned towards protecting and 17 towards growth. Fourteen skipped the question, more than any other multiple-choice question in the survey. This tells us the direction you would like the Strategy to lean, not what you want done in any particular place, that detail is in the asks that follow.

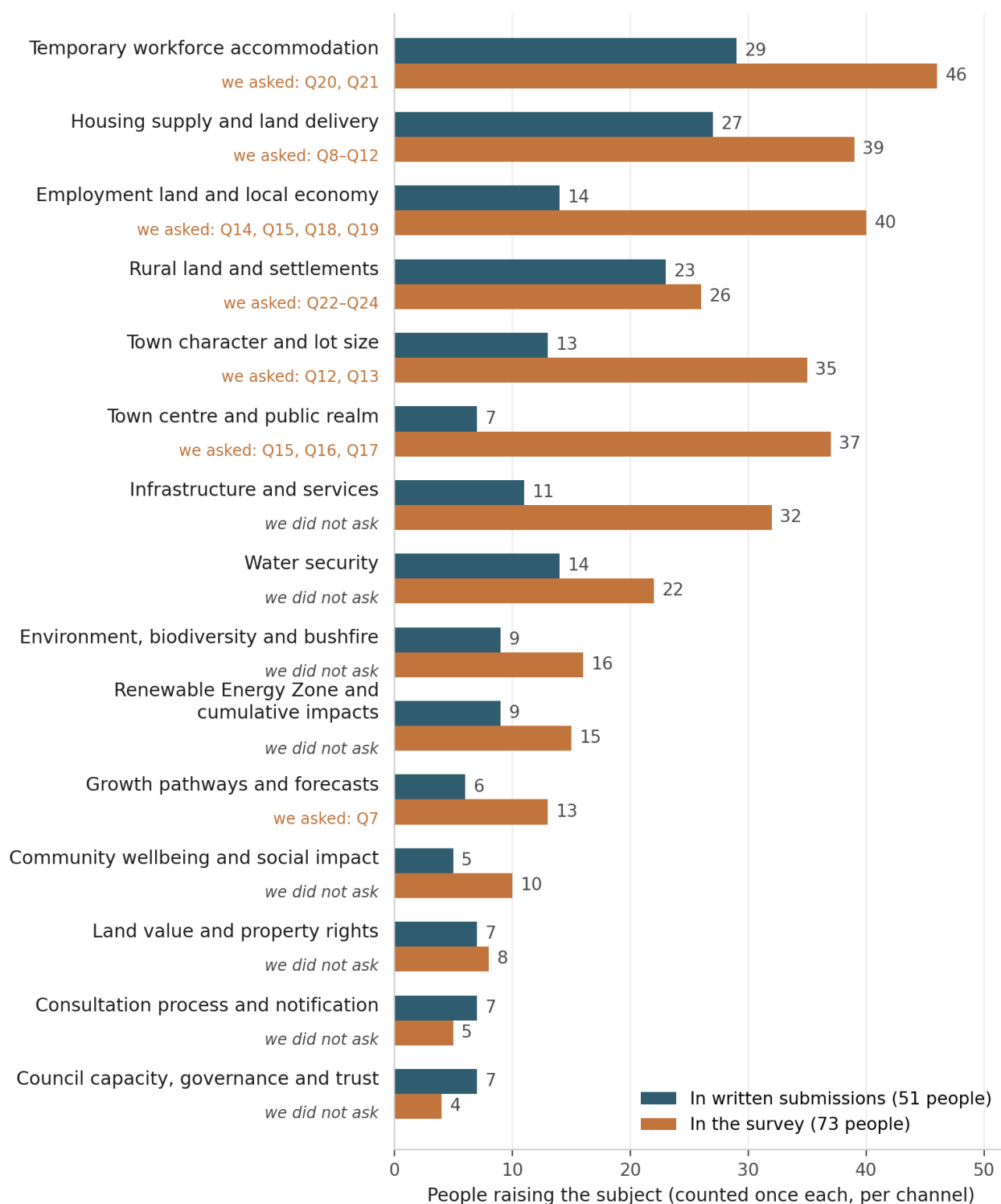
Figure 4 Where you think the balance should sit



61 of 75 answered this one; 14 skipped it, more than any other multiple-choice question in the survey. Of those who answered, 43 leaned towards protecting and 17 towards growth. Only the Uralla township group is large enough to read on its own. Written submissions were not asked this question, so there is no equivalent for them.

Figure 5 overleaf shows all fifteen subjects and how many people raised each, with the two channels side by side and never added together. Under each subject is whether the survey asked about it. This is not a ranking: where we asked a question, we got answers, so those numbers reflect the survey as much as anything else. The rows marked "we did not ask" are the ones that came entirely from you — infrastructure and services was raised by 32 survey respondents with no question prompting it, water security by 22.

Figure 5 What you raised, and where we asked about it



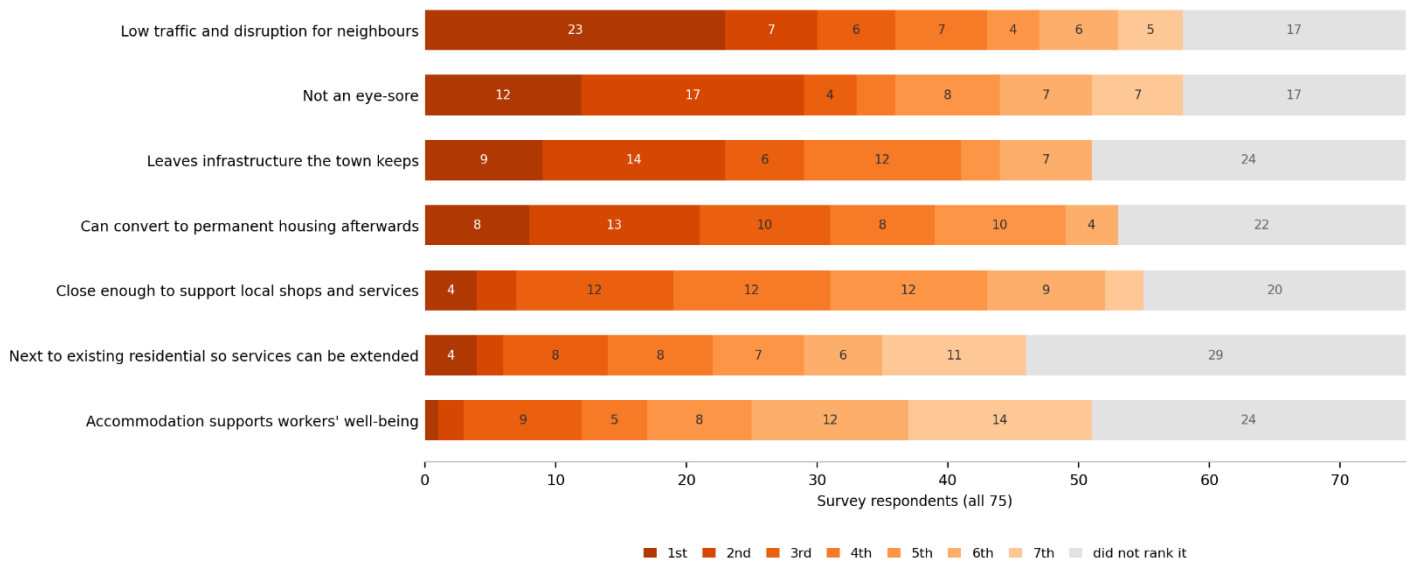
The two columns are never added together. People writing submissions chose their own subjects; people doing the survey answered the questions we put in front of them. Where we asked about a subject directly, the survey number reflects the question as much as anything else. Where we did not ask, people raised it anyway while answering something else — and those numbers tell us something on their own. These counts show how widely a subject came up. They do not rank the asks.

1. Temporary workforce accommodation

We asked about this directly. The survey showed the five candidate sites on a map and asked which would work well or poorly (49 people answered) and asked what matters most if accommodation is hosted (61 people ranked at least one option). So, the survey number here partly reflects the fact that we put the question in front of you. Nothing prompted the written submissions, and 29 of the 51 people who wrote to us raised workforce accommodation anyway, more than any other subject in that channel. What you asked for pulls in opposite directions, and it is set out that way below.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Do not identify any workforce accommodation sites in the Strategy; do not host a workforce camp in Uralla at all	3	15	Removal
Remove specified sites — B, D and E in particular — because they are occupied homes or adjoin established housing	10	7	Removal
Locate workforce accommodation outside the township — on the outskirts, at remote sites, or in Armidale	4	6	Amendment
Prefer the sites closest to town, services and the highway, or on Council-owned industrial land (Site A in particular)	2	10	In the strategy
Require a legacy outcome — design and condition accommodation so it converts to permanent housing	4	4	Condition
Use land voluntarily offered by REZ host landholders, and invite landowners to nominate sites	3	2	Change of direction
Condition any site on further investigation — servicing, flooding, employment-land loss, design and amenity — before it is confirmed	4	2	In the strategy
Retain the township locations shown at Figure 17 as the direction for workforce accommodation	1	0	In the strategy

Figure 6 If workforce accommodation is hosted, what you said matters most



Each bar shows where all 75 respondents placed that option. Darker segments to the left are higher placings. The grey tail is the people who did not rank that option at all, which is why the bars are not the same length. Every option here assumes accommodation is hosted somewhere. The question gave no way to say it should not be, and several of you told us so in your written answers. Read this alongside Theme 1, where the asks include hosting none at all.

“All would work poorly, take away from the uniqueness of Uralla.” — a Uralla township respondent (R049)

“Site A would work well, with least proximity to other housing and potential to reuse or repurpose the site afterwards.” — a Uralla township respondent (R037)

“Our land of 5 hectares (more or less) is contained within Site D and is close to established homes and rural residential properties.” — a landholder in the proposed Eastern Growth Area (S039)

“If on-site accommodation becomes the norm, there may be no lasting legacy for Uralla in this development space.” — graziers and generator host landholders (S013)

2. Water security

We did not ask a single question about water. Twenty-two survey respondents raised it anyway, most of them while answering the question about growth pathways, where water was the most common thing people chose to write about. Fourteen people raised it in writing. In both channels this came from you, not from us. The main ask is not for a particular solution, it is for the demand figures to be worked out and assessed against what the town's supply can actually carry, before land is released. This information was something that was asked to be made publicly available.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Do not implement growth or major rezoning until a permanent, funded water solution is committed	4	5	Condition

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Model and disclose water and wastewater demand from the workforce and growth against current capacity	6	14	Further work required
Secure a second source and increase storage — dam capacity and de-silting	1	2	Further work required
Require rainwater harvesting on new development and support retrofit on existing homes	2	1	Further work required
Protect the town water catchment	1	0	Condition

“Water supply for future growth (and even existing population in dry times) seems to be a big issue with no solutions in sight?” — a Uralla township respondent (R016)

“Housing growth should be supported not only by investment in infrastructure, but also innovative housing solutions that are less reliant on infrastructure with limitations and finite capacity.” — a Uralla community member (S046)

3. Consultation process and notification

We did not ask about how the consultation was run. Seven people raised it in writing and five in the survey, unprompted. The most repeated ask is a simple one: tell the owners of land before it appears on a public map.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Notify and consult directly affected landowners before any site or growth area is identified on a public map	6	5	Condition

“I object to locations being on the map without ownership being notified and approving.” — a Uralla township respondent (R073)

“For people to find out their homes were on a map for workforce accommodation only after it was in the public domain is unconscionable.” — a Uralla community member (S048)

4. Infrastructure and services

This is the clearest case of something we did not ask about and you told us anyway. There was no survey question about infrastructure or servicing, and 32 respondents raised it while answering questions about growth areas, pathways and industrial land. Eleven people raised it in writing. Road safety and heavy vehicle traffic came through the survey; developer contributions and one specific servicing offer came through the written submissions.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Confirm water, wastewater, stormwater and road capacity before land is identified or released	6	18	Condition
Require developer contributions or planning agreements so REZ proponents fund infrastructure and make-good	2	3	Condition
Require independent traffic and road safety assessment; manage heavy vehicle and construction traffic	1	10	Condition
Provide health, ambulance, emergency and policing capacity ahead of growth	3	8	Advocate to the State
Recognise a specific site for workforce accommodation as it has upgraded water, wastewater and bus access	1	0	Addition
Investigate a highway bypass	0	1	Further work required
Do not pursue a bypass — retain the highway through town as an economic asset	0	1	In the strategy
Use growth to secure new infrastructure and services — rail, health, childcare, education	0	2	Advocate to the State

“Looking at the current resources and can the town actually take more residents — water, sewerage, road (already in poor state).” — a Kentucky–Salisbury Plains respondent (R027)

“Directing EnergyCo's investment to this site instead ensures the roads, bridge, water and wastewater upgrades deliver a lasting benefit to Uralla, rather than being spent on land with no long-term residential future.” — a residential development landholder (S033)

“Need to make sure there is proper development to allow traffic flow and utilities whilst minimising impact on neighbours and environment.” — a Uralla township respondent (R033)

5. Housing supply and land delivery

We asked about this in several places — three separate questions on the southern, eastern and western growth areas, and two more on infill and the future investigation areas. Most of the survey response here came through those questions. The written submissions, which had no prompt, concentrated on a different point: whether the land counted as available can actually be built on.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Test the land supply figures — theoretical capacity is not deliverable supply; account for owner willingness, finance and fragmentation	12	4	Further work required

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Release more serviced land sooner and remove barriers to subdivision	3	5	Amendment
Do not rely on infill and higher density; provide conventional lots	2	4	In the strategy
Reduce the dwelling yields shown for the growth areas; the western, eastern and southern areas are constrained	1	13	Amendment
Proceed with the growth areas as proposed, or bring them forward sooner	1	8	Amendment
Plan specifically for seniors, over-55s, aged care and downsizing housing	9	5	Addition
Enable housing diversity and affordable housing, avoid concentrations of social disadvantage	6	9	In the strategy
Prohibit conversion of workforce camps into permanent social or high-density housing; oppose social housing	1	4	Change of direction
Reclassify the Future Investigation Area at Racecourse Road as a near-term growth area	1	0	Amendment
Clarify that the core growth areas are already zoned and residential development is already permissible	1	0	Amendment
Embrace gentle density; increase housing diversity	4	2	In the strategy

“Small gradual subdivisions seem to work. Blocks are selling quite quick. Over demand could end badly.” — a Uralla township respondent (R014)

“As a result, the theoretical supply of residential land is likely to differ significantly from the amount of land that is genuinely development-ready.” — a Uralla community group (S045)

“The Masonic village in Cookes Rd is a very good example of housing for retirees; you could also have some that are smaller for singles.” — a respondent from elsewhere in the Shire (R043)

6. Town character and lot size

We asked you to describe a development done well and one done badly (45 people answered), which is an open invitation to talk about character, and that is where most of the survey response here came from. The single most-asked-for thing in the whole survey sits in this theme: controls so that new development sits comfortably with what is already there. Asks to keep large lots and asks to allow more subdivision both appear, side by side.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Remove the Invergowrie minimum lot size increase from 2ha to 25ha	3	2	Removal

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Limit further subdivision in Invergowrie; retain as larger-lot rural residential	2	6	In the strategy
Apply a risk-based, differentiated minimum lot size rather than a blanket figure, and state the intended minimum for each area	2	2	Amendment
Do not reduce minimum lot sizes in the town; retain lots above 1,000m ² and avoid small-lot and higher-density forms	3	11	In the strategy
Require design and amenity controls so new development matches the established character	4	24	In the strategy

“The large blocks and rural outlook, don’t ruin it with throwing houses on top of each other.” — a Uralla township respondent (R002)

“Pokey block sizes. All jammed in makes it look like a slum! No variation, no environmental considerations.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R010)

“How is it expected this character will be maintained when existing lots no longer have a right to subdivide their lots in accordance with the existing planning strategy?” — an Invergowrie community member (S016)

“Nearby open communal spaces are important for medium density housing. Fewer spacious villas with gardens and adequate parking are better for residents and neighbours than over developed spaces.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R015)

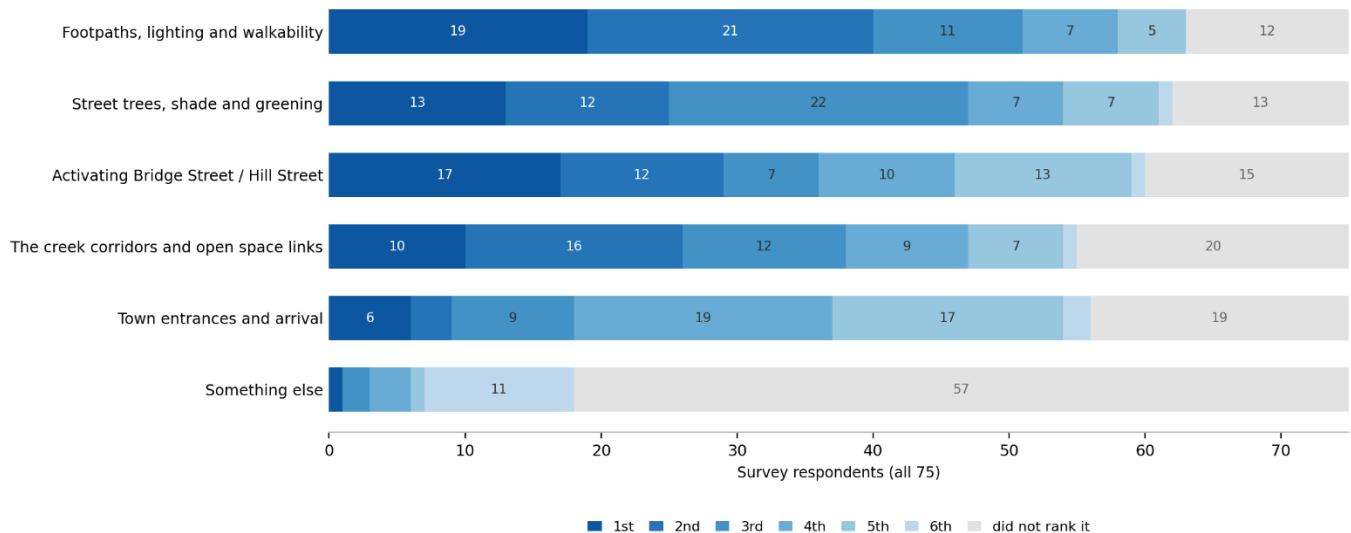
7. Town centre and public realm

We asked several questions specific to the town centre and the place design proposal in the draft Strategy and sought further feedback on public realm and town centre enhancements: suggestions for the commercial areas (45 answers), a ranking of public realm priorities (66 people ranked at least one option), and anything else about the town centre (36 answers). The survey response here reflects those questions. Seven written submissions addressed the public realm without being asked.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Address burial and cemetery capacity; investigate a natural burial ground that doubles as open space	2	1	Addition
Add public domain commitments — street trees, footpaths, lighting, parking, toilets and town entrances	2	25	Addition
Strengthen heritage commitments and recognise the heritage precinct in the document	2	10	LEP Review
Recognise the heritage and long family occupation of identified sites (B and D) as a reason not to use them	2	0	Removal
Keep retail, commercial and community uses concentrated in the town centre core	0	4	In the strategy

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Allow the centre to expand — up Hill Street, along Salisbury Street and to the northern end	0	4	Change of direction
Provide and program open space and recreation land alongside new housing	0	5	In the strategy

Figure 7 Public realm priorities for the town centre



Each bar shows where all 75 respondents placed that option. Darker segments to the left are higher placings. The grey tail is the people who did not rank that option at all. One respondent told us they could not complete the ranking because the ends of the scale were not labelled.

“Council should be seriously looking into Natural Burial sites. Cemeteries is something you have neglected to include in the strategy.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R035)

“I think the town centre is fantastic. It’s already very walkable, and I particularly like the awnings.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R009)

“A public toilet at the northern end of town. A fast EV charging station.” — a Uralla township respondent (R048)

8. Employment land and local economy

We asked four questions in this area: whether the approach to shops and services is right, suggestions for the commercial areas, concerns about the industrial land, and anything further on economic activity. Most of the survey response came through those. The written submissions raised industrial land delivery and the economic case for growth. Asks to keep activity concentrated in the town centre and asks to let it spread both appear.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Encourage business, tourism and agritourism; protect existing business from being displaced by REZ activity	7	7	Further work required
Prepare an industrial land delivery strategy and make Rowan Avenue the flagship industrial precinct	3	2	Further work required
Define what an economically resilient Uralla looks like and test the claimed economic benefit	4	4	Further work required
Plan for a new or second supermarket	1	5	In the strategy
Do not allow chain retail, plaza-format or out-of-centre commercial development	0	7	In the strategy
Buffer, screen and route industrial land so it does not conflict with housing and farmland	0	11	Condition
Reduce red tape and make it easier to establish and expand a business	0	6	Further work required
Support local jobs, training and a circular economy as priority sectors	1	1	Advocate to the State

“Reduce the red tape, lengthy processes and encourage local businesses to invest into Uralla.” — a Uralla township respondent (R065)

“We recommend the Strategy place greater emphasis on protecting scarce serviced industrial land for permanent employment-generating industries rather than temporary land uses.” — Uralla business operators (S052)

“Zone B is between Racecourse Lagoon and Dangars Lagoon — two important areas for environmental tourism and well-being for the community. I would like to see Zone A as the preferred zone for industrial development.” — a Uralla township respondent (R039)

9. Renewable Energy Zone and cumulative impacts

We did not ask about the Renewable Energy Zone itself. Fifteen survey respondents raised it while answering other questions, most often the one about growth pathways, and nine people raised it in writing. The written submissions asked for a cumulative impact framework and a response for the localities carrying the most concentrated effects. Opposition to the REZ itself came mainly through the survey and is recorded here as an ask about the Strategy's assumptions.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Commission an independent cumulative impact assessment across all REZ projects rather than project by project	5	1	Further work required
Prepare a place-based strategy for Salisbury Plains/Gostwyck and a High Cumulative Impact Rural Landscape Precinct	2	0	Further work required
Recognise scenic rural landscapes as productive economic assets, not just visual amenity	3	1	Addition
Direct benefit-sharing to the landholders, businesses and communities carrying the greatest impact, with local-content expectations	2	3	Further work required
Plan to convert REZ activity into permanent residents, businesses and investment	3	1	In the strategy
Do not support the REZ; revisit the proposals in the Strategy that rest on it	0	9	Change of direction

“They come, rents increase, services are in higher demand, locals can’t get appointments, they use the area and then leave.” — a Kentucky–Salisbury Plains respondent (R027)

“The current Strategy identifies where the impacts will occur but does not establish an appropriate planning framework to protect the people, businesses and landscapes that will experience those impacts.” — a Salisbury Plains community group (S008)

“Yet nowhere does it consider what happens when the landscape itself is the product being sold.” — a Salisbury Plains agritourism business (S003)

10. Rural land and settlements

We asked where the Strategy should focus on rural land (68 answers), invited people to tell us more (28 answers), and asked whether the direction fits the settlement you know best (46 answers). This is the most evenly shared subject across the two channels, and it holds the sharpest disagreement in the consultation — whether Invergowrie should allow further subdivision.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Rezone or allow more rural residential and lifestyle lots — Rocky River, Arding, the town fringe and Kentucky	10	8	Amendment
Protect productive agricultural land, support the Right to Farm and avoid fragmentation	5	7	In the strategy
Uralla Shire has no prime agricultural land; do not treat agricultural quality as a constraint	2	0	Change of direction
Kentucky — include or rezone nominated lots, and resolve contamination and wetland constraints first	6	3	Addition

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Do not rezone RU1 to R5 around the villages; villages should not become overflow suburbs	0	2	Amendment
Support and progress the Racecourse Road planning proposal (PP-2021-7205) to Gateway	6	0	Amendment
Grant rural dwelling entitlements on merit and location rather than by blanket minimum lot size	2	2	Requires change to State planning law
Plan for the villages — Bundarra, Kentucky, Invergowrie and Rocky River — with place-based representation	1	7	Further work required
Correct zoning anomalies and create transition zones between rural and residential land	2	0	Addition
Use temporary use provisions for rural function centres rather than permitting them outright	1	1	Amendment

“Invergowrie — Keep it as is. Would object to any further subdivision of land. Perhaps allow second dwellings on existing properties but no subdivision.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R009)

“I would like to see people allowed to subdivide out at Invergowrie instead of restricting housing.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R011)

“This land was included in the 2010 development strategy and therefore we are very disappointed that it is being overlooked in this current growth management strategy.” — Kentucky community members (S022)

“I think that rural events are great and can add to the local economy. If farmers want to host events that can help local businesses.” — a Uralla township respondent (R062)

11. Environment, biodiversity and bushfire

We did not ask a question about the environment, biodiversity or bushfire. Sixteen survey respondents and nine written submitters raised it regardless. The written submissions disputed the bushfire evidence used to support a larger minimum lot size; the survey asked for stronger waterway and wildlife corridor commitments, and for Uralla Creek to be looked after.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Dispute and re-examine the bushfire evidence base used to justify the lot size increase	2	2	Amendment
Remove identified land constrained by waterways, riparian corridors and flooding	4	1	In the strategy
Strengthen biodiversity, wildlife corridor and waterway commitments and assessment requirements	2	9	Addition

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Add climate change assumptions and modelling to a 20-year document	1	0	Addition
Manage Uralla Creek — weeds, silt, bank condition and stormwater	0	5	Further work required

“I value the bush, wildlife and the peace and quiet where we are situated.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R010)

“The [Biodiversity Strategy text] highlighted above identifies the basis of Council's intent to modify the lot sizes, yet nothing anywhere in this report justifies Council's intended actions.” — an Invergowrie community member (S016)

“Clean the weeds out of the creek and hold owners and council staff accountable.” — a Uralla township respondent (R002)

12. Growth pathways and forecasts

We asked what matters under each of the three growth pathways, and 67 people answered. Only 13 of them wrote about the pathways themselves. Most used the question to tell us about water, infrastructure and the Renewable Energy Zone instead. What people did with that question is a finding in its own right and is reflected in the themes above.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Plan for Pathway 3 as the probable case, with specified infrastructure, funding and trigger points	0	3	Amendment
The forecasts are too low — plan for a more ambitious growth rate	1	1	Amendment
The forecasts are too high — projected demand is accommodated within current supply	2	2	Amendment
Do not assume growth or the REZ is inevitable or positive; model a future that protects existing strengths	1	5	In the strategy
Test the pathways against the camps already reported at Kentucky and Wollun	1	0	In the strategy
Give equal emphasis to protecting what makes Uralla attractive, with staged release	0	2	In the strategy
Retain the growth pathways approach and stay ready for whichever pathway eventuates	1	0	In the strategy

“The Growth Management Strategy makes many assumptions, principally that growth is inevitable and a positive thing. The former is not necessarily true and the latter is rarely true in my experience.” — a Uralla township respondent (R059)

“There are so many opportunities across the Uralla area. Accepting more activity can only benefit the town.” — a Uralla township respondent (R012)

“Pathway 2 would be the first choice. Uralla will grow or die in tandem with Armidale.” — an Invergowrie respondent (R004)

13. Council capacity, governance and trust

We did not ask about this. Seven people raised it in writing and four in the survey. The asks are about the document itself: correct the errors in it, describe Council's role accurately, and commit to reviewing it.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Correct factual and mapping errors in the exhibited document — street names, Site D descriptions, Figure 2, worker figures	3	2	Amendment
Reframe the document as enabling growth rather than managing it, and rename it accordingly	2	2	Further work required
Add monitoring indicators and a review commitment — jobs, investment, visitation, affordability	2	1	Addition

“Yes, can you provide maps that have road names, not just key highway? I have a problem when you don't provide detail.” — a Uralla township respondent (R054)

“The mapping provided is at times so minimal in detail (p24 & 25 have not one street or road named) that it is hard to be certain what areas are indicated.” — a Uralla community member (S048)

“More public consultation is needed to help people understand who makes the decisions, who will benefit in the long run, and what council is financially gaining from this.” — a Uralla township respondent (R049)

14. Community wellbeing and social impact

We did not ask about social impact. Ten survey respondents and five written submitters asked us to deal with it inside the Strategy rather than alongside it — who carries the impact, who benefits, and what gets assessed before land is identified.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Require a social impact, community safety and policing assessment before land is identified	4	3	Condition
Address social systems, cohesion and who benefits in the document itself	1	7	Addition

“Careful consideration to not just servicing growth for REZ but not creating ghettos on the outskirts.” — a Uralla township respondent (R008)

“I imagine people that have lived here for a long time, and those that come for Uralla’s village feel, may be concerned.” — a Uralla township respondent (R046)

15. Land value and property rights

We did not ask about this either. Seven people raised it in writing and eight in the survey. The asks concern what appearing on a map does to a property, whether an owner can be compelled, and what the Strategy should say about uses it has not yet contemplated.

What you asked us to do	Written submissions	Survey responses	Change sought
Safeguard against affordable housing height and floor space bonuses exceeding the expected low-scale built form	2	0	Requires change to State planning law
Confirm consistency with the Regional Plan, SEPPs and the Ministerial Directions, and how the evidence drove the timing of the Future Investigation Areas	3	0	Condition
Adopt a policy position on data centres given their water and energy demand	1	0	Further work required
Rule out data centres	0	1	Requires change to State planning law
Confirm ownership and that no site proceeds without the owner choosing to sell or develop	0	6	In the strategy
Ensure landholders can embrace renewable energy opportunities	1	2	In the strategy

“Should this be a question of will they be available or not? People may not want to sell.” — a Uralla township respondent (R017)

“Our primary concern is that the Strategy must not create, directly or indirectly, a pathway for significant high-density, low-cost housing precincts in Uralla.” — landholders in the Eastern Growth Area (S011)

4 Where the Strategy wasn't clear enough

Alongside the asks, we checked the statements people made about what the draft Strategy says, and about the facts they relied on. There were 150 of them, and each was checked twice against the

exhibited document and the studies behind it. We went in expecting to find that some concerns rested on misunderstandings. In the main, that is not what we found.

Where a reading of the Strategy did not match what we meant, the reason was almost always the document itself: it was silent on the point, or it said the thing unclearly. Only a small number of readings went the other way, against a document that said the thing plainly. The full methodology is in the appendix.

It is not a comfortable thing to report, but it is the useful one. It highlights a need for better communication within the strategy itself: saying plainly what we left unsaid. What follows is set out in four groups.

Where the document left a gap

In each of these, the reading was a fair one on the words as they were exhibited. These are ours to fix, not yours to have got wrong.

What identifying a site as a strategic location for workforce accommodation does, and does not, do.

The draft Strategy stated that the workforce accommodation sites “have been chosen” without stating what identification authorises. Council's limited control over where such accommodation is ultimately approved appears early in the document and is never connected to the site discussion. Readers concluded reasonably that identification amounted to development approval, or to a commitment Council could not in fact make. In some instances, community responses suggest that by identifying the site, Council is providing a path for compulsory acquisition! That is not the case and needs to be clarified in the final document.

The Strategy's own status.

Several people read it as the instrument that changes zoning and lot sizes on adoption. The document nowhere states that it is a strategic document without statutory force, or that a separate planning proposal and LEP amendment process would follow, with further requirements for community consultation on that process.

The three growth pathways.

Around two dozen of the 67 people who answered the pathways question named one as their preference, their first choice, or the option they support. Only a handful wrote about which pathway is most likely to happen. That is not quite how the pathways work. There are three possible futures — no Renewable Energy Zone, a slow and sequenced rollout, and a fast contracted one — and the Strategy is written so that it holds up under all three. The final Strategy will need to spell out more clearly what the pathways are for and what Council can and cannot determine.

Salisbury Plains and Gostwyck.

The Strategy identifies these localities as likely to carry the most concentrated effects of the Renewable Energy Zone and then contains no locality-specific response. Submitters described this as an absence, and the document supports that reading.

“Legacy”, “repurposed” and “adaptive reuse”.

These terms are used without definition. The draft Growth Management Strategy document doesn't define what these terms mean. Some readers understood them to mean workforce camps converting to concentrated social housing. There is a range of outcomes that could meet community need into the future, including serviced residential and industrial lots, infrastructure upgrades, and potentially affordable housing. Any legacy outcome that is proposed will need to demonstrate alignment with Council policy like the recently adopted Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan, the principles of good planning.

Cumulative impact.

Cumulative impacts are discussed at Shire level without a framework, threshold or action. Submitters read the absence of a framework as an absence of intent.

Land supply capacity figures.

Twelve written submitters challenged the supply position, most of them on the ground that land counted as available is not necessarily land that anyone can build on. That is the right question, and the work behind the Strategy had already asked it. The modelling removes areas with hard constraints (like fire and flood prone land), then discounts for roads and services, then again for how much land will realistically come forward. The draft carries the resulting figures without any of that wording, so a reader has no way to tell that the numbers are already conservative rather than optimistic. The answer to the most common criticism of the supply position was sitting in the evidence base that we did not make widely available.

Minimum lot sizes.

The draft prints the 560m² minimum for the General Residential Zone without saying that it is an existing control. It is the figure already in force under the Uralla Local Environmental Plan, and the Strategy does not propose to reduce it.

What the Strategy does do is direct that the Core Growth Areas deliver a mix of lot sizes between 560m² and 1,000m², and propose a review of zoning in the Western Core Growth Area so that land currently zoned R2 Low Density Residential becomes R1 and comes under the R1 560m² minimum. Neither of those lowers the minimum lot size, but the draft never separates the control from the places it proposes to apply that control, so a reader cannot tell which is which.

Many of you also told us that town blocks in Uralla typically exceed 1,000m², and that small-lot development would be out of character. You were describing the same pattern our modelling assumes. The land supply work behind the Strategy is deliberately conservative. Rather than assuming new lots at the 560m² minimum, we assumed residential subdivision on larger sites produces lots of around 1,050m² — close to double the minimum, and in line with what recent subdivision in Uralla has delivered. We then discounted further for roads and services, and again for how much land will realistically come forward.

The figure the reader sees is 560m². The assumption the numbers rest on is roughly 1,050m². Nothing in the document connects the two.

How the land supply figures were worked out

In Uralla township we treated residential subdivision as possible only on blocks larger than 3,500m². On those blocks we set aside a proportion of the land for roads, drainage and services, and assumed a yield of one dwelling for every 1,050m² of what was left.

We then applied deliberately low take-up rates. Where a block was classified as underutilised i.e. one that already carries a dwelling or another structure but could be subdivided, we assumed that at most one in 10 such blocks would ever be subdivided. Land with an existing development approval was counted at 100%, greenfield land (blocks over 10,000 m²) in the township at 50%.

Because the take-up rate is a ceiling rather than a fixed proportion, and parcels are drawn at random up to it across repeated model runs, the result is a range rather than a single number.

This is what lies behind both the supply figures and the lot size assumption above. None of it appears in the exhibited document but sits in a technical background document that we did not make widely available.

Where community raised errors, issues or omissions to be addressed

Community and agency submitters identified errors and omissions in the exhibited material. We accept these, and they will be corrected before the Strategy is finalised.

- Site D is described as approximately 20 hectares of vacant RU1 land. It is not vacant — three dwellings exist on it. That description was incorrect.
- The same Site D description understates the dams on the land and omits a first-order waterway and a fall of 20.3 metres. This description will be reviewed.
- The mapping at pages 24–25 carries no street or road names. Three written submitters and seven survey respondents said they could not identify the land being discussed.
- The exhibited document cites Ministerial Directions that have since been superseded. An erratum is required before adoption.
- The Invergowrie minimum lot size is described in one place as a matter for investigation and in another as an amendment. This should be clarified.
- Site A is vacant industrial land. Using it for workforce accommodation temporarily would consume scarce employment land, and the document does not address that directly.
- The Strategy does not address land required for burials, which a growing population will need. This may lie outside the scope of the GMS, but could be considered.
- Nothing in the Strategy or the supporting consultant reports explains why 25 hectares was selected as the proposed increased minimum lot size for the western part Invergowrie.
- The dwelling demand forecast of 14 dwellings a year needs review: 14 dwellings were approved in the first six months of 2026 alone. The demand estimates are population-derived based on demographic forecasts. Dwelling completions and DA approval data could supplement these.

Where the document did say it, and it was read another way

A small number of readings did not hold against a document that says the thing plainly. They are recorded here because several were widely repeated and we would rather answer them than leave them standing. This is much the smallest of the four groups.

- That the lot size amendment was concealed in minor notations in the late pages of the draft. The action appears in the implementation table.
- That the strategy advocates small rural lots while the Strategy allows none. Page 22 describes the role of rural residential land; it does not propose lots.
- That Site D does not front McCrossin Street. It does but very difficult to read from the mapping supplied in the document.
- That subdivision in bushfire-prone areas is being increased to 25 hectares from 5 hectares. The increase is only proposed for part of Invergowrie.
- That workers will be housed mainly in densely constructed shipping-container style structures. The workforce accommodation principles are included in the GMS to prevent poor outcomes.
- That a pipeline will be built from Armidale to Uralla. This is not confirmed and is just one of several options being considered as part of broader regional water security planning. Through the Water Working Party, Uralla Shire Council is working with Armidale Regional Council to explore potential water security solutions and assess their costs, benefits and funding arrangements. Armidale Regional Council has lodged a scoping report for its proposed Water Security Project with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, which will be made public on the NSW Major Projects Portal.

Where the survey could have been better

Respondents identified some issues with the way we designed the survey. These include:

- The ranking question on workforce accommodation gave no option for saying it should not be hosted at all, so its results describe preferences among people willing to rank, not support for hosting.
- The ranking scales were not labelled at their ends, and at least one person could not complete them for that reason.
- Seven people could not answer the map questions because the exhibited maps carried no street names.
- The numbering skipped a question, so references people made to question numbers do not always match our export.

What we take from this

The public exhibition surfaced a document that did not say enough. On the workforce accommodation sites, what the community already knew about the Renewable Energy Zone was often ahead of what the document told you. In other areas is a clear need for broad and timely circulation of factual information.

Council communications and the final document can address what was left unsaid: what identifying a site does and does not allow, what this Strategy actually is in law, what the land supply figures assume, and what Council can and cannot control.

5 Beyond the Growth Management Strategy

Not everything you raised is something this Strategy can address. Some of it is for Council, but through a different plan, budget or process. Some of it sits with the State or with agencies we do not control. Some of it lies with the private interests and market processes. We have written it down here rather than leaving it out, because being told the Strategy is the wrong document is unhelpful.

The same counting rules apply. The two channels stay separate, each person is counted once per matter, and the numbers do not rank anything.

Things Council can act on, through something other than the Strategy

Matter raised	Written submissions	Survey responses
Consultation and engagement practice — exhibition length, map legibility and street names, direct notification of affected landowners	12	15
Council planning capacity, staffing and processing times — assessment turnaround, building inspection availability, and the evidence base for decisions	3	5
Council spending priorities and how it communicates about cost	1	4
Trust, transparency and perceived conflict in decision-making	3	4
Core service delivery and town maintenance — roads, parks, gardens and town presentation	2	0
Companion plans and studies Council could prepare — Local Infrastructure Plan, Climate Action Plan, Disaster Management Plan, Heritage Study update	4	0
Adopting the environmental growth outcomes and Biodiversity Study Update into the LEP and DCP	1	0
Advocacy to EnergyCo and the State, and negotiating contributions — complaints and mediation, cumulative impact assessment as a matter for advocacy	7	0
Monitoring and reporting on host community outcomes — wellbeing, mental health and social cohesion	2	0
Local employment, training and short-term accommodation incentives	1	0

The largest item here is how we consult — how long the exhibition ran, whether the maps could be read, and whether landowners were told directly. Twelve people raised it in writing and 15 in the survey, more than any other matter outside the Strategy.

Things that sit with other levels of government

Matter raised	Written submissions	Survey responses
Health, ambulance and policing resourcing	4	0
State road upgrades and management of REZ contractor traffic	2	0
REZ project determinations, workforce numbers and camp approvals	3	1
Rating policy, rate pegging and cost shifting	1	6
Water infrastructure funding — de-silting and a second dam	1	0
Land valuation, compensation and legal remedies	2	0
Council amalgamation and long-term viability	1	0

We can advocate around these, but we cannot decide them. Council is reviewing its rating policy, but rate pegging is set by IPART. Renewable Energy Zone approvals, worker numbers and camp determinations are made by the State. Health, ambulance and police resourcing sit with State agencies. Where advocating is what is available to us, it appears in the table above.

6 Preliminary directions arising from exhibition

Previous sections report what we heard from our community and stakeholders. This section sets out the preliminary directions officers need to consider in response – both in an amended Growth Management Strategy and beyond its scope. This list is not exhaustive but aims to the key areas where agency and community feedback has highlighted further considerations.

Many issues raised by the community fall outside the scope of what a GMS can deliver. These issues are either being addressed, or will need to be addressed, by further policy work or Council advocacy and are not raised in this section. The most consequential of these is water security.

These recommendations are preliminary and will be further considered and refined before the amended Strategy comes to Council. Council has not considered them, and the final recommendations put to Council may vary.

Some directions below follow what was asked for, some go further, and some do not follow it at all. Strategic planning requires officers to weigh the broad public interest, environmental sustainability, the conditions that allow an economy to function, State and Local policy directions, best practice, and the needs of people who do not live here yet, against the interests of those who do.

TOPIC	PRELIMINARY DIRECTIONS	COMMENT
Workforce accommodation	Delete sites B, D & E from workforce accommodation site analysis maps and tables.	- Community feedback suggests development in this location may have significant adverse impact on the amenity of adjacent residential development. - Noting that all these locations retain permissibility under SEPP (Housing) Part 13 – Accommodation for Renewable Energy Zone Construction Workers. Development applications lodged under this pathway must be considered on their merits.
	Retain sites A & C in the workforce accommodation site analysis maps and tables	- These locations represent the most strategic township adjacent opportunities for accommodating workforce demand while securing legacy benefit for Uralla. - Site C should be nominated as intended only for workforce accommodation with legacy, adaptive, or permanent residential use rather than temporary workforce accommodation. - Site A should be nominated as intended only for temporary use, to ensure retention as employment land over the long term. - Noting that most locations across Uralla Shire retain permissibility under SEPP (Housing) Part 13 – Accommodation for Renewable Energy Zone Construction

Invergowrie		Workers. Development applications lodged under this pathway must be considered on their merits.
	Retain Principles for workforce accommodation and Growth Outcomes – Workforce Accommodation within the Growth Management Strategy	- Principles should be retained to provide clear guidance of expectation for development applications lodged accordance with SEPP (Housing) Part 13. - Clarify the relationship between legacy outcomes and the existing provision that workforce accommodation must not create pressure for premature release of land, so that a planned legacy conversion is distinguishable from an unplanned early release. - Consider defining a range of performance measures against which proposed “legacy outcomes” can be assessed.
	Clarify Council’s strategic role in coordinating temporary workforce in the document and beyond	- Provide additional commentary on forecast temporary population, coordination risks and opportunities, site selection and delivery of workforce accommodation, and constraints that bind Council action in relation to location of workforce accommodation. - Clarify the overlap between workforce accommodation sites and future residential growth areas as deliberate and intended to deliver servicing and built form outcomes that provide longer term community-benefit.
	Defer nomination of 25ha minimum lot size pending further investigation.	- Community feedback highlights that the nexus between 25ha lot size and bushfire risk lacks robust evidence base; further assessment required. - Officers need to receive and consider further advice from NSW Rural Fire Service. - Recently lodged Development Application for subdivision at 196 Kareela Road, Invergowrie, which includes an area of ~500ha in the area identified for minimum lot size increase, will provide further granular, site-based bushfire risk and biodiversity assessment which may further inform minimum lot size increase or other appropriate mechanism.
	Consider application of appropriate Conservation	- Community feedback confirmed Invergowrie as having high value habitat

	zones for areas of High Environmental Value	and environmental values including core koala habitat. - DCCEEW advises appropriate Conservation zones should be considered for area of High Environmental Value across the shire; as well as securing ongoing future management of HEV land through a mechanism, such as a Biodiversity and Vegetation Management Plan (BVMP)
Kentucky	Review proposed rezoning on specific sites	- Review proposed zoning for identified listed Threatened Ecological Community type (ephemeral wetland) - Delete former landfill site from area proposed for rezoning to R5 and investigate appropriate future management - Consider sites nominated by landholders and community feedback on strategic basis.
Bundarra	Nominate minimum lot size for areas identified for rezoning from R2 to R5	- Existing minimum lot size of 5000m² should be maintained
Racecourse Road	Resolve existing Planning Proposal by seeking a revised proposal that demonstrates: - tighter alignment to Council's adopted plans and strategies, and - need for immediate release in relation to anticipated sources of demand.	- PP-2021-7205 (Links Estate) was submitted to Council in November 2021, seeking to rezone approximately 72ha of land on Racecourse Road from RU1 Primary Production to a mix of R1 General Residential and R5 Large Lot Residential. - Community feedback and stakeholder feedback raised support for this site's nomination as a future residential investigation area. - Land is not supported for immediate release in draft GMS on basis of existing land supply analysis undertaken by Council. Proponents must provide further evidence of immediate need to support application to Gateway. - DPHI advises that where Council is supportive of the revised proposal, land should be examined in the draft GMS
Rural-residential land supply	Review adequacy of rural-residential land supply by locality	- Community feedback raised question of adequacy of rural-residential supply when considered based on locality. - Community feedback suggests areas with existing supply e.g. Saumarez-Ponds are poorly correlated with demand in

different localities within the shire e.g. Uralla township.

- Noting that review may require the preparation of supporting rural-residential land supply analysis by locality, and/or supporting rural-residential land release strategy beyond scope of existing GMS.
- Consider inclusion of acceptable outcomes for proponent-led Planning Proposals for Additional Permitted Use dwellings within existing small lots within Rocky River.
- Pending outcome of rural-residential supply review, consider inclusion of acceptable outcomes for proponent-led Planning Proposals for rezoning within Rocky River within GMS

Residential land supply	Clarify existing controls within the strategy	- Amend the strategy to clarify the relevant existing controls where they are not proposed to change e.g. minimum lot sizes in the R1 zone
	Resolve requirement for preparation of master plan in areas zoned for residential purposes	- Consider appropriate actions and mechanisms to achieve growth outcomes in identified Core Growth Areas
Legibility	Amend maps to improve legibility	- Community raised issues with legibility of maps within the strategy, specifically the absence of street name labels. Where practical, this should be addressed.

7 What happens next

We have split this into two stages, so that what you told us is reported first and on its own, before we come back with what we propose to do about it.

Now — this report

"Council receives what you told us, with the asks recorded and the errors identified, together with officers' preliminary recommended changes to the Strategy. Council has not yet made any decisions on them. This report is public.

Next — the amended Strategy

Our response to each subject, and the amended Strategy, come to a later meeting. That report will say what changed, what did not, and why (including where we do not propose to act on something that was asked for).

September — coming back to you

We will communicate what changed as a result of the exhibition.

After that — endorsement, then implementation

Once Council is happy with the Strategy and it is adopted, the Strategy goes to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Its endorsement is what unlocks the actions in the implementation table, including the actions that require a change to the Local Environmental Plan. Those changes are separate processes, each with its own exhibition and its own chance to comment. Nothing in this Strategy changes a zoning or a minimum lot size by itself.

Council must lodge a Planning Proposal to amend the Uralla Local Environment Plan for Gateway determination, and that Planning Proposal must be then accepted and endorsed by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. This process includes public exhibition.

If you made a submission

Formal written submissions and survey responses, with identifying details removed, are included in the August 2026 Business Papers to Council and will be provided to our consultants, so that every point is considered in the redrafting.

If your submission raised something about a specific site or property, we will respond to you directly rather than only through this report.

Contact details for the project team appear on Council's Your Say page.

Appendix How this report was put together

Tools used

This report was prepared with the assistance of Anthropic's Claude Opus 5 model, working from the redacted submissions, the survey export and the coding workbooks. Coding decisions, verification findings and the wording of this report were reviewed and settled by Council officers. Every count is reproducible from the underlying workbooks.

How the source material was prepared

The 52 written submissions were consolidated into a single document by a Council officer, who removed personal identifying information, names, addresses, contact details and signatures, before any analysis began. Each submission was given a sequential identifier and a header recording submitter type, stated interest and locality; the key to those identifiers is held by Council. State agency submissions were retained unredacted, as they are made in an official capacity. Survey responses were redacted by removing names and email addresses where provided. No unredacted material was processed by the analysis tools described below.

What was analysed

Fifty-two written submissions and 75 survey responses. One survey response was withdrawn at the respondent's request before analysis and is excluded entirely. Fifty-one of the 52 submissions and 73 of the 75 survey responses contained at least one ask; the remainder were general comment or holding responses.

Channel separation

The two channels are coded and counted separately at every stage. There is no combined total anywhere in this report. They reached different people and carried different material and adding them would create a single number that describes neither.

How asks were identified

Every submission and every free-text survey answer was read and coded to a topic, a position, and, where the participant wanted something done, a change sought. Changes were classified as removal, amendment, addition or condition. Similar changes were clustered into the asks shown in Section 3. Where a single coded passage carried two asks, the dominant one was used. Claude's coding was manually verified by officers resulting in multiple changes to codification. All submissions and survey responses were read by a human at least once.

How the counts work

Each ask counts distinct participants: distinct submitters in the written column, distinct respondents in the survey column. A participant who made the same point at several places counts once. Because one participant may make several asks within a theme, the ask counts within a theme do not sum to the theme total. Every count traces to a named participant identifier in the underlying analysis workbooks, which also record each judgement call made in constructing the tables, including rows that could reasonably have been coded another way.

What the counts are for

To show how widely a view came up. They are not a ranking, a vote, or a weighting, and a higher number has not been treated as a stronger claim on the outcome. One submission identifying a factual error is more important to the document than a many statements of preference. The report is built so that both stay visible.

Why the survey numbers need reading carefully

The survey asked questions; the written submissions did not. Seven of the fifteen subjects had a survey question of their own, and where that happened, more people responded on that subject i.e. the number reflects the question as much as anything else. Eight subjects had no survey question at all, including water, infrastructure, the Renewable Energy Zone and social impact. Those came up because people chose to raise them while answering something else, and their numbers carry weight on their own. Section 3 says which is which at the start of every subject, and Figure 5 shows it across all fifteen.

Claims verification and Section 4

Responses were checked and codified for statements and claims that required validation. One hundred and fifty statements were checked in two passes against the exhibited Strategy, the supporting studies and, where relevant, external sources. Statements were separated into three kinds before checking: statements about what the Strategy says, statements about the world, and statements of position. Only the first two can be verified; positions are reported as positions. Where a statement about the Strategy did not hold, the reason was recorded — whether the document was silent, unclear, or clear and read differently. These distinctions form the basis of Section 4.

Of the 150 statements coded as claims: 77 were about what the Strategy says (e.g. the strategy promotes Uralla as a destination for population growth), 62 were about the world (e.g. a first order waterway on the land disqualifies it from workforce accommodation under Housing SEPP Part 13), and 11 were views rather than claims (e.g. the strategy is too focused on limiting growth rather than managing it). Of the 77, thirty were accurate as made. Of the 47 that did not hold, 37 traced to the document being silent or unclear, eight to a document that was clear and was read another way, one turns on whether a supporting paper formed part of the exhibition material, and one concerned an external fact rather than the document.

Conflicting asks

Where people asked for opposite things, both appear in the same table, next to each other. They are not netted off, no majority is declared, and neither is described as the community view.

Guarding against confirmation bias

We set out our expectations about what the submissions would show only after the coding frame was fixed, so the frame was not built to confirm them. Scope was coded conservatively, and where a check overturned an initial coding, the direction of that change was logged. An expectation that concerns would mostly rest on misreading the document did not survive the process. Section 4 reports what we found, not what we thought we would find.

Quotations

Quotations are word for word, with identifying detail removed. Several people named their own street address or lot and deposited plan number; those have been taken out. Quotations are attributed by a code and a locality only. At most one quotation is used per ask, and fewer where the summary already carries the point.

What is not in here

One submission raising potential conflict of interest matters has been referred to the General Manager and Council's legal advisers and excluded from the tables, counts and quotations in the attached report. The submission with the relevant sections redacted will be published.

The matter raised relates to Invergowrie only. The Officer direction as noted in this report proposes to defer the nomination of a 25ha minimum lot size for part of Invergowrie pending further investigation. This investigation will include the matter raised by the submitter. We have noted the exclusion at Section 2 so that the gap is visible. We have noted the exclusion at Section 2 so that the gap is visible.

Privacy and publication

The full redacted survey material and written submissions are published on Council's Yoursay page. One survey export containing names and email addresses has been handled as a privacy matter at the request of the submitter.