

# PARKES

*It all adds up.*



## Parques Shire Council Submission to the Draft Central West & Orana Regional Plan

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4 July 2016  
The Hon Robert Stokes  
Minister for Planning  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Minister

**Re Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan**

Parkes Shire Council would like to thank the Department of Planning and Environment for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan.

Parkes is a thriving Shire located within the Central West of New South Wales. The Parkes Shire has a population of more than 15,000, which has been growing steadily over the last 5 years. It is strategically located at the intersection of the Newell Highway, connecting Brisbane and Melbourne, and the transcontinental railway linking the eastern seaboard to Perth, and is set to play a major role as a National Intermodal hub when the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail is built.

The Parkes Shire boasts a strong, diverse economy, with a Gross Regional Product (GRP) of approximately \$1 billion per year. The economy is underpinned by the key industries of agriculture and mining, but also has a strong transport and logistics industry, retail and public sector. This diversity in the economy and the forward planning of the Community means that we believe that Parkes is set for a positive future. Council welcomes the Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan as a valuable tool to start planning for and facilitating this future growth.

Council agrees with the forward for the Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan written by the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC which eloquently states, what a wonderful place the Central West and Orana is to live and visit, it highlights the productive agricultural lands and the mineral and energy resources and also talks about the vibrancy use of the cities towns and smaller communities which may up the region

Council would like to extend an invitation to yourself and the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC to visit Parkes to discuss the implementation of the initiatives and ideas raised by the submission.

Should additional information be required Council's General Manager (Kent Boyd) and/or Business and Economic Development Manager (Anna Wylie) would be pleased to oblige on 02 6861 2333.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Ken Keith  
**MAYOR**



## + Overview and Structure

Parkes Shire Council believes that the vision and goals of the Draft Central West and Orana Regional Plan (Draft Regional Plan) are sound i.e.

- Goal 1:** A growing and diverse regional economy
- Goal 2:** A region with strong freight transport and utility infrastructure networks that support economic growth
- Goal 3:** A region that protects and enhances its productive agricultural land, natural resources and environment assets and
- Goal 4:** Strong communities and liveable places that cater for the region's changing populations

These goals are and in line with the strategic future directions of the Parkes Community Strategic Plan. Parkes Shire Council (PSC) is seeking to deliver its vision of being “a progressive regional centre, embracing a national logistics hub, with vibrant communities, diverse opportunities, learning and healthy lifestyles”.

The above vision involves working towards delivering the future directions to:

- + Develop education and lifelong learning opportunities
- + Improve health and well being
- + Promote, support and grow our communities
- + Grow and diversify the economic base
- + Develop Parkes as a national logistics hub
- + Enhance recreation and culture
- + Care for the natural and built environment in a changing climate
- + Maintain and improve the Shire's assets and infrastructure

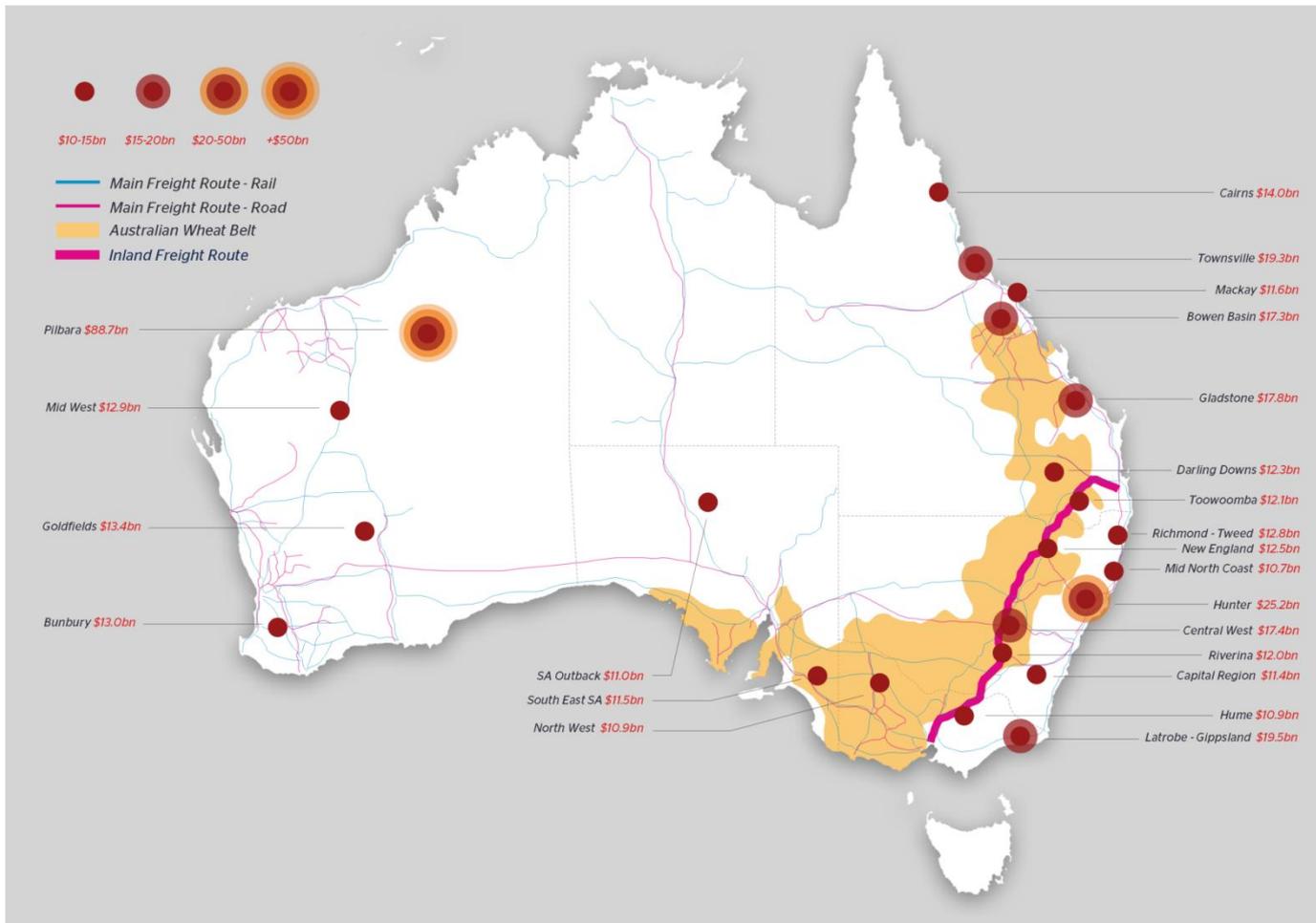
## + Developing a plan

On page 11 the of the Draft Regional Plan it outlines the reference material used to develop the document. Whilst Council believes that there is a comprehensive list of reference documents it feels that there are some key documents missing such as Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, especially Community Strategic Plans, LEP's and the State Government's Newell Highway Corridor Strategy (although it should be notes that it is referred to latter on in the Draft Regional Plan). There is also no reference to relevant Federal Government Reports, in particular the Australian Government's Infrastructure Australia (IA's) 15 year Australian Infrastructure Plan which was released in February 2016.

The importance of referencing documents such as IA's 15 year Infrastructure Plan is demonstrated in the below map (on the next page) which was adapted from Infrastructure Australia's 15 year Infrastructure plan (pg 61).

The map shows the projected gross regional product for major regional centres in 2031. In the Central West there will be \$17.4 billion worth of product being produced. The map also highlights the Eastern Wheat belt and the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. Council agrees with IA's comment “...in most regions, government investment is needed, either in part or full, to deliver economic infrastructure. While infrastructure investment can promote growth, it should be based on well-informed decisions about demand, scale, timing and funding of projects”.





Council believes that in any Regional Plan the appropriate documents at all levels of Government need to be referenced and taken into account.

### + Maps

Figure 4 Regional Assets - The map featured on page 14 and 15 of the draft plan has several errors including but not limited to missing roads, such as between Parkes and Wellington, irrigation areas which are not correctly identified, resources assets such as mining, water and some renewable energy assets are not identified. Council believes that maps are a very effective way of successfully communicating information (especially current and future states) and would suggest that all maps within the draft plan be revised for accuracy.

### + Governance of Delivering the Plan

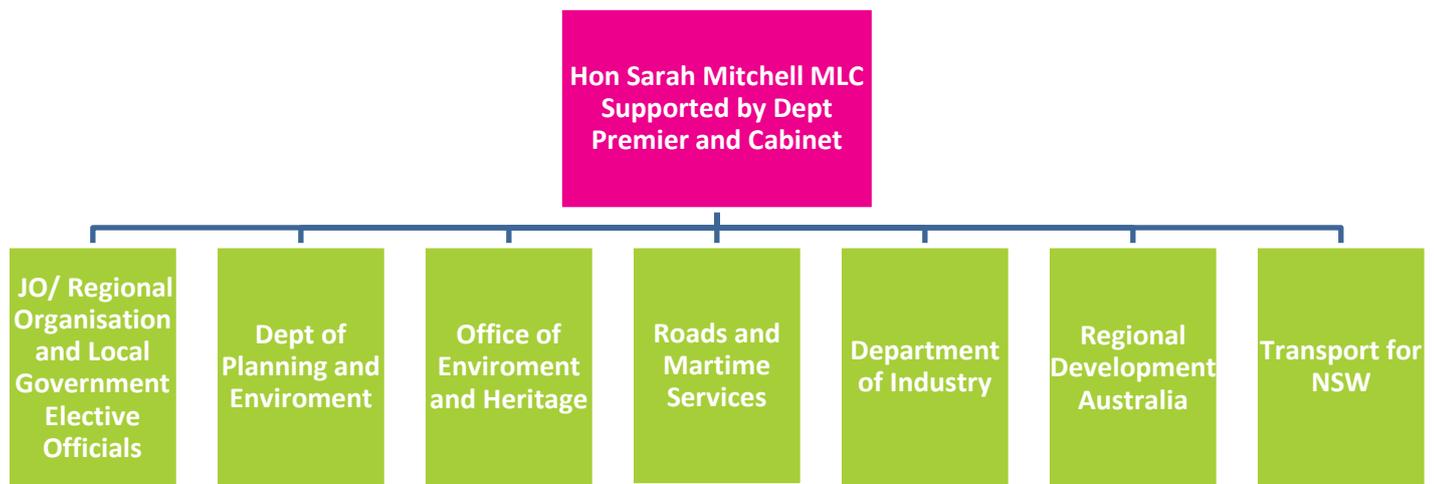
Whilst Council believes that the Department of Planning and Environment have created a strong document, we believe that to ensure that the document has weight and is effective in delivering the Vision and Aim set out in the forward which states "to grow economic diversity in the Central West and Orana over the next 20 years by creating more jobs and stability within these economies by ensuring that they are strong and resilient and can adapt to change over time" the Governance structure needs to be changed.

For the Draft Regional Plan to be truly effective it needs to be supported by all of the NSW Government Departments. There needs to be one comprehensive plan, avoiding each Department developing their own



Regional Plan. The Draft Regional Plan would be strengthened if under each goal where it states the "New South Wales government will..." there were tangible actions which reflected the views of all New South Wales Government Departments, be it the Office of Environment and Heritage, Roads and Maritime Services, Department of Industry Regional Development Australia, Transport for New South Wales, Department of Premier and Cabinet and Department of Planning and Environment.

Council believes the structure of the Coordination and Monitoring Committee needs to be altered. A Regional Plan with all the NSW Government Departments working together would be very powerful. For example a Governance structure such as that below would help ensure the effective implementation of a cohesive Regional Plan for the Central West and Orana.



Council suggests that for the goals and visions of a "true" Regional Plan for the Central West and Orana to be achieved, that the Coordinating and Monitoring Committee should be chaired for example by the Parliamentary Secretary for Western New South Wales, supported by the Department of Premier and cabinet. Local Government and joint regional organisations need to have a voice at this table to ensure that the objectives are in line with their Local Government Community Strategic Plans. Parkes Shire Council believes by taking this approach we would achieve a truly influential, inclusive and effective document which would drive change and growth, from local communities through all levels of government, and would help shape the future of the Central West and Orana and be truly reflective of grass-roots community views.

### + General comments on the Draft Regional Plan

A lot of the recommendations are things that Local Government is currently doing as part of their responsibilities to their communities.

Council believes that the document should give more focus to the challenges surrounding telecommunications whether it is NBN connections - fibre, wireless or satellite; or mobile coverage in regional NSW.

There needs to be a review of all maps and a focus future transport links be it Road, Rail or Air and they should highlight the potential for HPV networks, the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, and also identify pinch points outside the region that may need to be addressed to ensure that the ultimate version of the plan for economic stability for the region is achieved.

The idea of the "Principles" for making decisions and implementing new ideas should be used throughout the Draft Regional Plan not just under Action 1.5.1 - the "how" is always very important in any plan and Council believes by setting "Principles" about how the NSW Government will implement each action, the document would be a lot more tangible.

## Goal 1 - Growing and Diversified Regional Economy

Council strongly agrees that Growing and Diversifying the economic base of the Central West and Orana is paramount. This is a particular challenge as many local economies in the region have their gross regional product (GRP) dominated by one industry - be it mining or agriculture both of which are vulnerable to volatile markets conditions. Parkes Shire Council takes its role of ensuring a strong and diverse economy very seriously and strongly supports the comment that the planned Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail will expand economic opportunities for businesses in the region.

### Action 1.1.1 Provide enabling planning controls to facilitate diversification and attract investment in agribusiness sector.

Council supports the action of enabling planning controls to better facilitate the agri-business sector. Council welcomes the idea that the New South Wales Government will work with Councils to identify agribusiness value-added industries and opportunities and ensure that the appropriate land use strategies are facilitated. Council believes that this action should be expanded to also identify any transport pinch points within and outside the regions that hinder the development and investments in agricultural value add industries.

### Direction 1.3 Manage the region's mineral and energy report resources sector in a sustainable way

Council would suggest that Northparkes Mines (NPM), which has been operating within the Parkes Shire for over 20 years, would be a very good case study to include in this section. Northparkes Mines is copper/gold mine which employs approximately 600 people (including contractors). It contributes approximately 30% of the local GRP. NPM works well with Council and within the community. The mine runs a productive agricultural business as well as a profitable mine - more information can be found at <http://www.northparkes.com/>

### Action 1.4.2 Support employment and investment growth in education and training sector

The recommendation for this action is that the New South Wales Government will work with Councils to remove planning barriers to the expansion of the education and training sector. Parkes Shire Council questions what barriers would be put forward to stop the expansion of education and training within local government areas? Council would suggest that a better recommendation would be that Councils and the New South Wales Government should work together to predict the future training needs of communities and plan for important infrastructure for education and training including telecommunication needs.

### Direction 1.5 Support business activities with well-located and serviced industrial land and commercial centres

Parkes Shire Council supports this direction as we take the philosophy that as a Council we should be rolling out the "red carpet" rather than the "red tape" to investors, by insuring that we have adequate industrial land, suitably zoned with suitable bar buffer areas enabling Council's to facilitate investment. Council believes that the supply of industrial land is something that we should be reviewing regularly, based on the needs of industry and changes within local economies. Council welcomes the draft principles for industrial land identification.

### **Action 1.5.2 Develop and deliver strategies that strength and commercial functions of the CBDs of regional cities and regional centres and local towns.**

Council strongly supports this action, especially having recently developed a Parkes CBD Vibrancy Strategy. Council understand the importance of providing retail space and responding to the changes in the retail sector. It is important that regional communities continue to have vibrant and busy Main Street's. They are important as they create a sense of place for the community but also attract visitors to the business district. However Council would question how the New South Wales Government is going to provide strategic direction for commercial land use in CBD's and town centres. Council would suggest that like industrial land there should be some guiding principles for developing this action.

## **Goal 2 - A region with strong freight transport and utility infrastructure network that support economic growth**

Council supports the overall objective of this goal. Parkes Shire Council prides itself on planning for the future and ensuring that as a Shire, we have the necessary infrastructure to take advantage of economic growth in areas such as transport and logistics, and agriculture productivity. Council believes that this goal would be strengthened with reference to Infrastructure Australia (IA) is 15 year Plan. Infrastructure Australia's Plan calls for a national approach to transport with the development of a National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy. IA also identifies strong regional growth areas such as the Central West where it predicts by 2031 that over \$17.4 billion worth of product will be developed within the region.

### **Action 2.1.1 Support coordinated investment in fright network to improve network of efficiency.**

This section states that the State Government will work with stakeholders to coordinate investment in freight networks to improve network efficiency. Council questions how this will be achieved and suggests some tangible strategies would strengthen the plan

### **Action 2.1.2 Identify and prioritise pinch points within the existing freight network**

This action needs to be broadened to consider pinch points outside the region, including the Capital Cities. It should also review the links in the ports including the NSW Ports (Botany and Kembla) and the Port of Newcastle.

### **Action 2.1.3 Identify and prioritise opportunities to improve regionally significant local road connections**

The recommendation is that the NSW Government will work with Council's to identify, coordinate and prioritise delivery of local road projects, which would help support the regional freight network. It could be argued that this is already happening through the regional JO prioritise infrastructure project. This could also be formalised with the regional road group recently formed through the DPL and the JO.

### **Action 2.1.4 investigate opportunities for new intermodal terminals and rails freight facilities**

Council believes this is a very important action as should reference the work which is being carried out by the Regional Intermodal Taskforce, whose report into NSW Regional Intermodals is due out later this year.

### **Action 2.1.5 Work with the Australian Government on the proposed Melbourne- Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor through the region**

Parkes Shire Council has been a long time advocator of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail. We believe that it will be a game changer to the way in which freight is moved throughout the country and will create a corridor of opportunity. We believe it will provide opportunities and efficiencies to many industries especially agriculture. Please refer to image as demonstrated in the map on page 5 of this submission

Whilst we welcome that the New South Wales Government will endeavour to work with the Australian Government to develop an agreement to finalise the planning engineering assessment of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland rail corridor. Council would suggest that the Draft Regional Plan site the recent 2015 Inland Rail Business Case developed by the Inland Rail Implementation Group, headed by former Deputy PM John Anderson AO as a reference <http://inlandrail.artc.com.au/>

Council believes that using some of the funds allocated under the Fixing Country Rail program to develop a strategic and costed Regional Rail Optimisation Strategy for access to Newcastle and other NSW ports from regional areas will increase productivity and efficiencies in the freight network. The plan may also complement the strategy that the Federal Government has proposed in the plan to develop a National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy which is proposed to engage all levels of Government.

### **Action 2.2.1 Coordinate the delivery of infrastructure to support the future needs of residence business and industry**

Council questions the map on accuracy of Figure 11 pg 41 and data the behind Forecast Supply Deficiency 2036. Parkes is currently undertaking several major water security projects including, \$13mill Lake Endeavour Dam upgrade, a new river intake on the Lachlan River, we have brought an additional bore (bore 8) online and we are currently in the middle of building new a Water Treatment Plant and a new Sewage Treat Plant which are jointly valued at approximately \$70 million. In addition to that, Council has also been awarded a grant to develop a recycled water ring main. Council believes that it has been proactively managing the threat of a deficient supply of water and would question why it is shown as being 51-90% deficient by 2035.

Parkes Shire Council sees water security as a collaborative responsibility of all levels of Government, natural water systems are larger than one community and need to be managed for not only urban use but also industry and agriculture.

Parkes Shire Council who is also a member of Centroc, has already completed and seeks to continue, to secure water for our urban communities, for the industrial sectors that support our livelihoods, and for our unique and precious natural environment. The Centroc Councils have recently completed a Carbon Plus Study, which will ensure that those Councils continue to manage the carbon footprint of its water security strategy. Achieving water security for Central New South Wales will require significant investment in both infrastructure and demand management programs.

Through Centroc, the 17 local government councils within the region have demonstrated their capability to unite, collaborate and work toward a common goal. Already, the collective efforts have successfully developed a long-term sustainable water supply strategy which significantly improves the water supply security of the central west region whilst balancing social, environmental and economic outcomes.

There is no comprise when it comes to water security, it is an essential element for communities to prosper. But Council also believes that it is essential that Governments of all levels look at the issues around water security as an integrated and collaborative approach, but also firmly believes in the public ownership of water and sewer assets.

Council also feels that the issue of Waste needs to be explore further in this section.



### **Action 2.2.2 Establish monitoring mechanisms to enable better demand forecasting to inform infrastructure coordination**

Council believes that this action should be linked to Section 94 & Section 94A planning. Council would suggest that guiding principles may need to be established.

## **Goal 3 - A Region that protects and enhances its productive agricultural land, natural resources and environmental assets**

Council would request that all maps within this section are reviewed for accuracy

### **Action 3.1.1 Identify and protect regionally important agricultural land**

Once again Council would request that guiding principles for the identifying and protecting agricultural land be developed. These principles need to be developed in consultation with stakeholders and governments of all levels.

### **Action 3.1.2 Establish a strategic planning framework to protect a productive values of agricultural land**

Council would suggest that any framework established should be in consultation with stakeholders, with would be of particular importance when looking at agricultural land on urban fringes.

Councils and the New South Wales government also need to work together to address the development challenges of more intensive agricultural industries such as poultry abattoirs horticulture and feedlots. Ensure that the right zonings are established to encourage and facilitate these developments.

### **Action 3.2.1 Identify mineral and energy resource lands to support the sustainable management of mining industries and diversification of NSW energy supplies**

Land access agreements which are required for exploration activity on land not owned by the exploration company, are not covered in this section.

### **Action 3.2.2 Plan for the ongoing productive use of mineral and energy resource lands**

This section did not take into consideration mine rehabilitation and return of final land forms to original use or improved state. There is also the possibility that during the operational stage of mining, progressive rehab of final land forms should be undertaken. An example of this can be seen at Glencore's Mangoola Open Cut Mine <http://www.mangoolamine.com.au/EN/environment/Pages/Rehabilitation.aspx>

### **Action 3.2.3 Implement the NSW Renewable Energy Action Plan to increase renewable energy generation**

This section fails to make the connection between rehabilitated mine landforms and potential use for wind and solar farm renewables energy activities.

### **Direction 3.3 Manage competing and conflicting interests in agricultural, mineral and energy resource areas to provide greater certainty for investment**

Council suggestions that the NSW Government could also take a proactive approach to identifying and planning for the impact of mining on agricultural lands and the impact on regional communities and services. The South Australian Government has developed a Regional Mining and Infrastructure Plan which could be used as a model

[http://www.infrastructure.sa.gov.au/major\\_projects/regional\\_mining\\_and\\_infrastructure\\_planning\\_project](http://www.infrastructure.sa.gov.au/major_projects/regional_mining_and_infrastructure_planning_project)

This section was all about coal and gas, at Northparkes Mines, as previously mentioned farming and mining co-exist. This section does not address the conflict between renewables energy and farming, solar farms tying up quality agriculture land limiting long term sustainable use.

**Action 3.3.1 Avoid urban and rural residential encroachment into identified agricultural and extractive resource lands when preparing long term settlement strategies.**

Visual aspects of renewables conflict with urban land use especially solar farms, which are not covered.

**Action 3.4.1 Support the sustainable use and conservation of water resources.**

Council feels that Figure 16 - does not accurately reflect the role that Local Government play in water Governance and should be deleted.

**Direction 3.5 Protect and manage the region's environmental assets**

Council asks that Figure 17 be reviewed for accuracy especially in regards to irrigation areas.

## **Goal 4 - Strong communities and liveable places that cater for the region's changing population**

**Action 4.1.1 Support the role and function of the regional cities and regional centres**

Even though this action refers to of regional cities and regional centres the action at the end refers to the NSW Government only working with regional cities not regional centres.

**Action 4.3.3 Develop a framework to facilitate a range of accommodation options for the seasonal, itinerant and mining workforces**

Council agrees and welcomes this initiative.

**Action 4.3.4 Develop and implement principles for rural residential development**

More and more people are moving to the Central West and Orana as a lifestyle choice. They want to escape the city and have room to move and bring their families up in a rural/ regional setting with the convenience of "town" facilities such as water and sewer. Hence Council welcomes the Draft Settlement Planning Principles, with the caveat of "right-to-farm" principles.

**Action 4.4.2 Implement local planning controls that protect regional airports from encroachment of incompatible land uses**

Parkes Shire Council welcomes this initiative as we believe that for any regional community to grow and prosper, it needs to have an airport with a regular RPT service.

