




JUNE 1, 2025

Engagement Report

URALLA DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

EMILY SIMS
STRATEGIC PLANNING OFFICER
Uralla Shire Council



Contents

Summary	2
Distribution	3
Summary of Key Themes from Public Submissions	7
Survey Responses	17
<i>Demographics</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Character and Footprint</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Land Supply.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Addressing the needs of older people.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Dwelling Size</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Housing Affordability</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Ensuring a positive legacy from the REZ</i>	<i>53</i>
Written Submissions	60
Conclusion	71

Summary

This report summarises community and stakeholder engagement undertaken during the public exhibition of the Draft Uralla Local Housing Strategy (March–May 2025). The engagement was designed to test the assumptions of the draft strategy, invite community perspectives on growth and housing needs, and identify areas for refinement prior to final adoption.

Over 120 survey responses and 13 written submissions were received, along with strong attendance at events and direct conversations during the exhibition period.

Community feedback demonstrated broad support for the strategy’s intent—particularly its emphasis on preserving village character, supporting ageing in place, and addressing housing affordability—but also identified opportunities to strengthen the document in response to changing needs, such as the New England REZ and interest in community-led housing solutions.

The feedback has directly informed refinements to the final strategy, including strengthened guidance on worker accommodation, new actions to explore innovative housing models, and a clearer pathway for planning growth areas and rural settlements. This report documents those insights and outlines how they shaped the final strategy.

Survey submissions	123
Name or email provided	49
No name or email provided	74

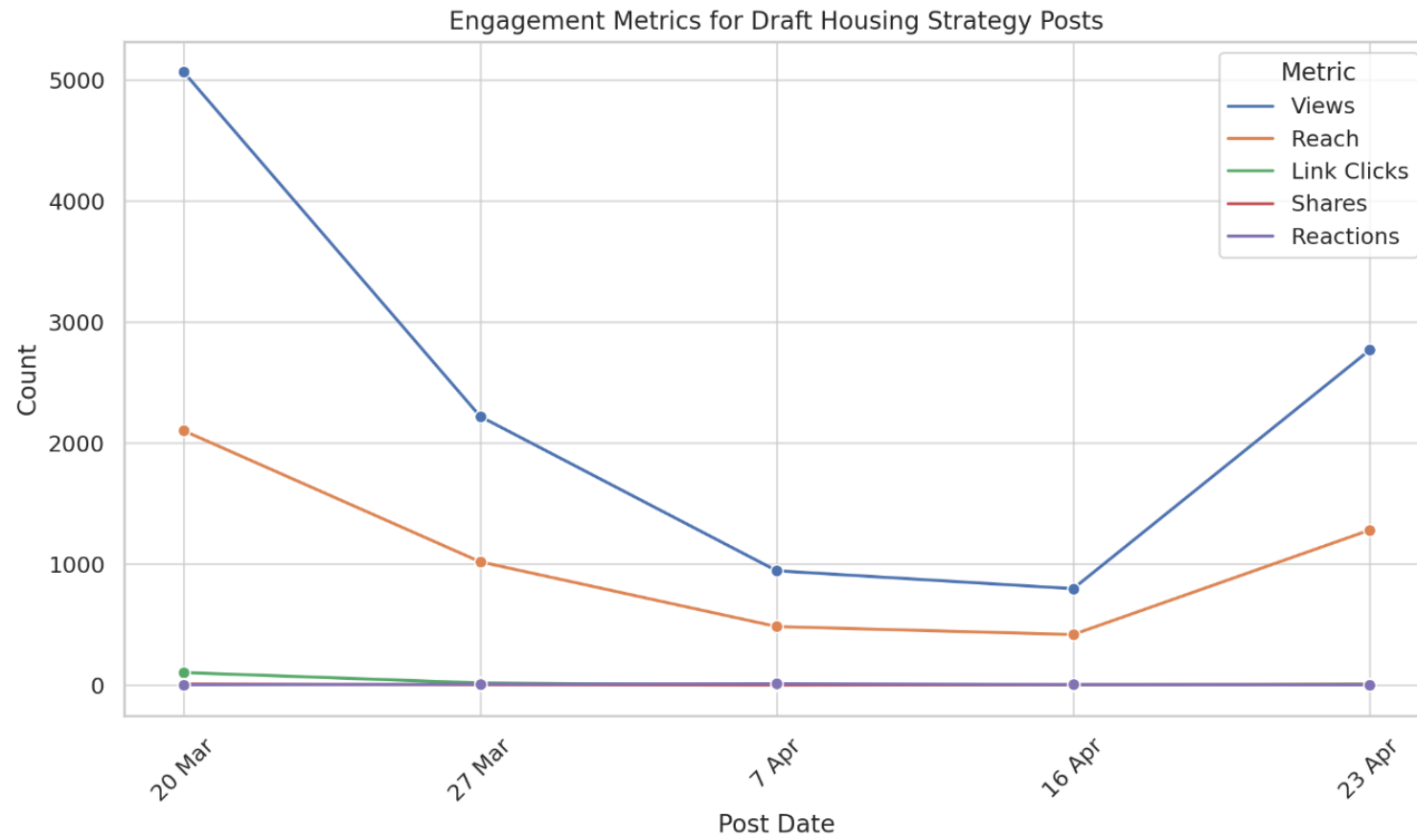
Written submissions	13
Individual submissions	10
Government department submissions	3

Distribution

18 February	REMPLAN presentation to Council. Chris Kelly presented the draft strategy to Councillors and invited guests who had been part of the early engagement.
3 March – 5 May	Exhibition period opens. The Draft Uralla Local Housing Strategy ('draft strategy') was placed on public exhibition for 56 days
17 March	Wordsworth article #1 – Front page with links to survey
18 March	Online survey opens.
20 March	Social media campaign starts. Council ran a targeted social media campaign to promote the Draft Housing Strategy and associated engagement opportunities. The campaign included five Facebook posts between 20 March and 23 April 2025. The draft strategy had relatively robust social media engagement (see graph below). <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Posts with a clear call to action and survey link saw the highest interaction.- Posts tied to community events (e.g. markets, drop-ins) performed well in terms of reactions and shares, though had fewer link clicks.
31 March	Wordsworth article #2 – links to survey
1 April – 5 May	Posters and flyers were distributed around the Shire – including shop windows in Bridge St, Uralla, Golf Club, Uralla Bowlo, New England Brewery, Invergowrie Store, Bundarra Store. Hard copies of strategy and key issues report displayed at Library, Chambers, Bundarra Store, Invergowrie Store. Newsletter items were sent to Kentucky and Kingstown Public Schools.
3 April	Community briefing session at Courthouse hosted by Uralla Business Chamber – ~30 Attendees

Draft Uralla Local Housing Strategy – Engagement Report

- 6 April **Community stall at the High-Country Markets** featured two-panel display of draft Housing Strategy extracts, including land supply maps, housing supply gaps, ‘plan on a page,’ top-line objectives and outcomes.
- We had several high-quality engagements directly related to the Housing Strategy, directing people to provide their feedback via the online survey.
- 16 April **Bundarra School of Arts Hall & Community Committee Meeting briefing.** Emily attended Bundarra committee meeting and made a presentation about the strategy with Q& A – ~10 attendees
- 24 April **Drop-in session Uralla Neighbourhood Centre.** Targeted promotion to users of foodbank and neighbourhood centre, social media post. ~5 attendees.
- 28 April **Original exhibition period closes.** The exhibition period was extended by 7 days at the discretion of the General Manager at the request of several government departments and a member of the community.
- 29 April Further reporting appeared in the NE Times at the end of the exhibition period.
- 5 May **Exhibition period closes.** Online survey closed.





Draft Housing Strategy display at markets



Have your say on the future of housing in Uralla Shire

**NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE DROP-IN SESSION
THURSDAY 24 APRIL, 10AM - 12PM**

Come and chat with a Council planner about your experiences and ideas. You can look through the draft strategy, ask questions, and give feedback—no forms or speeches required. Just a conversation over a cuppa.

Can't make it?
Scan the QR code to complete the survey online



Example flyer distributed at Neighbourhood Centre

Summary of Key Themes from Public Submissions

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Proposed change to LHS</i>	<i>Reason</i>
<p><i>Worker accommodation and REZ legacy housing</i></p>	<p>Submissions strongly supported a proactive, coordinated approach to planning for temporary worker accommodation associated with the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).</p> <p>There was consistent support for identifying a well-located site (or sites) near Uralla township, with good access and infrastructure.</p> <p>Several submissions proposed that accommodation be designed for long-term use, transitioning to community housing, seniors’ living, or affordable rental stock after REZ demand subsidies.</p> <p>Survey responses also showed majority support for the concept. Appropriate control over the outcomes of worker accommodation was a key issue raised in submissions.</p>	<p>Add additional detail to Action 2.3 to specify design and development outcomes to be achieved for worker accommodation through new DCP controls, including layout, built form, and visual amenity.</p>	<p>The Strategy already supports temporary worker accommodation near Uralla.</p> <p>The recently released <i>Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation</i> and amendments to the SEPP (Housing) provide much-needed guidance around definitions and permissibility. However, they do not extend to detailed design controls.</p> <p>It is considered important that such controls are in place both to ensure amenity during use as worker accommodation, and to support positive outcomes if and when sites are transitioned to permanent uses.</p> <p>Preparing a Development Control Plan (DCP) amendment will help ensure accommodation is appropriately designed for its location, minimises land use conflict, and supports repurposing where feasible.</p>

Community-led and non-market housing models

Several submissions called for Council to support alternative housing delivery models beyond traditional developer-led or speculative market housing. These included Community Land Trusts (CLTs), cooperative housing, rent-to-buy schemes, and modular or shared living models.

Submissions emphasised the potential of these models to support long-term affordability, local ownership, and greater diversity in housing options, including for those renting and on low-to moderate incomes. These ideas were supported by several survey responses and linked to broader calls for community control and housing innovation.

Include a new action under the ‘Diverse housing for all residents’ goal to establish a **Community Housing Innovation Forum**. This group would explore, test, and support delivery of alternative housing models such as CLTs, rent-to-buy, shared equity, and cooperative or co-housing initiatives.

The Strategy currently supports housing diversity as a key goal but lacks a specific mechanism to foster innovation in community-led delivery and ownership.

Establishing a forum will provide a structured but flexible platform for collaboration between Council, landowners, community groups, and potential delivery partners.

The aim of the would be to create a space/process for demonstration projects and funding advocacy, while supporting locally grounded responses to affordability and inclusion.

Growth areas and urban edge development

Several submissions raised concerns about the Strategy’s emphasis on infill development and the lack of identified future growth areas on the edge of Uralla township.

Some submitters advocated for the inclusion of specific sites (e.g. Racecourse Road) for rezoning or preferred future development.

Others raised the need for a defined township boundary to guide growth and infrastructure planning.

No change to zoning directions in the Strategy.

Update mapping to **identify potential investigation areas** for future residential expansion.

Amendment to action 4.1 to refer to **preparation of a Growth Management Strategy that would include a place based strategic plan** (i.e. framework

The Strategy does not preclude rezonings or future urban expansion; rather, it prioritises better utilisation of existing zoned land as a first step.

This approach is supported by most submissions, including survey responses, which favour consolidation within the existing township footprint in a way that preserves character.

The Strategy applies a conservative dwelling yield assumption (approximately 1 dwelling

<p>While some community survey responses supported limited expansion, the majority preferred consolidation within the existing urban footprint in a manner that respected township character.</p>	<p>plan) for Uralla township as part of broader considerations.</p> <p>Clarify within narrative and ‘Maintaining the village character and footprint of existing settlements’ goal that future urban edge growth may be considered through a structured process of preparing a Growth Management Strategy, such as a land use and infrastructure framework.</p>	<p>per 1,050 sqm), which is significantly lower density than permitted under current planning controls (minimum lot sizes of 560 sqm in the R1 General Residential zone).</p> <p>A key implementation focus is to monitor whether infill actions are effective in activating this existing land supply. If actions are not delivering the intended outcomes, there would be a clear justification to explore new rezonings to meet housing demand.</p> <p>The updated Strategy will clarify that future township expansion and refinement of settlement boundaries may be considered through a structured, place-based planning process (Action 4.1). This Growth Management Strategy will take a holistic view of Uralla’s township structure—not only residential uses, but also commercial, industrial, environmental, and recreational considerations—ensuring future decisions are coordinated and transparent. This approach aligns with feedback from Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) on the need for strategic justification of growth areas.</p>
---	--	---

Rocky River and rural lifestyle development

A number of submissions raised concerns about the elevated role given to Rocky River in the Draft Strategy (notably Action 4.2), arguing that it lacked sufficient strategic justification.

Other submissions raised broader concerns about planning controls for RU1 land and small holdings across the Shire, and suggested that Council consider how rural lifestyle living, modest expansion, or low-impact subdivision could be supported in rural and edge-of-town areas.

While there was some support for increased housing in Rocky River, this was tempered by opposing views and concerns regarding the impact on other productive land uses.

Remove Action 4.2 (Rocky River zoning review).

Amend Action 4.1 to refer to **preparation of a Growth Management Strategy** that includes a dedicated rural lands component.

The Rural Lands element will consider development potential and constraints across all rural areas and small settlements, including Rocky River.

The Strategy does not currently contain a strong evidence base to support prioritising Rocky River as a standalone action area.

Broader concerns about rural living, lifestyle subdivision, and land use pressures are best addressed through a Rural Lands Strategy, to be delivered as part of a broader Growth Management Strategy under Action 4.1.

This will provide a more transparent, equitable and strategic framework for managing rural change—considering zoning, subdivision patterns, land capability, and the interface with productive land uses and biodiversity.

This approach reflects community feedback and aligns with DPHI expectations for place-based planning.

Use of Council land for housing

The use of Council owned land for affordable housing was generally supported.

Several submissions raised questions about the role Council-owned land could play in helping address housing need.

Comments focused on the importance of transparency regarding land holdings and decisions about their future use, as well as the potential for Council to enable affordable or

Amend action 3.3 to **clarify use of land would be to support community-benefit housing outcomes**, subject to transparent process and planning alignment.

The Strategy does not identify specific Council-owned sites for development but acknowledges that local government can play a facilitative role in housing supply.

Submissions have highlighted the importance of doing so transparently, and with a clear focus on delivering affordable or community-oriented outcomes.

Data gaps for informed decision making

<p>community housing projects on surplus or underutilised land.</p> <p>Submitters emphasised that if Council land is to be used for housing, it should be for clear community benefit—not speculative development or market-rate housing.</p>		<p>The Community Housing Innovation Forum could also offer a practical mechanism for Council to consider proposals and partnerships relating to use of public land.</p>
<p>A number of submissions highlighted limitations in the Strategy’s evidence base and the need for improved ongoing monitoring. These included a lack of data on short-term rental accommodation (STRA), uncertainty around land uptake rates, assumptions about downsizing preferences, and the need for transparent demographic and housing modelling.</p> <p>DPHI raised several points for further justification, such as lot size changes in Invergowrie.</p> <p>DPHI also noted the need to include reference to additional documents and data, primarily those that had been released at the time (or after) the preparation of the draft strategy.</p>	<p>Include reference to documents and data referred to by DPHI (including new state population projections, <i>Guidelines for Construction Worker Accommodation</i>, and the <i>New England Development Strategy</i>).</p> <p>Add specific reference to STRA monitoring under Action 4.8 (which will be action 4.7 in updated strategy).</p>	<p>The Strategy is built on a strong initial evidence base, using data from reliable sources and established, tested modelling approaches. Like all strategic planning work, the evidence involves some assumptions, particularly around land uptake, household behaviour and dwelling yields. These assumptions were transparently applied and are consistent with contemporary regional housing strategies.</p> <p>Submissions, including from DPHI and residents, have made a valid case for supplementing the Strategy with additional data sources and committing to ongoing monitoring.</p> <p>In response, the Strategy will include reference to new state-level projections and regional strategies, and will explicitly commit to tracking short-term rental trends, land</p>

Retirement and ageing-in-place housing

Several submissions and survey responses identified a shortage of appropriate housing for older residents who wish to downsize or age in place.

Concerns included the lack of small, accessible dwellings with low-maintenance needs, and the absence of Over 55s or retirement-style housing options.

There was strong support for a greater mix of housing types, including small, detached dwellings, standard-sized homes on smaller lots to reduce maintenance, flexible layouts, and options that allow older residents to live independently while remaining in the community.

Some submissions also raised concerns that the Strategy focuses on distributed retirement living across multiple sites, while potentially

Update Action 1.2 to **highlight retirement living as a distinct priority**. Amend action to indicate a preference for sites close to the town centre and **clarify that rezoning may be supported for appropriate sites** adjacent to residential areas.

activation rates, and housing diversity outcomes.

This will ensure the Strategy remains responsive, evidence-informed, and capable of adapting to emerging conditions and policy directions.

The Strategy already provides strong support for increasing housing diversity, including accessible and low-maintenance dwellings that can support ageing in place. While these forms are not necessarily small in size, they are intended to reduce maintenance needs and support independent living.

What submissions have reinforced is the need to make the demand for Over 55s and retirement living options more explicit, and to position this as a distinct and pressing housing need.

The Strategy is currently silent on the form that retirement housing should take—whether as a consolidated facility or multiple smaller-scale developments—and this is appropriate at the strategic level.

The revised approach clarifies that all delivery options should be explored, including the

Township boundaries and structure

<p>overlooking the benefits of a consolidated facility.</p>		<p>potential for a single, larger facility where supported by location and planning merit.</p> <p>The update to Action 1.2 signals that rezoning to support retirement or aged care housing will be considered, particularly where sites are well-located with respect to town services. While a central location is ideal, it is not mandatory. Given the importance of the issue and the limited supply of suitable land, a range of site and delivery models should be evaluated to meet future need.</p>
<p>Several submissions raised concerns about the lack of a clearly defined township boundary for Uralla and how this may affect infrastructure planning, rezoning decisions, and protection of town character.</p> <p>Some supported the introduction of a formal boundary to guide orderly development and avoid ad hoc expansion, while others queried whether the Strategy implicitly defines one by prioritising infill.</p> <p>Submissions also raised related concerns about non-residential development —particularly for commercial and employment uses—and the risk of fragmented growth that undermines the role of the town centre.</p>	<p>Clarify in the Strategy narrative that there is no formal township boundary at present.</p> <p>Amend Action 4.1 to confirm that the Growth Management Strategy will include a place-based planning framework that may define or refine township boundaries.</p>	<p>The Strategy does not define a statutory township boundary and does not preclude future expansion. It instead prioritises better utilisation of existing zoned land.</p> <p>Submissions highlight the need for a transparent and coordinated structure to guide decisions about land use, infrastructure, and growth areas.</p> <p>Clarifying the role of the Growth Management Strategy in assessing and, if appropriate, defining township boundaries ensures that future decisions consider all land uses—not only housing—in a coordinated and evidence-based way.</p>

Subdivision and secondary dwellings

There was broad support for planning to be coordinated, transparent, and place-based, considering not only residential development but also commercial, industrial, open space, and infrastructure functions.

Some submissions and survey responses expressed concern that current planning controls restrict the ability to subdivide land or construct secondary dwellings.

Others noted that while subdivision and secondary dwellings are technically permissible in many areas, barriers still exist—such as infrastructure limitations, site suitability, or construction costs.

There was a noticeable difference in community sentiment between the two: subdivision was viewed more cautiously, with concerns about character loss, overdevelopment, and unintended impacts if poorly designed. In contrast, secondary dwellings (e.g. granny flats) attracted stronger support as a means to accommodate family members, generate modest rental income, or provide more flexible housing options—particularly for downsizers or intergenerational living.

No change to Strategy actions.

Clarify in narrative and supporting material that current planning controls do permit subdivision and secondary dwellings in many locations, but that the **Strategy identifies barriers to uptake and includes actions to address these.**

The Strategy supports smaller housing forms and increased take-up of existing development rights.

It includes actions to monitor uptake and reduce barriers to development.

While subdivision and secondary dwellings are already permitted in residential areas, submissions confirm the importance of reinforcing these messages and ensuring implementation focuses on enabling access, feasibility, and practical delivery pathways.

Affordability and inclusive housing

Many submissions and survey responses emphasised the need for more affordable and inclusive housing in Uralla.

This included concerns about rising prices, the limited availability of housing for key workers and lower-income households, and a lack of secure, long-term rental options.

Some raised the importance of housing models that support vulnerable or at-risk groups, while others focused on reducing barriers to home ownership.

There was general support for more diverse housing types and alternative delivery models to improve access and affordability.

No change to existing actions.

Clarify in narrative that **affordability is a core principle underpinning multiple actions**, and that the Strategy supports a range of delivery pathways, including non-market and community-led housing.

The Strategy embeds affordability and housing access across multiple actions, including support for smaller and diverse dwellings, adaptable housing, community-led models, and implementation and monitoring.

Submissions affirm the need to make these linkages clearer in the narrative.

Highlighting affordability as a guiding theme will ensure it remains central to implementation decisions, without requiring additional actions.

Design quality, heritage, and environmental protection

Many submissions and survey responses highlighted the importance of preserving Uralla’s unique character through high-quality design that respects heritage, landscape values, and the rural village setting.

Concerns were raised about the visual and environmental impact of new housing—particularly subdivision and infill—on town identity, canopy cover, built heritage, and biodiversity.

Include new action to **review, update and implement the Heritage Study and incorporate into the LEP.**

Reinforce the importance of character and heritage in the narrative and goals of the Strategy.

The Strategy embeds respect for local character, heritage, and landscape in its goals and implementation actions.

Several submissions reinforced the need for strong emphasis on these values during growth and development.

While the Strategy cannot directly control built form or enforce design outcomes, it establishes the policy direction and sets up processes to achieve this through implementation.

<p>These concerns extended beyond Uralla township, with submissions referencing rural and village settlements such as Rocky River and Invergowrie.</p> <p>Respondents emphasised the importance of design quality and environmental protection across all localities to ensure growth enhances rather than detracts from existing character.</p> <p>There was strong support for improving landscaping, retaining significant trees, enhancing walkability, and applying design controls to ensure that new development contributes positively to streetscape and liveability.</p>		<p>Several actions support improved design and character outcomes, including the development of local design guidance, and the preparation of a place-based planning framework under the Growth Management Strategy. These will help formalise the identity of Uralla and its smaller settlements, guiding future zoning, design controls, and infrastructure coordination.</p> <p>Adding a new action regarding implementation of the heritage study will further support protection of heritage specifically.</p> <p>Additionally, Action 2.4 supports the use of Community Benefit Sharing funding to enhance the public realm, including streetscapes and accessibility improvements that benefit older residents and the wider community.</p> <p>Overall, the Strategy sets a clear intent to preserve and enhance the unique identity of Uralla Shire.</p>
--	--	--

Survey Responses

“Complete the survey” was the key call to action during the community engagement campaign.

Thanks to strong support from Councillors, and good attendance at the Courthouse briefing session the survey had relatively high level of engagement.

The survey had 123 responses, with most respondents providing additional high-quality feedback in the open-ended response boxes.

Demographics

Because the respondents were not randomly selected, we must assume likely self-selection bias. However, due to the large number of responses, we considered how closely the data we’d collected represented the population of the Shire.

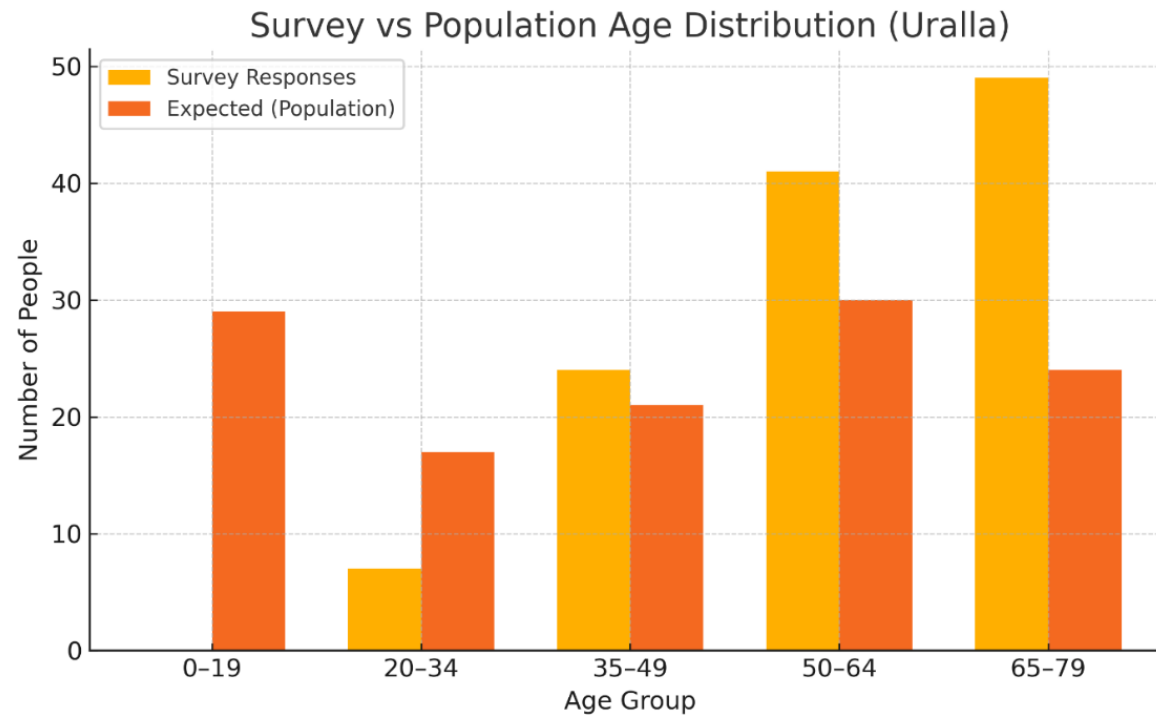
Does the distribution of survey respondents by age, housing tenure and locality match the actual population of Uralla?

ABS 2021 Census data was used to determine an expected population proportion for age, tenure and location. This expected population was then compared to the survey responses.

Population

Age and life stage shape housing need. We asked respondents to provide their age in order to learn more about the representativeness of our survey responses. The sample age distribution is significantly different from Uralla’s actual population age structure:

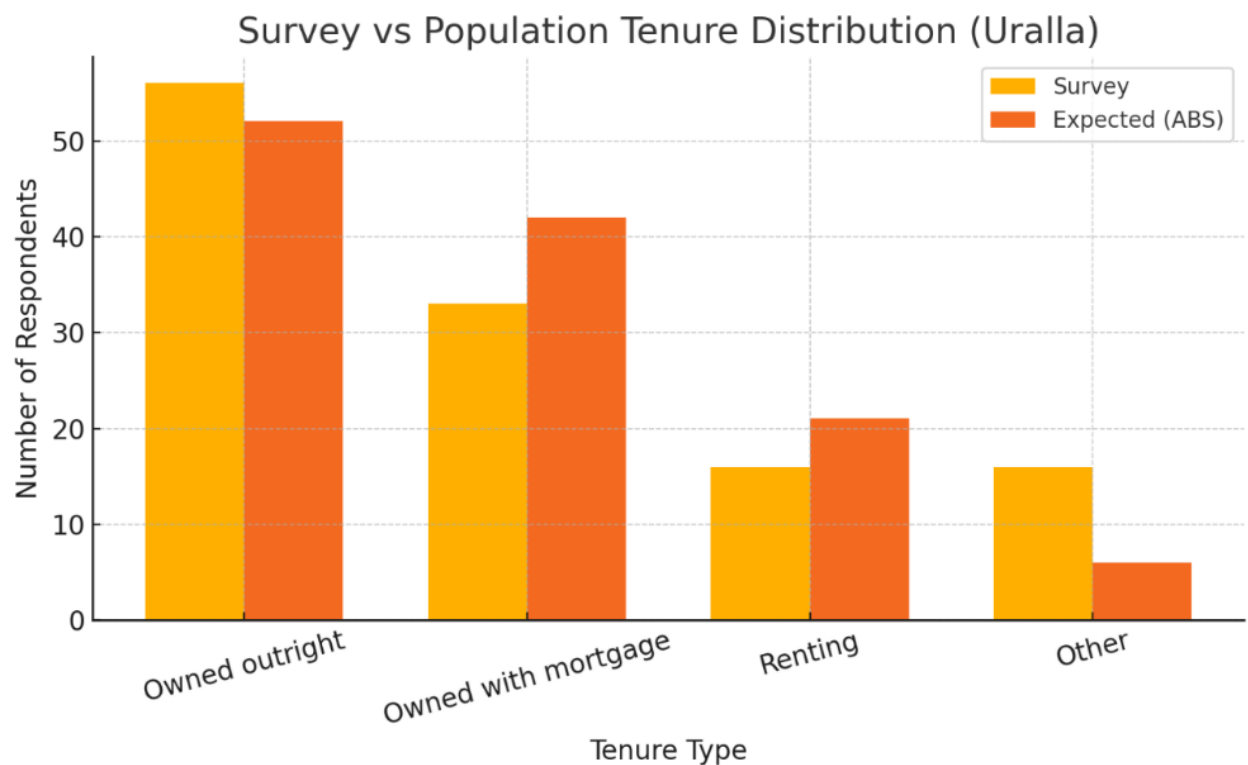
- Older residents (50–79) are overrepresented, meaning the responses are likely to skew towards the housing needs of that cohort.
- Younger residents (especially 0–34) are underrepresented, with no respondents aged 0–19.



Tenure

Housing tenure contributes to housing security. We asked respondents to nominate their tenure to learn more about the representativeness of our survey sample.

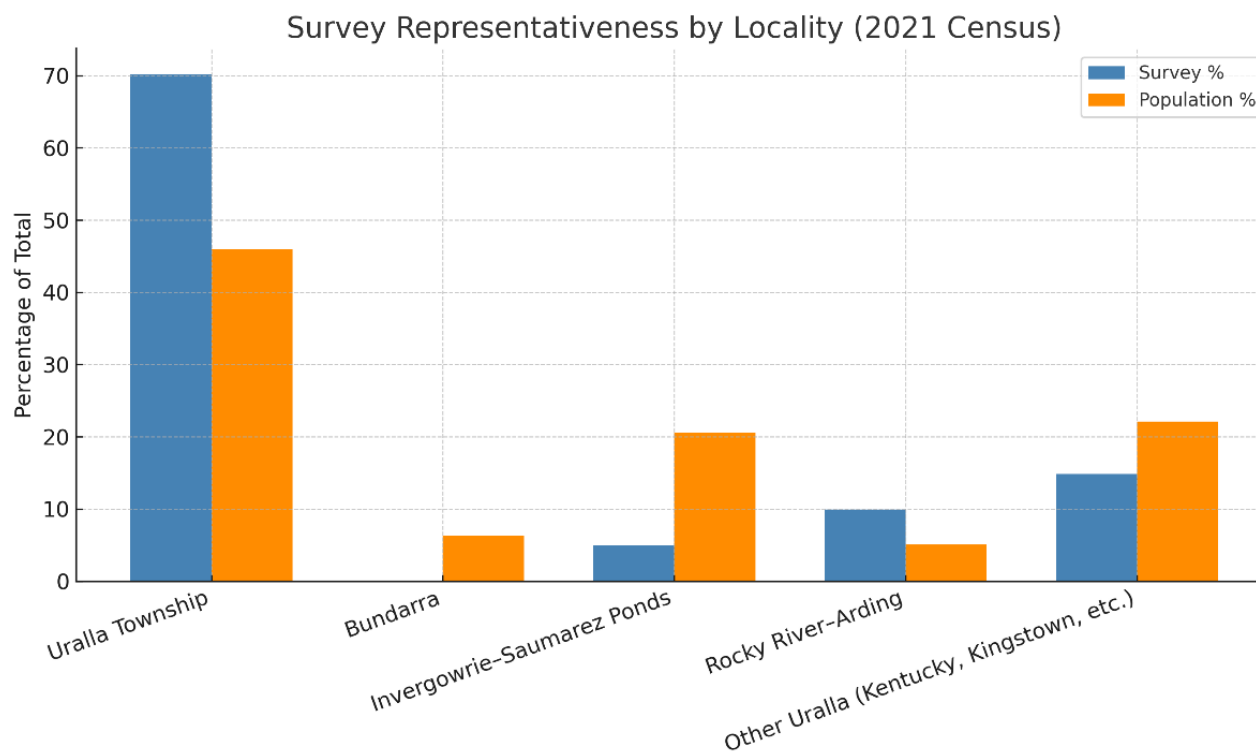
- Owner-occupiers (esp. owned outright) are slightly overrepresented
- Renters and ‘Other’ tenure types are underrepresented
- The “Other” category includes ownership of investment, commercial or rural land.



Location

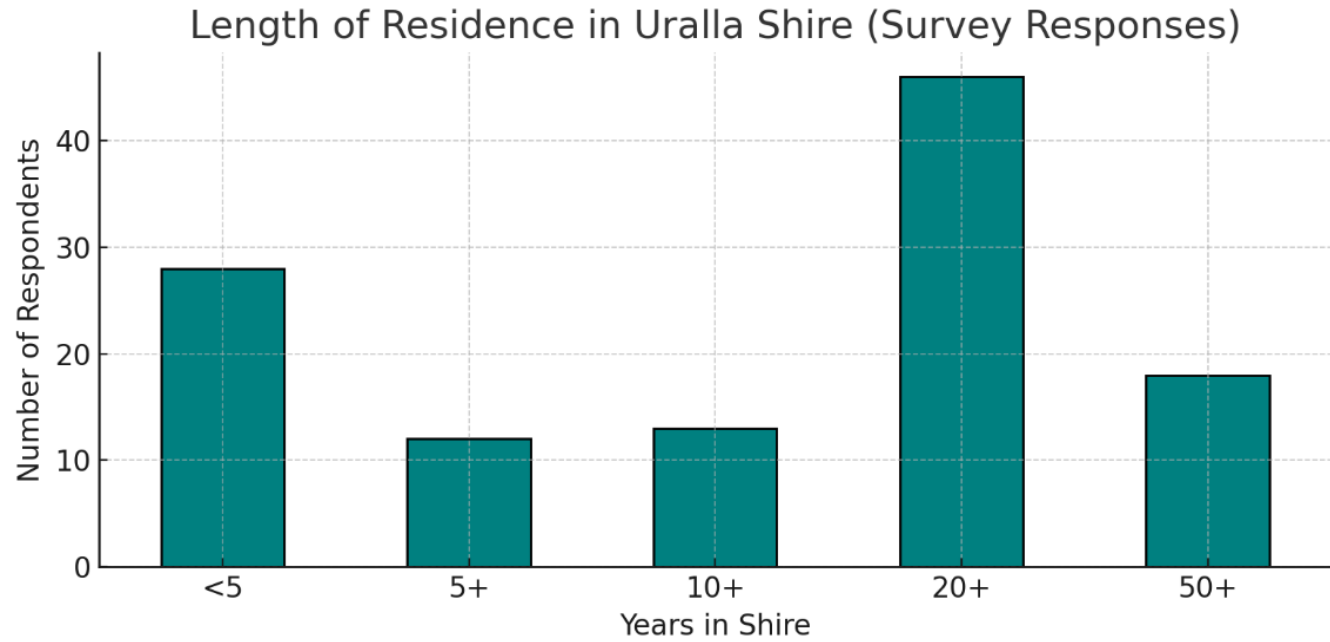
We asked survey respondents to nominate where in the Shire they lived.

- Uralla township was significantly overrepresented in the survey responses
- Invergowrie was significantly underrepresented.
- The survey did not elicit any responses from Bundarra
- Respondents from Rocky River were overrepresented compared to the proportion of residents who live in that locality.



Length of Residence

The largest group of survey respondents have lived in the Shire for over 20 years. Notably, 25% of survey respondents moved to the Shire in the last 5 years, i.e. during or after COVID.



Character and Footprint

What does Village Character mean to you?

Prompt: *During our initial consultation, we heard that Uralla’s existing “village character” was a highly valued attribute of our town. The draft strategy aims to protect the existing character. Some things that people said defined Uralla's "village character:" “The old buildings”, “Community mindedness”, “Can walk around the shops”, “Know where it begins and ends”, “Everyone knows each other”, “Shops are not chain stores”, “No obvious rich and poor divide”*

We asked this question to improve our understanding of what people value about Uralla, and test interpretation and assumption that existing scale and form was valued.

- This open-ended question generated over 100 unique responses.
- To better understand how the community defines “village character,” responses were thematically coded using an inductive, qualitative analysis approach.
- Eleven recurring themes were identified through manual review. Each response was tagged according to the themes it reflected, and representative direct quotes were selected to illustrate each theme in the community’s own words.

Theme	Illustrative quote
Community cohesion	<i>“It suggests a community that feels safe for everyone, where people acknowledge one another, where we celebrate diversity and support those who are vulnerable.”</i>
Heritage character	<i>“The history of our town in the older buildings.”</i>
Small population / social scale	<i>“Small, rural and supportive”</i> <i>“Keeping the town small not overpopulated”</i>
Distinctive identity	<i>“Maintaining a look and feel which is unique to Uralla. For example, heritage buildings, large blocks, parks, planting in public spaces, etc”</i>
Walkable / human scale	<i>“Easy access to shops, with these being all within walking distance.”</i>
Local business / anti-chain	<i>“Shops owned by families or individuals, no large chain stores or fast food outlets, village style main road, no large car parks, artisan shops as well as butcher, bakery and small supermarket...”</i>

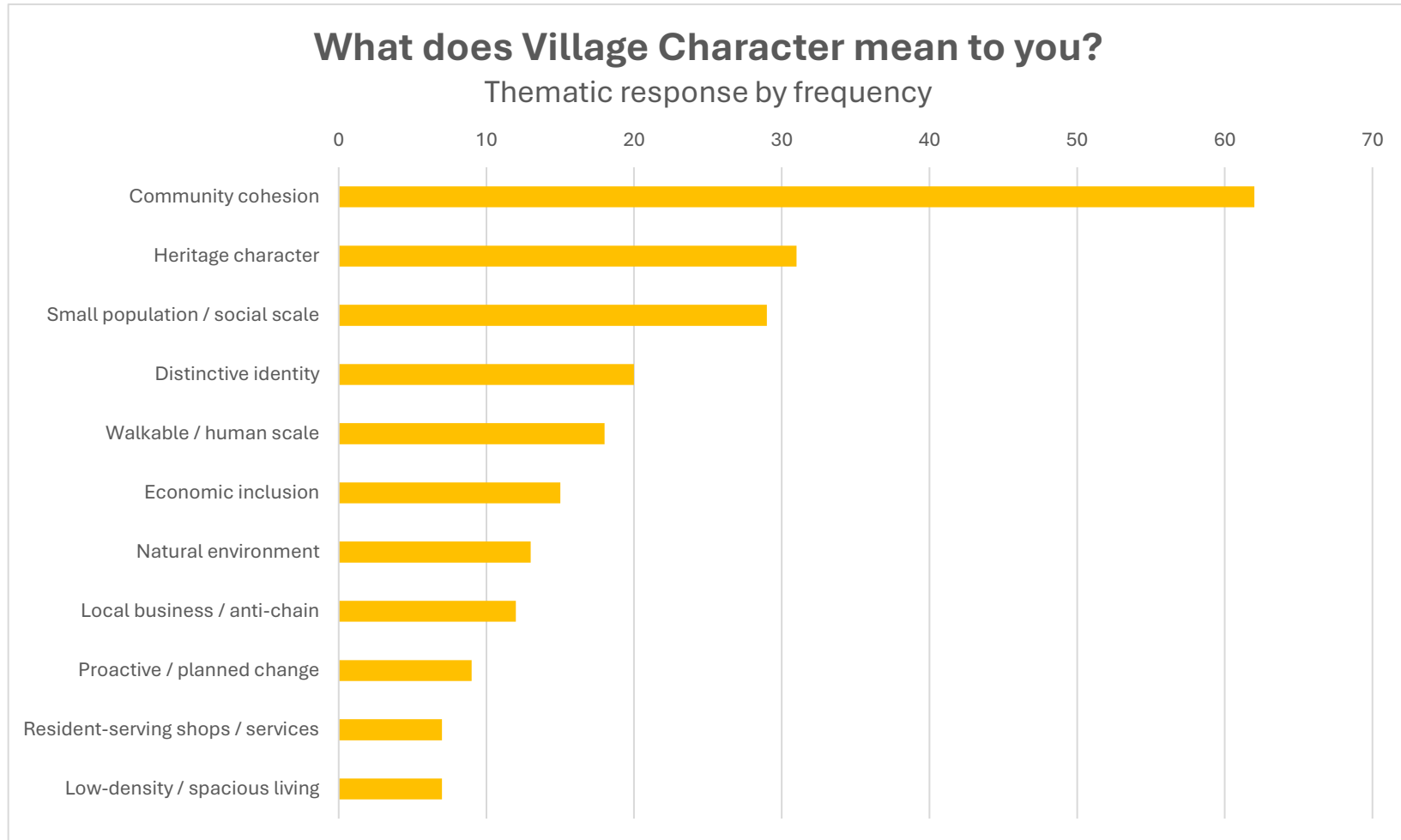
Resident-serving shops / services	<p><i>“It has a community feel where people can share. It does not exist just for business (eg. tourism), people’s needs are met.”</i></p> <p><i>“A readily accessible community where businesses, community groups, and services are serving local needs.”</i></p>
Natural environment	<p><i>“Protection of significant trees and heritage buildings, unique identity, strong “high street”.”</i></p> <p><i>“Beautiful environment including wildlife, dark skies, silence, waterways, space.”</i></p>
Economic inclusion	<p><i>“Everything, although the bigger it gets the more crimes happen... rents went up, housing prices went up.”</i></p> <p><i>“The Town needs to grow or the young professionals will leave.”</i></p>
Low-density / spacious living	<p><i>“Like the old and plenty of space”</i></p> <p><i>“Space between dwellings”</i></p>
Proactive / planned change	<p><i>“Local community atmosphere where council supports local population and businesses by fostering access to affordable housing alternatives with community involvement and support.”</i></p>

"Community cohesion emerged clearly as the most frequently mentioned theme. Respondents consistently described village character through social relationships: familiarity, safety, mutual support, and neighbourly interaction.

Other frequently mentioned themes that relate to the built-environment and/or urban form:

- heritage character,
- walkability, and
- low-density spaciousness

These themes appear to support or reinforce a lived experience of social cohesion. In other words: Built form matters, but as a container for community life.



What do you feel would negatively impact Uralla’s character?

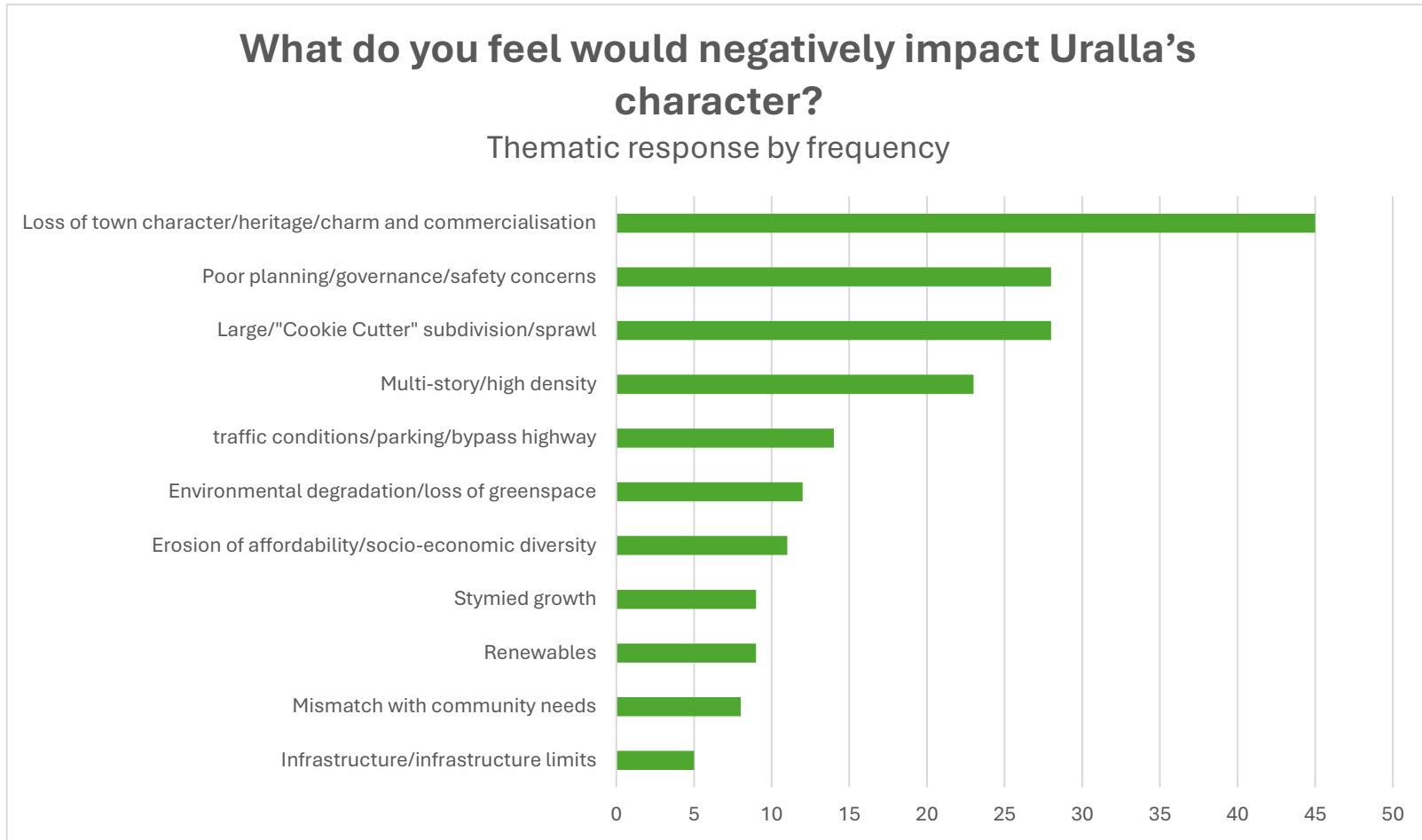
We asked this question to improve our understanding of what our community considered the greatest risks to what they value about Uralla.

The most frequently raised concern — mentioned in 45 responses — was the **loss of town character and heritage charm**, particularly in relation to the commercialisation of the town centre. Many respondents specifically referenced chain stores, large-scale retail, or fast food. Other frequently raised themes included:

- **“Cookie cutter” subdivisions or sprawl** (28 mentions): Fears about new housing estates lacking diversity or integration with the town’s character.
- **Poor planning, governance, or safety concerns** (28 mentions): Concerns about ad hoc decision-making, lack of infrastructure planning, and the perceived mismatch between growth and local capacity.
- **Multi-storey or high-density development** (23 mentions): Reluctance to accept vertical or dense housing forms, often linked to fears of urbanisation or loss of privacy and space.
- **Traffic conditions and bypass/highway impacts** (14 mentions): Concern with the impact of a (hypothetical) main street bypass, inadequate parking, or, the converse – continued disamenity from the highway.

Theme	Illustrative Quote
Loss of town character/ heritage/ charm; Commercialisation	<i>"High density housing, city people telling us how we should live/what's important, housing so close you can see into your neighbours windows, no lawn; chain stores; cookie-cutter houses;"</i>
Large/"Cookie Cutter" subdivisions/ sprawl	<i>"A subdivision that is like the foothills with project builders building the same house several times on tiny blocks"</i>
Poor planning/governance/safety concerns	<i>"Cut and pasting policies from other councils which ignore the unique characteristics of one of the smallest council areas in the state."</i>
Multi-story/high density	<i>"Chain stores, small blocks of land, crowded and small streets, multi-story buildings, modern buildings"</i>

traffic conditions/parking/bypass highway	<i>"Changing the rural component ie diverting the trucks" "If the highway bypassed the Main Street, congestion due to REZ, traffic delays."</i>
Environmental degradation/loss of greenspace	<i>"Erosion of green spaces. Sacrificing parks, waterways, and biodiversity."</i>
Erosion of affordability/socio-economic diversity	<i>"No matter your income, everyone gets along. If housing became too expensive, we would lose that sense of equality."</i>
Renewables	<i>"Wind turbines and too much solar."</i>
Stymied growth	<i>"Not supporting new business and housing." "Empty buildings and lots"</i>
Mismatch with community needs	<i>"Solar farms...Prices of housing, plenty of shops but aimed at tourist, no hardware, no new agency, locals have to do everything in Armidale, do we won't attract retirees."</i>
Infrastructure/infrastructure limits	<i>"Not maintaining current infrastructure, parks and gardens and historical sites within the shire."</i>



What do you think is important when considering new housing development?

This question asked respondents to rank seven housing development considerations **from most to least important**. The two most frequently selected as **most important** (ranked #1) were:

- “Good design with high environmental performance”
- “Affordable housing”

The option most frequently selected as **least important** (ranked #7) were:

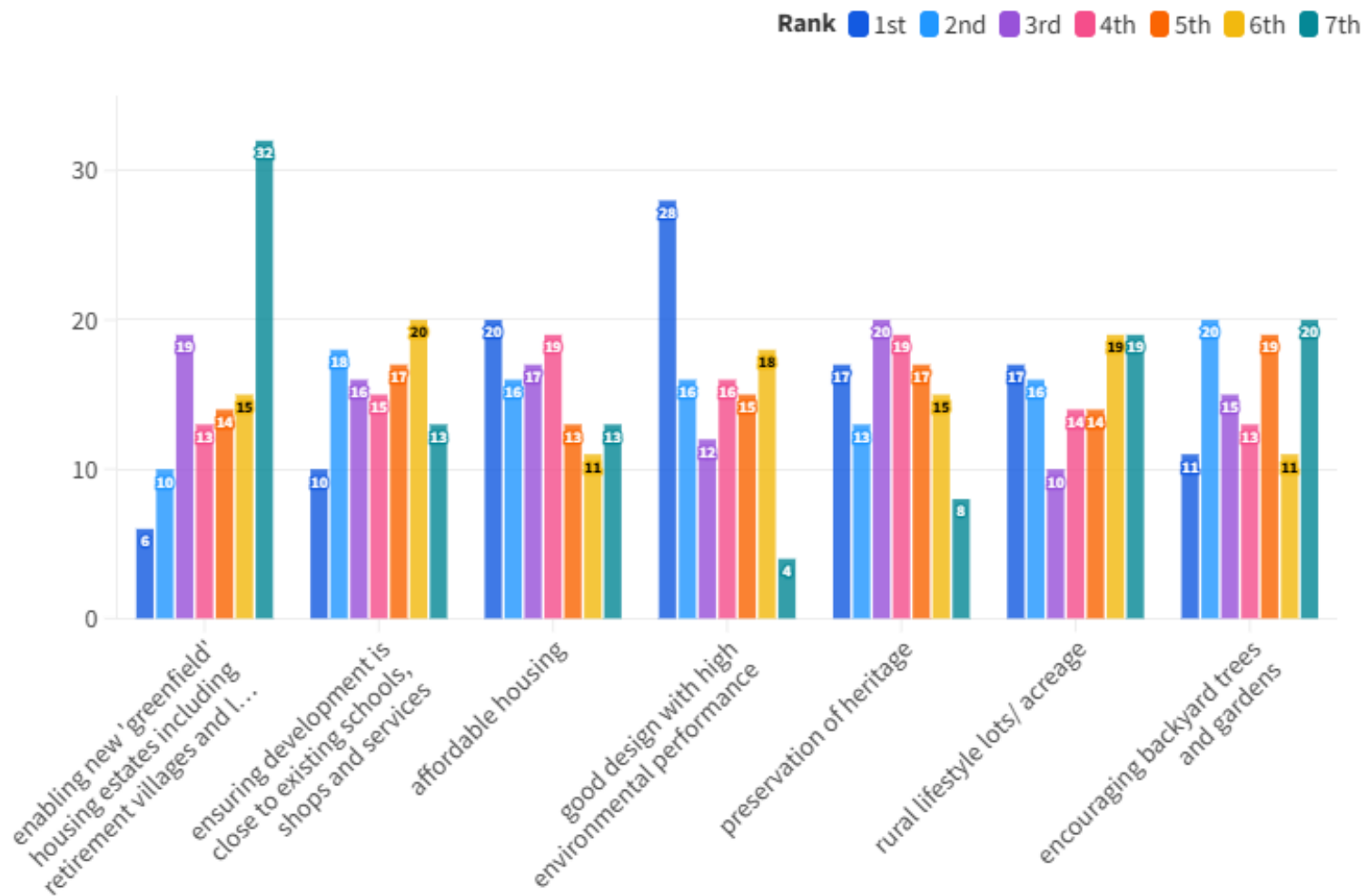
- “Enabling new ‘greenfield’ housing estates including retirement villages and land lease estates”

This suggests that respondents prioritise environmental quality and low-cost housing when thinking about future development in Uralla. Expansion-focused development is seen as less of a priority.

Considering the weighted average scores, private greening, accessible development, and rural lifestyle lots were rated with relatively similar importance, suggesting a moderate level of community support for these outcomes — neither dominant priorities nor strongly dismissed.

What do you think is important when considering new housing development?

Ranked responses



The community’s definitions of *village character* and their concerns about *development outcomes* provide a strong foundation for place-based planning principles - ensuring that future development reflects and supports what people already value about Uralla.

Responses suggests that when people talk about “village character,” they’re not only describing built form or visual aesthetics — they’re reflecting on what makes Uralla *feel* like a village: its social scale, relational intimacy, and sense of shared belonging. It also means that change is not inherently a threat — but it must be shaped with awareness of how social dynamics and spatial form are interrelated.

Residents are not opposed to growth in principle — but they are strongly opposed to:

- Uncoordinated or “outsider-driven” change,
- Development that undermines heritage, identity, or walkability, and
- Growth that appears to benefit external interests more than local needs.

The Housing Strategy’s objective to “*protect and maintain village character*” should be understood not only in terms of design or density, but in terms of **how planning decisions affect the conditions for social connectedness**. These include:

- **Scale:** Growth should be incremental and consistent with Uralla’s walkable, small-town structure — avoiding large subdivisions or disjointed developments.
- **Design:** Community preferences point clearly toward **diverse, low-rise, environmentally sound, and heritage-sensitive built form**
- **Commerce:** There is strong support for **local, independent businesses** and concern about chain stores or franchise-led development. Planning policy should reinforce the role of Uralla’s Bridge Street (and Bundarra’s Thunderbolts Way) precinct as a locally serving, socially active centres.
- **Environment:** The community values **open space, trees, and the rural setting**. Future development should respond to the landscape, and we should work to protect and enhance the Shire’s visual and ecological character.
- **Culture:** There is a strong desire to retain housing diversity and affordability to support social mix; Planning should encourage development forms that reinforce a sense of neighbourliness and belonging, improving accessibility to shared spaces and walkability.
- **Governance:** Planning must demonstrate **transparency, responsiveness, and genuine community engagement**. The community will support growth when they can see how it aligns with shared values and long-term vision.

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Community Vision</i>	<i>Community Concerns</i>
<i>Scale</i>	Small, walkable, connected	Large, sprawling developments
<i>Design</i>	Diverse, heritage-focused, rural	Uniform, suburban, high-density
<i>Commerce</i>	Independent, local shops	Chain stores, strip malls
<i>Environment</i>	Integrated, green, quiet	Loss of trees, overbuilt
<i>Culture</i>	Inclusive, friendly, cohesive	Gentrification, displacement
<i>Governance</i>	Local, engaged planning	Outsider-driven, rushed policies

Do you support more housing development in Rocky River?

Survey responses show support for land-use zoning that supports a **low-density, mixed-use future** for Rocky River — one that balances rural lifestyle living with small-scale farming, home-based businesses, and access to community spaces.

Do you support more housing development in Rocky River?



If you answered yes, which of the following best reflects the future development you'd like to see in Rocky River?

Of the open-ended responses (n34), several highlighted the potential for Rocky River to support the growth of Uralla’s existing artisan production:

“As it is so close to the township I don't think it needs to develop its own commercial centre. Individual small craft businesses would be a bonus for the town.”

Others questioned why Rocky River was the focus at all:

“Why is Rocky River the only option when people want to live in Uralla? Why not give building entitlements to all the lots in Kentucky? Before it was Invergowrie now Rocky River. Lets develop the ace in the pack Uralla.”

These comments highlight not only land-use preferences, but also the need for transparent decision-making about where growth is directed and why. While there is interest in a mixed-use future for Rocky River, there is also a clear call **strategic consideration of other localities**. These concerns were highlighted by DPHI and in several written submissions.

Which of the following best reflects the future development you'd like to see in Rocky River?

Rural living with farming and small businesses – larger properties with options for farming, farm stays, and rural businesses.

Small-scale farming and rural lifestyle – smaller lots for hobby farms, plant nurseries, home businesses, and farm gate sales.

Rural village with homes and shops – housing on smaller lots with the option for a local store, artisan food production, and community spaces.

Spacious residential lots – family homes on large blocks, with options for home offices or studios, but limited farming or businesses



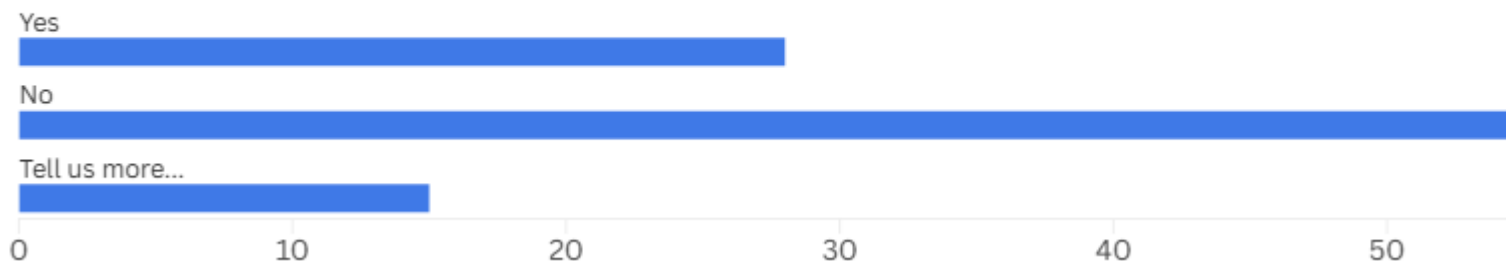
Land Supply

One of the most consequential findings in REMPLAN’s Key Issues Report was that there is sufficient supply of land within existing residential zones across the Shire to meet the projected demand for over 20 years. The following questions were designed to test assumptions and interpretations of the land supply audit.

Do you agree that we should prioritise development within existing towns and villages before rezoning rural land on the edge of townships?

53% of respondents support the strategy’s focus on utilisation of existing zoned land. 31% did not agree.

I would consider subdividing...



While many respondents agreed in principle with focusing development within the existing footprint, the write-in responses (*n*49) revealed a range of conditions, tensions, and practical constraints:

Barriers to infill development

Multiple responses questioned whether existing underutilised land is realistically available for housing. Concerns included:

- Landowners unwilling or unable to develop
- Financial and regulatory constraints (e.g. subdivision costs, infrastructure limitations)

“I suspect many of the homeowners on larger blocks might not be able to necessarily afford to subdivide — and if they can, why have they not already?”

“Council would need to incentivise and support landowners... even preparation of housing and engineering plans could go a long way.”

Support for targeted rezoning or edge-of-town development

Several responses expressed openness to limited rezoning, especially when tied to:

- Proximity to infrastructure
- Opportunities for small enterprise
- Integration with existing urban form

“Rezoning is required to give impetus to and attract small enterprise initiatives that requires larger land allocations than residential blocks.”

“If somebody has the land, the will and the resources and the land is close to existing infrastructure why not rezone so there can be more supply. I am not saying we should spread the town far and wide but allow this development to take place where it makes sense. For example, where land adjacent to town joins sporting facilities and golf clubs and is within a short distance to existing service infrastructure.”

Infrastructure and cost considerations

Respondents emphasised the need for clarity around infrastructure readiness and equitable cost-sharing:

“Any development (infill or otherwise) needs contribution policies in place. Cannot be ratepayer subsidised.”

Concerns about vacancy and housing efficiency

A few respondents raised the issue of **vacant dwellings** as a more immediate priority:

“Although reasonably new to town I am aware of more than 6 houses close to us that have been empty before we came to town and remain so. Several I am told are owned by the same person and it seems a bad situation when housing is an issue for that to be allowed. I feel that owners should be deterred from simply sitting on empty housing as an investment strategy by having to pay triple rates or something similar if a house is left empty for more than 12 months, until it becomes occupied for the same length of time.”

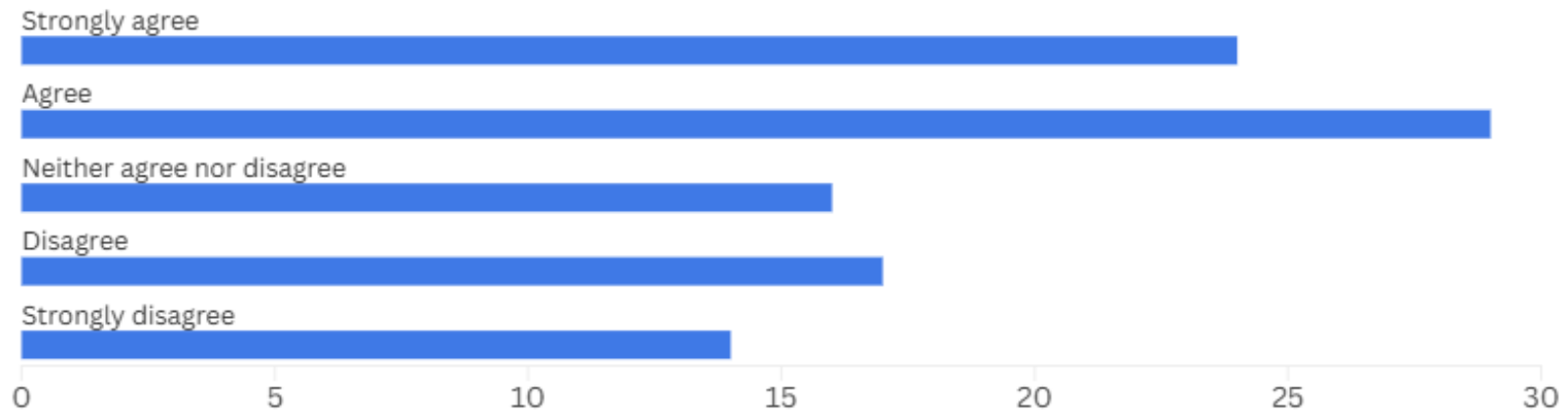
Protecting character while preparing for change

Several comments connected this issue to the REZ, emphasising the importance of **integration** with town character and long-term use:

“Where and how will the REZ workers be accommodated? And how will this be done such that... this accommodation area ‘seamlessly’ integrates with Uralla town’s ‘village character’?”

Overall, while the **strategic preference for infill is broadly supported**, many respondents stressed the need for flexibility, incentives, and site-by-site assessment — rather than a blanket approach.

Do you agree that we should prioritise development within existing towns and villages before rezoning rural land on the edge of townships?



I would consider subdividing ...

The survey asked: Do you own a large residential block in Uralla or Bundarra township? (over 1200sqm) and if so, would you consider subdivision.

45 respondents indicated that they owned a residential block in Uralla or Bundarra over 1200sqm, while 15 were unsure. Of those respondents, only 28 would consider subdividing.

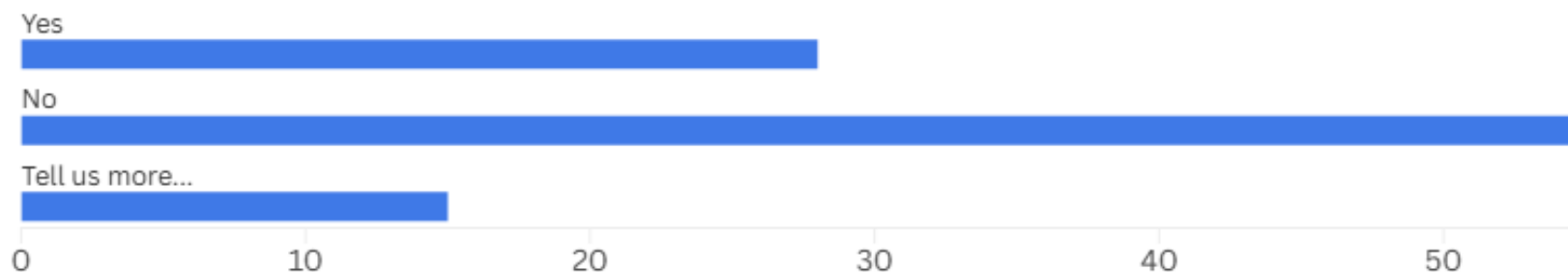
Open ended responses indicated that improving the process would be beneficial.

“Would consider proceeding with subdivision if current planning processes and procedures were reviewed and made easier”

There was more positive sentiment for the potential of granny flats and/or dual occupancies.

“I don't think we should crowd people into small blocks. Yes to granny flats NO to postage stamp sized blocks, there is no need, make use of the land around the town of Uralla.”

I would consider subdividing...



I would consider putting a granny flat or another dwelling (dual occupancy) on my lot...

Responses to this question reflected a mix of support, conditional interest, and concern about dual occupancy and secondary dwellings (such as granny flats).

Most were **supportive**, especially where these housing types could enable **ageing in place, affordability, or flexible living arrangements**:

“Personally, I would do it for myself as I age — I’d keep the big house to rent out and live in the granny flat.”

Another group indicated **conditional support**, depending on factors like **block size, privacy, and Council processes**:

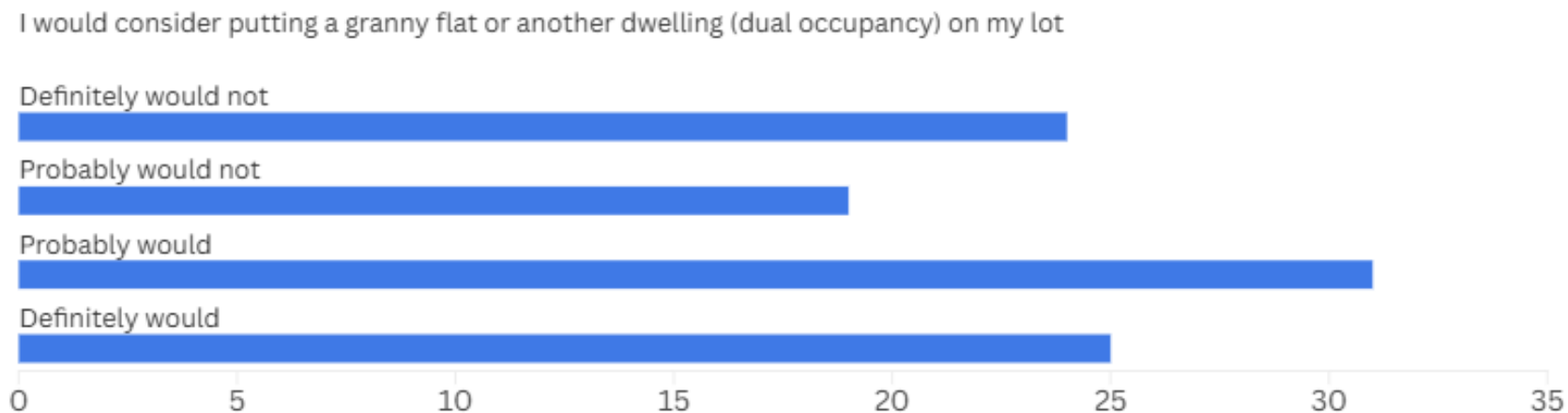
“Privacy is one consideration.”

“We did consider it but at the time found the Council not very helpful or supportive.”

A smaller number of respondents were **unsupportive**, often citing concerns about the character of rural living or the potential for overcrowding:

“Country towns have large blocks — not jam packed.”

A notable number of respondents also indicated they **already have a secondary dwelling**, suggesting that this form of housing is not uncommon and may already be shaping how Uralla residents live and plan for the future.



What do you consider the most useful action Council could take to facilitate development?

The draft strategy makes several recommendations around Council support and facilitation of development. These were developed through the early engagement we undertook with landholders and developers. This question helped us to determine which of these recommendations were considered helpful.

The options most frequently selected as **most important** (ranked #1) was:

- Clearer procedures for development approvals, engineering standards, and communication with stakeholders.
- Create guides or toolkits for subdivisions and multi dwelling developments.

The option most frequently selected as **least important** (ranked #4) was:

- Establish a regular landowner/ developer forum

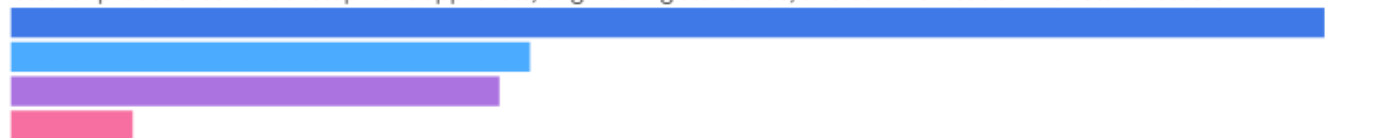
Thinking about your own experience and/or plans for the future, what do you consider the most useful action Council could take to facilitate development? (1 being the most useful and 4 being the least)

1 2 3 4

Establish a regular landowner/ developer forum



Clearer procedures for development approvals, engineering standards, and communication with stakeholders.



Create guides or toolkits for subdivisions and multi dwelling developments.



Publically available maps of infrastructure assets



0 10 20 30 40

Addressing the needs of older people

We need more options for retirement and independent living within the Uralla township.

85% of respondents were supportive and the question elicited 32 open-ended responses which reflect a clear sense of urgency and empathy. One respondent put it simply: *“I know of many 'elderly' singles in large homes with nowhere else to go.”*

Another, drawing from direct experience, added:

“My job involves working with some of the most vulnerable and elderly in our community and they have very limited options to live in, especially if they have always rented. We also need to consider pets in this situation and accommodate for them.”

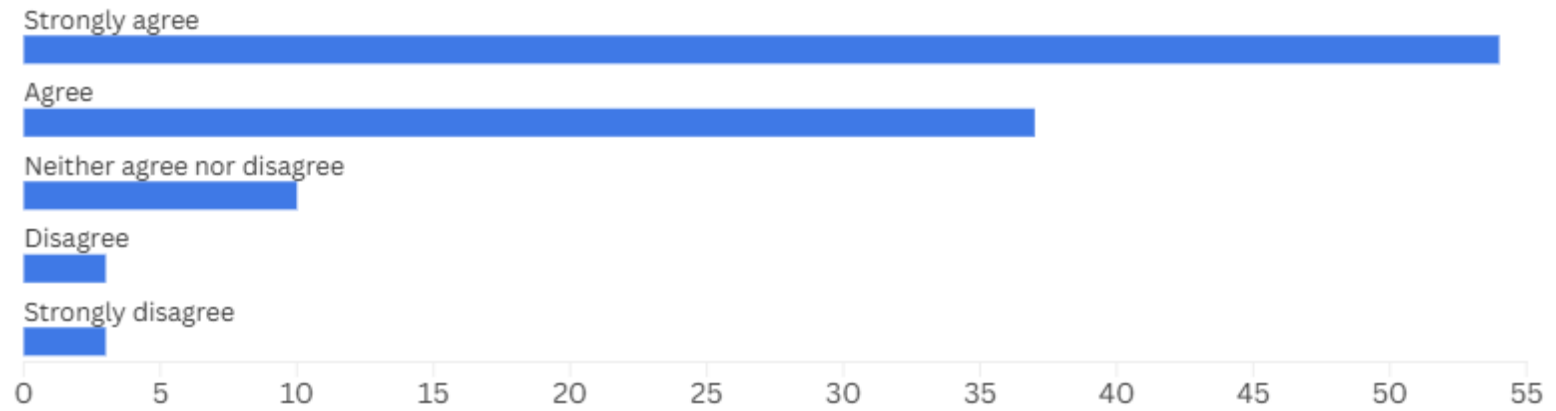
Key themes:

1. **Shortage of appropriate options** — for older people who are not ready for a nursing home but can't maintain their current homes
2. **Desire to stay in Uralla** — some feared having to leave town due to a lack of housing options.
3. **Support for independent units, villages, or low-maintenance housing** — clustered, walkable options were mentioned positively

“A village that then removes the need for retirees to be responsible for maintenance of grounds and the building.”

4. **Concern about supporting all demographics** — some noted that housing suitable for older people, would also support younger demographic moving to the area.
5. **Broader infrastructure needs** — including transport, healthcare, and support services for older people

We need more options for retirement and independent living within the Uralla township.



Thinking about the future, what kind of housing will you need next?

Most respondents (n99) reflected thoughtfully on their future housing needs, with the majority anticipating a move toward **smaller, lower-maintenance, or more affordable housing** as they age. Some expect to stay in their current homes, while others are planning ahead for decline in mobility, health, or financial capacity.

“Preferably a coffin but I could need nursing care for my wife and supported accommodation although I do not envisage it at this stage.”

“Smaller housing fitted for independent living for aged people. We will likely need to move interstate to be close to family when age overtakes our ability to look after ourselves.”

Several responses mentioned **affordability** and the need for housing that supports independent living without burden:

“Smaller house, more affordable rent.”

A number of respondents expressed a strong desire to remain where they are, a few humourously or frankly addressing end-of-life needs:

“We will stay in our home until we die.”

“None. When I hit 80 and need supported independent living, I'll just walk into my dam with lead boots on.”

Alongside these practical and reflective responses, a smaller group shared **aspirational housing goals** — including larger blocks, family homes, or semi-rural living arrangements:

“Family home on lifestyle block with option to build granny flat for grandparents.”

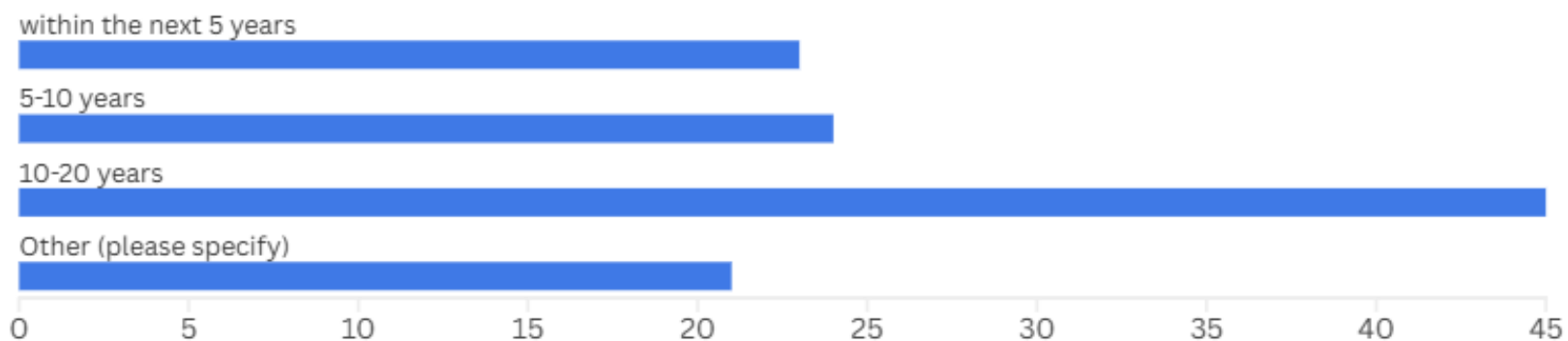
While future needs vary, the dominant message reinforces the key directions of the draft strategy.

When do you think you might want/need to transition?

Over half of respondents (51%) indicated they would need or want to transition to a different form of housing within the next 10 years. This suggests that a substantial number of existing residents may be seeking more appropriate housing **during the construction period of New England Renewable Energy Zone.**

Among those who selected “Other,” most expressed a desire to remain in their current homes indefinitely, reinforcing the strong preference for ageing in place.

When do you think you might want/need to transition?

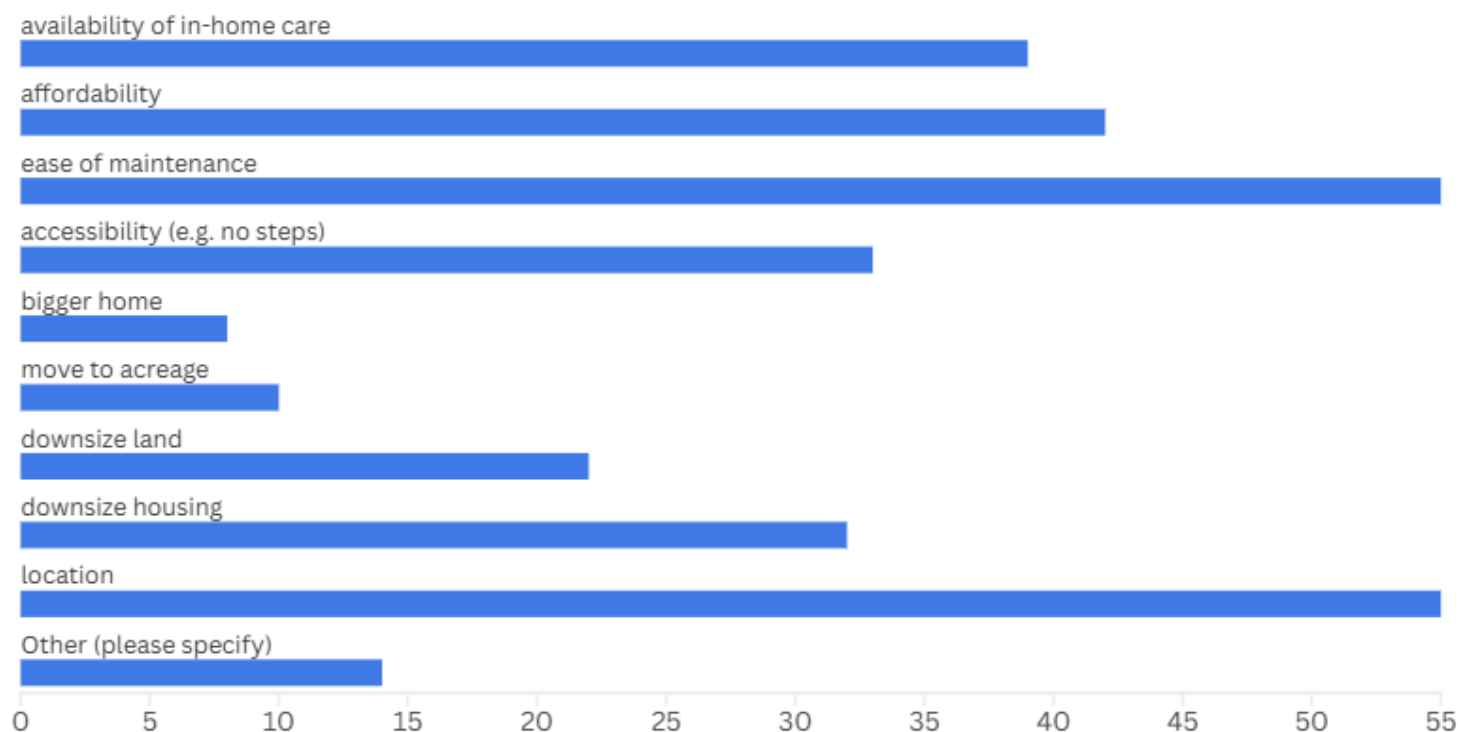


What other factors will influence your next move?

When asked what factors would influence their next move, respondents most frequently cited **ease of maintenance** and **location**, followed closely by **affordability** and **accessibility**.

In contrast, relatively few indicated a desire for a **bigger home** or to **move to acreage**, highlighting a strong preference for smaller, manageable, and well-located housing that supports ageing in place.

What other factors will influence your next move? (tick all that apply)



Dwelling Size

The survey posed a range of questions designed to test the assumption that there is a supply mismatch between larger family-sized homes and smaller household size within the Shire.

Are you happy with the size of your home?

Most respondents expressed satisfaction with their current housing, even when it exceeds their daily functional needs.

Open-ended responses (*n*36) highlight that **perceived suitability is personal and contextual** — not solely about number of bedrooms or floorplan efficiency. For many, extra space is seen as an asset that enables autonomy, connection, or lifestyle continuity. For many, spare bedrooms and extra space serve meaningful purposes — such as accommodating visitors, supporting hobbies or remote work, or contributing to a sense of wellbeing and flexibility.

“We have a four bedroom home and are a married couple with no children... It’s a perfect setup for us.”

“More bedrooms than is needed on a daily basis doesn’t mean wasted space... Having options for friends and family to visit is important for mental and physical wellbeing.”

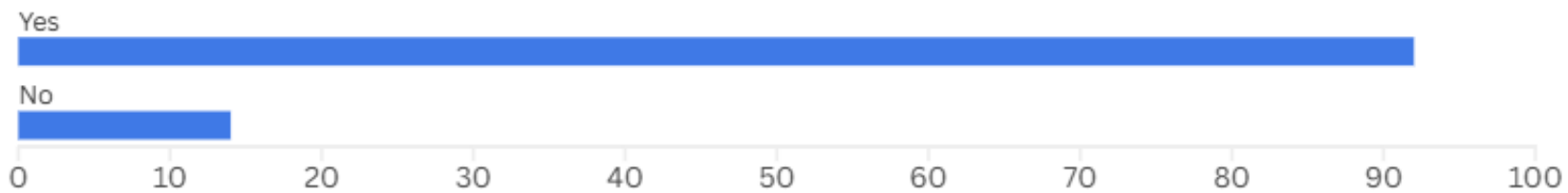
Others mentioned specific adjustments that would improve suitability, including:

- Ability to subdivide land
- Desire for larger homes or blocks
- Improved accessibility or thermal performance

“If I could subdivide land to smaller land area.”

“Larger home and land.”

Are you happy with the size of your home?



Is there anything that might make it difficult for you to downsize or downsize within Uralla Shire?

Due to a formatting error in the survey, respondents were only able to select **one option** rather than multiple as intended. Many of the write-in responses pointed out this error.

Despite the limitation, the open-ended responses (*n*31) provide insight into how people think about downsizing in Uralla. A number of respondents expressed no interest in downsizing, either because they were satisfied with their current living arrangements or resistant to the idea in principle:

“Simply do not want to do it.”

The most frequent response was a **lack of suitable options** — not just in terms of housing stock, but also the broader infrastructure needed to support it:

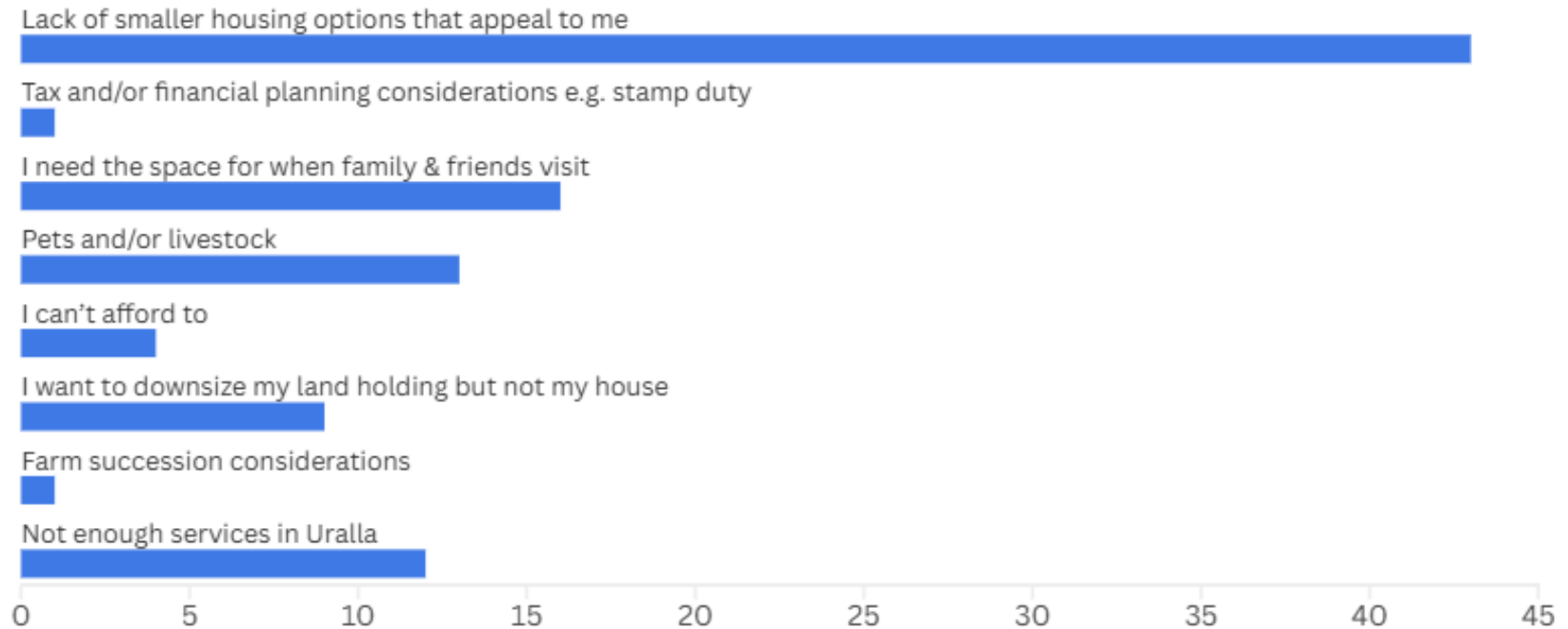
“No real options to downsize.”

“Need a taxi service, footpaths.”

“If I did have to leave my current home, the lack of smaller housing options is an issue — as is the lack of services in Uralla. The recent crisis wrought by the GP leaving is a case in point.”

Overall, these comments suggest that downsizing is not just a housing question — it’s about access to services, appropriate design, and preserving quality of life.

Is there anything that might make it difficult for you to downsize or downsize within Uralla Shire?



Housing Affordability

The survey asked several questions related to housing affordability. These were designed to test early engagement support for the provision of housing for people on low incomes, and the recommendation related to the use of Council owned land for housing.

Do you agree that people on low incomes should be able to find housing in Uralla?

Respondents expressed strong support for affordable housing in Uralla. Write-in responses (n34) expressed a need for a diverse and balanced housing mix in Uralla — both in terms of housing types (e.g. size, form) and housing tenures (e.g. ownership, rental, affordability).

Many saw this mix as essential to a healthy and inclusive community:

“A vibrant community ideally consists of souls from all walks of life, so we don't want an obvious privileged enclave nor a ghetto — a ghettoenclave.”

Some saw housing diversity as key to attracting new families and supporting local institutions like schools:

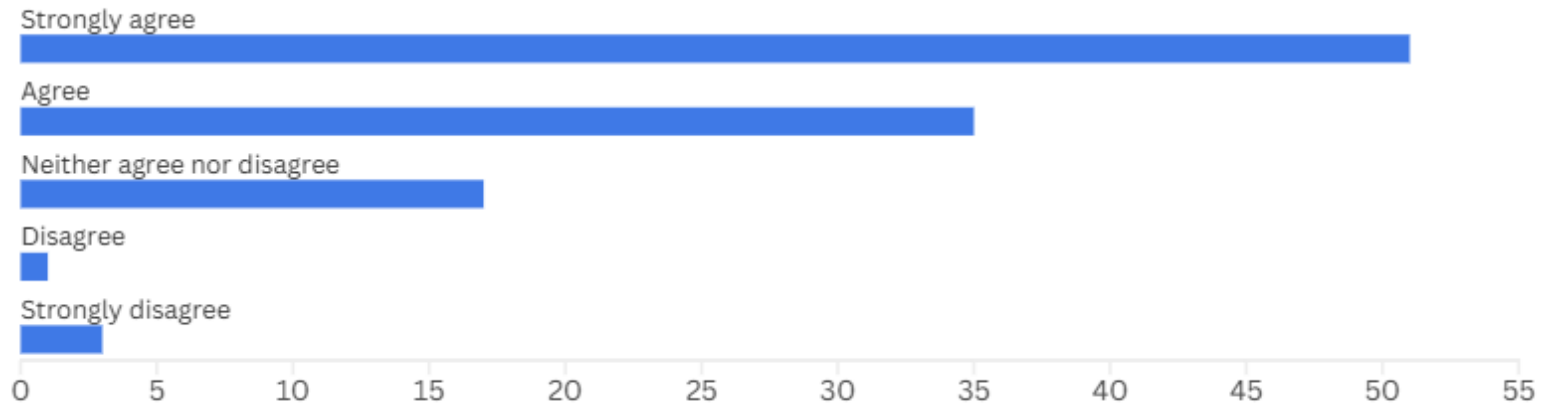
“If you want to attract families to Uralla, which will help the town, school etc, we need more affordable family homes to rent and to buy. Uralla is becoming way overpriced.”

A smaller number of responses expressed caution about over-concentrating disadvantage or introducing social problems, particularly given Uralla’s limited-service capacity:

“There should be a balance of low income and other tiers of income... Social problems related to an unbalanced socioeconomic population would ruin the peaceful and harmonious character of Uralla.”

Overall, the open-ended responses reflect a desire for **balance and integration** — not uniformity or exclusion — and a recognition that housing mix must be matched with services and infrastructure.

Do you agree that people on low incomes should be able to find housing in Uralla?



Do you agree that Council-owned land should be used for affordable housing?

Most respondents (60%) supported using Council land for housing. Write-in responses (n33) indicate that this support is conditional on Council “making the case” for a specific site.

There was strong interest in innovative and inclusive approaches, including co-operatives, modular housing, and Community Land Trusts:

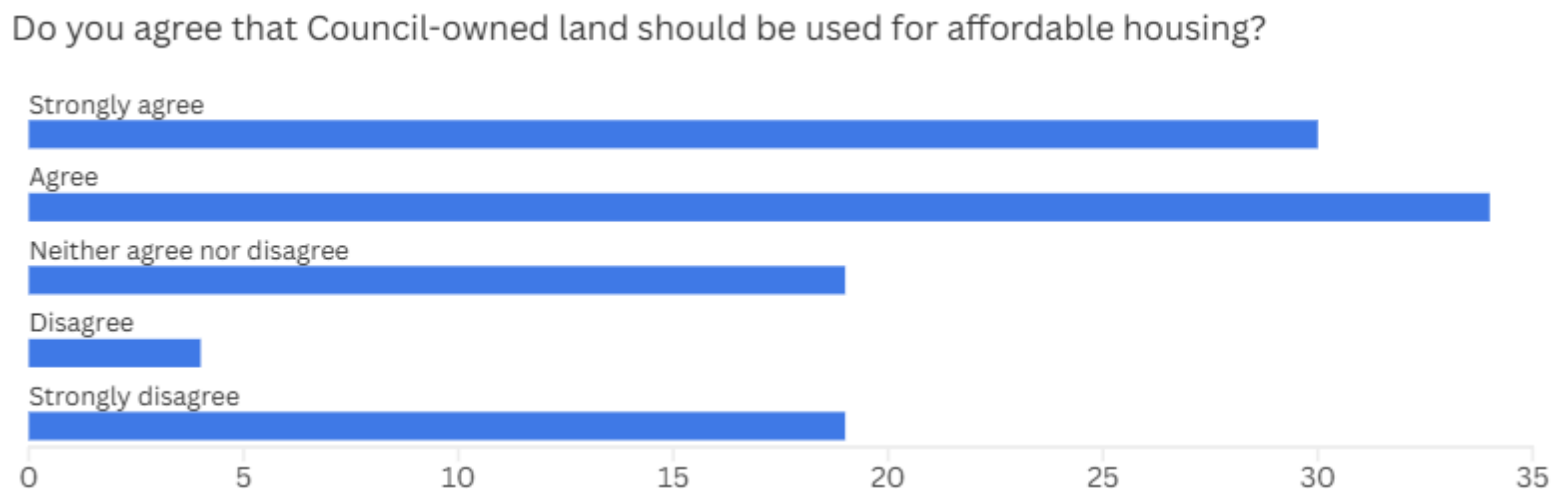
“I would like to see Council explore a range of options for providing affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing solutions driven by local needs.”

Others emphasised the importance of community fit and tenant behaviour:

“Only if consideration is given to local community as priority, and if tenants are respectful of the amenity provided.”

Some respondents stressed the need for due diligence:

“Subject to a good business case.”



Ensuring a positive legacy from the REZ

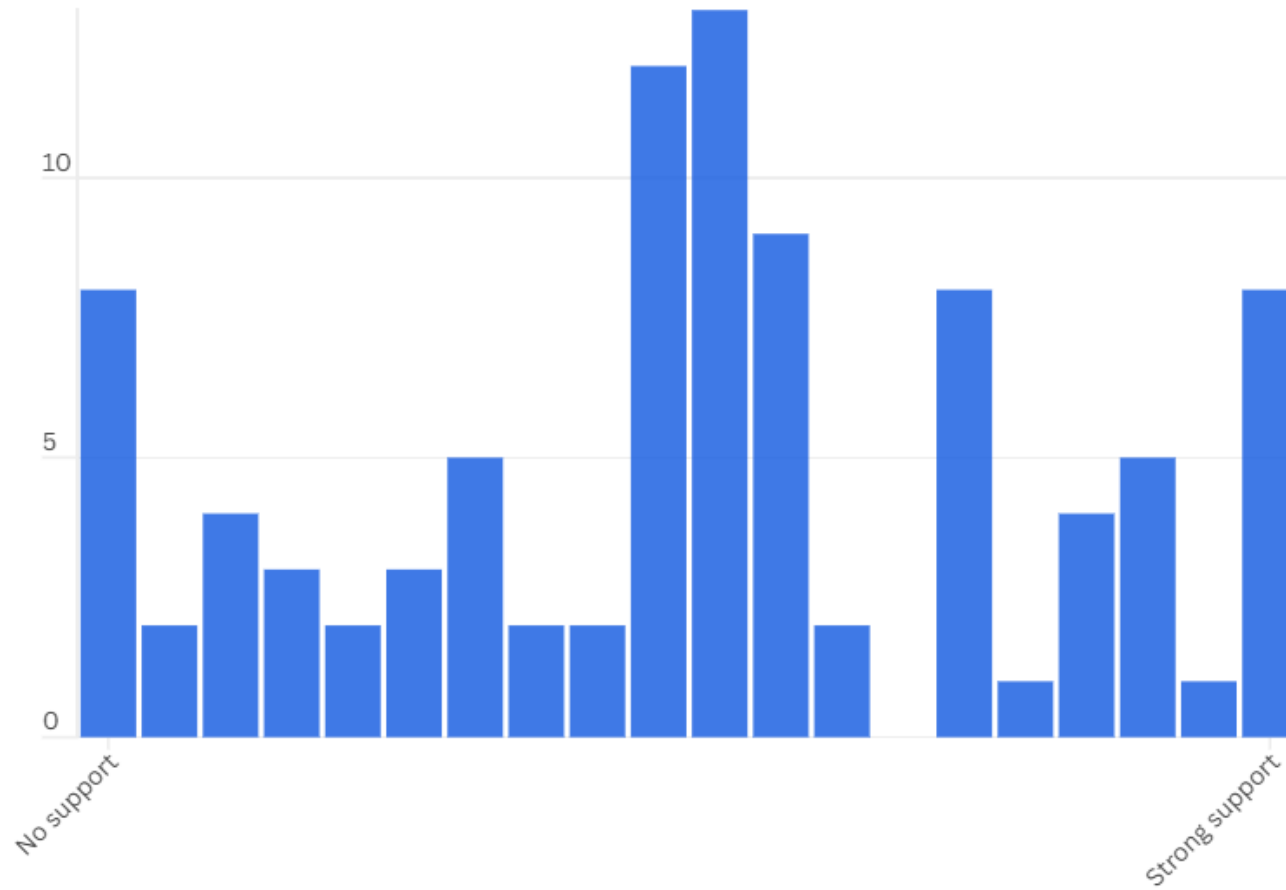
Addressing the housing and accommodation impacts of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) was a central focus of the Strategy. Survey questions tested Council’s working hypothesis—reflected in the draft strategy—that a centralised facility near town would offer mutual benefits for both developers and the community, enabling a shared, coordinated response while generating economic activity for Uralla’s businesses and service providers.

Do you support the idea of Council identifying a large site near town for shared temporary workers' accommodation?

This question asked respondents to adjust a slider from 0 – 100 position to indicate the strength of their support for a large site near town being identified for temporary workers' accommodation.

The distribution of responses suggests **moderate overall support** for the idea of Council identifying land for temporary workers accommodation — but with a wide range of views, from strong endorsement to clear opposition.

Do you support the idea of Council identifying a large site near town for shared temporary workers' accommodation?



How could a workers camp provide a positive legacy?

Most respondents viewed the potential legacy of a worker’s camp as tied to long-term housing reuse. The dominant theme was support for **repurposing worker accommodation into affordable or retirement housing** after the REZ construction period:

“Designed in a way that the roads, power, sewer, water, etc. could be converted to a residential suburb after the REZ is complete.”

“Leave every 4th unit in place maybe for small housing and affordability — in a strategic position of course if it's not an eyesore.”

Other key themes included:

The **opportunity to upgrade infrastructure** such as roads, water, sewer, and energy systems to facilitate future residential development.

Economic benefits from increased population and spending:

“Money in town, more young people about the place.”

“[A camp] keeps the rent down in town.”

Some respondents emphasised the importance of **good design and integration** with the community:

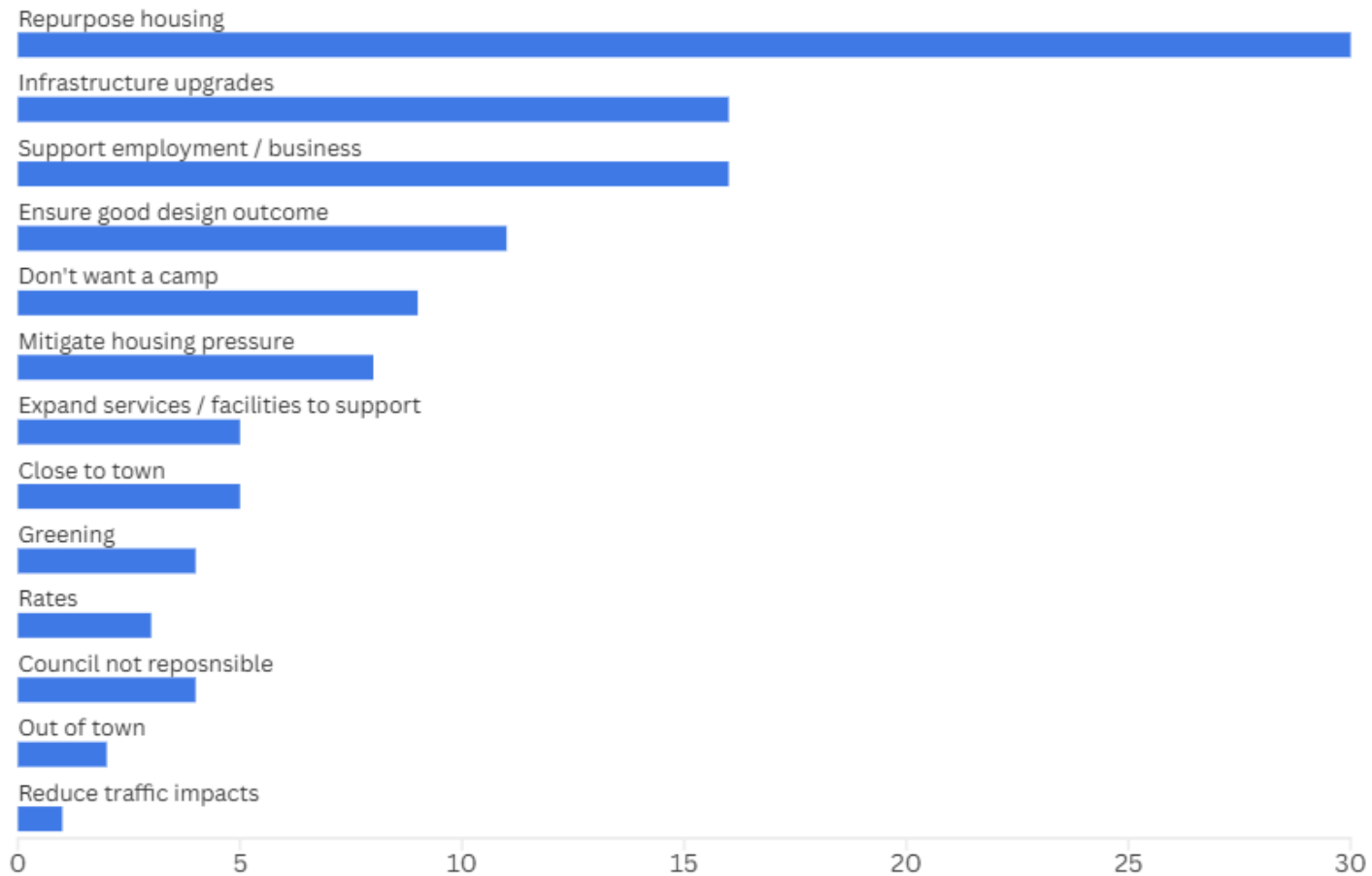
“The housing needs to be integrated into town, designed well for appealing, sustainable, reusable housing.”

A smaller group were opposed in principle, citing past experiences or concern about impacts:

“It wouldn’t [provide a positive legacy], as we have seen from the past and when you talk to other towns that have them it’s not a good idea for the community.”

Overall, the responses suggest cautious optimism — with strong support for legacy outcomes if the camp is designed for adaptability and long-term value.

How could a workers camp provide a positive legacy?



Thinking about the future planning for Uralla Township, what do you think Council needs to be attentive to?

The final survey question invited broad reflections on what Council should be attentive to in planning for Uralla’s future. Several key themes emerged from the open-ended responses (n95):

Creative, context-specific planning

- Strong resistance to generic or “big city” suburban models.
- Preference for planning that reflects Uralla’s distinct identity and community values.

“Uralla deserves creative solutions, not recycled suburban templates from bigger cities.”

Heritage and character protection

- Repeated emphasis on preserving Uralla’s heritage, tree canopy, and open space.
- Frustration about underutilised heritage surveys not informing planning instruments like the LEP.

“Uralla’s main drawcard is its conserved heritage — not just the charming buildings, but its trees and open spaces... Yet [heritage survey findings] were never made overtly public, nor included in Council’s LEP.”

Community resilience and social infrastructure

- Desire to maintain tight-knit social bonds and avoid erosion by transient populations.
- Interest in community-owned retail and local service diversity (e.g. hardware, grocers).

“Maintaining community. As we don’t have many services in our town, we really rely on each other and neighbours to help out in a crisis. This is the beauty of living in a small town. Bringing in transient workers can destroy this very quickly as they don’t often bring community or trust with them.”

“Look at a broader role in supporting the kind of community we want to be. We have cafes, shops the tourists like but no hardware store, no fruit and veg shop etc. There are interesting models in the UK and Europe for community owned and operated ventures.”

Industrial and employment land supply

- Specific references to the need for serviced industrial land (e.g. depot relocation, business clusters).

- Desire to activate vacant commercial land and support local enterprise.

"I think the Council needs to develop their land on the tip road to encourage industrial businesses to that area including the Council depot, fire station etc. This could also free up space within the township for development. I think when business owners and developers initiate development and ideas that benefit the town, Council should do everything in their power to provide support and resources where possible. In addition, there seems to be some vacant commercial buildings/land in Hill Street. Can Council approach landowners to see how they can help provide support to initiate building and development."

Enabling growth

- Responses frequently recognised the need for housing and economic growth
- Calls for increased greenfield development opportunities, as well as strategic approaches to smaller settlements e.g. Kentucky, Rocky River etc
- Calls for streamlined subdivision and rezoning processes, especially on well-located blocks.

"Streamlining council's own procedures and reducing time take to actually do anything"

"Making it easier for people to subdivide larger blocks "

Essential and support infrastructure

- Requests for increased police and ambulance presence, footpaths, parking, taxi services, and water/sewer extensions.
- Broader theme of infrastructure lagging growth pressures.

"Uralla having an ambulance station. Good policing including nights and weekends."

"The cost of housing and a lack of services such as taxi"

Transport and connectivity

- Acknowledgement that walkability and public transport are key for accessibility and sustainability.

"Transport connections- more walkability of the town and better public transport connections are the way forward."

Is there any other feedback you would like to provide?

This final question served as a catch-all. 63 respondents provided additional feedback, reinforcing major themes from the survey:

- A desire for balanced growth that preserves Uralla’s identity
- Focus on equity, diversity, and sustainability
- Recognition of Council’s efforts and a strong sense of community pride

Written Submissions

13 written submissions were received. These submissions are considered in detail below:

<i>Submission</i>	<i>Themes</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>LHS Action</i>	<i>Reason</i>
<i>Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure</i>	Strategic alignment	Offers detailed feedback to ensure alignment with State policies and guidelines.	Amend sections as requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to include additional justification of increased lot sizes in Invergowrie. - Consider approach with Racecourse Rd. Planning Proposal. - Need to refer to the <i>New England Development Strategy 2010</i>. 	The submission reflects the Department’s role in approving the Strategy and provides valuable implementation feedback.
	Mapping accuracy			
	Rocky River zoning	Suggests clearer articulation of the purpose and relationship of the Key Issues Paper and Housing Strategy.		Council will update mapping references, review and include Invergowrie lot size evidence, and clarify Racecourse Rd’s treatment as a candidate for future assessment under Action 4.1.
	Invergowrie lot sizes			
	Racecourse Rd proposal	Recommends reviewing zoning review actions for Rocky River, checking background studies supporting lot size maps in Invergowrie, and providing clearer treatment of the Racecourse Rd Planning Proposal — including whether it is supported or not.	Remove action 4.2 for Rocky River rezoning. Add in new action for rural land study/GMS.	Rocky River will no longer be a standalone priority and instead will be assessed as part of a broader Rural Lands Strategy/UGS incorporating all smaller rural townships and zones.
		Supports the Strategy’s general emphasis on infill development.	Add new Rural Lands Strategy action to guide rural settlement planning.	
			Clarify treatment of Racecourse Rd Planning Proposal.	

Homes NSW

Affordable housing	Supportive of the LHS.	No change to LHS.	The submission is supportive of the strategy direction and actions particularly those focussed on affordable housing.
Community Housing Providers	Highlights the opportunity and benefits of transferring ownership of affordable housing on council sites to Community Housing Providers. Offers information and further assistance in delivering LHS.		

Transport for NSW

REZ workforce housing, Infrastructure planning, Road safety	Notes the Strategy’s consideration of REZ-related worker accommodation and provides comments on infrastructure and traffic management for potential future accommodation camps. Emphasises the importance of considering cumulative traffic impacts, sight distances, intersection design, and proximity to services when identifying sites. Recommends Council explore coordinated transport access and pick-up/drop-off points to reduce pressure on the road network.	No change	The submission provides technical input to support future implementation and site assessment rather than suggesting changes to the Strategy’s policy direction. Council will retain these recommendations for consideration during the planning and assessment of specific worker accommodation proposals, in line with Action 2.1.
---	---	-----------	--

Mrs. Sonia Williams

Greenfield development	Question the appropriateness of forecasting future demand on basis of past trends.	No change to LHS.	The Strategy balances growth and infrastructure capacity. While the Key Issues Report notes current zoned supply is adequate for 20+ years of growth, the Strategy also includes actions to review delivery constraints and enable rezonings if demand is demonstrated (see Action 4.4 & 4.7).
REZ growth potential		Potential to loosen or change language to be clearer on rezoning for retirement living.	
Retirement living	Critiques the Strategy’s reliance on infill development, arguing it risks overloading infrastructure, ignores market demand for new release areas, and excludes opportunities for larger developers.		
Infrastructure			
Private sector delivery	Raises Racecourse Road site (landholder) as a missed opportunity and requests greater diversity in growth areas and housing choice.		
			Retirement housing and worker accommodation are identified as key needs.
			Support for retirement housing in the LHS is general in nature to support a range of options and does not suggest that is it solely focussed on dispersed infill to the exclusion of other typologies.

Simon Halcrow - Design Build Instruct

Racecourse Rd Planning Proposal	Lodged on behalf of proponents of the Racecourse Rd Planning Proposal.	Amend section with mapping (Identifying areas with development potential) to clearly state that only existing residential extent was included.	While Racecourse Rd offers potential aligned with Strategy objectives, it must be assessed through statutory planning processes and implementation of Strategy actions (e.g. Actions 1.2, 2.1, 4.1).
Growth areas	Asserts the Strategy fails to recognise this site’s potential for downsizing, retirement, worker		
Housing diversity			

<p>REZ workforce housing</p> <p>Retirement living</p> <p>Rocky River zoning</p>	<p>accommodation and large-lot housing.</p> <p>Criticises reliance on infill, questions land supply assumptions, and highlights inconsistency in the treatment of Rocky River.</p> <p>Seeks explicit inclusion of Racecourse Rd as a preferred growth site.</p>	<p>Strengthen section on township framework plan on what this could include. Potentially amend action to reference Growth Management Strategy with township place plan.</p> <p>Remove Action 4.2 relating to Rocky River and include a new action related to a more comprehensive Rural Lands Strategy incorporating all smaller townships and villages.</p>	<p>The Strategy does not define township boundaries — its role is to guide strategic direction on housing need, supply, and broad locations for growth. Formal definition of township boundaries is more appropriately undertaken through a Township Framework Plan/Urban Growth Strategy, as outlined in amended Action 4.1.</p> <p>Future planning process provides an opportunity to evaluate the Racecourse Rd area (and other candidate sites) for rezoning, based on infrastructure, land capability, and alignment with long-term growth priorities more broadly, not just housing.</p> <p>It is accepted that Rocky River’s elevated status is not supported by sufficient evidence. It is more appropriate that this and other rural localities be assessed within a detailed Rural Lands Strategy</p>
---	---	--	---

				that considers both residential, agricultural, and other productive land use outcomes.
Cr. David Mailler –	<p>REZ impact</p> <p>Land activation</p> <p>Population modelling</p> <p>Housing diversity</p> <p>Land banking</p> <p>Infrastructure planning</p>	<p>Expresses concern that the strategy underestimates future demand due to NE REZ projects and inaccurate government population forecasts.</p> <p>Highlights challenges with activating zoned land, risks of relying on infill, and the importance of supporting local character and amenity.</p> <p>Emphasises the need for robust assumptions testing, stronger data on land use constraints, and clearer planning for long-term growth, housing affordability, and social resilience.</p> <p>Suggests strategy action to ensure built heritage and riparian areas within Uralla township are enhanced and preserved.</p>	<p>No action.</p>	<p>The Strategy acknowledges the NE REZ as a critical influence and adopts a flexible approach to responding to demand and opportunities.</p> <p>The strategy recognises the challenges with activating zoned land and provides a range of actions aimed at facilitating development of existing zoned land, while also monitoring land activation, reviewing greenfield development as needed, and review constraints such as land banking and infrastructure.</p> <p>Demographic forecasts in the Key Issues Report have already improved upon state government projections through localised scenario modelling.</p> <p>Concerns regarding amenity, ageing population needs, and</p>

**Mr. Colin Hull –
Uralla Shire
Business Chamber**

			<p>affordability are reflected in the Strategy’s vision and implementation priorities.</p> <p>Actions in the LHs include development of a township framework plan to guide growth of Uralla overall, while a new action to put greater weight to community input into housing opportunities has been included in response to very strong community feedback on this issue.</p>
Economic growth	Advocates for a housing strategy that supports long-term population and economic growth.	Inclusion of a Growth Management Strategy to replace the township framework plan will include a more rural land study.	<p>The Strategy supports population growth and housing diversity, but changes to rural planning controls and DCP provisions are beyond its scope.</p> <p>The submission raises valid considerations better addressed through a future Rural Lands Strategy, where issues like land use compatibility, rural productivity, and land use conflicts can be properly evaluated.</p>
Rural housing			
Population targets	Recommends bold action to increase land supply and dwelling approvals across the shire, including rezoning RU1 land, modifying DCP provisions, creating mixed-use zones, and enabling more rural development.		
Planning controls			
Mixed-use zoning			
DCP reform	Proposes a level of 75 dwellings per year could be achieved to reach a population of 10,000 by 2045.		

Cr. Adam Blakester

			The current DCP already enables denser housing in town centres. Mixed-use zoning and targeted precinct planning can be explored through township framework planning under Action 4.1.
REZ planning	Raises concerns that the Strategy may not adequately match the scale of change associated with the REZ. Describes a “strategic asymmetry” between regional impacts and local planning.	Minor clarification to Actions 2.1 and 4.1 to better reflect coordinated and scalable planning approaches.	The Strategy acknowledges the REZ as a key driver of local change and includes actions to support worker accommodation (Action 2.1) and flexible implementation models, including delivery across multiple sites.
Worker accommodation			
Legacy outcomes		Inclusion of a new Action 1.5 for community innovation forum.	
Strategic planning	Advocates for a more transformative, master planned approach — such as purpose-designed housing or village precincts — to support long-term community benefit and resilience.		Larger residential redevelopment is already permissible under existing zoning. However, Council recognises the value of a more coordinated and strategic approach and will clarify that Actions 2.1 and 4.1 may include master planned or precinct-based housing responses. The Township Framework Plan (Action 4.1) provides the

				<p>vehicle for identifying future housing precincts, and Council will consider including opportunities for REZ legacy planning and demonstration projects as part of implementation.</p>
<p>Mr. Peter Low</p>	<p>REZ workforce housing</p> <p>Shared living models</p> <p>Legacy housing</p> <p>Walkability & Streetscape amenity</p>	<p>Suggests Council encourage a coordinated, pooled funding model for REZ developers to jointly deliver temporary and permanent housing.</p> <p>Proposes shared-living clusters with communal spaces as a legacy housing form for future single-person households.</p> <p>Highlights need for increased tree cover and sheltered seating in public streetscapes to improve walkability, referencing findings from local thermal imaging and urban heat studies.</p>	<p>Include in new Action 1.5 (Community Housing Innovation Forum) to explore shared living models, legacy housing and coordinated worker accommodation delivery.</p>	<p>Submission provides constructive suggestions consistent with the strategy’s emphasis on adaptable worker accommodation and improving housing diversity which is incorporated through several existing actions in the strategy.</p> <p>Shared-living cluster concepts could be explored further through implementation and precinct planning.</p> <p>Suggestions on tree cover and seating are noted for potential inclusion in future design guidelines or as part of broader liveability initiatives.</p>
<p>Mr. Andrew Toomey</p>	<p>Township boundary</p> <p>Edge-of-town growth</p>	<p>Requests that Council reconsider its decision to retain existing township boundaries, arguing that</p>	<p>No change to strategy; note site for potential consideration in implementation.</p>	<p>The Strategy aims to manage growth within existing zoned areas while preserving</p>

Rural lifestyle	opportunities should be provided for edge-of-town landowners to	township character. It does not preclude future growth at the urban edge, and land such as that identified by the submitter may be considered through the preparation of a future land use and infrastructure framework (Action 4.1).
Underutilised land	subdivide compatible with Uralla’s rural lifestyle. Notes that his family's land is adjacent to the boundary and could logically be developed. Questions assumptions that owners of underutilised land will be willing to subdivide or that the community supports increased density over modest expansion.	Currently, there is no formal township boundary; the Strategy seeks to address this in a coordinated manner that considers all land uses—not just residential, which is the focus of this Strategy. Concerns about the activation of underutilised land are acknowledged and are reflected in the Key Issues Report. These are subject to ongoing monitoring and implementation actions (Actions 3.1 and 3.3). It is also worth noting that most submissions, particularly via the community survey, expressed a preference for considered development within

<p>Mr. Andrew Parker</p>	<p>Community Land Trusts</p> <p>Pilot project</p> <p>REZ worker accommodation</p> <p>Legacy housing</p> <p>Community benefit funds</p>	<p>Outlines the benefits and opportunity for Uralla and the community to support new methods of housing delivery, focussed on Community Land Trust (CLT) model.</p> <p>Proposes a pilot modular housing project to deliver worker housing that transitions to long-term affordable housing.</p> <p>Suggests leveraging Community Benefit Funds to support land transfer and legacy housing outcomes.</p> <p>Emphasises the importance of alternative, non-market housing models to preserve affordability and community character in Uralla amid rising pressures from REZ and demographic change.</p>	<p>Include new action (1.5) to establish a Community Housing Innovation Forum to support community-led housing models, including CLTs, shared equity and rent-to-buy initiatives.</p>	<p>the existing township over outward expansion.</p> <p>The submission builds on similar ideas raised in other submissions and provides a detailed, practical model.</p> <p>The Strategy currently supports adaptable worker accommodation (Action 2.1) and housing diversity (Action 1.3), but a dedicated action to support community-led and non-market housing models would strengthen its implementation.</p> <p>This aligns with growing local interest and enables Council to support pilot projects and policy innovation.</p>
<p>Ms. Tara Toomey</p>	<p>Short-term rental accommodation</p>	<p>Raises concerns about missing data on short-term rental accommodation (STRA), flawed assumptions around downsizing</p>	<p>Include STRA monitoring under Action 4.8.</p>	<p>The submission raises multiple valid concerns that are partially addressed through existing actions (1.3 on housing</p>

Land use transparency & community involvement	and density preferences, and lack of pathways to ownership.	Reference community-led housing pathways (including rent-to-buy) under new Action 1.5 (Community Housing Innovation Forum).	diversity, 2.1 on worker accommodation, and 3.1 on data and monitoring), but they also highlight opportunities to strengthen implementation.
Housing diversity	Opposes concentrating social and affordable housing on single sites.		
Rent-to-buy	Supports expansion of the town boundary and emphasises the need for community input beyond developer interests.		Acknowledging and addressing data gaps related to short-term rental accommodation (STRA) will improve the evidence base and support better-informed planning under Action 4.8.
	Calls for transparency in the use of Council land and inclusion of rent-to-buy models as legitimate housing pathways.		The Strategy will also recognise community-led ownership models such as rent-to-buy and shared equity housing under new Action 1.5 (Community Housing Innovation Forum), providing greater flexibility and long-term housing security.
			Concerns about transparency and the use of Council-owned land can be addressed through clearer public engagement protocols as part of implementation planning.

Conclusion

The engagement process has confirmed strong community interest in the future of housing in Uralla Shire. Respondents expressed a clear desire for growth that is carefully managed, inclusive, and grounded in local values.

Key messages from the community include:

- Protect Uralla’s village character by reinforcing social cohesion, heritage, and walkability.
- Support housing diversity and affordability, especially for older residents, key workers, and those on low incomes.
- Plan for the REZ in a way that leaves a positive housing legacy.
- Enable innovation in housing delivery, including non-market and community-led models.
- Adopt a transparent, place-based approach to managing growth and rural land use, that incorporates economic development aspirations.

These messages have been incorporated into the final strategy, which provides a clearer roadmap for implementation, deeper alignment with State planning frameworks, and more emphasis on local voices and practical delivery.