

## **Appendix A**

### **Submission by Moree Plains Shire Council on the Draft New England North West Regional Plan**

Moree Plains Shire Council submits that the Draft New England North West Regional Plan should be amended to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Provide details of local road management as a critical part of the agricultural transport chain. Include details of resourcing.
2. The Plan be accompanied by a fully-costed infrastructure plan.
3. To provide clear statements about state agency responsibility and commitments. These should be “boxed” to draw attention to them, and conclude each section.
4. Provide specific commentary on developing telecommunications specifically how the NBN will interact and enhance local economic opportunities.
5. Council to be kept informed of ten-year plans that will be developed for individual agricultural industries.
6. Council to be involved in the preparation of the strategy/guidelines for intensive agricultural and food processing developments.
7. That the Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land map be amended to accurately depict prime agricultural land in the region. The current mapping is not considered to be appropriately accurate.
8. Council to be involved in the preparation of the guidelines on the identification and management of Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land. In this regard Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land needs to be broadened as a category to include access to water and transport. Agricultural productivity is, in part, dependent on these two critical items.
9. Address the relationships between mining, agricultural land uses and renewable energy developments with respect to land use compatibility.
10. Consideration of the potential for new, larger water storage infrastructure.
11. The Department of Planning and Environment:
  - a. Complete a review of the current minimum lot sizes for rural zones in conjunction with Council;(does MPSC want this?)
  - b. Develop model planning provisions adopting the principles of the Department of Primary Industries Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guidelines (2011);
  - c. Develop in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries Guidelines for Land Use Conflict Management (including in use).
12. Investigate of the use of inactive railway lines as they have the potential to be reopened to support freight transport.

- 13.** Provide more information on the threats and opportunities provided by the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail and investigate the use of inactive railway lines for freight transport including how the efficiency of freight transport through Narrabri, Moree Plains and Gwydir can be balanced with the needs of the local community to cross roads.
- 14.** Address infrastructure matters in this Plan with respect to the Australian Infrastructure Plan, February 2016.
- 15.** Include discussion on the NSW Regional Intermodal Task Force report and Government response.
- 16.** Address land access agreements which are required for exploration activity on land not owned by the exploration company.
- 17.** Council to be involved in the preparation of the state-wide criteria for land release for rural and regional areas.
- 18.** Moree's smaller towns and village be included in transport connectivity initiatives.
- 19.** Confirm the need for regional carriers to continue to have adequate slots at Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport
- 20.** Details of resourcing for Plan implementation. Costs for local government must be manageable.
- 21.** The proposed implementation plan must have genuine, legislated power to ensure that the Plan is effectively delivered.
- 22.** That the Plan be equitable in addressing the strengths and opportunities in our region. It cannot become a plan solely focussed on Tamworth and Armidale.

Draft New England North West Regional Plan			
Introductory sections		Staff Comments	
Introduction		<p>-Eighth paragraph. Should make reference to improvements to grain on rail as well</p> <p>-Include reference to resilience for smaller communities/strategic centres.</p> <p>-Rather than "balance" land use conflict Council suggests "address" land use conflict.</p>	
Delivering the Plan		<p>- Implementation. Section 117 directions are only triggered at rezoning stage. These are not a core implementation tool.</p>	
Vision		<p>Development opportunities around food processing industries should be broadened to refer to secondary processing industries. Strategic centres such as Moree need to be specifically acknowledged in the vision (paragraph 8).</p>	
Goal 1 – A Growing and Diversified Agricultural Sector			
<p>According to the State Government productive agricultural land covers around 67 per cent of the New England North West region, making it one of the top agricultural producing regions in NSW, generating around \$2.5 billion in 2011.</p>			
DIRECTION 1.1 Grow broadacre agriculture and livestock grazing sectors			
Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
1.1.1	Implement the Government’s Agriculture Industry Action Plan	<p>The Department of Primary Industries <i>Agriculture Industry Action Plan-Primed for growth: Investing locally and connecting globally</i> (2014) provides a roadmap of actions and strategies for industry and government to work together to drive growth in the NSW agricultural sector. According to the plan ten-year plans will be developed for individual agricultural industries to grow the sector and guide government.</p>	<p>It is pleasing to see a focus on enhancing the agricultural sector which is a regional core competency for the North West and that Moree Plains has been specifically identified as playing a key role in achieving this goal.</p> <p>Council should request to be kept informed of the ten year plans which are to be developed for each agricultural industry as this is likely to impact upon Council’s future land use strategies.</p> <p>Note that employment trends in</p>

			agriculture are unlikely to continue at the same pace as the last 15-20 years. Instead, these trends while continuing are likely to plateau.
--	--	--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

***DIRECTION 1.2 Grow and diversify intensive agriculture and food processing agribusiness***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
1.2. 1	Prepare and implement a Regional Intensive Agribusiness Strategy to support new opportunities for intensive agricultural and food processing agribusinesses	<p>The Regional Intensive Agribusiness Strategy will identify locations with potential for intensive agricultural development. The strategy will also include Intensive Agricultural and Food Processing Guidelines to minimise the effects of development and assist the local government approval process. It may include the design and layout of intensive agricultural and food processing developments.</p> <p>Strategies to facilitate the growth of agribusiness will also support the strength of the region's agricultural productivity and contribute to the diversification of the region's economy.</p>	<p>Council should seek to be involved in the preparation of the strategy/guidelines. This could potentially be an opportunity for Council to provide a suitable area for an intensive agricultural production and food processing precinct.</p> <p>Improvements in freight networks needs to explicitly include local roads</p>

***DIRECTION 1.3 Protect agricultural land from urban encroachment and fragmentation***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
1.3. 1	Identify and protect important agricultural lands	<p>Important agricultural land will be mapped to guide government when making planning decisions, preparing local plans and investing in infrastructure. The maps can be used to identify areas with potential for land use conflicts, such as the expansion of rural residential uses. The mapping will provide industry with information on the existing agricultural production in the region. It will also identify land that is suitable for future investment for agricultural production and associated activities, such as value-adding/processing, and farm stay accommodation.</p>	<p>Parts of Moree Plains Shire have been mapped as comprising Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land. The mapping is the same as that found in the Strategic Regional Land Use Plan 2012 which Council considers to have limited accuracy. It is recommended that this map be reviewed to ensure an appropriate level of accuracy. Otherwise the map would inform industry with information that is of questionable reliability.</p>

		<p>The NSW Government will develop guidelines for councils about planning for urban or rural residential development on important agricultural land, including mapped Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land. These guidelines will also assist councils to identify issues they need to consider when preparing local strategies or planning controls.</p> <p>Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land is high quality agricultural land based on characteristics such as soil fertility, access to water and land capability. It is naturally capable of sustaining high levels of productivity and requires minimal management to maintain its quality.</p>	<p>Council seeks to be involved in the preparation of future guidelines for classifying Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land.</p> <p>The guiding principles for the identifying and protecting agricultural land need to be developed in consultation with stakeholders and governments of all levels. There needs to be a particular focus on agricultural land on urban fringes.</p> <p>Care is needed in terms of assuming that agricultural subdivision is necessarily bad. Agricultural subdivision not connected to dwelling rights is important for landholder flexibility.</p> <p>Regionally specific data on what is important to the regional agricultural industry will assist in identifying high quality agricultural land</p> <p>Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land also needs to take into consideration key factors of production including accessibility and water.</p>
1.3. 2	Limit fragmentation of agricultural land and minimise incompatible land uses on or near agricultural land	Councils should try to retain existing large rural landholdings to maximise production efficiencies and the viability of agricultural sectors. Applying provisions that limit the development of dwellings that are not a primary residence or associated with agriculture will also avoid potential conflicts with agricultural activities. Before approving secondary dwellings or detached dual occupancies in rural areas, councils should consider the possible land use conflicts and	Limiting rural land subdivision through minimum lot sizes is still considered to be the most effective means of protecting agricultural land. A review of the current minimum lot sizes in conjunction with Council is considered necessary. Additional planning provisions in LEPs adopting the principles of the Department of Primary Industries

		<p>the impacts on local agricultural activities.</p> <p>Councils can identify certain agricultural areas for inclusion in the primary production small lot zone. Local environmental plans can also be used to support these industries, with provisions such as farm boundary adjustments, subdivisions to create a primary production lot without a dwelling and rural worker dwelling controls. The provisions should offer flexibility and opportunity, but prevent fragmentation.</p>	<p>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guidelines (2011) are supported. There is also a need for the Department of Primary Industries to develop a Land Use Conflict Management Guideline that provides a framework for management in use included standard recommended buffers for the various land use types.</p>
1.3.3	Increase the region's biosecurity through the use of buffers and land use conflict risk assessment	<p>Consider opportunities to minimise biosecurity risks for current and future industries through biosecurity plans, and strategic planning (including a review of zones in local plans).</p> <p>Promote the application of buffer areas to minimise biosecurity risks when assessing the potential impacts of new development.</p>	<p>The location and maintenance of any biodiversity offsets need to be carefully considered to ensure that they do not provide an area for noxious weeds to become established.</p>
1.3.4	Manage and protect travelling stock reserves for their economic, environmental and social values	<p>Local Land Services are developing a NSW travelling stock reserve state planning framework that will guide how they manage travelling stock reserves with multiple values.</p> <p>Councils will consider incorporating the management arrangements for these reserves in planning strategies and local environmental plans.</p>	<p>No comment.</p>

***DIRECTION 1.4 Increase opportunities to move agricultural produce to market***

The NSW Government estimates that there are an estimated 2.9 million tonnes of freight generated annually on broadacre grain farms in the region with freight volumes along the Newell Highway from Narrabri to the Queensland border forecast to increase by around 80 per cent to 4.9 million tonnes to 2031.

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
1.4.1	Investigate opportunities to improve local road connections	Through the NSW Government's \$550 million Fixing Country Roads and \$345 million Bridges for the Bush programs, targeted funding is available to resolve constraints on local road networks and reduce the cost for businesses of transporting goods to market.	<p>The Draft Plan does not provide any commentary regarding its alignment with the Australian Government's Australian Infrastructure Plan (February 2016) nor indeed the NSW Government's Regional Intermodal Task Force Report (June 2016). These documents must be part of the transport discussion in the plan.</p> <p>In addition to containerisation enhanced opportunities for bulk aggregation need to be identified.</p> <p>The local road network issues are more than just "pinch points". There needs to be full recognition of the "last mile" problem as part of the overall logistics chain.</p>
1.4.2	Investigate opportunities for increased rail freight	The region's outbound containerised agricultural freight is forecast to grow by nearly 10,000 TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) by 2031, with meat and grains experiencing the highest growth. There are opportunities to cluster complementary activities to create freight and logistics precincts, based around freight intermodal terminals.	The Draft Plan should investigate the use of inactive railway lines as they have the potential to be reopened to support freight transport.
1.4.3	Work with the Australian Government on the proposed Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail Corridor	The preferred corridor for inland rail, passing through the region in Narrabri, Moree Plains and Gwydir. The fine-scale alignment of the corridor is yet to be settled.	The threats and opportunities provided by the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail which will pass through the region in Narrabri, Moree Plains and Gwydir are not yet entirely understood and the Draft Plan does not shed any light on this subject. Consideration needs to be given to how the efficiency of freight transport through the

			Narrabri, Moree Plains and Gwydir can be balanced with the needs of the local community to cross roads.
1.4.4	Investigate opportunities to provide greater access for high productivity vehicles	<p>The pilot Namoi Joint Organisation of Councils is undertaking a heavy vehicle route analysis to identify infrastructure constraints and impediments to current and future heavy vehicle access. One of the objectives of this work is to identify an approved regional road train network.</p> <p>The Rebuilding NSW – State Infrastructure Strategy (2014) reserved \$2 billion for the regional road freight corridor and \$443 million for the Fixing Country Roads program, which will target regional road freight improvements.</p>	Noted.
<p><b>Goal 2 – A Diversified Economy Through the Management of Mineral and Energy Resources, Including Renewable Energy Generation</b></p> <p>According to the NSW Government the value of the region’s mining production grew by 24 per cent each year between 2006 and 2014, contributing approximately \$1 billion in gross domestic product in 2014-15.</p>			
<b><i>DIRECTION 2.1 Deliver economic diversity through sustainable use of, and access to mineral and energy resources</i></b>			
Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
2.1.1	Identify mineral and energy resource lands to support sustainable development of mining industries	<p>The NSW Government has introduced a Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum (including coal seam gas).</p> <p>The current planning framework around mining and petroleum (including coal seam gas) proposals will continue.</p> <p>In August 2016, the Government secured the cancellation of the Caroonna mineral exploration licence, covering approximately 344 square kilometres of the Liverpool Plains.</p>	<p>The Strategic Release Framework for Coal and Petroleum should provide commensurate attention to minerals other than coal and petroleum. All relevant forms of mining should be addressed in the framework.</p> <p>The Caroonna mineral licence buyback by the NSW Government came at huge expense and</p>



		<p>The Liverpool Plains provide some of the most productive and valuable farming land in Australia.</p> <p>The NSW Government has committed to increasing its efforts to reduce the area of encroachment of coal exploration licences into the strategic agricultural land of the Liverpool Plains. Negotiations have commenced with Shenhua to relinquish parts of its mining title that encroach onto such land.</p> <p>The region has potential to be a leader in the development of renewable energy generation by harnessing solar in the North West and wind energy in the New England. The region receives 19 to 20 megajoules daily of solar exposure, making it the second highest solar penetration region in NSW.</p> <p>The renewable energy sector is also injecting infrastructure worth over \$700 million into the region.</p>	<p>followed a drawn-out approval process. If the Government considered the development to be inappropriate why was it approved? The planning process for such developments may need to be reviewed.</p> <p>Discussion is needed on land access agreements which are required for exploration activity on land not owned by the exploration company.</p> <p>Impacts on groundwater should be specifically identified as a key part of the assessment process.</p>
2.2.1	Plan for the ongoing productive use of extractive resource lands	<p>Developing land use plans that respond to the lifecycle of mineral and energy resources will enable all stakeholders to better understand the long term productive value of the land and provide greater certainty for investments.</p> <p>These land use plans may consider how identified mineral and energy resources can accommodate a range of uses, either sequentially or simultaneously, with extraction-related activities.</p>	<p>The appreciation that the full lifecycle of mining developments need to be actively managed is welcomed. The State Government also needs to provide support to communities for the transition to post-mining based local economies and take a proactive approach to identifying and planning for the impact of mining on agricultural lands.</p> <p>Potential impacts of mining proposals need to include biophysical impacts and impacts on water.</p> <p>Lead in stage. Environmental <i>and</i> social impacts.</p>
2.2.	Avoid urban and	Long term settlement strategies should	it is suggested that the Division of

2	rural residential encroachment into identified mineral and energy resources when preparing long term settlement strategies	<p>recognise and respond to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opportunities to provide similar housing outcomes in other locations in the region to avoid potential land use conflict;</li> <li>• the specific operational requirements of existing or potential future mineral and energy resource industries; and</li> <li>• effective and efficient provision and management of infrastructure and services associated with mining activities.</li> </ul>	Resources and Energy's current mapping of potential mineral and energy resources could be included in the plan. This would assist in identifying mineral and energy resource lands which may be incompatible with urban or rural residential development.
2.2.3	Implement a robust assessment process to consider social, economic and environmental implications and manage these throughout the life of the project	The assessment process provides the opportunity to assess mining applications, specifically, to identify and manage potential land use conflicts that may arise during the life of a project.	<p>The cumulative impact assessment methodology for mining proposals and development assessment guideline for impact on human health from dust generated from mining and other activities are supported and long overdue.</p> <p>Conditions of title. Should this read conditions of approval?</p>

***DIRECTION 2.3 Increase opportunities for renewable energy generation***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
2.3.1	Map opportunities for renewable energy generation in the region	Identifying locations that have the necessary infrastructure and corridors to allow renewable energy projects to access the electricity transmission network is a priority. Councils will identify these locations in planning strategies and apply appropriate zonings in local environmental plans	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Flaw in third paragraph. Renewable energy sector is not related to stormwater reuse.</p> <p>Case study. Moree solar farm is now constructed. Update section.</p>

***Goal 3 – Communities Resilient to Change, with Housing Choice and Services that Meet Shifting Needs and Lifestyles***

According to the NSW Government between 2006 and 2011, the population of the New England North West grew to 182,600. By 2036 an additional 19,500 people are expected to be living in the region. The Tamworth and Armidale Regional Local Government Areas will support more than half of the region's population and dwellings by 2036.

The NSW Government expect the New England North West to continue experiencing the outward migration of young adults (aged 20-30 years). As a result of these trends the region is expected to have relatively fewer

younger people and more older people.

The expansion of the region's natural resource sectors may lead to relatively large and rapid fluctuations in population for some communities.

***DIRECTION 3.1 Strengthen community resilience***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
3.1.1	Undertake local planning that supports community resilience	Councils are encouraged to consider developing local strategies to capitalise on community strengths, diversify the economy, attract investment, integrate infrastructure and transport planning, and deal with growth pressures.	A scenario planning modelling tool would be extremely useful for local planners considering the impacts of different growth scenarios on community infrastructure.
3.1.2	Work with Local Aboriginal Land Councils to conduct a strategic assessment of their landholdings to identify priority sites for further investigation of their economic or housing opportunities	Together, Aboriginal Affairs NSW, Department of Primary Industries (Lands), and the Department of Planning and Environment will work with the Land Councils to identify their landholdings and to map the level of constraints for each site. This information can be used by Aboriginal communities to consider potential uses of the land for housing and employment opportunities. It has potential to provide economic returns to the Land Councils, which can be invested in assistance programs in the region.	Noted.
3.1.3	Facilitate the delivery of temporary housing for mining and seasonal or itinerant agriculture employees	Prepare planning guidelines for temporary accommodation of mining and agriculture employees to inform the location and design of future facilities to maximise social integration and economic benefits to local communities, and to minimise land use conflicts and amenity impacts.	Noted.

***DIRECTION 3.2 Plan for housing to meet the needs of a growing and changing population***

According to the NSW Government Housing NSW has indicated there is a moderate to high need for

affordable housing in Moree Plains, Narrabri and Gunnedah. The Draft Plan proposes to prepare guidelines for local housing strategies and consider amendments to relevant environmental planning instruments informed by updated strategies.

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
3.2.1	Facilitate the supply of more affordable housing	<p>The NSW Government recognises that more needs to be done to meet the housing needs of people on very low, and low incomes. The Government aims to develop a comprehensive approach to affordable housing that involves all stakeholders – the Government, councils and the private and community sectors.</p> <p>Councils can help to improve affordable housing by including model controls and development incentives in their planning strategies and local environmental plans.</p>	<p><i>A Housing Market Analysis for New England and North West Region</i> was prepared on behalf of the Department of Planning and Environment in November 2015. That analysis shows that there will be an overall low growth rate between 2011 and 2036 with the most growth in the age group 65+. Essentially what is happening is that people are living longer and remaining in the LGA but are not being replaced by younger people being born and moving to the area.</p> <p>Tamworth LGA, on the other hand, is expected to show strong growth in the under 65 age group.</p> <p>Council may wish to consider investigating strategies to encourage people to move to the MoreePlains LGA.</p> <p>Council may also look to establish an ageing in place policy to ensure that adequate services are available to residents aged 65+ to allow them to stay in the Moree Plains LGA.</p>
<b><i>DIRECTION 3.3 Deliver housing choice to suit changing needs</i></b>			
Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
3.3.1	Provide for a range of dwelling types in local controls	A greater mix of housing will be necessary to satisfy projected demand for smaller housing types, for example townhouses, villas and apartments.	The Moree Plains LEP provides for sufficient housing diversity to meet community requirements.

<b><i>DIRECTION 3.4 Promote sustainable settlement growth with great places to live</i></b>			
<b>Draft Action</b>		<b>Commentary from Plan</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
3.4. 1	Direct future growth to the most appropriate locations by applying Draft Settlement Planning Principles	<p>Proposals to release new land for residential, industrial or rural residential purposes will need to apply the Draft Settlement Planning Principles, which have been established by the Department of Planning and Environment. The principles include the need for new land release areas to be identified through a comprehensive strategic planning process or local growth management strategy, which has been endorsed by the Department of Planning and Environment.</p> <p>These principles will apply until the state wide criteria for land release in regional NSW are in place. The criteria will provide for a consistent approach to identifying and planning for future growth across regional areas.</p>	The Statewide land release criteria and settle planning principles are supported. Council would like to be involved in the establishment of the Statewide criteria for land release in regional NSW.
3.4. 2	Promote quality urban design in neighbourhoods and centres	Encourage councils to apply the Neighbourhood Planning Principles when preparing their local environmental plans and development control plans for new release areas and in strategic planning to revitalise town centres.	The neighbourhood planning principles are broad principles which look to encourage growth in areas which are suitable (i.e. has the climate, topography, access to facilities, minimal impacts on environment and heritage, not limited by physical constraints and in areas that have capacity to promote energy and water efficiency). Broadly speaking, these matters are already considered by Council in the plan making process.
3.4. 3	Encourage healthy living by increasing options for walking and	Work with councils to develop and implement programs that improve opportunities for walking and cycling.	Agreed. This issue has also been addressed in Council's new Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.

	cycling		
<b><i>DIRECTION 3.5 Increase access to health and education services</i></b>			
<b>Draft Action</b>		<b>Commentary from Plan</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
3.5.1	Realign health services to the needs of the community	Identify capacity for health facilities to align their functions and services in response to the changing health needs of the community.	Noted.  Explicit reference should be made to increasing health services in the strategic centres.
3.5.2	Facilitate planning for additional primary and secondary school places	By 2031, there are expected to be around 450 more primary school places and 300 more high school places in public schools in the New England North West. The projected growth in the number of school-age children is likely to be accommodated in existing schools.  The Department will monitor changes in demand in all the region's public schools over time and plan for additional school places as required.	It should be noted that there is also potential for expansion of the private sector.
<b><i>DIRECTION 3.6 Coordinate infrastructure delivery</i></b>			
<b>Draft Action</b>		<b>Commentary from Plan</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
3.6.1	Coordinate urban growth and infrastructure delivery	Councils should undertake detailed infrastructure service planning to establish that land can be feasibly and economically serviced, prior to rezoning. This will support the timely release and development of land.  Councils should also undertake detailed design investigations and analyse the infrastructure requirements associated with rezoning proposals.	Council may consider undertaking an audit of its existing undeveloped land on the basis of this.
3.6.2	Monitor development activity to support infrastructure planning	The New England North West Housing and Land Monitor was introduced to monitor housing, jobs and infrastructure delivery.	Noted.

**Goal 4 – Prosperous Urban Centres with Job Opportunities**

According to the NSW Government Tamworth and Armidale, are projected to support over half the region's population by 2036 and their development will help to drive growth for the region. A further 28 per cent of the population is projected to reside in the four strategic centres of Inverell, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Moree.

***DIRECTION 4.1 Grow the regional cities of Tamworth and Armidale***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
4.1.1	Work with Tamworth and Armidale Regional Councils to provide opportunities for increased jobs, services and housing	The growth of Tamworth and Armidale will strengthen the region's economy. Residential release areas in these regional cities will deliver the majority of new housing that will be required in the region to support projected population growth.	There is no discussion on other LGA's in this action. The plan does not talk about working with strategic centres such as Moree.

***DIRECTION 4.2 Enhance access to jobs, goods and services by improving connections between centres***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
4.2.1	Identify connectivity improvements for key State roads in the region	The Newell Highway Corridor Strategy (2015) outlines the investment priorities to develop, manage and maintain the Newell Highway.  The New England Highway Corridor Strategy is also being prepared.	Improvements are needed in regional bus connectivity in particular to access higher order services in Tamworth and Armidale.
4.2.2	Deliver improved transport connectivity for urban centres	The New England North West Regional Transport Plan (2013) identified that the region will receive a share of the \$389 million to support and improve rural and regional bus services. Transport for NSW will work with bus operators in the region to develop routes and timetables to improve services.	Moree Plains' smaller towns and village need to be included in the discussion on transport connectivity. The key to the growth of villages and towns is to provide adequate transport services to reduce reliance on cars and enable those in outlying areas to access jobs and services in the regional centres.  The need for regional carriers to continue to have adequate slots at Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport should be discussed.

4.2. 3	Minimise the impact of development on the efficiency of the transport network	Limiting inappropriate development along existing and proposed bypasses, and ribbon development along highways, will minimise the potential effects of development on the efficiency of the transport network. It will also protect the productivity and safety improvements from the investment in bypasses and highway upgrades.	Noted.
-----------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------

***DIRECTION 4.3 Provide well-located and serviced supplies of industrial and employment lands***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
4.3. 1	Secure a supply of relevant industrial and employment lands to support employment growth	The NSW Government's New England North West Housing and Land Monitor provides information on industrial land supply in each local government area and indicates the rate at which industrial land is being developed on an annual basis. It is produced with council input.	Noted

***DIRECTION 4.4 Enhance the viability and vitality of commercial centres***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
4.4. 1	Encourage retail and commercial uses in main streets and town centres to enhance the vitality and viability of these areas	Where it is not possible to expand or accommodate growth in existing centres, or where there is significant market demand, councils may need to consider new centres of an appropriate size and scale.	The Local Infrastructure renewal scheme has been established by the NSW Government to provide councils with a subsidy in interest costs to make it more affordable to take out major bank loans to fund their projects. This is a possible option to provide funding for master plan/main street upgrades.

***DIRECTION 4.5 Grow tourism to support employment opportunities and urban centres***

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
4.5. 1	Facilitate opportunities for a range of tourist experiences and accommodation	The NSW Government will work with councils to plan for a range of tourist experiences and accommodation. This includes providing scope for complementary land uses, and infrastructure and services that support and build on existing and emerging tourist attractions across the region. This can be	Noted.



		<p>done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing flexible planning controls to facilitate a range of tourist accommodation options, such as farm stay and bed and breakfast developments;</li> <li>• enabling a diverse range of cultural heritage tourism, including opportunities to engage with Aboriginal communities and their culture; and</li> <li>• supporting the development of complementary tourism experiences associated with agriculture.</li> </ul>	
<b>Goal 5 – Protected Water, Environment and Heritage</b>			
<p><b><i>DIRECTION 5.1 Manage water resources for a growing economy and environmental sustainability</i></b></p> <p>According to the NSW Government groundwater and surface water are vulnerable to the pressures of urban growth, increasing climate variability and growing agricultural and natural resource needs.</p>			
<b>Draft Action</b>		<b>Commentary from Plan</b>	<b>Staff Comments</b>
5.1.1	Manage water access and trading across the region	The Department will develop water sharing plans, in accordance with the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, for all major river and groundwater systems.	<p>Noted</p> <p>Draft Plan dot points for Goal 5. Explicit reference needs to be included regarding protection of groundwater.</p> <p>.</p>
5.1.2	Identify measures to improve the efficient use of water	Improving the water efficiency of buildings in urban areas can help to extend the life and reliability of water supplies. Councils should promote water sensitive urban design techniques to improve water use planning, efficiency and supply. Councils can also apply water sensitive urban design through wastewater re-use, for example, by substituting water currently used for watering parks and reserves or to supplement agricultural uses near settlements.	Noted.
5.1.	Maintain healthy waterways and	Use appropriate provisions to protect water catchment areas and groundwater sources	Noted

3	wetlands, including downstream environments	from the potential effects of development. (Any development should have a neutral or beneficial effect on water quality).	
---	---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

***DIRECTION 5.2 Protect areas of high environmental value***

According to the NSW Government around 882,000 hectares, or 9 per cent of the region, is protected in the public reserve system.

Draft Action		Commentary from Plan	Staff Comments
5.2.1	Protect areas of high environmental value	Identify and implement appropriate planning controls to protect areas of high environmental value; Implement the 'avoid, minimise, offset' hierarchy, by striving to avoid and minimise impacts on areas of high environmental value, and where impacts cannot be avoided, identify and secure appropriate biodiversity offsets through an offset strategy; and Consider the use of biodiversity certification	The location and maintenance of any biodiversity offsets need to be carefully considered to ensure that they do not provide an area for noxious weeds to become established.
5.2.2	Identify areas of potential high environmental value in new land release areas	Assist councils to achieve biodiversity certification and identify any potential offset requirements in new land release areas	Noted.

***DIRECTION 5.3 Protect Aboriginal and historic heritage***

According to the NSW Government the region has significant Aboriginal and historic heritage assets. The State Heritage Inventory contains 65 items listed under the Heritage Act 1977 and 1,315 items listed by councils and State agencies.

Draft Action		Draft Action	Draft Action
5.3.1	Identify and, where appropriate, map areas of Aboriginal and historic heritage in new land release areas	The Office of Environment and Heritage will review proposals for new land release to identify Aboriginal and historic heritage issues, and their advice will be used to inform council planning strategies and local environmental plans.	Noted.

5.3. 2	Identify appropriate and innovative opportunities to preserve heritage assets	Encourage councils to regularly review and update their planning controls and heritage studies so that opportunities for the adaptive or sympathetic use of heritage items are promoted and available.	Noted.
-----------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------

***DIRECTION 5.4 Adapt to natural hazards and climate change***

According to the NSW Government Flooding is a major hazard in the region due to its topography and climate and land that is prone to hazards should not be developed unless it can be managed appropriately.

Draft Action		Draft Action	Draft Action
5.4. 1	Assist the community to adapt and build resilience to climate change	Complete the New England North West Enabling Regional Adaptation Project and assist communities to implement resilience outcomes.	Noted.
5.4. 2	Minimise the potential impacts of flooding	<p>Councils have a number of opportunities to minimise the potential impacts of flooding on the community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving and updating flood mapping, including local overland flooding;</li> <li>• using new information to better avoid development in high risk areas or development that increases the impact or risk of flooding elsewhere; and</li> <li>• improving long term flood resilience by rebuilding to a higher standard of flood immunity. Options include redesigning, upgrading and/or relocating infrastructure and communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Council is currently finalising a new flood model.</p> <p>Minimising potential impacts of flooding should also make reference to engineering works as an option (e.g levee banks)</p>
5.4. 3	Minimise the potential impacts of bushfires	Require that new land release areas are not within a bushfire hazard area or can be managed in accordance with the Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006 guidelines.	Council is in the process of updating its bushfire prone land map in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service.
5.4. 4	Minimise the potential impacts of naturally	Require that councils affected by areas of naturally occurring asbestos use appropriate approaches to manage the risks of	This mainly relates to land between Tamworth and Bingara.

	occurring asbestos	disturbance.	
--	-----------------------	--------------	--