

# Delivery Program 2025-2029





# Acknowledgement

Muswellbrook Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the local Aboriginal people who are the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land.

## Our Community Our stories

### Water Story

A retelling of Aunty Bev's (Bev, Beverley Van Vliet, nee Beale)

Water is the lifeblood of this country, the creeks, the rivers, springs, waterholes and swamps. It supplied many of the staples like fish, eels, muscles, tortoises, yabbies, watercress, bulbs, and tubers. The most significant water sources were marked and talked of in the stories and paintings of those who walked before.

The old people tell us this it has always been, without water there is no life.

Before she passed, Aunty Bev shared some of her early memories of living at the camp. At the mouth of muscle creek between the Hunter and the railway line. How her father and the other men would set a net across the mouth

of the creek and heard fish into it, they would keep enough to feed the camp that night and release the rest.

During the 55-flood water 9 or 10 foot deep, inundated the camp. I remember her smile and the sparkle in her eyes as she remembered the frogs. There were lots of frogs in those days, she and the other kids would catch some and hold frog races. Both the creek and river were clear back then. They'd swim and drink the water it made her sad that you no longer see eels or frogs there anymore.

Experts tell us that there is nothing wrong with the river or creeks she'd say, but if you want to know about river health, ask the frogs and fishes.

<https://wanaruahlalc.wixsite.com/wanaruahlalc/history-of-the-wanaruah-mob>

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# Message from the Mayor



It's with great pride we present Muswellbrook Shire Council's Delivery Program 2025-2029.

The Delivery Program is the elected Councils commitment to the community on how it will achieve the community's vision, it is more than a document it is a roadmap shaped by our community for the community.

It reflects what we value, what we want to achieve and the practical steps we'll take to get there. Over the next four years, the Delivery Program sets the direction for how Council will deliver the services, infrastructure, projects and the opportunities that matter to you.

We're focused on making sure that Muswellbrook Shire remains a great place to live, work and raising a family.

We're delivering Council's core services like roads, waste and water. We are also looking ahead – supporting local jobs, attracting new industry, taking care of our natural assets, planning for growth and investing in the facilities and services that bring people together.

Our objectives are ambitious, but they're built on the solid ground of community values and good governance.

Whether you've lived here for generations or you've chosen our community, there is space for you in our Shire.

On behalf of my fellow Councillors, I thank you for your input, your ideas and your trust. We're looking forward to working with you to bring this vision to life.

Together we are building a future we're proud of.

**Councillor Jeff Drayton**  
Mayor  
Muswellbrook Shire Council

# Message from the General Manager



Council is committed to delivering real outcomes for the people of Muswellbrook Shire.

You've told us you want reliable services, responsible growth and a Shire that remains a fantastic place to live, work and invest. The Delivery Program is the link between your Community Strategic Plan and Council's annual Operational Plans, the Delivery Program outlines how we'll turn ideas into actions – identifying what Council will do, how we'll resource it, and how we'll measure our success over the next four years.

The Delivery Program is grounded in your aspirations and driven by a shared desire for a stronger, more connected, and more sustainable Shire.

It's a time of significant change across the region, and we recognise the need to be proactive, collaborative, and transparent. From infrastructure upgrades and community services to economic development and environmental leadership, every action we take is designed to serve the people of this Shire with integrity and purpose.

We're working within a strong financial framework, backed by responsible planning and a commitment to good governance. Our staff are dedicated to delivering the highest standards in service and community support.

This is a Program built on your vision and it sets the course for how we'll get there – together.

**Derek Finnigan**  
General Manager  
Muswellbrook Shire Council

# Our Council

The governing body of Council consists of twelve (12) councillors elected for four years. The Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire Council and the Deputy Mayor are elected by Councillors every two years. The Mayor holds a number of Council delegations and some statutory responsibilities to make determinations on behalf of the governing body of the Council between Council meetings. The Mayor is responsible to the governing body for the determinations they make.



**Jeff Drayton**  
Mayor

With previous extensive experience on Council and the newly appointed Mayor, Jeff wants to see Council focus on important issues and delivering the

best outcomes for the community. He wants to ensure that the community benefits from mining and energy generation activities and continues to thrive through jobs growth and investment as well as addressing social issues.



**De-anne Douglas OAM**  
Deputy Mayor

Second term councillor and our new Deputy Mayor, long-term Muswellbrook resident, De-anne brings a wealth of local knowledge and experience to the role. De-anne

is a former manager of the Muswellbrook PCYC and has deep community connections and a strong local voice. Her immediate priorities include improved access to medical services and the delivery of the planned Youth Centre.



**Clare Bailey**  
Councillor

First term councillor, Clare is deeply committed to serving our community with integrity and a passion for positive change. Growing up in Wybong within the Muswellbrook Shire, Clare has

firsthand understanding of the unique needs of rural living. Clare works as a coal miner but has also gained experience in small businesses in town, which fuels her dedication to creating and preserving local jobs. Clare's focus is always on ensuring that our region thrives, and that the voices of local residents are heard and respected.



**Amanda Barry**  
Councillor

Second term councillor and Denman resident, Amanda wants to be part of a strong council that can be trusted and respected. As an advocate

of community engagement, she wants to work towards creating a shared vision for the future, including developing more efficient and effective community services and a focus on the protection and enhancement of the Shire's natural environment.



**Louise Dunn**  
Councillor

Long-term resident, schoolteacher and second term councillor Louise has a strong sense of community and has resolved to bring the Shire

back to being caring and compassionate to all. While acknowledging that carbon neutrality and sustainable energy is the way of the future, she also understands that coal mining is vital to the economy and would also like to see more parks and open spaces throughout the LGA.



**David Hartley**  
Councillor

David is a resident of Muswellbrook Shire of more than 25 years. Raising three kids here, David has a strong passion to ensure our youth are

not left behind. David is passionate about sport and, in particular, junior sport - he volunteers for various sporting groups. David's focus is on creating a shire that we, as a community, are proud to call our own.



**Rohit Mahajan**  
Councillor

Born in India, Rohit is now a proud Australian citizen, Muswellbrook resident and successful businessman. Running his own

business puts him face-to-face with a wide range of community members on a daily basis and he shares their concerns regarding local business and employment opportunities. With sound relationships in place, he wants to be their voice on Council and believes local government can only be deemed to be successful if the community is happy and contented.



**Darryl Marshall**  
Councillor

A Shire resident for 56 years, second term councillor Darryl has worked across the wine, agriculture and coal industries and ran his own

contracting business for more than 20 years. Now that he is semi-retired, he has the time to make a commitment to Council and pledges to serve the people of the region, work hard for the community and bring a truly local voice to Council.



**Graeme McNeill**  
Councillor

Incumbent councillor Graeme is serving his fourth term on Council. With a special interest in sport and recreation and long-time involvement

with the Olympic Park project, Graeme's priorities include pathways, cycleways, improvements to roads and investment in the Shire's young people. His hope for this term is to build a strong, united Council to drive a strong united community.



**Max Morris**  
Councillor

Max has lived in Muswellbrook for over 50 years - his wife was born in Muswellbrook as were his two children. Max has a strong

background in business management and strategic marketing. He is passionate about securing a prosperous future for the region and ensuring we have the correct infrastructure and revenue sources in place to make the Shire an attractive place to live, work, play and visit.



**Rod Scholes**  
Councillor

Fourth term councillor and Muswellbrook resident since 1982, Rod and his family have contributed greatly to the Shire community. He

has served as deputy mayor and mayor during his time on Council and brings a wealth of experience to the table. During this term he wants to continue to improve the Shire's livability, infrastructure and services, and advocate for better local health services.



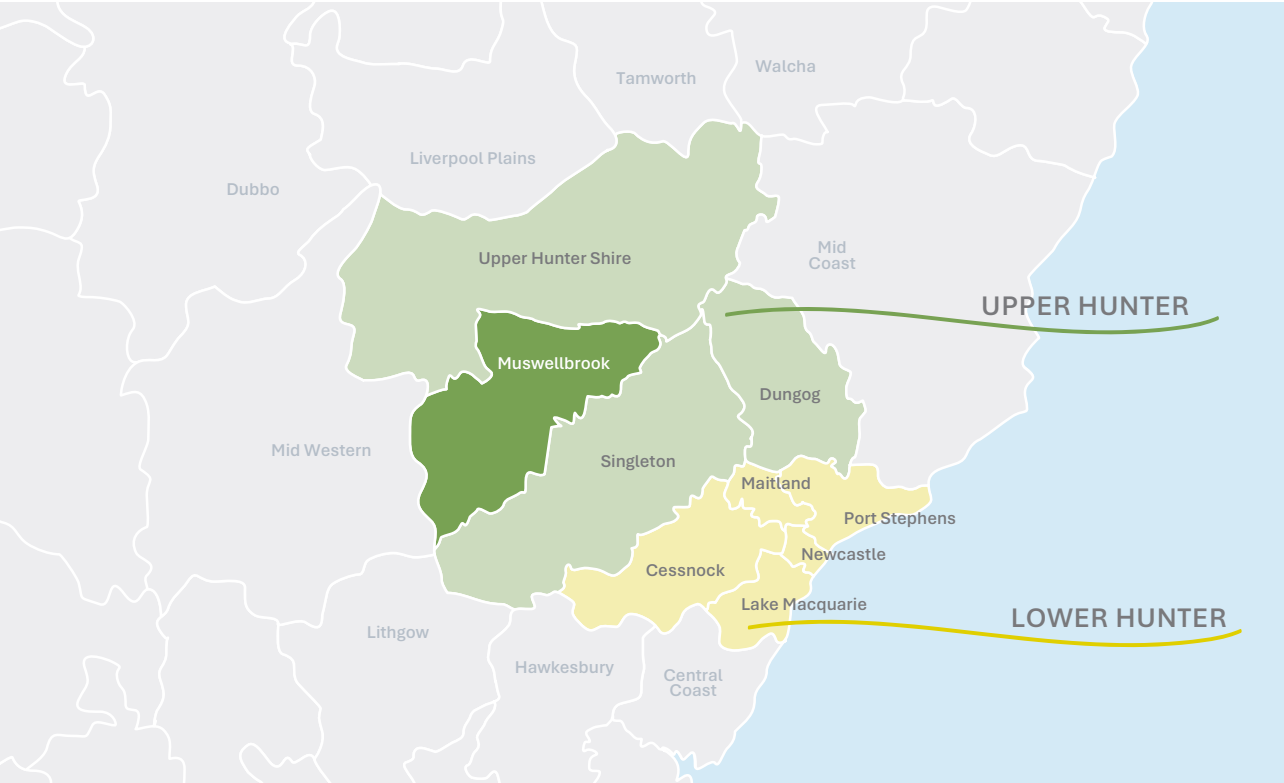
**Stephen Ward**  
Councillor

Stephen is a civil engineer and father of two, and an active member of the Denman community. He is a member of the Local Lions Club

and the Denman Hospital Auxiliary. He is on the Maxwell Mine CCC. Stephen suffered a stroke in 2013, leaving him with reduced mobility and a communication disorder called aphasia. Stephen also attends the dialysis unit at Muswellbrook Hospital. This lived experience means he continues to advocate for better health and telehealth services for our area.



# Our Shire



**Muswellbrook Shire is home to more than 16,500 residents, our community is young and hardworking, we are proud of our history in mining and energy generation and are surrounded by magical landscapes that have been the backdrop of indigenous stories for millions of years.**

There’s a steady resilience here. For generations, our communities have worked the land and the seams below, powering the country and funding the nation. Muswellbrook and the Hunter Region is at the forefront of global change, as the world shifts, Muswellbrook is too – exploring diverse investments, technologies, smart agriculture and new industries.

We are building on what we know, are doing things our way and doing them better together.

We love our sport, equine pursuits and viticulture and are the birth place of the Australian Cattle Dog. Our local producers are trailblazers, founded in our agricultural roots and growing our tourism potential.

Council is investing in our community’s future, progressing opportunities to build economic resilience and create jobs. We have made a significant investments in projects which will inspire future generations, prepare business for new opportunities and leverage our lifestyle advantages.

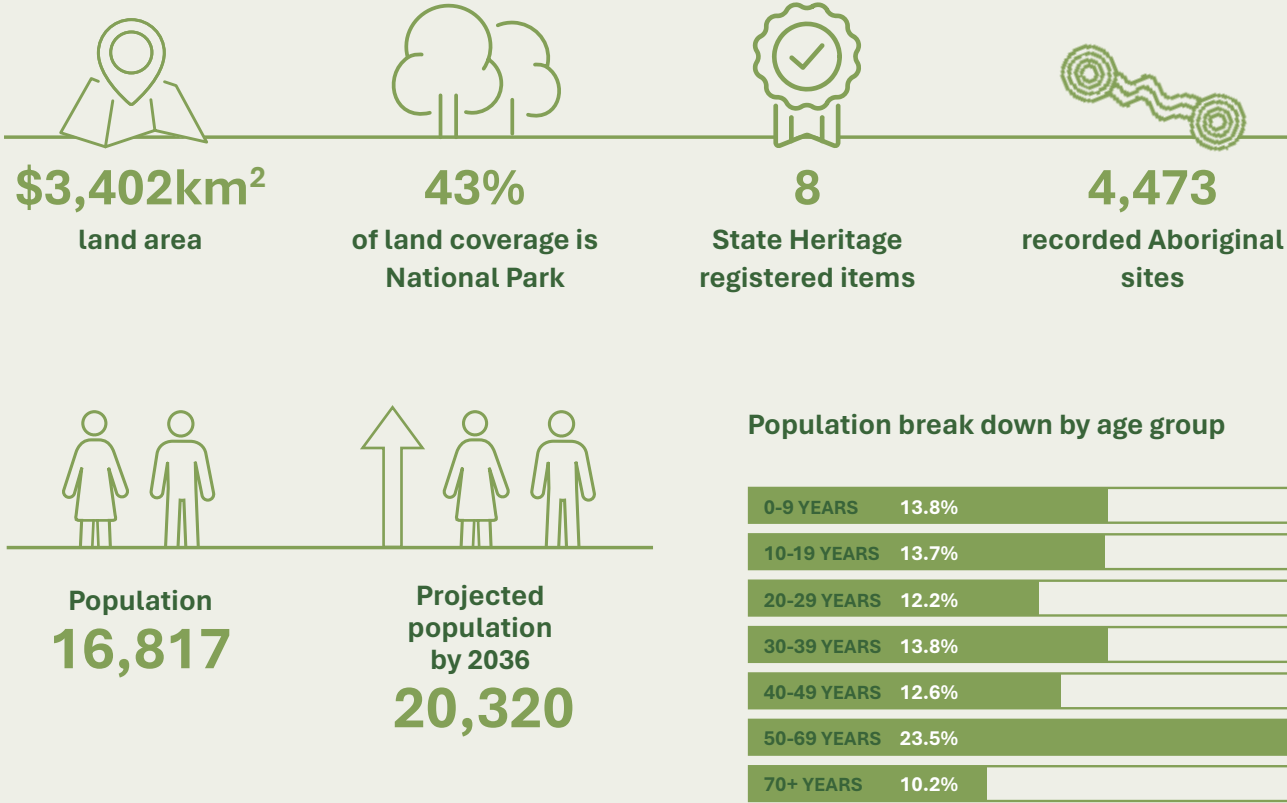
Council is focused on improving liveability and our natural advantages. Muswellbrook Shire offers a comparatively affordable lifestyle with diverse housing options from in-town living to lifestyle properties.

As a regional centre, our community has access to regional sporting and recreational facilities with the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre and redevelopment of Olympic Park as well as world-class cultural assets like the Muswellbrook Regional Art Gallery, Hunter Conservatorium of Music and the soon to be built Regional Entertainment Centre.

We are supporting the growth of Denman as a residential and tourist destination, creating new housing developments and developing the Denman Tourist Park.

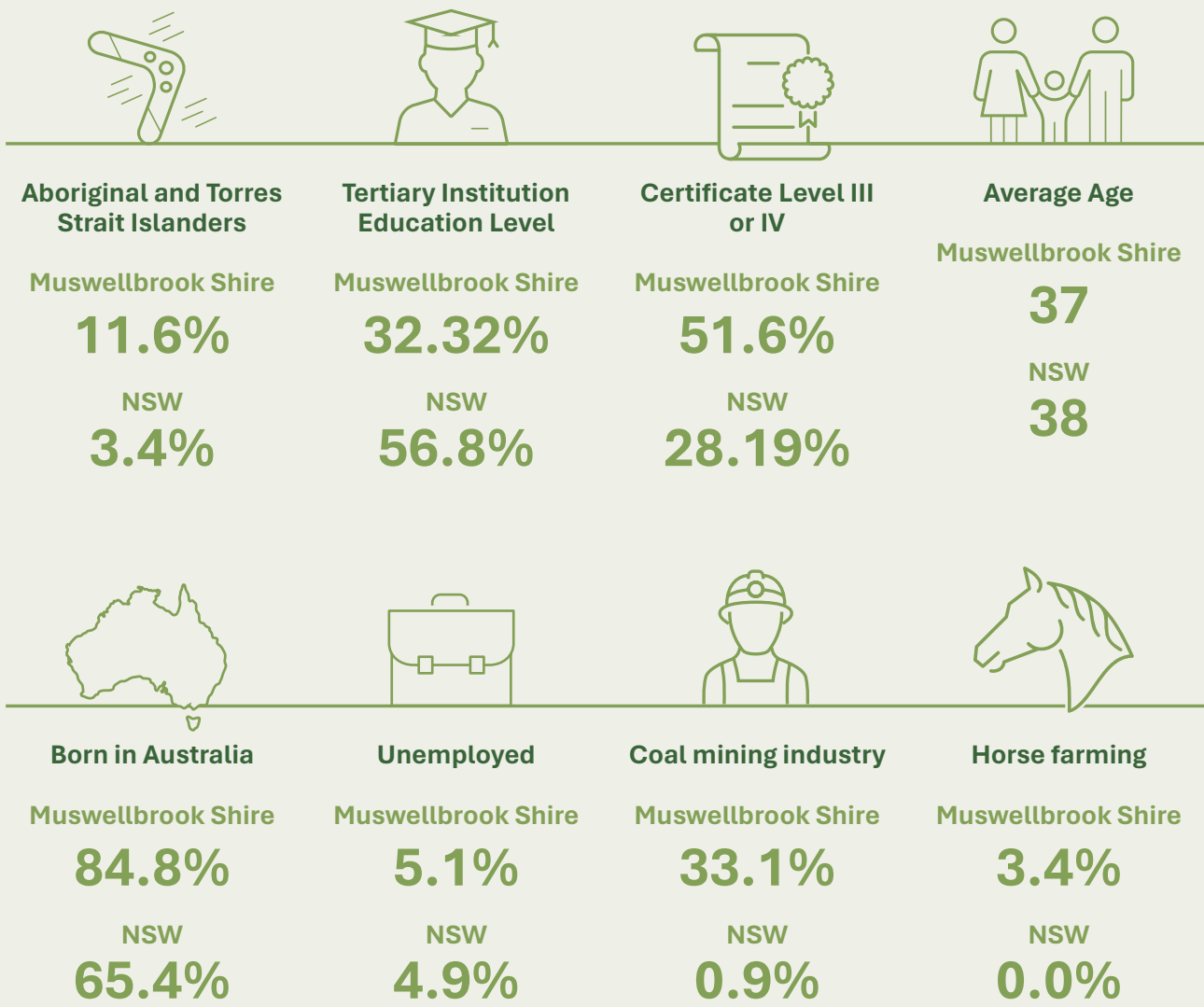
Council is ensuring all members of our community have improved access to health care, transportation, services, education and housing to improve their quality of life and opportunity.

Muswellbrook Shire faces the future without forgetting the story of this place we cherish. Being part of our community means respecting where we have come from, our people and buying into a future built together.



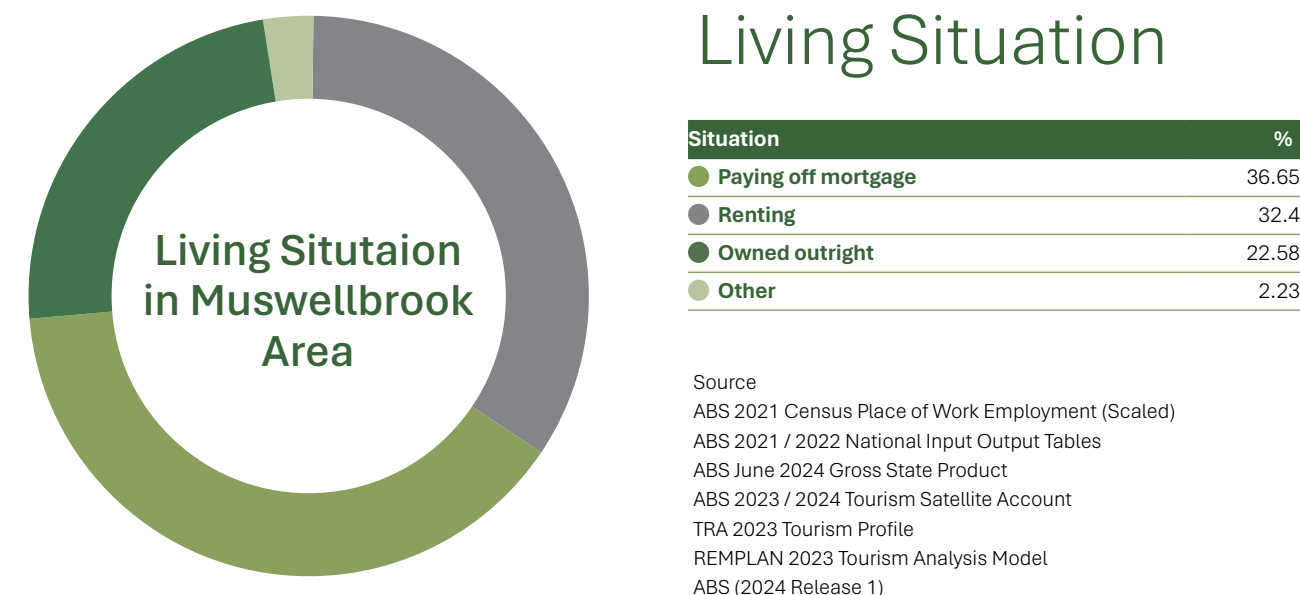
# At a Glance

Snapshot of significant indicators for Muswellbrook shire compared with NSW as a whole:



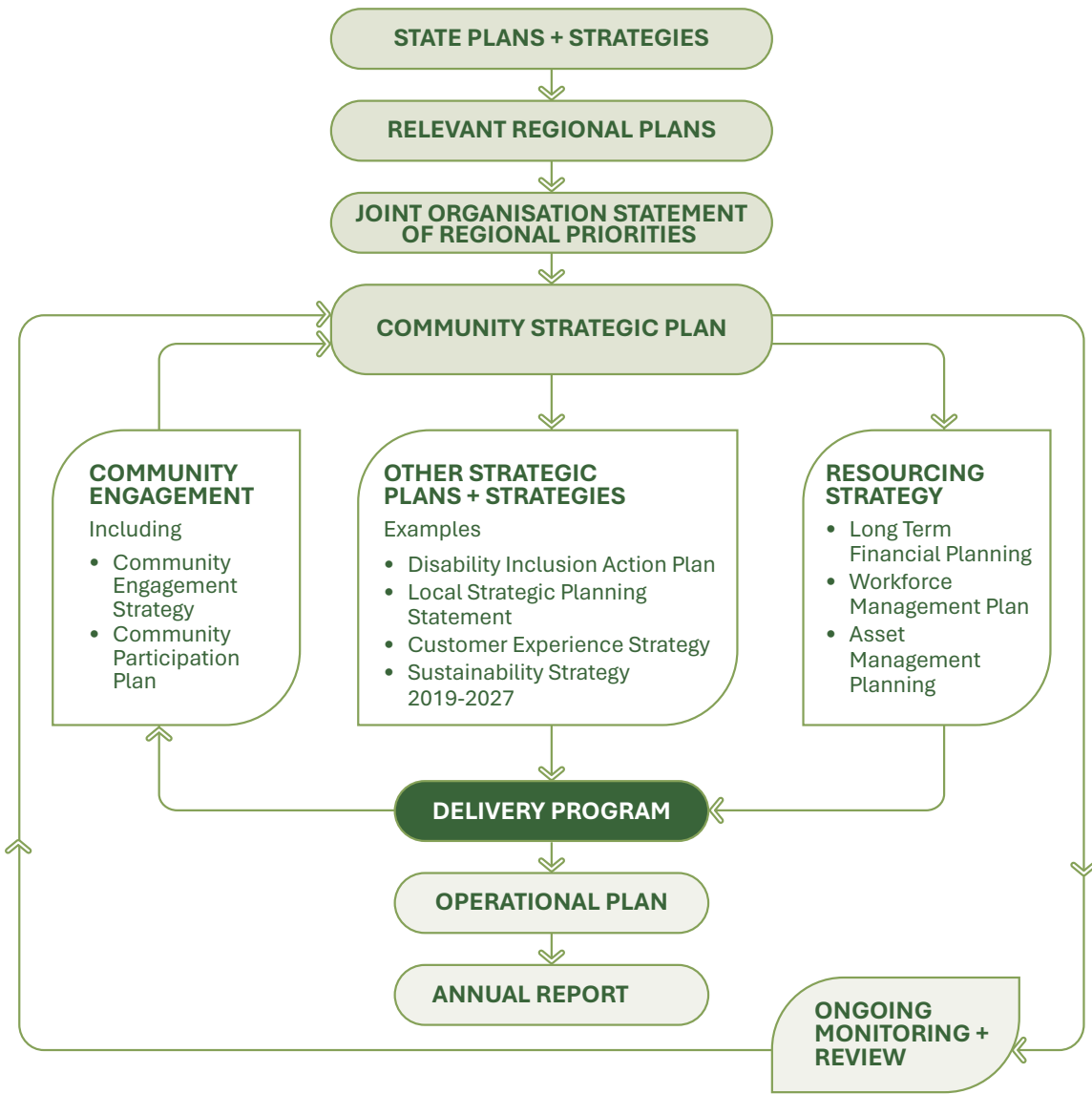
[2021 Muswellbrook, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

# Economic Output





# Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework



## Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan provides a strong base for long-term planning for both Council and the community. The Plan includes a shared vision for the future, connecting the community's goals with Council's decisions over the next 10 years. It will guide Council's plans, strategies, and policies, such as the Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan, this community vision will also be shared with other agencies, government departments, and stakeholders to help guide their long-term planning.

## Resourcing Strategy

The Resourcing Strategy is reviewed every year. It shows the time, money, assets and people needed in the long term to achieve the community's aspirations in the Community Strategic Plan. It consists of three components:

- Long-term Financial Plan (10 year)
- Asset Management Plan (10 year)
- Workforce Management Plan (4 year)
- Delivery Program (4 year)

## Delivery Program (4 year)

The Delivery Program is a 4-year plan that matches the term of the elected Council. It is based on the Community Strategic Plan and the Resourcing Strategy and outlines what can be achieved during the Council's term. The program is reviewed every year to make sure it still aligns with the community's aspirations.

## Operational Plan (annual)

The Operational Plan lists the actions Council will take each year to achieve the priorities in the 4-year Delivery Program. It also shows how each priority will be funded. Council staff give regular updates to the elected Council on how the plan is progressing.





# Relevance of the Delivery Program to the Community Strategic Plan

The Delivery Program is the elected Councillors’ response to the community’s aspirations in the Community Strategic Plan. Via a community engagement process, the community tells the Councillors what they want for the future of the Shire, the Councillors listen to and consider the community’s concerns and ideas, and the Delivery Program explains how the Councillors will prioritise and direct Council towards meeting the community’s expectations during their elected term.

All objectives described in the Muswellbrook Shire 2025-2029 Delivery Program link to an aspiration in the Muswellbrook Shire 2025-2035 Community Strategic Plan.

Councillors monitor the progress of Council’s activities via reports and each year, Council reports to the community on the progress of Council’s activities via the Annual Report. Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting documents are available on Council’s website at: [www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au/council-integrated-planning-overview/](http://www.muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au/council-integrated-planning-overview/)

# Council’s Role and Services

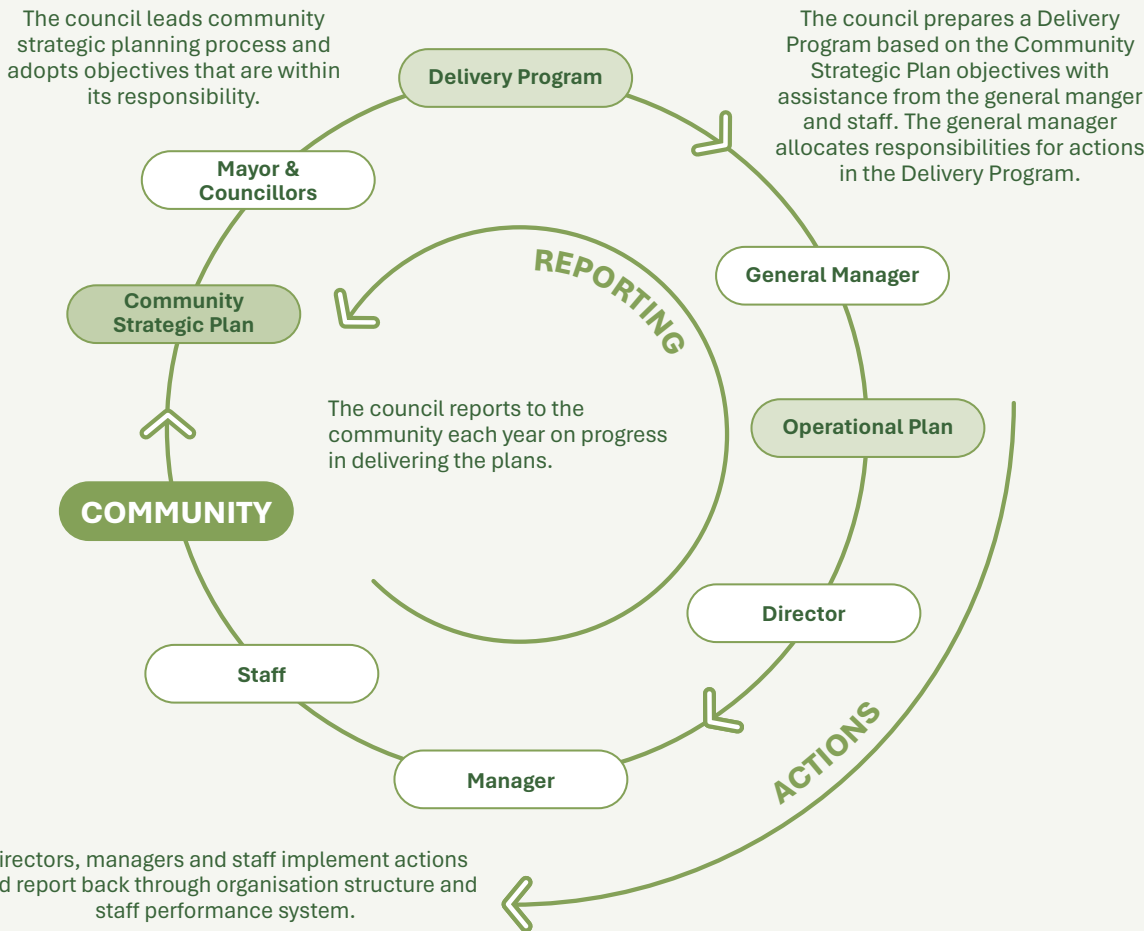
**Council plays an important role in providing services, building infrastructure and managing regulations for our community. The decisions we make at the local level directly affect life in our Shire.**

We deliver everyday services like bin collection, fixing local roads and running public swimming pools in Denman and Muswellbrook. We also manage key utilities, such as water and sewer systems, across the Shire (only 89 out of 128 councils in NSW provide water services).

In addition to essential services, Council supports culture and community activities. We run facilities like the Regional Art Centre, Denman Memorial Hall and local libraries, we also organise events for residents and visitors, like the Rock’n the Brook and partnering with Community events such as Denman Food, Wine and Film Festival.

Council also, drives policy change, influences decisions and plans for our community’s future through land use planning and preparing for new industries.

Council works with local businesses, key stakeholders, governments, and community groups to meet the needs of our community. We will deliver the objectives in this delivery program by:



### Delivering

When Council directly manages an asset, infrastructure, or program, we can meet community needs using our own operating budget and resources.

### Partnering and collaborating

When Council doesn't have control over things like emergency services, we will form partnerships, seek support, or work with other organisations and providers to help achieve results.

### Advocating

Council can speak up for our community to ask for more funding or better outcomes for things like public transport or health care services.





# United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are 17 goals created in 2015 to help solve global problems and build a better future for everyone by 2030. These goals focus on challenges like poverty, education, clean energy, and protecting the planet.

In this plan, we show how our community goals match the Sustainable Development Goals and how Council will work towards these goals. This helps both Council and the community understand their role in making a difference, not just in our Shire but as part of a bigger, global effort.



# How to read the Delivery Program

Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
2.1 Provide and maintain local transport infrastructure, including roads and footpaths to allow safe and easy movement around	2.1.1 Provide and maintain safe, cost effective and fit for purpose transport infrastructure	Infrastructure and Property
	2.1.2 Improve and promote active travel connections and opportunities	Infrastructure and Property
2.2 Advocate for effective public transport networks and transport planning to ensure infrastructure meets community need	2.2.1 Increase access to public transport options in and around the LGA	Infrastructure and Property
2.3 Manage increasing transport demands on our roads to ensure the community has safe and prioritised access	2.3.1 Participate in planning and decision making to leverage investment and ensure our communities needs are prioritised	Infrastructure and Property / Environment and Planning
2.4 Advocate and provide services and facilities expected of a regional centre	2.4.1 Deliver, maintain and enhance Council owned facilities	Infrastructure and Property
	2.4.2 Ensure regional and state plans acknowledge Muswellbrook as a Regional Centre	Infrastructure and Property
2.5 Provide well-maintain accessible sport, leisure and recreational infrastructure and facilities	2.5.1 Manage existing community facilities to meet the needs of the community	Infrastructure and Property
2.6 Advocate and collaborate with government and educational providers to expand access to education opportunities which allow students to study locally	2.6.1 Improve the availability and access to educational opportunities	Community and Economy



## Vision

**Our Shire is powered by opportunity, with space to grow and shape a thriving future.**

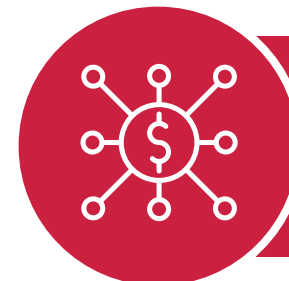
## Themes



*We are a...*  
**strong community**



*We are a...*  
**regional centre**



*We are a...*  
**thriving economy**



*We are a...*  
**great place to live**



*We are...*  
**working together**
































# We are a... strong community

## Community Outcome

Our community contributes to community life,  
is safe and has access to services and facilities.



Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
<b>1.1 Deliver services to improve community health and inclusion at all stages of life</b>   	1.1.1 Deliver a diverse range of social, recreational and educational programs and assistance to encourage community participation and a healthy lifestyle 	Community and Economy
	1.1.2 Provide opportunities to participate in community life and feel a part of the community 	Community and Economy
<b>1.2 Advocate and collaborate with government and private partners to improve services relating to health with a strong focus on aged care, mental health and maternity services</b> 	1.2.1 Advance health services suitable for a Regional centre 	Community and Economy
<b>1.3 Deliver programs, campaigns, facilities and infrastructure which improve community safety</b>  	1.3.1 Design and manage public spaces to ensure people feel safe and welcome 	Infrastructure and Property
	1.3.2 Review and enforce council policies to enhance community safety and ensure compliance 	Environment and Planning/ Infrastructure and Planning
<b>1.4 Provide and support events and activities to encourage community pride and connection</b>  	1.4.1 Grow the region as a vibrant events and visitor destination  	Community and Economy
<b>1.5 Celebrate our culture and heritage by showcasing and preserving our history</b>  	1.5.1 Recognise, protect and celebrate our heritage 	Infrastructure and Property
	1.5.2 Celebrate and recognise our local Indigenous culture  	Community and Economy
<b>1.6 Develop programs to support the community and increase participation. enhance the capacity of volunteers and volunteer organisations</b>  	1.6.1 Increase Volunteer participation to create community resilience and connection 	Community and Economy
	1.6.2 Provide access to community grants and in-kind support to support the community. 	Community and Economy

Our role:  Delivering  Partnering and collaborating  Advocating


























# We are a... regional centre

## Community Outcome

Our community has access to regional services, infrastructure and facilities.



Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
2.1 Provide and maintain local transport infrastructure, including roads and footpaths to allow safe and easy movement 	2.1.1 Provide and maintain safe, cost effective and fit for purpose transport infrastructure 	Infrastructure and Property
	2.1.2 Improve and promote active travel connections and opportunities 	Infrastructure and Property
2.2 Advocate for effective public transport networks and transport planning to ensure infrastructure meets community need 	2.2.1 Increase access to public transport options in and around the LGA  	Infrastructure and Property
2.3 Manage increasing transport demands on our roads to ensure the community has safe and prioritised access 	2.3.1 Participate in planning and decision making to leverage investment and ensure our communities needs are prioritised  	Environment and Planning/ Infrastructure and Planning
2.4 Advocate and provide services and facilities expected of a regional centre  	2.4.1 Deliver, maintain and enhance Council owned facilities 	Infrastructure and Property
	2.4.2 Ensure regional and state plans acknowledge Muswellbrook as a Regional Centre  	Infrastructure and Property
2.5 Provide well-maintain accessible sport, leisure and recreational infrastructure and facilities 	2.5.1 Manage existing community facilities to meet the needs of the community 	Infrastructure and Property
2.6 Advocate and collaborate with government and educational providers to expand access to education opportunities which allow students to study locally  	2.6.1 Improve the availability and access to educational opportunities  	Community and Economy

Our role:  Delivering  Partnering and collaborating  Advocating



























# We are a... thriving economy

## Community Outcome

Our community has opportunities for employment, business and training and we drive investment into our economy to benefit our community.



Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
3.1 Lead the diversification of the local economy, including attracting new industry and businesses  	3.1.1 Retain our workforce and grow employment opportunities by attracting new industry and investment 	Community and Economy
3.2 Support businesses to grow and prepare for the opportunities of the future  	3.2.1 Provide a range of programs and facilities to assist business to diversify and grow  	Community and Economy
3.3 Support the growth of tourism, a diverse retail and hospitality offering and a vibrant nightlife  	3.3.1 Support the growth of the Tourism Industry 	Community and Economy
	3.3.2 Activate the Muswellbrook Town Centre 	Community and Economy
3.4 Collaborate with key stakeholders and government to secure investment and long-term employment 	3.4.1 Work with industry and government to fast-track land use planning and infrastructure to support future industry uses 	Environmental and Planning
3.5 Provide access to innovation and reskilling for future workforce needs  	3.5.1 Develop and implement initiatives to attract, nurture and retain innovators 	Community and Economy
	3.5.2 Increase opportunities for employment, skills and education for all ages  	Community and Economy
3.6 Plan for the use of former mining and energy generation land for employment, recreation and environmental purposes  	3.6.1 Deliver improved economic outcomes on mining and energy impacted lands  	Environment and Planning/ Community and Economy

Our role:  Delivering  Partnering and collaborating  Advocating





















We are a...  
**great place to live**

### Community Outcome

Our community offers a great lifestyle  
in a healthy natural environment.



Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
4.1 Advocate and facilitate investment in a variety of housing, including affordable housing, to meet the needs of current and future residents 	4.1.1 Implement the Local Housing Strategy that identifies how and where housing will be provided 	Environment and Planning
	4.1.2 Streamline planning and development outcomes 	Environment and Planning
4.2 Manage development to protect our natural environment and heritage and be resilient to natural hazards 	4.2.1 Improve the planning and preparedness for natural hazards 	Infrastructure and Property / Environment and Planning
4.3 Protect and enhance Council-managed water infrastructure and mitigate environmental and man-made impacts 	4.3.1 Plan for and upgrade our water and waste water infrastructure to support residential and economic expansion 	Infrastructure and Property
4.4 Advocate for clean air and an improved natural environment 	4.4.1 Advocate for improved air quality monitoring and reporting 	Environment and Planning
	4.4.2 Provide opportunities to participate in environmental learning activities and programs 	Environment and Planning
4.5 Manage the use of water and waste wisely, efficiently and sustainably to facilitate growth and economic opportunity 	4.5.1 Promote efficient water, energy and waste management and decrease waste 	Infrastructure and Property / Environment and Planning
4.6 Reducing emissions of Council owned assets to reach Net Zero targets 	4.6.1 Develop strategies to respond to climate policy and reduce carbon impacts 	Environment and Planning
4.7 Maintain and enhance our open and public spaces and natural areas 	4.7.1 Enhance, protect and improve our natural environment and public spaces 	Infrastructure and Property / Environment and Planning

Our role:  Delivering  Partnering and collaborating  Advocating





# We are... working together

## Community Outcome

Our community is involved in decision making and resources are managed to align with the values and priorities.



Community Strategic Plan Aspiration	Delivery Plan Objective	Primary Responsibility
5.1 Increase community awareness and understanding of Council business	5.1.1 Effectively inform the community about Council's responsibilities, business and activities	Community and Economy
	5.1.2 Provide timely and factual information on key issues impacting our community	Community and Economy
5.2 Ensure a wide range of community engagement programs to enable effective Council decision making	5.2.1 Engage, involve and empower our community and stakeholders to inform Council on the issues impacting them	Community and Economy
5.3 Deliver sustainable projects, services and programs through sound financial management	5.3.1 Continue to seek funding to provide infrastructure, programs, services or events which meet the needs of our community	Office of the General Manager
5.4 Ensure Council has long-term financial sustainability	5.4.1 Support financial sustainability through planning, budget management and accurate reporting to the community	Office of the General Manager
	5.4.2 Ensure Council's rate structure and revenue streams address Council's long term financial challenges	Office of the General Manager
5.5 Improve efficiency of Council systems	5.5.1 Support the continual innovation of Council processes and technologies to enhance efficiency and productivity	Office of the General Manager / Community and Economy
	5.5.2 Use technology to make it easy for customers to engage with Council and access information	Community and Economy / Environment and Planning
5.6 Ensure Council attracts and retains adequately skilled staff	5.6.1 Be an employer of choice by investing in the development and growth of our people	Office of the General Manager
5.7 Council provides effective leadership	5.7.1 To lead and represent the interests of our community in an ethical and transparent way	Community and Economy / Environment and Planning



# Major Projects

The Delivery Program is focused on improving community engagement, service delivery, job creation and industry attraction and completing the major projects including:

- Muswellbrook Town Centre: including the Possum Park, Regional Entertainment Centre, and civil and landscaping works
- Loxton House Refurbishment
- Muswellbrook Youth Centre
- Olympic Park precinct
- Denman Tourist Park: staged delivery of master plans
- Denman to Sandy Hollow Pipeline
- Wollombi Precinct: staged delivery of master plans

## Community Infrastructure

During this term of Council there will be a Federal Election held in May 2025 and a State Election March 2027.

Council will embrace these opportunities to advocate on behalf of the community for the delivery of major projects and community priorities aligned with the CSP, by seeking commitments from the Federal and NSW Governments for:

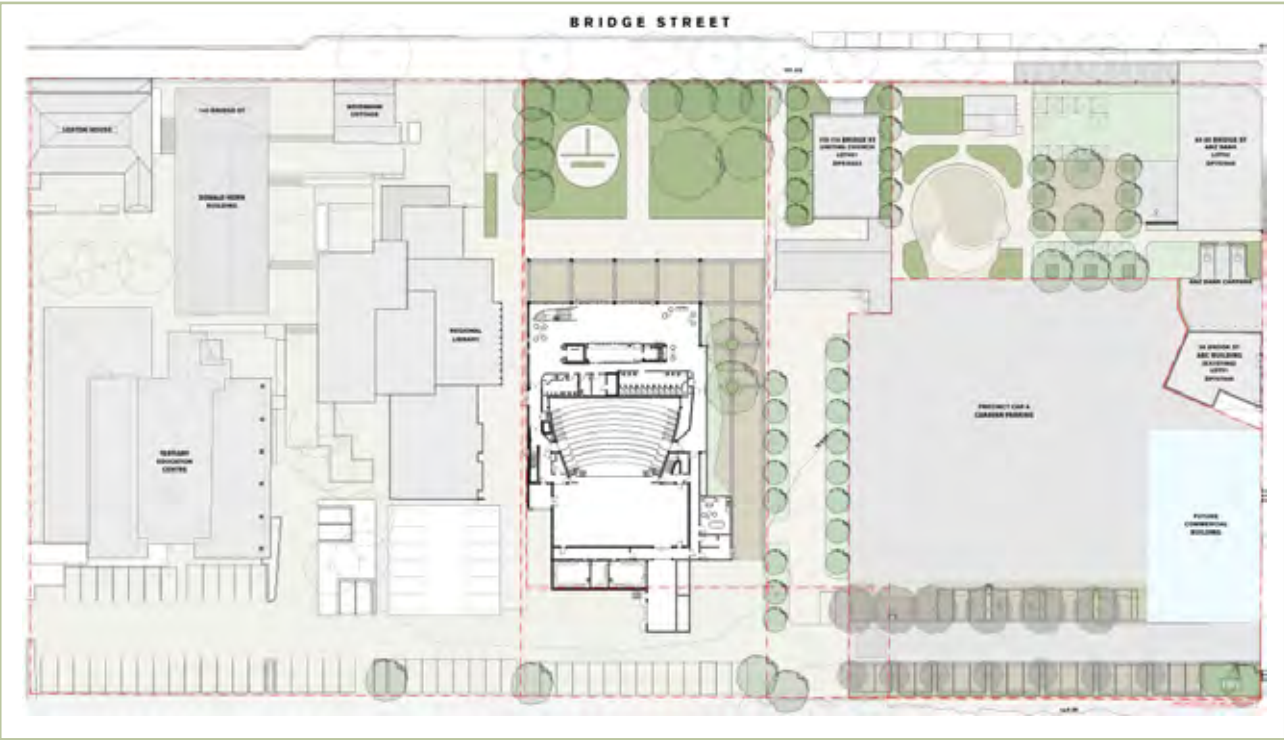
- the delivery of the Muswellbrook Bypass by 2027;
- improved health services and public transport for the Shire;
- planning and resourcing for post mining land use;
- leadership to drive economic diversification;
- Wollombi Precinct staged delivery;
- improved access to education, training and research.

## The Muswellbrook Town Centre

The Muswellbrook Town Centre redevelopment is transforming the heart of Muswellbrook. Council is working to realise the vision of the Muswellbrook Town Centre Strategy (2017) to create a place where the community can come together to learn, play, be entertained and connect.

The Town Centre consist of three stages:

- The Hunter Innovation Precinct
- The Regional Entertainment Centre
- Possum Park and commercial precinct



## Possum Park

The vision is for Possum Park is to provide a meaningful connection to place which will be the heart of the community. It has been designed as a place to embody our community identity, value, pride, inclusivity and foster social interaction.

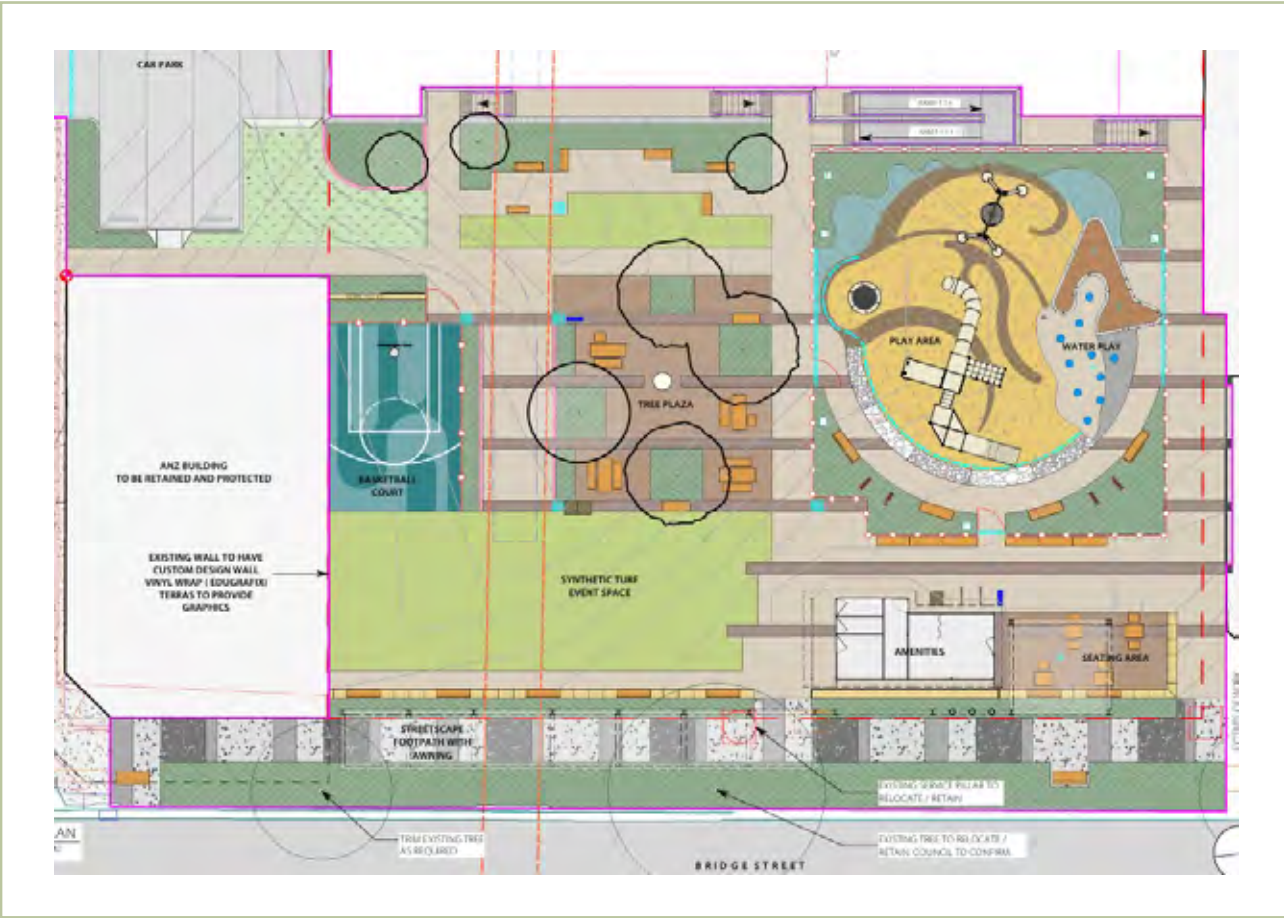
This will be achieved through the creation of an attractive, safe and engaging public space which can facilitate a range of experiences for gathering, community markets, pop up food vans /services, and passive recreation.

The children's play and water play areas are reflective of the park's namesake, the Possum. The planting, art and design elements are inspired by local indigenous culture and are meaningful to our history and the place.

The park includes:

- Possum children's playground
- water play area
- Sound play area
- Mural and public art
- grassed areas
- basketball half court
- car parking
- landscaping and indigenous garden
- footpaths
- projection wall and solar lighting
- bike parking
- seating and shade
- amenities and a changing places facility.

Estimated cost and timing : \$2.3M, 2026





Regional Entertainment Centre

The Regional Entertainment Centre is the final piece of the Muswellbrook Town Centre redevelopment and Council is working to secure the remaining funding.

The Regional Entertainment centre will provide opportunities for regional communities to engage with the arts and be entertained, bringing performance, hosting local performances and schools, and education and connection to the heart of Muswellbrook not previously available here or in our surrounding communities.

This impressive design includes a 400-seat theatre and back of house. It provides a venue for dance schools, theatre groups, amenities to cater for related activities and allow for flexible scheduling.

**Estimated cost and timing: \$23M part funded expected completion by 2027**

Loxton House Refurbishment

Built in c1838 Loxton House, State Heritage Listed, is one of Muswellbrook’s oldest commercial buildings. Council’s will now be preserving and breathing new life into one of the most significant buildings in our Shire and to the community following significant structural works in previous years.

The majority of structural remediation works have been completed. Refurbishment of the internal building is set to commence in 2025 following heritage approval. This will see the three story building restored to house a co-working facility on the top level connected to the Donald Horne Building, commercial space at the ground level, and a restaurant on the lower ground level adjoining the rear courtyard.

**Estimated cost and timing: \$3.2M finalising funding to deliver ground floor and level 1 with occupation by early 2026**



Muswellbrook Youth Centre

The Muswellbrook Indoor Sports and Youth Centre includes the construction of a new multipurpose facility aimed at enhancing engagement of young people and promoting active lifestyles.

The new Youth Venue will connect northwest on the existing Muswellbrook Indoor Sports Centre site. It will provide a purpose-built facility to provide youth programs and activities to support the community.

Upper Hunter Youth Services will occupy the building and connect with the Muswellbrook Skate Park creating a safe space for youth to meet and engage.

**Estimated cost and timing: \$2.3M, 2025**

Olympic Park Precinct

Olympic Park is Muswellbrook’s premier regional sporting venue, home to junior and senior rugby league, touch football, velodrome, and tennis clubs and courts, and community groups. It is located in the same precinct as the Muswellbrook Aquatic Centre and Muswellbrook Golf Club and squash courts, and bordered by Muscle Creek’s natural and riparian areas.

The redevelopment will see upgrades to the grandstand including additional change rooms for women, amenities, new canteen, and function room.

**Estimated cost and timing: \$8.15M, 2026**



Denman to Sandy Hollow Pipeline

Council has secured \$18.9M in State government funding and is seeking additional funding to construct the Denman to Sandy Hollow pipeline and upgrades to Denman Water treatment plant.

The Denman to Sandy Hollow Pipeline construction project will unlock mining impacted land along the pipeline to attract intensive agricultural, industry and unlock and support new housing development.

The upgrade of the Denman Water treatment plant will increase capacity and enhance the plant’s, ability to produce high quality potable water consistent with NSW Health requirements.

**Estimated cost and timing: \$26.5M, \$18.9M funded - 2027 pending funding**





Denman Tourist Park

Denman is the shire's key tourist destination offering great food and wine and heritage charm.

Its rolling green hills and rock escarpment backdrop are home to the largest thoroughbred horse stud in the southern hemisphere and a basecamp for accessing natural area assets and surrounded by Wollemi National Park which cannot currently be accessed from the Upper Hunter.

Denman is a burgeoning tourist destination and with continued investment has the opportunity to develop into a quintessential Australian country town destination.

The continued investment in Denman is based on the Denman Recreation Area master plans included Denman Tourist Park building on the existing recreational facilities in the Denman Recreation Area Reserve including golf, tennis, swimming, indoor sports, football grounds, cricket pitch, RV dump point and Heritage Village.

Estimated project total \$10.5M+

Stage 1 - Funded \$1.3M amenities, civil works and landscaping



Wollombi Precinct

The objectives of the Wollombi Precinct Plan are to promote and enhance community identity and sense of belonging, provide active and passive recreation opportunities with safety and amenity for all users including improving roads and pedestrian access.

Wollombi Park is designed to accommodate a wide range of community activities with a primary focus on families and teenagers and is central to residences in the Wollombi Road precinct.

A staged delivery program is beginning developed to provide:

- New access road and car parking
- Multipurpose playing court areas
- Basketball court and murals
- Adventure Playground
- Picnic shelters and BBQs
- Pedestrian paths and lighting
- Avenue and park tree plantings, and bush regeneration
- Oval and irrigation
- Public amenities
- Parkour facility

Estimated Cost: Council is identifying funding \$10M





## Community Infrastructure Depot

Muswellbrook Shire is taking a leadership role on waste and recycling issues collaborating with other Hunter councils to develop a regional response to leverage waste and recycling opportunities continuing to advocate for improved service delivery and better outcomes for the environment.

To facilitate improved waste services and efficient use of resources in managing our community's infrastructure Council is committed to the construction of a Community Infrastructure Depot facility including administration, stores, workshop, and associated infrastructure.

The facility is to be located at the Muswellbrook Waste Management Facility as part of an integrated circular economy precinct for resource recovery and recycling. The integration of a consolidated Community Infrastructure Depot with the Muswellbrook Waste Management Facility will ensure efficient, effective, and innovative reuse of waste resources for the construction, maintenance and operation of community infrastructure and services.

The project will see approximately 1150 sqm of building/ additional associated infrastructure accommodating a range of technical/professional/administrative/ operational staff across Council's community infrastructure operations including waste management, water, wastewater networks, civil, parks/gardens, and natural areas.

The contribution of the Community Infrastructure Depot will provide the critical demand part of the circular economy precinct dedicated to resource recovery/ recycling. Recycling operations will include but not limited to reuse of roadbase material, brick/ building rubble for road subgrades, green waste for mulch and composted soil in parks/ gardens, recycled water/ stormwater, and trialling new approaches to reduce waste and increase recycling. We are also seeking funding commitment to deliver recycling infrastructure and for 100% of the waste levy to be returned to local governments for community waste minimisation and recycling programs.

**Estimated Cost: \$14.5M Partial funding: \$4.8M \$14.5M**

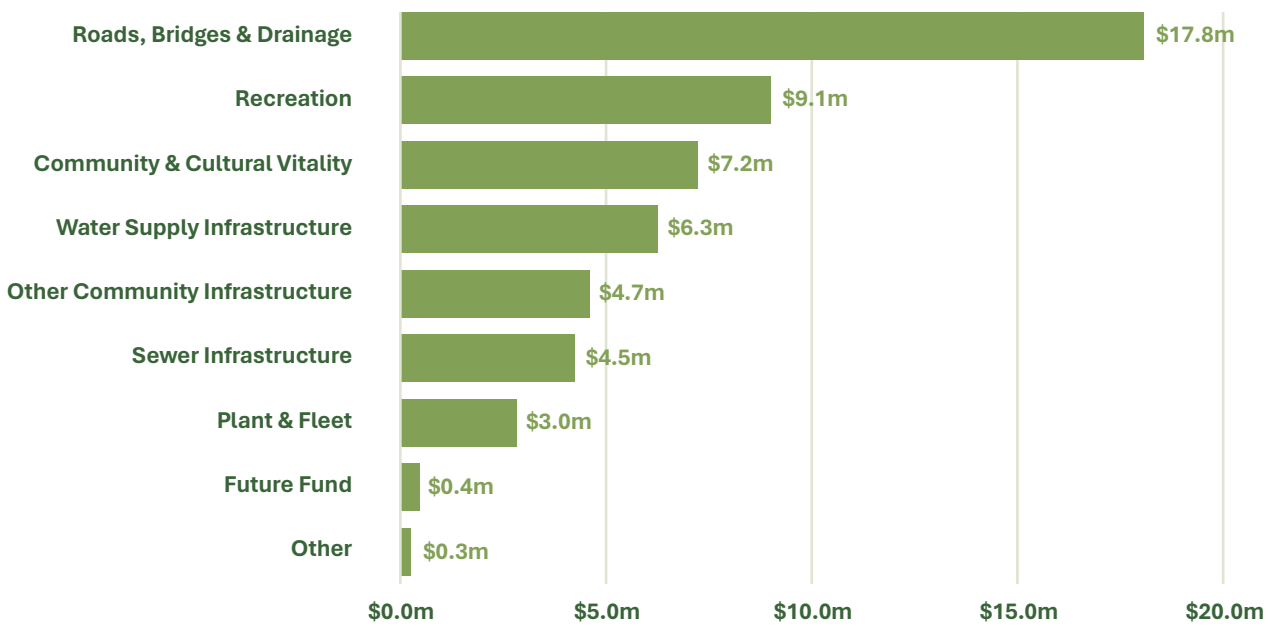




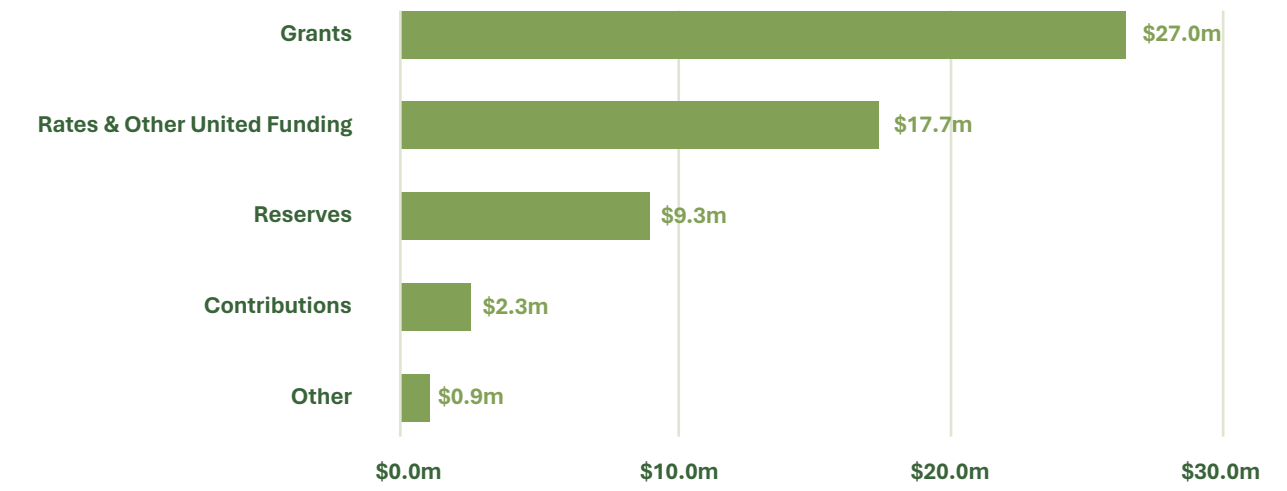
# 4 Year Budget Forecast

	Revised Budget	Budget	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates
	2025 \$000's	2026 \$000's	2027 \$000's	2028 \$000's	2029 \$000's
Income					
Rates & annual charges	35,379	36,848	37,770	38,714	39,682
User charges & fees	14,544	15,436	15,860	16,295	16,743
Other revenues	1,588	1,534	1,572	1,611	1,652
Grants & contributions provided for operating purposes	9,363	7,285	7,467	7,654	7,845
Grants & contributions provided for capital purposes	27,451	34,595	24,136	9,722	8,264
Interest & investment income	3,510	3,450	3,536	3,624	3,715
Other income	6,230	6,459	6,620	6,786	6,955
Net gain fromthe disposal of assets	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	98,064	105,606	96,960	84,406	84,855
Expenditure					
Employee benefits & on-costs	21,875	22,233	22,789	23,358	23,942
Materials & services	25,128	24,296	24,896	25,512	26,142
Borrowing costs	2,590	2,665	2,578	2,138	1,914
Depreciation, amortisation & impairment of non-financial sstes	16,252	17,065	17,918	18,814	19,755
Other expenses	2,846	2,612	2,677	2,744	2,815
Net loss from the disposal of assets	0	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	68,692	68,870	70,858	72,566	74,566
Operating result profit/(loss)	29,371	36,736	26,102	11,840	10,289
Operating result profit/(loss) excluding capital grants & contributions	1,921	2,141	1,966	2,118	2,025

# Capital Works 2025/26



# Capital Funding 2025/26





# Measuring Success

We will measure the success of the program through the actions of Council's Operational Plan.

Success will be captured in our ability to:

- deliver on what we have said we will do
- partner with others to leverage opportunities and
- advocating to achieve better outcomes

## Success will look like



### Deliver

- 90% completion of Operational Plan Actions
- Increase in community satisfaction
- Number of community programs delivered
- Usage of Council facilities
- Deliver funded and planned projects
- Compliance with Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Financial Sustainability - Meeting performance ratios
- Increasing employee engagement, retention and satisfaction
- Increase in visitor economy (no. of visitors)
- Meeting statutory planning timeframes
- Compliance with water regulations
- Deliver the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan



### Partner

- Grant application success rate and funding secured
- Attraction of new businesses and industries
- Demonstrate and progress policy on the use of mining land
- Increased recycling, reuse and landfill diversion rates
- Increased access to education, training and research
- Increased Index of Disadvantage (Social Economic indexes for Areas - SEIFA)
- Increased participation rates in events, programs and volunteering



### Advocate

- Increase in public transport access
- Increased access to health care
- Improved air quality
- Secured funding for the Denman to Sandy Hollow Pipeline
- Secured funding for the Wollombi Precinct
- Commencement of the Muswellbrook Bypass and funding for link roads
- Increase in education attainment







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