

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood at sunset. The houses are densely packed, with various roof colors and styles. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue. The foreground is a dark, curved shape that frames the text.

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION

# LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2041

[W singleton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.singleton.nsw.gov.au)







# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Singleton Council acknowledges the Wanaruah, Wonnarua people and their custodianship of the land in the Singleton Local Government Area. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who live within the Singleton Local Government Area and pay our respect to elders past present and future.

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# FROM THE MAYOR

CR SUE MOORE



# FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

JASON LINNANE



Given Singleton's central location in the Hunter Valley, unique mix of large natural landscapes, investment and business opportunities, range of lifestyle and employment options, pivotal transport connections and contemporary education, social and health infrastructure, it's little wonder our local government area (LGA) is quickly rising as a desirable residential location.

We're planning for an increase of 4,745 people by 2041, which will require approximately 1,898 additional dwellings.

We also recognise that changes in housing demand aren't solely driven by people moving into our area. The needs of our existing residents will grow, downsize, and change according to their stage of life, and we want to support people to find the housing that best suits their needs without having to leave their community.

That's why this Singleton Local Housing Strategy 2041 is so important. This is the blueprint for our vision for housing, outlining areas for growth and policy positions to guide future land use decision making – without compromising the appeal of a rural lifestyle with city conveniences.

I'm happy to present this document which sets out a long-term, strategic approach to address

housing needs including diverse and affordable housing, housing and communities which is sustainable and liveable, and which fit in with the desired future character of the area.

Best of all, it responds to what our community told us is important. The strategy incorporates community feedback received from consultation sessions including surveys and workshops, both virtual and face to face.

The actions included in the Local Housing Strategy are the ways we will ensure we facilitate the housing we will need, identifying sufficient land to cater for our projected growth while allowing flexibility for applications for rezoning if a proposal addresses identified housing gaps, provides significant public benefit and complies with our criteria for urban and lifestyle living land.

As Singleton continues to offer a unique lifestyle proposition, I have no doubt this strategy will be instrumental in helping to create the neighbourhoods and the communities that people will be proud to call home.

Livability has emerged as the most important consideration for people when choosing where to make their homes, and with an offering of city conveniences with a rural heartbeat, it's hard to look past Singleton.

As we prepare for more people to settle in our local government area (LGA) or make changes to how they live without leaving the community they love, the biggest challenge is to accommodate and promote growth while preserving what makes Singleton so unique.

What's more, in addition to the provision of housing to suit every stage of life, we want to enable people to live in communities where they feel safe, connected and enriched, with ready access to transport, services and facilities, and social support.

The Singleton Local Housing Strategy 2041 considers where, and equally importantly how we'll live in the Singleton LGA into the future. Critically, it sets out actions that aim to balance housing needs without compromising the integrity of the "small country town feel" our residents told us must be retained.

The Strategy promotes diverse and affordable housing, with a focus on three key types

including urban areas close to existing infrastructure and facilities; lifestyle living with lots ranging typically from 4,000 sqm to more than five hectares; and in rural areas on agricultural land where lots can have a dwelling entitlement.

At the same time, it recognises there are various constraints that impact the location of housing, including bushfire, flooding, ecologically significant vegetation, heritage, potential land use conflicts and infrastructure provision.

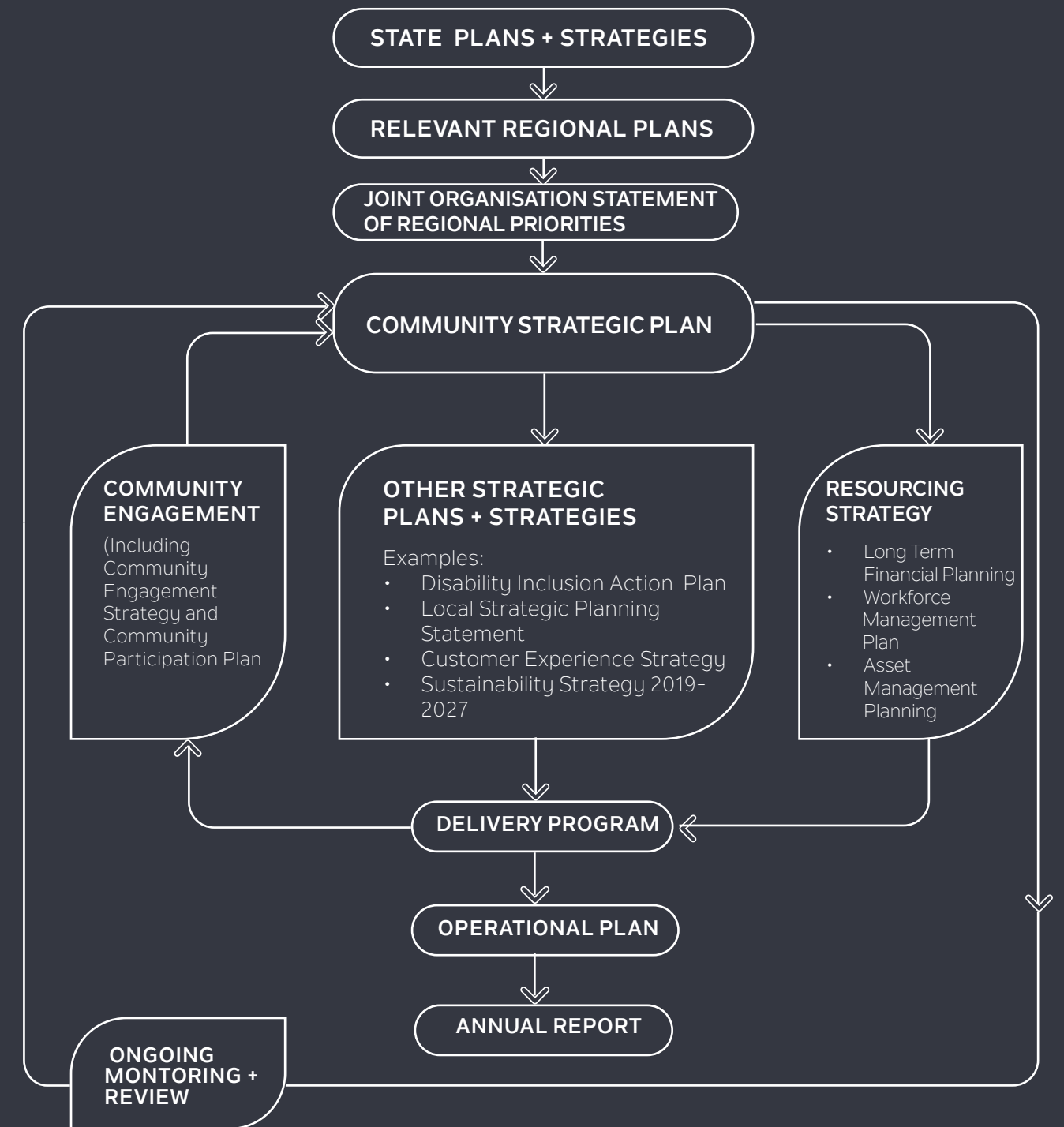
Sustainability is also encouraged through the way we design, construct and live in our communities.

We are committed to the actions in this Strategy as the means to achieve our vision not just for housing, but for livability in our local government area. In these pages is the formula to create and preserve the vibrant, connected, resilient and sustainable communities that make Singleton a special place to live.





## Integrated Planning + Reporting (IP+R) Framework



*This diagram demonstrates Singleton's response to the IP+R Framework.*

# OUR FRAMEWORK

## INTEGRATED PLANNING + REPORTING (IP+R) FRAMEWORK

The CSP is the highest level of strategic planning that local councils undertake. It is the keystone document of the NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP+R) Framework.

The framework provides the integrated approach to strategic and operational planning, including identifying the resources required for delivery and the need for ongoing monitoring, evaluation and engagement with the community.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Singleton Council offers city conveniences with a rural feel. Our area benefits from easy access to nearby amenities while also boasting world renowned vineyards and diverse rural landscapes. In close proximity is the Newcastle Airport, University of Newcastle and the Hunter Expressway which easily links Singleton to Sydney and the North Coast.

The Singleton Local Housing Strategy 2041 sets the roadmap for decision making around housing in our Local Government Area to acknowledge and take into consideration the characteristics which make our area a unique and attractive place to live while facilitating housing to respond to our communities’ needs.

The aim of the Local Housing Strategy is to tell the story of housing from the current situation around housing, how our existing zoned areas can accommodate future demand and the housing gaps we need to address. Feedback received through consultation and workshops with the community has informed the development of the Local Housing Strategy and is reflected in our principles and actions for housing over the coming decades.

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Planning for the future of housing in Singleton is guided and supported by a range of local and regional plans and policies. The Local Housing Strategy contributes to the line of sight between these strategic documents to ensure that housing in Singleton is planned for and delivers for the needs of our communities.

**Supporting documents | Local and regional plans + policies:**

- **Hunter Regional Plan 2036**
- **Branxton Sub Regional Land Use Strategy and Structure Plan**
- **Singleton Council Local Strategic Planning Statement 2041**
- **Singleton Community Strategic Plan 2017 - 2027**
- **Singleton Land Use Strategy 2008**





# CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Singleton Council undertook extensive consultation with key stakeholders to inform the creation of the Singleton Local Housing Strategy 2041.

In 2020, a public survey, workshops and information sessions were held to understand the needs and priorities our community has for the future of housing in Singleton.

In 2020, a Visioning Survey was circulated to gauge the community's perceptions on housing, places and neighbourhoods, lifestyle, affordability, and sustainability.

In February 2021, an Age-Friendly Workshop was held to seek input from the community on the needs and considerations of older persons when planning for housing in Singleton. The workshop used discussion topics to elicit feedback to inform the Local Housing Strategy. Some of the discussion topics included: Common issues for regions such as Singleton; Demands for different housing types; Access to services and amenities; Self-reliance and barriers to down-sizing; Better design for health and wellbeing; Existing and emerging industry trends; Housing affordability issues ; and, Key principles for age-friendly housing provision in Singleton.

From September 2021, an additional online survey was circulated seeking feedback on the proposed principles and actions for the Local Housing Strategy. There were 207 responses received to the survey. A majority of feedback was positive that the principles reflected the community's wishes for future decision making around housing.

The feedback to all consultation events has been considered and used to inform the Local Housing Strategy including our actions for giving effect to the Strategy.



# HOW TO READ THE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

The Local Housing Strategy is structured in seven key sections which aim tell the story of housing in the Singleton LGA and set the framework for decision making around housing now and into the future.

## KEY SECTIONS

- 1. Our Singleton:** Sets the scene of our LGA more generally
- 2. Our Housing:** Describes the current status of housing and other housing related metrics
- 3. Housing Demand:** Describes the expected demand for housing based on Council adopted population projections
- 4. Housing Supply:** Describes the capacity of housing in the Singleton LGA to meet the projected housing demand
- 5. Housing Gaps:** Analyses the housing gaps present in the existing housing supply to meet the projected housing demand
- 6. Housing Principles:** Outlines the four key principles to guide future decision making around housing
- 7. Implementation + Monitoring:** Key actions we will undertake to give effect to the Local Housing Strategy





# OUR SINGLETON

## OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

The Wonnarua/Wanaruah people have been the traditional custodians of land in the Upper Hunter region for at least 30,000 years with traditional knowledge affirming custodianship which extends back to the early stages of the Dreaming.

The Singleton LGA sits at the gateway between the lower Hunter and the rest of north-western NSW (**Figure 1**). As a pivotal junction between the New England Highway, Hunter Expressway and Golden Highway, Singleton is well-placed to provide city convenience with a rural heartbeat.

Investment in mining support, coupled with a an evolution of our economy gives Singleton an attractive value proposition for professional services, renewable energy, manufacturing, the visitor economy, Defence, agriculture and distribution services.

With a diversity of public and private schools, access to medical facilities and outstanding parks, arts and culture and a modern CBD, the Singleton LGA offers existing and future residents with opportunities to grow.

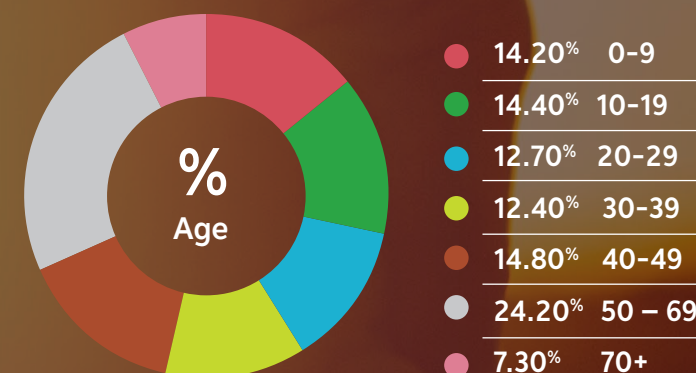



Figure 1: Our place in our region

## COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

 **23,573**  
Population

**37 yrs**  
Medium age



 **4,893km<sup>2</sup>**  
LGA area



### Main Employing Industries

- 40.59% Mining
- 6.50% Public Administration + Safety
- 5.82% Construction
- 5.70% Retail Trade
- 5.38% Accommodation + Food Services
- 36.01% Other



**16,325**  
jobs within Singleton



### SINGLETON LGA

**Agriculture**  
\$101m regional output annually (CSP)  
1.399 million visitors to the region annually  
Over 40 vineyards, wineries and cellar doors locally

**Retail, Accom + Food Services**  
\$218m in regional output annually

**Defence**  
Lone Pine Barracks 14,000 hectares,  
500 permanent staff, 2000 recruits use facility annually. 60% live locally, 6% own a home locally

**Mining**  
20 coal mines, 57 million tonnes of coal annually. Mining royalties, strong community partnerships and many employment opportunities demonstrate important of this industry to the local economy.

Source: ABS 2016



A number of major industries operate in the LGA, including mining defence, tourism, viticulture and manufacturing. Mining has been and continues to be a significant industry in the LGA and has contributed to our prosperity with approximately 19% of land in Singleton being subject to coal mining or exploration leases. Into the future as our economy evolves, we have the opportunity now to plan for our future including our housing needs.

**Some of the emerging opportunities for economic evolution include:**

- Innovative energy and renewables industries
- The agricultural sector
- Professional, scientific, and technical services
- Manufacturing and processing
- Aged care, health care and social assistance
- Training and education
- The visitor economy

The Local Housing Strategy can work in tandem with current and future changes to our economy and ensure that the provision of housing can respond to these changing needs.

## OPPORTUNITIES + CONSTRAINTS

Our LGA benefits from being located at the edge of the Newcastle urban area with easy connections to Sydney while also being home to renowned vineyards and diverse landscapes.

The completion of the Singleton by-pass will also relieve congestion through the town centre which will create opportunities for greater place-making and the potential for nodes around the by-pass on- and off-ramps.

Our LGA has Strategic Growth Areas, many of which are already zoned, and need only be developed. There is an opportunity to revisit these areas to understand any barriers or constraints to their development. There may also be the opportunity to expand on these areas if required where land is consistent with criteria set out in the Local Housing Strategy and where significant public benefit can be shown.

There are various constraints which will impact the location of housing in the Singleton LGA including bushfire, flooding, ecologically significant vegetation, heritage, potential land uses conflicts and infrastructure provision.



# OUR HOUSING

## HOUSING LOCATION


Housing in Singleton is primarily clustered around towns and village centres and along main road corridors. **Table 1** presents a breakdown of key population areas in the Singleton LGA. Our housing is broadly comprised of three key types being: urban areas, lifestyle living areas and rural areas.

In the context of the Singleton Local Housing Strategy the following characteristics are used to describe these key types:

- Urban areas** comprise the Singleton township and surrounding greenfield areas. These areas are close to infrastructure and facilities, are serviced by reticulated water and sewer, and are comprised of lot sizes typically between 500sqm-1,000sqm. Examples of urban housing areas are Singleton, Singleton Heights and Hunterview.
- Lifestyle living** areas offer a popular alternative lifestyle option being lots ranging typically from approximately 4,000sqm up to 5+ hectares. Depending on infrastructure available, lifestyle living areas may be serviced by both reticulated water and sewer, notably in the Hunter Water serviced area of Branxton, or may be serviced only by reticulated water. Larger lifestyle living lots may also be unserviced and rely on water tanks and separate on-site sewerage management systems. Key areas of lifestyle living areas are around Branxton, Wattleponds and Sedgfield.
- Rural areas** provide some housing throughout agricultural zoned areas and where lots have a dwelling entitlement. The Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 sets requirements around dwelling entitlement with the objective of minimising unplanned rural-residential development and safeguarding rural land for agricultural purposes now and into the future.

Suburb	Housing count	% of total housing
Branxton	394	4.4%
Bridgman	81	0.9%
Broke	256	2.9%
Bulga	158	1.8%
Darlington	135	1.5%
Glendon Brook	127	1.4%
Glenridding	82	0.9%
Gowrie	116	1.3%
Howes Valley	79	0.9%
Hunterview	1050	11.8%
Jerrys Plains	124	1.4%
Lambs Valley	87	1%
Lower Belford	135	1.5%
Putty	140	1.6%
Redbournberry	94	1.1%
Sedgfield	92	1%
Singleton	2032	22.8%
Singleton Heights	1693	19%
Wattle Ponds	398	4.5%
Whittingham	150	1.7%
Other suburbs	1482	16.6%
TOTAL	8905	100%

Table 1: Key population areas in Singleton LGA



### OUR HOUSING

<b>Public open space within 1km</b> 78% R1 General Residential 84% R2 Low Density Residential	<b>Business zone within 1km</b> 64% R1 General Residential 46% R2 Low Density Residential <b>Bus Shelter within 1km</b> 60% R1 General Residential	<b>Train station within 1km</b> 8% R1 General Residential
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DWELLING STRUCTURE


As at 2021, the population of the Singleton LGA was approximately 23,573 residents accommodated in approximately 8,905 dwellings. **Table 2** shows the breakdown of Singleton’s dwelling structure across the LGA being the dwelling types which accommodate our population.

Notably, over 95% of dwellings are single dwelling houses with the remainder being other forms of diverse and affordable housing types including seniors housing, dual occupancies and multi-dwelling housing units.

The existing housing mix demonstrates the strong preference for detached housing which is expected to continue into the future.

Dwelling type	Dwelling count	% of total housing
Boarding houses	1	<1%
Dual occupancy	258	2.9%
Dwelling houses	8501	95.5%
Group homes	1	<1%
Multi-dwelling housing	114	1.3%
Residential flat buildings	1	<1%
Rural workers dwellings	23	<1%
Secondary dwellings	2	<1%
Seniors housing	3	<1%
Shop top housing	1	<1%
TOTAL	8905	

Table 2: LGA Housing Mix Audit Counts by Housing Type as of 31 December 2020 (Singleton Council, 2000)



Over 95% of dwellings are single dwelling houses

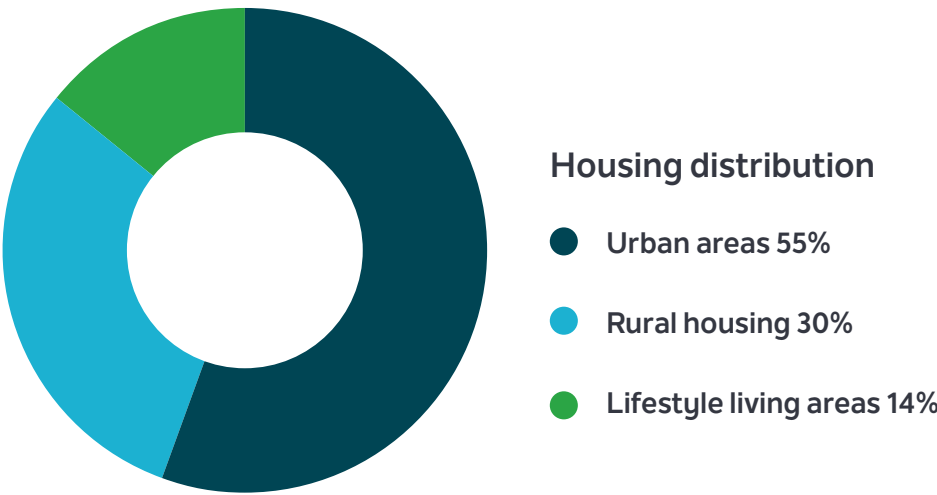
HOUSING DISTRIBUTION

Housing distribution refers to where in the LGA our housing can be found. **Table 3** shows this breakdown by urban areas, lifestyle living areas, rural areas and others, and then breaks these down further by zone.

The majority of housing (approx. 55%) in Singleton is located in urban areas. The main housing type in urban areas is dwelling houses, however some diverse housing types are also present. The vast majority of dwellings in urban areas are in areas zoned for residential development with some dwellings located in employment zones.

Rural housing makes up 30% of housing but this percentage is not expected to increase dramatically into the future as rural lands are safeguarded for agricultural purposes. Applications for dwelling houses in rural areas can comprise the replacement of existing dwellings with a new dwelling which does not increase the quantum of housing stock; however, development applications for dual occupancy developments and in some instances rural workers’ dwellings are also not uncommon.

Lifestyle living areas comprise approximately 14% of housing across the LGA and this is expected to increase as this alternative lifestyle offering continues to be popular and greater transport connections mean that people can easily commute to areas outside the LGA. The appeal of lifestyle living areas increased across NSW as a result of the pandemic, however the ongoing appeal of this lifestyle offering is not known. It is anticipated that if current flexible working arrangements which resulted from the pandemic continue, there will be a continued draw to lifestyle living areas, including in the Singleton LGA, into the future.



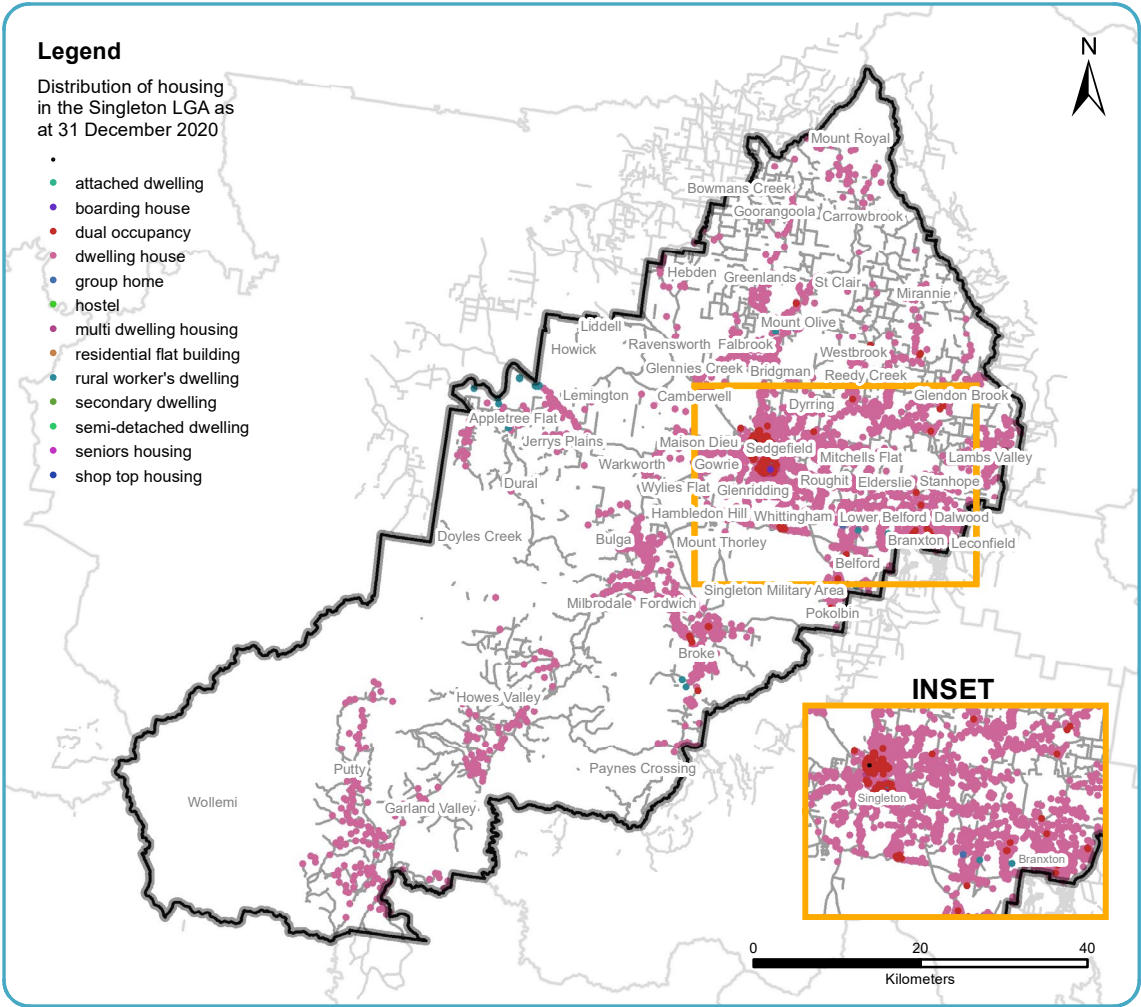


Zone	Housing type	Housing count	% Housing Total	Zone total
<b>Urban areas</b>				
<b>R1 General Residential</b>	Boarding houses	1	<1%	Approx. 55%
	Dual occupancies	207	2.3%	
	Dwelling houses	4563	51.2%	
	Group home	1	<1%	
	Multi-dwelling housing	112	1.3%	
	Residential Flat Buildings	1	<1%	
	Secondary Dwellings	2	<1%	
	Seniors Housing	2	<1%	
<b>R2 Low Density Residential</b>	Dwelling houses	13	<1%	
<b>B3 Commercial Core</b>	Multi dwelling housing	1	<1%	
<b>B4 Mixed Use</b>	Dual occupancy	4	<1%	
	Dwelling houses	37	<1%	
	Seniors housing	1	<1%	
<b>B5 Business Development</b>	Dwelling houses	6	<1%	
<b>B6 Enterprise Corridor</b>	Dwelling houses	7	<1%	
	Multi dwelling housing	1	<1%	
	Shop top housing	1	<1%	

Zone	Housing type	Housing count	% Housing Total	zone total
Lifestyle living areas				
R5 Large Lot Residential	Dual occupancy	9	<1%	Approx. 14%
	Dwelling houses	542	6.1%	
C4 Environmental Living	Dual occupancy	1	<1%	
	Dwelling houses	620	7%	
Rural areas				
RU1 Primary Production	Dual occupancy	25	<1%	Approx. 30%
	Dwelling houses	1919	21.5%	
	Rural workers dwellings	17	<1%	
RU2 Rural Landscape	Dual occupancy	2	<1%	
	Dwelling houses	365	4.1%	
RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	Dual occupancy	10	<1%	
	Dwelling houses	376	4.2%	
	Rural workers dwelling	6	<1%	
RU5 Village	Dwelling houses	31	<1%	
Other				
Other zones	Dwelling houses	23	<1%	1%

**Table 3:** Location of housing types across urban, lifestyle living areas and rural areas by zone (Dec 2020)  
(Singleton Council, 2000)





Source: Singleton Council dwelling analysis

Figure 2: Distribution of housing

HOUSING APPROVALS

Table 4 shows the number of dwellings approved and completed over the period 2000-2020. Of the approved dwellings, 95% were approved through the development application process and 5% were approved through the complying development certificate process. Housing approvals data can be used to understand the expected housing types which will need to be facilitated into the future.

Dwelling houses, seniors housing, dual occupancies and multi dwelling housing made up the largest percentages of the housing types approved. Importantly, these data refer to the number of individual dwelling units and not individual developments.

Housing Type	No. Applications	No. Dwellings	% Total Dwellings
Dual Occupancy	82	135	5.2%
Dwelling House	2008	2008	77%
Group Home	1	4	<1%
Multi Dwelling Housing	22	149	5.7%
Residential Flat Building	2	17	<1%
Rural Workers Dwelling	14	14	<1%
Secondary Dwelling	3	3	<1%
Seniors Housing	5	277	10.6%
Seniors housing	3	<1%	
Total:	2137	2607	-
Average per year:	107	130	-

Table 4: Housing approvals by housing type (2000-2020)  
(Singleton Council, 2000)



**Table 5** breaks down dwelling approvals data further by zones. The rates of housing approvals can reflect changes in the demand for different housing types and gives an indication of the extent to which planning controls facilitate or restrict housing development in different zones.

A majority of approvals (55%) were in urban areas and of these the majority of applications were for detached dwellings. This is consistent with expected dwelling type preferences in the Singleton LGA. Approvals for dwelling houses in lifestyle living areas and rural areas were approximately the same at 21% and 24% respectively. It is not expected that new dwellings on rural land will make up a significant portion of new development into the future as rural lands are safeguarded for agricultural purposes and lots with a dwelling entitlement are developed. However, where additional housing in rural areas can be accommodated without sacrificing the agricultural primacy of rural lands this will be investigated.

HOUSING APPROVALS

Housing Type	Zone	No. Dwellings	% Total (approx.)
Urban land			
Dual Occupancy	R1 General Residential	85	3.2%
Dwelling house	R1 General Residential	840	33%
	R2 Low-density Residential	12	
	B4 Mixed Use	1	
Group home	R1 General Residential	4	<1%
Multi-dwelling housing	R1 General Residential	136	5.7%
	B3 Commercial Core	3	
	B6 Enterprise Corridor	10	
Residential Flat Building	R1 General Residential	17	<1%
Secondary Dwellings	R1 General Residential	3	<1%
Seniors Housing	R1 General Residential	254	10%
	B4 Mixed Use	23	
Total for urban land			54%

HOUSING APPROVALS

Housing Type	Zone	No. Dwellings	% Total (approx.)
Lifestyle living			
Dual occupancy	R5 Large Lot Residential	14	<1%
	C4 Environmental Living	6	
Dwelling house	R5 Large Lot Residential	245	21%
	C3 Environmental Management	1	
	C4 Environmental Living	300	
Total for living land			22%

HOUSING APPROVALS

Housing Type	Zone	No. Dwellings	% Total (approx.)
Rural			
Dual Occupancy	RU1 Primary Production	23	1%
	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	7	
Dwelling house	RU1 Primary Production	432	23%
	RU2 Rural Landscape	94	
	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	79	
	RU5 Village	4	
Rural Workers dwellings	RU1 Primary Production	9	<1%
	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	5	
Total for rural land			24%

 **TOTAL = 2601**

Table 5: Housing Approvals by Housing Type and Land Use Zone (2000-2020)  
(Singleton Council, 2000)





## LOT SIZE STRUCTURE

Lot size structure refers to how big or small lots are. This is useful to understand predominant lot size ranges and where lot size gaps may be present. A variety of lot sizes is important as this contributes to diversity of housing, lifestyle choices and price points.

**Table 6** shows the amount of lots counted, within the different housing types and lot size ranges. Lots within employment zoned areas are not included as they are not considered representative of new housing opportunities reliant on lot sizes but could accommodate shop-top housing. The distinction between lot sizes which are associated with urban housing and lifestyle living housing is not defined or concrete, however, lifestyle living lots are typically zoned R5 Large Lot Residential or C4 Environmental Living and are typically between 4,000sqm up to 40 hectares. Some lifestyle living lots may be less than this.

Urban housing lots are well provided for with the largest percentage of lots falling within the 500sqm to 1,000sqm size range and lowest percentage of lots falling within the 2,000sqm to 3,000sqm range. Similarly, rural housing is also well provided for in the LGA but is not expected to see a significant increase in number into the future due to dwelling entitlement requirements for future housing on rural land.

In terms of lifestyle living lots, the lowest percentage of lots fall within the 5,000sqm and 8,000sqm ranges. Lots in this range tend to be difficult to service as it can be financially less viable to provide reticulated water and sewer, and for smaller lot sizes it can be difficult to accommodate adequate effluent disposal areas for on-site sewer management systems. To note is this constraint is not present in Branxton which is serviced by reticulated water and sewer from Hunter Water.

Housing Type	Lot size range	Lot Count	Approx. %
<b>Rural</b>			
<b>Urban housing</b>	<250m <sup>2</sup>	432	5.5%
	>250m <sup>2</sup> - 500m <sup>2</sup>	611	7.8%
	>500m <sup>2</sup> - 1000m <sup>2</sup>	1048	26.3%
	>1000m <sup>2</sup> - 2000m <sup>2</sup>	775	9.9%
	>2000m <sup>2</sup> - 3000m <sup>2</sup>	100	1.3%
	>3000m <sup>2</sup> - 4000m <sup>2</sup>	78	1%
<b>Lifestyle living housing</b>	>4000m <sup>2</sup> - 5000m <sup>2</sup>	138	1.8%
	>5000m <sup>2</sup> - 6000m <sup>2</sup>	50	<1%
	>6000m <sup>2</sup> - 7000m <sup>2</sup>	42	<1%
	>7000m <sup>2</sup> - 8000m <sup>2</sup>	74	1%
	>8000m <sup>2</sup> - 9000m <sup>2</sup>	308	4%
	>9000m <sup>2</sup> - 1Ha	119	1.5%
	>1Ha - 2.5Ha	571	7.3%
	>2.5Ha - 5Ha	149	1.9%
	>5Ha - 10Ha	137	1.8%
	>10Ha - 20Ha	226	2.9%
	>20Ha - 40Ha	121	1.6%
<b>Rural housing</b>	>40Ha - 80Ha	1119	14.4%
	>80Ha	691	8.9%

**Table 6:** Lot size ranges for urban, lifestyle living and urban housing (Singleton Council, 2000)


HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

Household structure refers to the number of bedrooms per dwelling. **Table 7** presents the number of bedrooms per household across the Singleton LGA and indicates approximately 80% of dwellings contain three or more bedrooms.


A greater number of bedrooms is typically tied to higher rents or mortgages which can impact housing affordability. Changes are expected to household structure in the coming decades due in part to an ageing population as well as a general trend for a decrease in occupants per dwelling. A diverse proportion of studio, one- and two-bedroom dwellings would cater to individuals who have differing housing needs.

No. of bedrooms	Dwellings	%
0 (included bedsitters)	47	<1%
1	187	2.2%
2	838	10%
3	3126	37.4%
4	2853	34.1%
5+	617	7.4%
Not stated	688	8.2%


Table 7: Number of bedrooms and corresponding number of dwellings (ABS, 2016)




Approximately 80% of dwellings contain three or more bedrooms



TENURE



Dwellings owned or mortgaged  
63.98% (2016)



Rental dwellings  
(Excl. Transitional, social + subsidised housing)  
26.15% (2016)

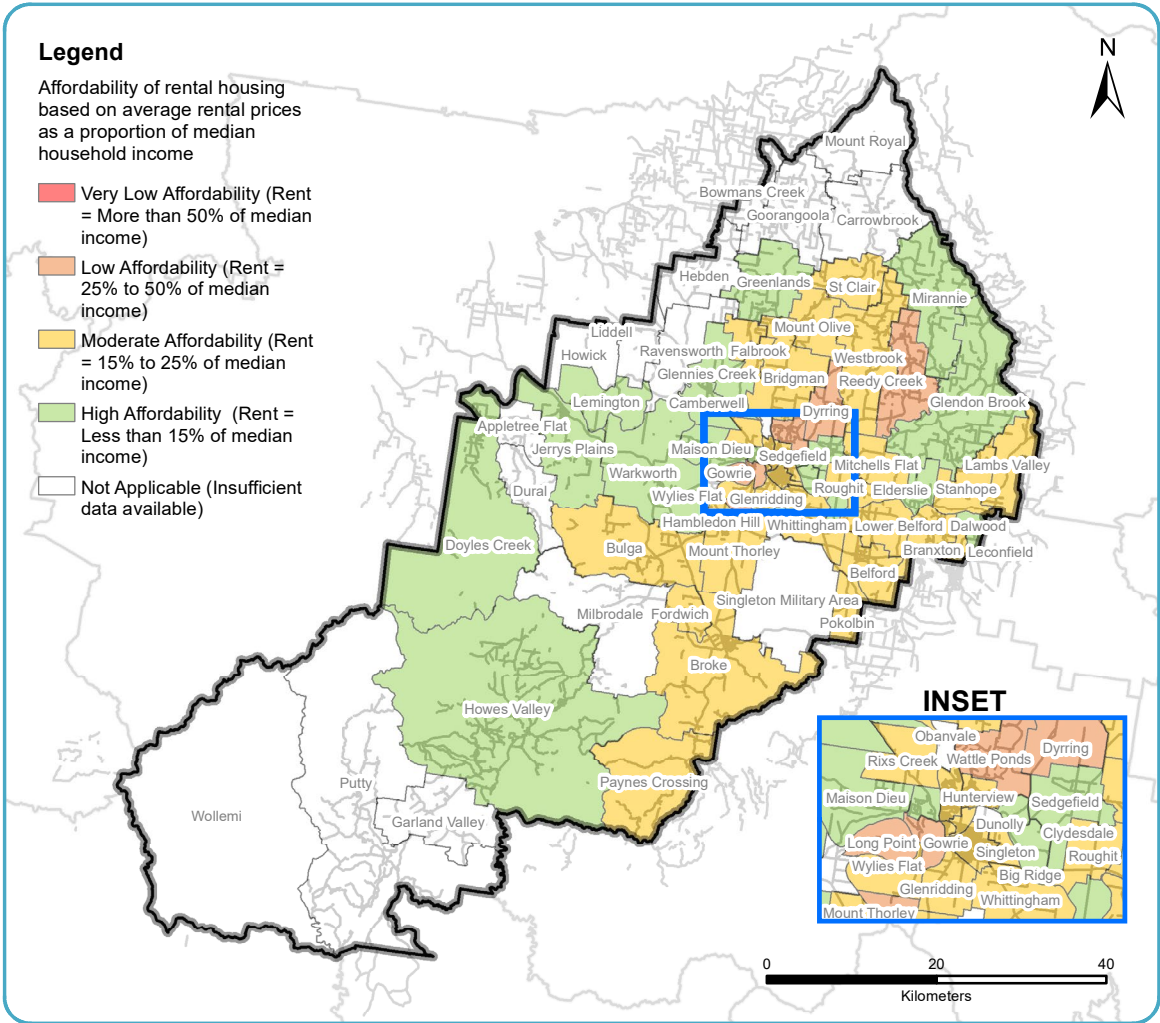
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY + HOUSING STRESS

Housing stress occurs when a household’s mortgage or rent payments exceed 30% of the household income. As of 2020, it was generally less expensive to purchase or rent housing in Singleton compared to other LGAs in our region. This is likely due to Singleton’s location and the local prevalence of the coal mining industry which typically commands higher wages, and high employment levels in the region.

**Figure 3** shows the average affordability of rental housing in each suburb based on rent as a percentage of median household incomes. Average rental prices in the majority of suburbs in the LGA at the time comprised less than 25% of median incomes. To note is that significant increases in the cost of housing were experienced generally across all of NSW as a result of government stimulus in response to the pandemic and are likely to have had impacts on housing affordability and housing stress in the Singleton LGA at least in the short term. The Local Housing Strategy will include an action to further understand housing affordability as a result of the pandemic and respond accordingly.

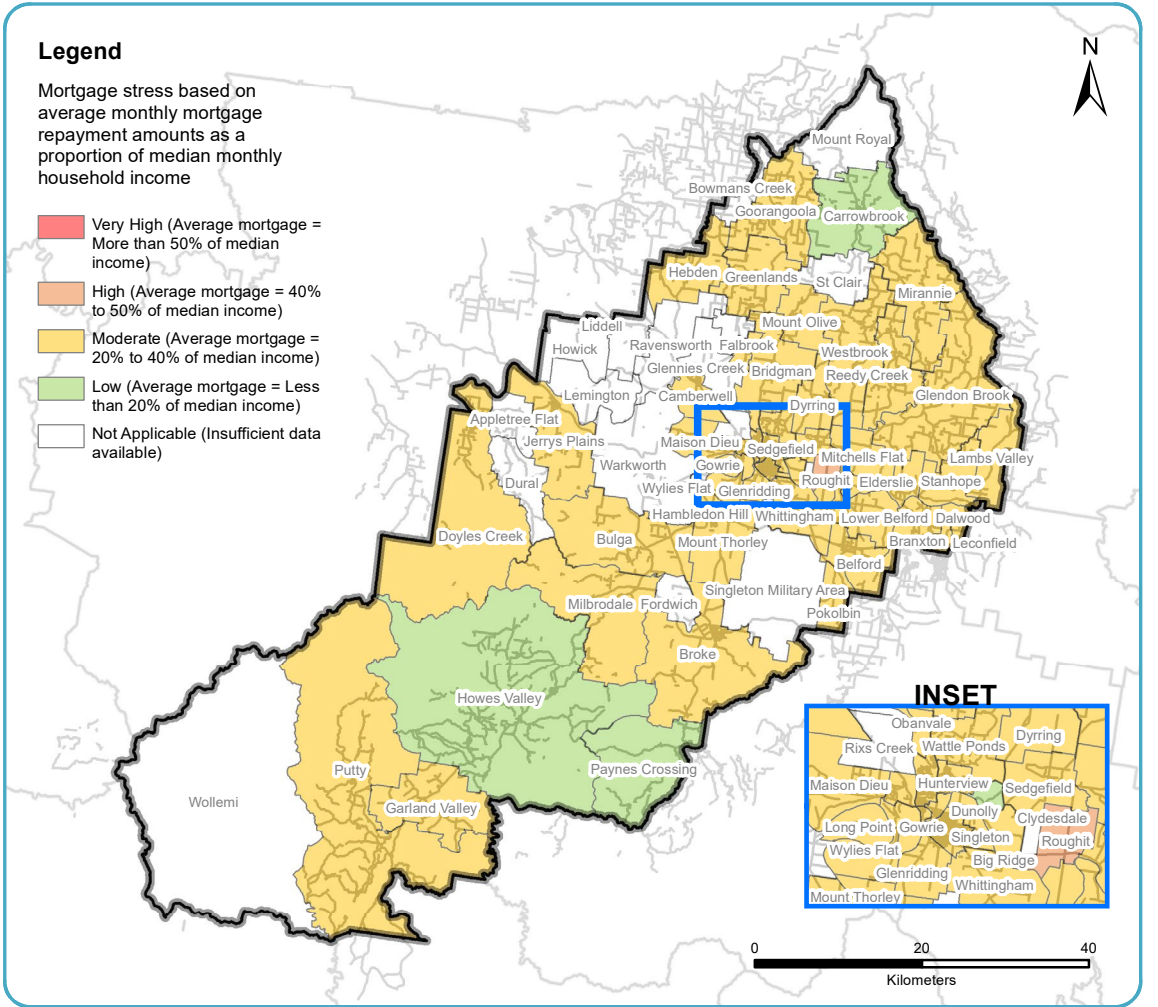






Source: Based on figures from the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing

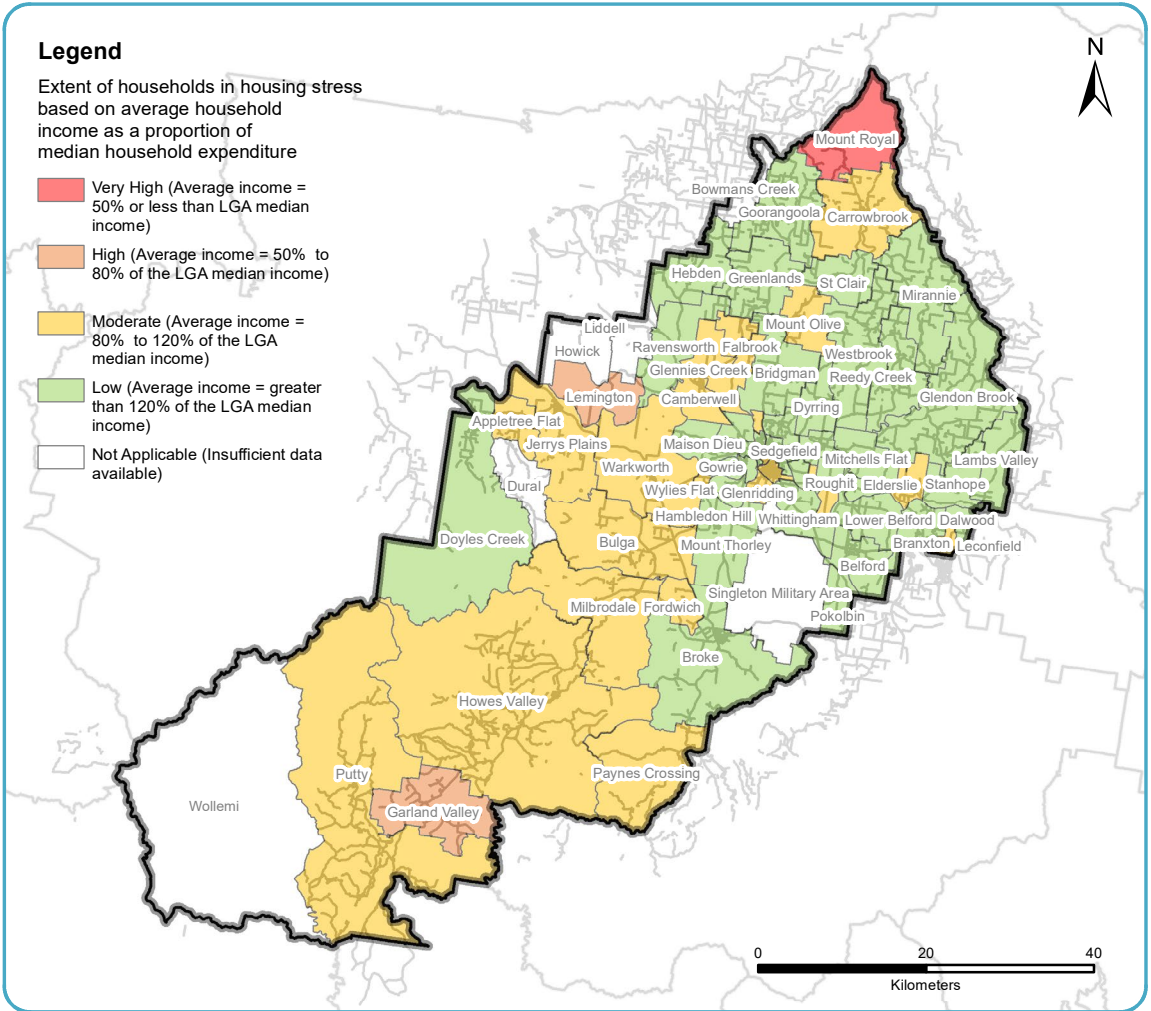
**Figure 3: Singleton LGA Median Dwelling Rent and Sales Prices NSW FACS Rent and Sales Report (Sept 2020) (ABS, 2016)**



Source: Based on figures from the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing

**Figure 4: Mortgage stress based on average monthly mortgage repayments (ABS, 2016)**





Source: Based on figures from the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing

**Figure 5:** Housing stress based on average household income as proposition of expenditure (ABS, 2016)

# HOUSING DEMAND

Using population and average household size projections, the expected demand for housing can be anticipated. **Based on population growth analysis, by 2041 the Singleton LGA population is projected to have:**

- A significantly larger percentage of seniors (70 to 84 years old) and elderly (85+ years old) persons
- Moderate growth in the percentage of parents and home builders (35 to 49)
- Moderate growth in the percentage of primary school and secondary school children
- Fewer people per household

Housing demand in the Singleton LGA has historically catered to a temporary workforce tied closely to peaks in mining which can influence demand for housing particularly as rental stock. The Local Housing Strategy will ensure that planning controls do not unreasonably inhibit temporary accommodation types including hotels and motels to allow traditional residential dwelling stock to be used for owner-occupiers and the long-term rental market.

## SCENARIOS FOR GROWTH

**Table 8** sets out three scenarios for growth in Singleton for 0.4%, 0.8% and 1.2% per annum using consistent assumed average household sizes across each scenario. These scenarios are presented in Figure 5.

Council’s adopted projected growth and housing demand is Scenario 2 which anticipates a growth rate of 0.8% per annum equating to an increase of approximately 200 people and 80 dwellings being required each year between 2021 to 2041 based on an anticipated average occupancy rate of 2.5 people per dwelling.

A 0.8% growth scenario is adopted based on recent dwelling approvals data as well as:

- The availability of land
- Proximity to Newcastle and Sydney
- Overdevelopment of other LGAs
- Singleton’s social infrastructure and servicing





SCENARIO 1 – 0.4% GROWTH PA

Totals	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Total population	23,573	24,044	24,524	24,014	25,514
Per annum change (in people)	94	96	97	100	102
Average household size (no. of people)	2.63	2.59	2.57	2.55	2.53
Dwellings required (per annum)	36	37	38	39	40



Total increase in dwellings  
by 2021 - 2041  
**776**



Total increase in population  
2021 - 2041  
**1,941**

ADOPTED SCENARIO  
For Singleton Local Housing Strategy 2041

SCENARIO 2 – 0.8% GROWTH PA

Totals	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Total population	23,573	24,516	25,496	26,515	27,575
Per annum change (in people)	188	196	204	212	220
Average household size (no. of people)	2.63	2.59	2.57	2.55	2.53
Dwellings required (per annum)	71	76	79	83	87



Total increase in dwellings  
by 2021 - 2041  
**1,601**



Total increase in population  
2021 - 2041  
**4,002**

SCENARIO 3 – 1.2% GROWTH PA

Totals	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Total population	23,573	24,987	26,486	28,075	29,760
Per annum change (in people)	283	300	318	337	357
Average household size (in people)	2.63	2.59	2.57	2.55	2.53
Dwellings required (per annum)	108	116	124	132	141

Table 8: Population projections analysis



Total increase in dwellings  
by 2021 - 2041  
**2,475**



Total increase in population  
2021 - 2041  
**6,187**





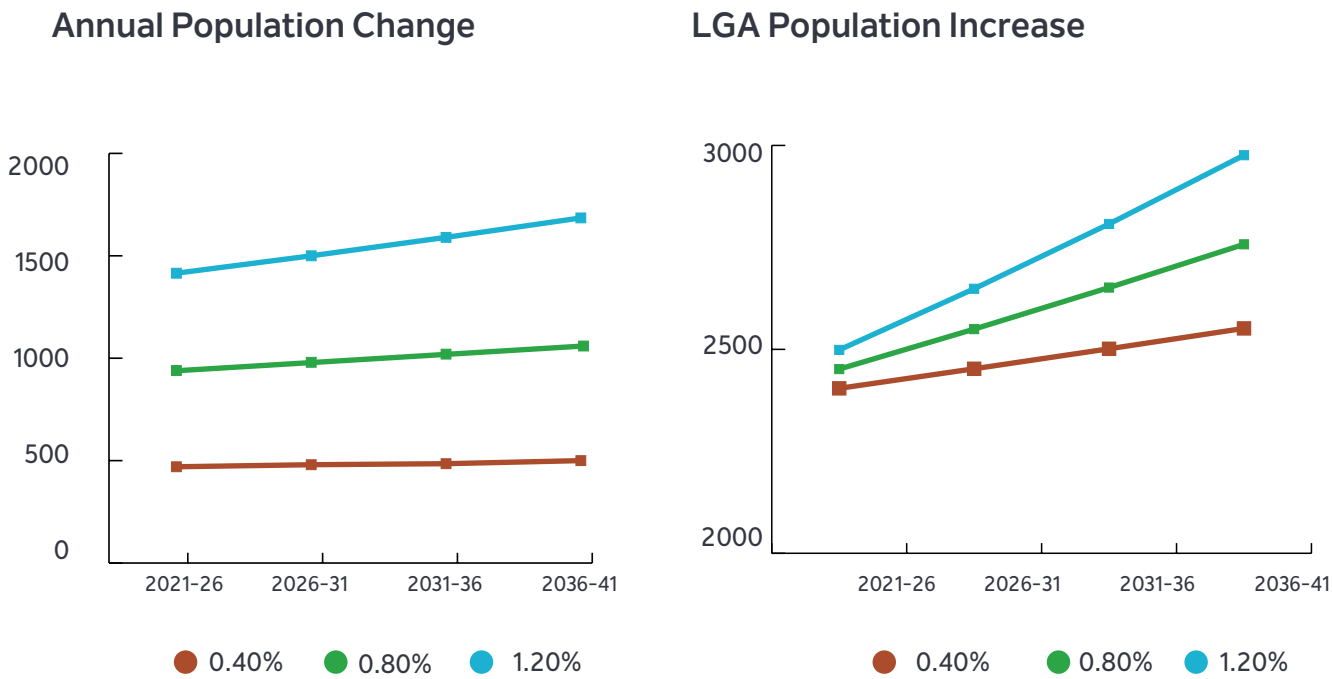


Figure 5: Singleton LGA growth scenarios

Demand for housing in the Singleton LGA can be influenced not only by our LGA’s projections but also by factors experienced outside our LGA boundaries which may not be able to be anticipated. A key factor which could result in a higher growth scenario is ongoing increased demand in regional NSW for lifestyle factors and affordability as a result of the pandemic or housing demand in adjoining LGAs which is realised in the Singleton LGA. In this regard, an aim of the Singleton Local Housing Strategy is to be able to respond to various growth scenarios and facilitate land for housing to be made available as required.

TYPES OF HOUSING

The types of housing required to accommodate the population moving to the Singleton LGA into the future can be anticipated based on data outlined in the section Our Housing. The majority of housing needs in the Singleton LGA are anticipated to be fulfilled by urban housing and lifestyle living housing. The anticipated makeup of housing types to be delivered is set out in **Table 9**. Notably, the anticipated growth of rural housing is not expected to be significant. Minimum lot size and dwelling entitlement requirements mean the provision of new rural land is not expected to make up a significant amount of new housing stock in rural areas over the coming decades.

Replacement of existing dwellings on rural land is not included as no quantum increase in housing stock is achieved. An action is included in the Local Housing Strategy to investigate how sensitive increases in the number of dwellings in rural areas can be accommodated.

Based on previous dwelling approvals it is expected that of the 92 additional dwellings required each year 70% of these (64 dwellings) will be urban housing, 25% of these (23 dwellings) will be lifestyle living housing and 5% of these (5 dwellings) will be rural housing.

METRIC

**Population**  
Additional 4,002 persons from 2021 to 2041, or approximately 200 people per year

**Dwellings**  
Additional 1,601 dwellings needed between 2021 to 2041 equating to 80 dwellings per year

Housing type	Assumed percentage uptake of dwellings delivered per year	Dwellings per year (approx.)	Total from 2021 – 2041 (approx.)
Urban housing	70%	56 per year	1,121 dwellings
Lifestyle living housing	25%	20 per year	400 dwellings
Rural housing	5%	4 per year	80 dwellings

Table 9: Breakdown of anticipated housing type





# HOUSING SUPPLY

To accommodate the projected housing demand, this section of the Local Housing Strategy analyses the capacity of the LGA to accommodate the projected growth. The Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement 2041 identifies existing Strategic Growth Areas across the Singleton LGA which are already zoned for their future use and are categorised according to the following growth area types:

- Urban Housing
- Lifestyle living
- Tourism
- Employment

These Strategic Growth Areas are identified at **Figure 6**. Tourism land is limited to one site at Pokolbin which can accommodate limited residential development in conjunction with agricultural or tourist and visitor accommodation uses. Employment land refers to residential accommodation in business/employment zoned areas. Tourism and Employment housing types are not considered to be a significant portion of future housing and so are not included in the Singleton Local Housing Strategy.

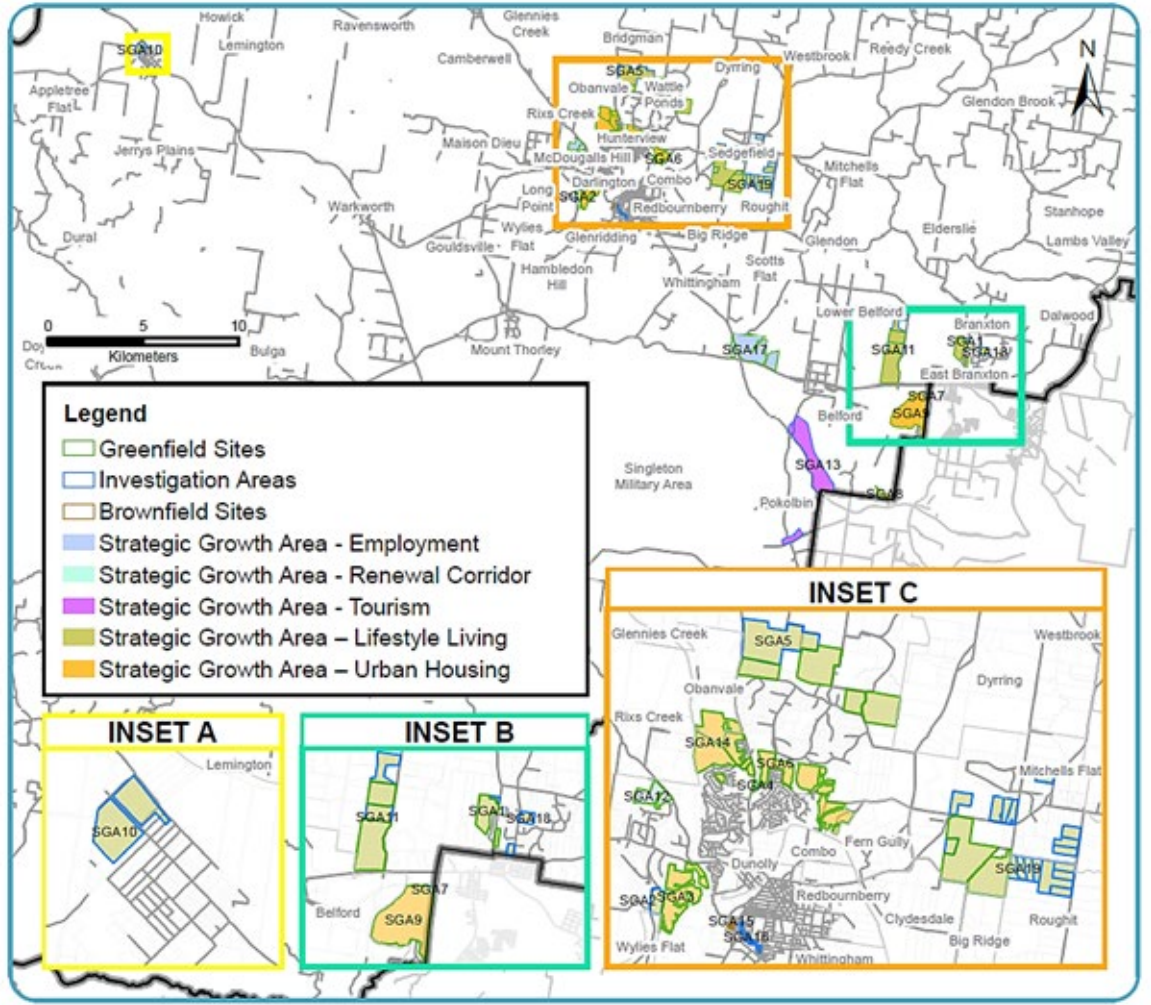


Figure 6: Location of Strategic Growth Areas (Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement, 2020)





Housing Type	ID	Type	Projected dwelling yield	Completed (as at Dec 2020)	Remaining capacity (as at Dec 2020)	% capacity remaining (as at Dec 2020)
Branxton Strategic Growth Area	SGA1	Lifestyle Living	156	6	150	96.2%
	SGA18	Lifestyle Living	13	1	12	92.3%
Gowrie Strategic Growth Area	SGA2	Lifestyle Living	37	2	35	94.6%
	SGA3	Urban housing	755	1	754	99.9%
Huntermview-Wattle Ponds Strategic Growth Area	SGA5	Lifestyle Living	326	41	285	87.4%
	SGA6	Urban housing	1086	7	1079	99.4%
Huntlee	SGA8	Lifestyle Living	58	0	58	100%
	SGA9	Urban housing	1434	0	1434	100%
Jerrys Plains	SGA10	Lifestyle Living	20	5	15	75%
Lower Belford	SGA11	Lifestyle Living	158	16	142	89.9%
Pokolbin	SGA13	Tourism	28	2	26	92.9%
Singleton Heights-Obanvale	SGA14	Urban housing	1060	8	1052	99.2%
Singleton	SGA16	Urban housing	Strategic Growth Area outcomes subject to planning study, which considers factors such as flood hazard, infrastructure requirements, local character, liveability and local economic effects.			
Sedgefield	SGA19	Lifestyle Living	52	18	34	65.4%
TOTAL			5176+	5076		

Table 10: Summary of planning housing supply (Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement, 2020)



HOUSING SUPPLY

Housing type	Housing demand (2021 – 2041)	Location	Remaining capacity	Total remaining capacity	Remaining capacity in years
Urban housing	1,112	Surrounding Singleton	2,885	4,319	40+ years
		Huntlee	1,434		
Lifestyle living	400	Surrounding Singleton	354	757	30+ years
		Surrounding Branxton	362		
		Elsewhere	41		
Rural	80				

Analysis of the projected housing demand against the amount of land zoned for urban and lifestyle living purposes indicate there is sufficient land zoned for each housing type for the life of the strategy.

However, it is unclear whether projected dwelling yields are achievable in the context of changes to legislation which may limit development potential and feasibility for development.



# HOUSING GAPS

**Based on the data and findings in the Local Housing Strategy the following housing gaps have been identified.**

- Greater diversity of lot sizes
- Diverse and affordable housing types
- Dwellings with fewer number of bedrooms
- Housing to cater toward short-term stays and temporary workers
- Dwellings in rural areas

## Greater diversity of lot sizes

As outlined in Table 6, there is a limited number of lots across the range of lot sizes. For lifestyle living lots this can be partly explained because of minimum areas required to accommodate on-site sewer management systems. However, where lifestyle living lots are serviced by reticulated sewer this constraint does not exist.

Facilitating a greater diversity of lot sizes will contribute to housing choice and price points which also contribute to increased housing affordability.

## Diverse and affordable housing types

A majority of dwellings in the Singleton LGA are detached dwellings houses. Only a small portion of dwellings are diverse and affordable housing types such as dual occupancy developments, multi-dwelling housing, seniors housing and boarding houses. Increasing the amount of diverse and affordable housing types will contribute to housing choice, contribute to a reduction in mortgage and rental stress, and provide housing options which are better suited to individuals' needs.

## Dwellings with fewer numbers of bedrooms

Most dwellings in the Singleton LGA are of three or more bedrooms. For smaller households this household structure may not be suitable and require a higher rent or mortgage to service.

Ensuring dwellings with a range of bedrooms are delivered will contribute to housing diversity and affordability.

## Housing to cater toward short-term stays and temporary workers

Changes in demand in industries such as mining mean that temporary workers may need to find accommodation in market rental stock which can increase competition with local residents. Increasing the amount of housing aimed at short-term stays and temporary workers would reduce pressure on market rental dwellings and contribute to reducing rental stress.

## Dwellings in rural areas

The Singleton Local Environmental Plan 2013 includes a provision regarding dwelling entitlements to restrict the construction of dwelling houses and dual occupancies on certain rural and conservation land unless the lot has a dwelling entitlement. The purpose of the provision is to maintain the primacy of agricultural land and minimise unplanned rural residential development.

The community has raised concern with the provision such as that it limits the ability for families to age in place by restricting additional lots or dwellings to be excised off existing lots. There is a need to maintain the agricultural primary of rural lands; however, in consultation with relevant government agencies Council will investigate ways to potentially facilitate sensitive increases in dwellings in rural areas. This may be achieved through a new Dwelling Entitlement Map in the Singleton LEP 2013 which would be based on site suitability such as land use constraints including lot size and dimensions; hazards; distance from services and facilities; and Critical Industry Clusters. If a lot is included on the Dwelling Entitlement Map then despite the written provisions of the Singleton LEP 2013 the lot will have a dwelling entitlement.



In summary, The Local Housing Strategy will aim to address housing gaps by reviewing planning controls and policies and investigating alternative ways to promote housing which addresses housing gaps. This can include Council-led initiatives, participation from private industry or through the assistance of the community.

Council will review the suitability of land already zoned for residential purposes and through this process the amount of developable land may be reduced and warrant consideration of additional land for urban or lifestyle living purposes. This review will need to be informed by technical studies and environmental assessments and so cannot meaningfully take place until these studies and assessments have been completed. However, until this assessment takes place and to not unintentionally stifle the supply of land: which can feasibly be developed Council may consider rezoning applications where:

- The rezoning will address identified housing gaps
- Significant public benefit is provided; Examples of significant public benefit may include: infrastructure items which will benefit the local community; commitments to achieve greater ecologically sustainable development; or responses to achieve greater design, character and liveability
- The land is suitable for development and complies with the criteria in **Appendix 1** for Urban Land or **Appendix 2** for Lifestyle Living.

For clarity, Council will only consider land which complies with Appendix 1 or Appendix 2 where it is located within areas identified in **Figure 7**. Areas indicated in **Figure 7** are considered to deliver outcomes sought through the Local Housing Strategy with regard to location and constraint requirements.

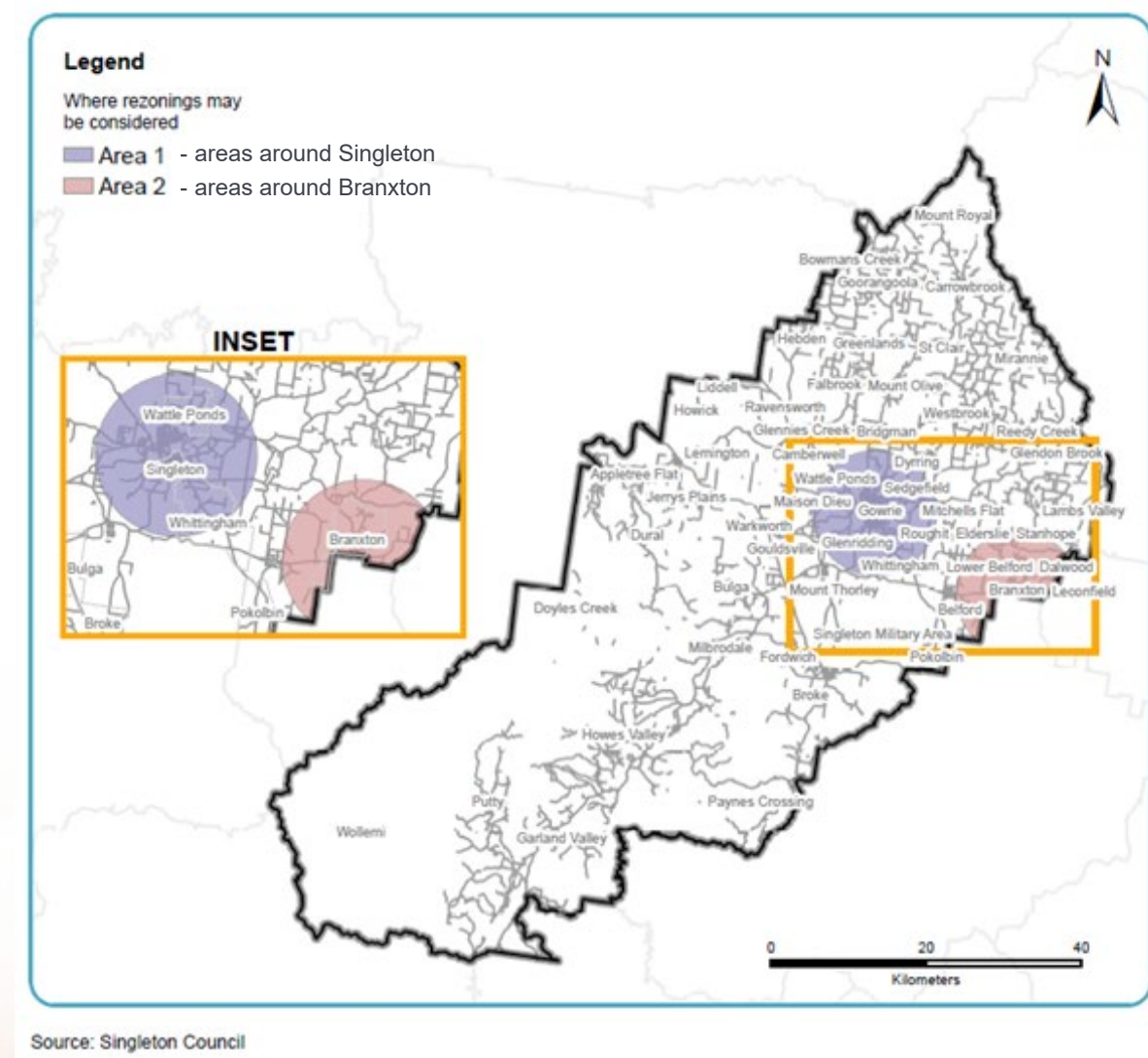


Figure 7: Areas where Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 apply (Singleton Council, 2020)



# VISION FOR HOUSING

**In addressing our identified housing gaps, we will work toward achieving our vision for housing.**

## Our Vision:

Our housing will respond to the needs of our communities now and into the future. We will do this by facilitating housing which is diverse and affordable and ensuring that sustainability and character are key considerations in our decision making

Over the coming decades, the connections of Singleton to the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area and surrounding LGAs, will continue to evolve and transform. Upgrades to the New England Highway and access to the Hunter Expressway will make travel to and from the Singleton LGA quicker and easier in conjunction with proposed passenger train services and increases to levels of service. Evolution of the industry base and improved liveability standards will see Singleton's role continue to grow in the Hunter Region as an attractive and desirable place to work and live. These changes will contribute to making Singleton a destination of choice.

In urban areas of the LGA, we will prioritise facilitating infill development including a mix of diverse and affordable housing types to complement the desired future character of the area with access to employment, services and facilities. Existing Strategic Growth Areas will accommodate greenfield development of urban housing.

Housing in rural areas will support local rural activities. Protection of rural character, the natural landscape and important farmland will be prioritised. Maintaining lifestyle offerings and minimising land use conflict will also be essential in maintaining the ongoing desirability of Singleton's rural areas as places to live and work. Where sensitive increased residential accommodation in rural areas can be accommodated this will be explored.

Housing growth will follow a preferred pattern of compact housing in locations near to existing town centres, with lower density housing in village, lifestyle living and rural areas. There will be targeted investigations focusing on the specific housing needs of younger and older persons, housing on existing small rural holdings, housing for low-income earners, housing in heritage areas and environmentally sustainable housing.

The actions contained in this strategy focus on delivering this vision in a planned and logical manner through a process of continual improvement of discovery, framework review and delivery.



Figure 8: Process wheel for continual improvement (Singleton Council, 2015)



# HOUSING PRINCIPLES

Attaining our Vision for housing can be achieved through our four key principles.

## PRINCIPLE 1: MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF LAND

### Rationale

The population in the Singleton LGA is anticipated to grow by approximately 200 people per year which will require approximately 80 dwellings per annum. The mix of infill and greenfield development targets for Singleton being part of the Central Hunter district in the Hunter Regional Plan are 40% infill and 60% greenfield. Generally speaking, across regional NSW there is a strong preference for detached housing in greenfield areas and so this should be facilitated while also giving consideration to how to encourage additional infill development which benefits from being close to existing infrastructure and services. The analysis in the Local Housing Strategy identifies an ongoing strong preference toward detached single dwelling houses which will cater principally to the dwelling demand.

It is important we ensure that greenfield land is able to be developed to cater to the needs of the current and future population. The Local Housing Strategy has identified that as a quantum there is sufficient land zoned to meet the housing needs of our current and future projected population for the Singleton LGA. However, an analysis of the suitability of these areas in consideration of changes to legislation and infrastructure projects such as the Singleton Bypass and changes to environmental legislation need to be undertaken to ensure projections are accurate. It should also be acknowledged that demand for different types of housing in the Singleton LGA is interconnected with demand from neighbouring LGAs and that this should be a consideration when considering proposals for rezonings of land.

**In order not to stifle the provision of land for housing which can feasibly be developed Council may consider rezonings prior to an assessment of currently zoned land where:**

- The rezoning will address the Housing Gaps identified in the Local Housing Strategy;
- Significant public benefit is provided. Examples of significant public benefit may include: infrastructure items which will benefit the local community; commitments to achieve greater environmentally sustainable design; or, including responses to achieve greater design, character and liveability.
- The land is suitable for development and complies with the criteria in **Appendix 1** (Urban Land) or **Appendix 2** (Lifestyle Living Land).

Rural lands and viticultural areas should be safeguarded for future agricultural uses. An action of the Local Housing Strategy will be to investigate ways for sensitive increases in dwelling densities to be accommodated.

### Strategic policy positions

- The housing supply pipeline should provide for delivery of a variety of dwelling types, sizes and price points to meet the needs of the population.
- Engagement with key industry and agency stakeholders will be key to understanding and solving constraints to the delivery of new housing.
- Currently zoned land in Strategic Growth Areas may no longer be suitable for development due to environmental constraints or the location of major infrastructure items such as the Singleton Bypass and so should be reassessed. Until this assessment can take place Council may consider rezoning applications where it can be shown that rezonings will address housing gaps, provide significant public benefit, and the land complies with rezoning criteria in Appendix 1 (Urban Land) and Appendix 2 (lifestyle living).
- Rural lands should be safeguarded for agricultural purposes; however, sensitive increases in residential density should be explored to allow families to age in place where these are consistent with State agency policies.

## Actions

1. Track the take up of existing land supply to ensure sufficient land is zoned to meet current and future housing needs including lot sizes.
2. Liaise with Government agencies to investigate how sensitive increases in housing densities on rural lands can be achieved including a Dwelling Entitlement Map.
3. Ensure that developer contributions remain current to provide for infrastructure required to service urban and lifestyle living areas.
4. Engage with key stakeholders to understand barriers to housing supply in Singleton and other centres.
5. Foster strong regional and local working partnerships to advocate for investment, knowledge share and infrastructure to support housing delivery and community building.
6. Promote lifestyle villages within 15 min walk in urban settings or 15 min bike ride in suburban settings.
7. Undertake an analysis of existing zoned areas to ensure these areas are feasible to be developed under current legislation.

## PRINCIPLE 2: HOUSING WILL BE DIVERSE + AFFORDABLE

### Rationale

Housing affordability is acknowledged as an issue across all levels of government and is acknowledged as having worsened as a result of the pandemic. There are limited levers which local governments can pull to directly influence housing affordability; however, planning controls and policies can facilitate and encourage greater diversity and affordability of housing stock.

Approximately 95% of dwellings in the Singleton LGA are detached dwelling houses and a majority of these have three or more bedrooms. This dwelling structure can have negative implications on affordability in the Singleton LGA by increasing the cost of housing for those with a mortgage and those who rent. A sustainable economic model for housing is based on no more than 30% of household income being allocated to housing. If a household's expenditure exceeds this, then less disposable income is available for discretionary spending including lifestyle and entertainment.

Analysis of our population indicates that a detached dwelling house on a separate parcel of land with three or more bedrooms will not be the most appropriate dwelling type for all members of our communities now or into the future. We want to ensure individuals and households do not experience mortgage or rental stress and can continue to age in place. To achieve this, it will be necessary to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to the delivery of diverse housing types including developments with smaller dwellings with fewer bedrooms, detached dwelling houses on smaller lots, seniors housing developments, dwellings which are adaptable, and dwellings which use alternative construction methods.

### Strategic Policy Positions

- Housing which caters to individuals' needs and which is affordable should be a right.
- Achieving a 40% infill development target will contribute to greater density developments and greater housing diversity and so should be encouraged.
- Reviewing and updating of planning controls where appropriate can assist with facilitating more diverse and affordable housing types by removing unnecessary impediments and offering development incentives where appropriate and advocating for changes where needed.
- Monitoring of issuing of development application approvals and construction certificates will allow us to monitor the types of housing being provided and identify areas to focus on.

### Actions

1. Review Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan controls and make appropriate amendments to better facilitate diverse and affordable housing outcomes where the standard of outcome will not be impacted and in consultation with the community.
2. Engage with key stakeholders to understand impediments, if any, to increased diverse and affordable housing in the Singleton LGA.
3. Investigate a public-private partnership "demonstration project" for a diverse housing typology project.
4. Investigate alternative housing systems that deliver construction efficiency, high quality housing and lower cost to market



5. Facilitate land use efficiency through diversity of urban release lot sizes and price points
6. Proactively work with resources sector, community housing and Defence Housing Authority providers to explore new models for shared and investment incentives through subsidized or deferred return on investment programs.
7. Support innovative housing solutions such as pre-fab, manufactured housing, 3D print housing and tiny houses where development outcomes do not negatively affect amenity of the site or surrounds.
8. Investigate and implement ways to encourage temporary housing for transient workers or individuals displaced due to social issues. This can include motel and hotel developments so rental stock is not taken up by this cohort.
9. Investigate ways to ensure a greater number of dwellings are adaptable and implement measures where appropriate.
10. Investigate impacts on housing affordability as a result of the pandemic and respond accordingly within resource availabilities.

## PRINCIPLE 3: COMMUNITIES + HOUSING WILL BE SUSTAINABLE

### Rationale

Incorporating sustainability in the way we design, construct and live in our communities will be a key consideration at both macro and micro levels. Sustainable housing developments reduce carbon emissions in both construction and over the life of the development, as well as deliver improved health and social outcomes for communities. Singleton Council is committed to the Federal Government's aim of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. Net zero emissions refers to achieving an overall balance between greenhouse gas emissions produced and greenhouse gas emissions taken out of the atmosphere.

Consideration must be given to the location of housing communities, including the characteristics of the area and respond to any constraints. This includes land which is of high biodiversity value, or environmental significance.

The implementation of sustainable design principles is fundamental in ensuring that homes are equipped to respond to climate change scenarios including extremes in temperature, bushfires, floods and droughts. Guidelines for innovative and sustainable development can help inform and encourage our communities to design homes which respond to site constraints and blend in with the surrounding environment.

The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) measures a home's efficiency to generate a star rating. The higher the star rating, the less energy consumed in heating and cooling a home. NatHERS could be used to measure efficiency of dwellings and other buildings in Singleton.

Principles of ecologically sustainable development are firmly embedded in the Singleton Sustainability Strategy 2019-2027, where UN Sustainable Development Goals (**Figure 8**) have been prioritised and include:



*Figure 8: Four priority UN Sustainable Development Goals*

**Each of the four Sustainable Development Goals are supported by long-term objectives to:**

- Work with the community to achieve reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- Drive sustainable design and development
- Maximise resource efficiency through avoidance, reduction, reuse, repurpose and recycling
- Improve efficiency in energy and water consumption
- Enhance the environmental quality and biodiversity of Singleton's ecosystems, natural environment and waterways

Informed by such, the Singleton Local Housing Strategy seeks to deliver long-term development outcomes for our local government area that do not compromise the environmental, economic and social viability of our community now and into the future. Through policy, education and advocacy of sustainable initiative and alternatives, this strategy will ensure that sustainability (in all its forms and at all levels) is the cornerstone of how we live within our communities and in our day-to-day lives.

## Strategic policy positions

- Principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) are embedded in decision making, ensuring the delivery of development outcomes for our local government area that do not compromise the environmental, economic and social viability of our community now and into the future.
- Council will encourage well designed, accessible and environmentally sustainable housing.
- Council will encourage innovative approaches to design and construction.

## Actions

1. Promote infill housing to limit sprawl and take advantage of existing services and infrastructure.
2. Develop a suite of design guidelines to encourage ecologically sustainable development.
3. Extensions to identified growth areas must include quality open space areas and/or be designed to connect to established open space including walking and cycling routes where possible.
4. Investigate and implement changes where possible to support transition to climate-efficient housing developments to achieve net-zero emissions status by 2050.
5. Investigate and promote modern and emerging technologies that deliver energy and water efficiencies for all forms of residential housing.
6. Facilitate education and engagement initiatives that collaborate with community and encourage sustainable living opportunities and outcomes.
7. Investigate how to apply NatHERS National Scorecard Initiative in future development.

## PRINCIPLE 4: DESIGN, CHARACTER + LIVEABILITY

### Rationale

The character of an area is what makes one neighbourhood distinctive from another. Character is created through how the built and natural elements in both the public realm and private domain interrelate with one another including the interplay between buildings, architectural style, subdivision patterns, activity, topography and vegetation.

The Singleton LGA is made up of a variety of places, each with their own distinct characteristics that connect people to those places. Our LGA offers rural villages, acreage lifestyle offerings and various items of local heritage significance and heritage conservation areas which contribute to a sense of place. Recognising, respecting and nurturing what makes these places special is critical to good place-based planning and creating liveable neighbourhoods. As liveability assessments are carried out for urban areas of Singleton, these will be used to guide decision making to ensure future development maintains or enhances the desired future character of the area. Equal consideration should also be given to the design, character and liveability of individual buildings.



Figure 9: Local Character Wheel (DPE)

In accordance with Action 2.1.5 of the Singleton Local Strategic Planning Statement 2041, Council is preparing local character statements for important precincts within the LGA. This work will inform measures to improve liveability and identify important characteristics of precincts that need to be protected and enhanced. There are opportunities to link this information to the strategic planning and development assessment process to improve liveability outcomes and protect local character.

## Strategic policy positions

- Design, character and liveability are crucial to creating place and should be a key consideration in decision making and assessment.
- Development should maintain or enhance the character of an area and be compatible with relevant local character statements and heritage conservation areas.
- Active placemaking will positively contribute to design, character and liveability.

## Actions

1. Prepare liveability assessments of the urban areas of the Singleton LGA and use these to inform Council and community responses to positively contribute to character and place.
2. Engage the community as a key, active participant in defining desires for future housing, active living and a culturally rewarding community.
3. Encourage design, character and liveability responses if further rezonings are sought.
4. Review planning control and design guides to ensure that medium density and diverse housing types in heritage conservation areas are sympathetic to the current and desired future character of the area.



# IMPLEMENTATION + MONITORING

Implementation of the Local Housing Strategy will be an ongoing process to review, amend, monitor and evaluate housing in the Singleton LGA. A list of the actions outlined in the Housing Principles section of the Local Housing Strategy is collated at **Appendix 3**.

Some actions will be strategic pieces of work which will need to be completed prior to other actions being able to take place. Other actions will be able to form part of Council's Operation Plan which can help inform a logical sequence and progression of work to ensure the findings and outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy can be given effect to.

To monitor the construction of dwellings during the life of the strategy, Singleton Council will use the NSW Planning Portal which captures data around number of dwelling applications received, the type of residential accommodation the application is for and the location of dwellings. These data will be reported to the Council on a biannual basis.

## APPENDIX 1

### Criteria for rezoning land to Urban Land

(R1 – General Residential + R2 – Low Density Residential)

Considerations for rezoning to create new land for urban purposes must be able to address housing gaps identified in the Local Housing Strategy and provide public benefit. Examples of significant public benefit may include infrastructure items which will benefit the local community; commitments to achieve greater ecologically sustainable design; or, include responses to achieve greater design, character and liveability.

**In addition to these, applications will only be considered where land meets the following criteria and objectives:**

- Should be located adjacent or near to existing urban zoned land (R1 - General Residential', R2 - Low-density Residential) and located within an area where rezonings may be considered.
- Have access to required services and infrastructure including reticulated water and sewer, electricity and telecommunications.
- Land will not be located on the flood plain.
- Be free of high biodiversity or ecological value. Where biodiversity constraints exist, applications are required to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). BDARs at development application stage are not preferred.
- Be consistent with Planning for Bushfire Protection requirements.
- The land has following general attributes:
  - Generally flat-moderate grades.
  - Access to community services and facilities.
  - Access to convenience / other retail.
  - Road access.
  - Consistent with objective of creating walkable neighbourhoods.

## APPENDIX 2

### Criteria for rezoning land to lifestyle living land

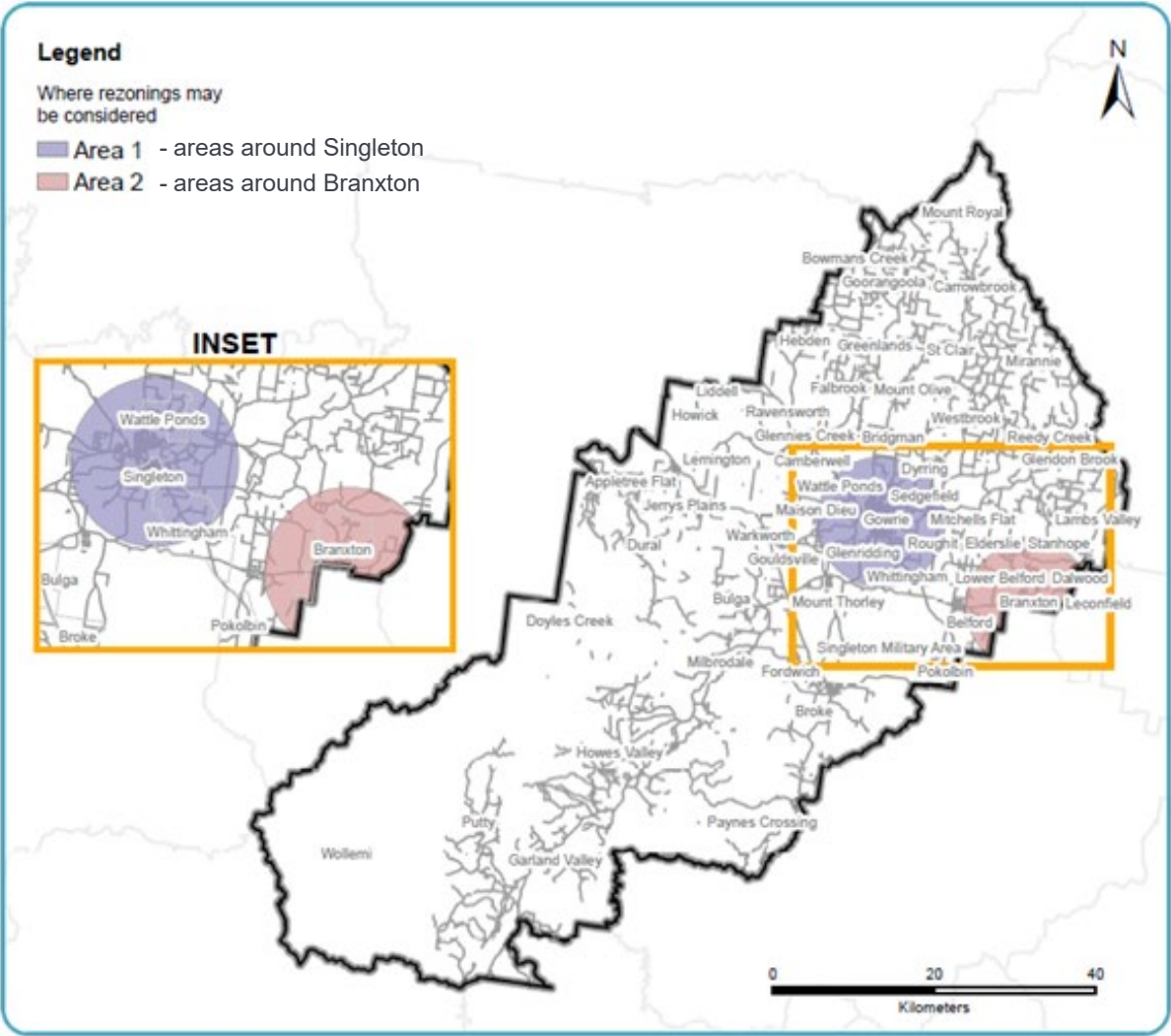
(R5 – Large Lot Residential + C4 Environmental Living)

Considerations for rezoning to create new land for Lifestyle Living must be able to address housing gaps identified in the Local Housing Strategy and provide public benefit. Examples of significant public benefit may include infrastructure items which will benefit the local community; commitments to achieve greater ecologically sustainable design; or, include responses to achieve greater design, character and liveability.

**In addition to these, rezonings for additional Lifestyle Living land will only be considered where the land meets the following criteria and objectives:**

- Should be a logical extension of an existing lifestyle living area and be located within an area where rezonings may be considered.
- Have access to water, reticulated sewer/on-site sewer management system, electricity, telecommunications.
- Include a staging and sequencing plan giving consideration to lot sizes based on available water supply, reticulated sewer and other infrastructure such as electricity, telecommunications and bushfire services. Minimum lot sizes for unsewered areas should be demonstrated by the proponent and justified why these are appropriate.
- Be consistent with Planning for Bushfire Protection requirements.
- Be free of high biodiversity or ecological value. Where biodiversity constraints exist, applications are required to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). BDARs at development application stage are not preferred.
- Biodiversity and water and sewer infrastructure reviews be undertaken prior to determining final zoning boundaries and minimum lot sizes.
- Should not be proposed in areas identified or better suited for future urban development.
- Should not be located so as to increase the potential for water extraction from streams or groundwater and comply with harvestable water rights requirements.





Source: Singleton Council

APPENDIX 3  
Housing Principles Actions

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Priority 1: Housing Supply		
Track the take up of existing land supply to ensure sufficient land is zoned to meet current and future housing needs including lot sizes.	Council	Ongoing
Liaise with Government agencies to investigate how sensitive increases in housing densities on rural lands can be achieved.	Council	Short-term
Ensure that developer contributions remain current to provide for infrastructure required to service urban and lifestyle living areas.	Council	Short-term
Engage with key stakeholders to understand barriers to housing supply in Singleton and other centres.	Council / Development Industry	Medium-term
Foster strong regional and local working partnerships to advocate for investment, knowledge share and infrastructure	Council / State Government / Development Industry	Long-term
Promote lifestyle villages within 15 min walk in urban setting or 15 min bike ride in suburban setting	Council / Development Industry	Ongoing
Undertake an analysis of existing zoned areas to ensure these areas are feasible to be developed under current legislation	Council	Short-medium term



Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Priority 2: Diverse and Affordable Housing</b>		
Review Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan controls and make amendments where appropriate to better facilitate diverse and affordable housing outcomes where the standard of outcome will not be impacted and in consultation with the community	Council	Medium-term
Engage with key stakeholders to understand impediments, if any, to increased diverse and affordable housing in the Singleton LGA	Council / Community / Development Industry	Short-term
Investigate a public-private partnership “demonstration project” for a diverse housing typology project	Council / Development Industry	Med- to Long-term
Investigate alternative housing systems that deliver construction efficiency, high quality housing and lower cost to market	Council	Long-term
Facilitate land use efficiency through diversity of urban release lot sizes and price points	Council	Ongoing
Proactively work with resources sector, community housing, Defence Housing Authority providers to explore new model for shared and investment incentive through subsidized or deferred return on investment programs.	Council / Agencies	Ongoing
Support innovative housing solutions such as pre-fab, manufactured housing, 3D print housing and tiny houses	Council	Ongoing
Investigate and implement ways to encourage temporary housing for transient workers such as motel and hotel developments so rental stock is not taken up by this cohort	Council	Short-term
Investigate ways to ensure a greater number of dwellings are adaptable and implement measures where appropriate.	Council	Short- to medium-term
Investigate impacts on housing affordability as a result of the pandemic and respond accordingly	Council	Short-term

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
<b>Priority 3: Sustainability</b>		
Promote infill housing to limit sprawl and take advantage of existing services and infrastructure	Council	Ongoing
Develop a suite of design guidelines to facilitate environmentally sensitive development outcomes.	Council	Ongoing
Extensions to identified growth areas must include quality open space areas and be designed to connect to established open space including walking and cycling routes where possible.	Council	Ongoing
Investigate and implement changes where possible to commence transitioning to climate-efficient housing developments to achieve net-zero emissions status by 2050.	Council / Development Industry	Medium-term
Investigate and promote modern and emerging technologies that deliver energy and water efficiencies for all forms of residential housing	Council	Ongoing
Facilitate education and engagement initiatives that collaborate with community and encourage sustainable living opportunities and outcomes	Council	Ongoing
Investigate how to apply NatHERS National Scorecard Initiative in future development	Council	Ongoing



Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Priority 4: Design, Character + Liveability		
Prepare liveability assessments of the urban areas of the Singleton LGA and use these to inform Council and community responses to positively contribute to character and place.	Council	Medium- to long-term
Engage the community as an active participant in defining desires for future housing, active living and a culturally rewarding community.	Council / Community	Ongoing
Encourage design, character and liveability responses if further rezonings are sought.	Council	Ongoing
Review planning control and design guides to ensure that medium density and diverse housing types in heritage conservation areas are sympathetic to the current and desired future character of the area.	Council	Medium-term







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