

# Palerang Rural Lands Strategy

## 2016 – 2036

December 2016



During the development of the Rural Lands Strategy, the former Palerang Council was amalgamated with the former Queanbeyan City Council to form Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council. Throughout the Strategy the term 'former Palerang' has been used to denote the rural area applying to the Strategy.

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# 1 GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Agricultural class	A five class system used by NSW Primary Industries which classifies land in terms of its suitability for general agricultural use. Refer to ( <a href="http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/189697/ag-land-classification.pdf">http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/189697/ag-land-classification.pdf</a> ) for more information
Commercial agriculture	Farming activity likely to generate some part-time net income after deduction of operational costs
CP	A Contributions Plan prepared under the provisions of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> to levy contributions on development
DGP	A Development Control Plan prepared under the provisions of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act</i> which specifies certain planning controls to apply to development
DPE	NSW Department of Planning and Environment
DPI	NSW Department of Primary Industries
EH	Existing Holding – a holding of land where a dwelling is permissible. See clause 4.2A(6) of the Palerang LEP 2014
Environmental Land	Generally, more remote natural areas over 50 hectares with low impact and low density living. (See Section 5.5 for detail)
EP & A Act	The <i>NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
Hamlet	A cluster of small lots in a rural location (See Section 5.1.1 for details)
Hard infrastructure	The fixed assets and control systems to operate, manage and monitor the systems. This type of infrastructure includes waste management, sewer, water, electricity and transport systems.
LEP	A Local Environmental Plan prepared and gazetted under the provisions of the <i>NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
LGA	Local Government Area
LLS	NSW Local Lands Services
Lot	A single title parcel – normally classified as a lot in a Deposited Plan
OEH	NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
OSSM	On Site Sewerage Management System
PLEP	<i>Palerang Local Environmental Plan 2014</i>
RDA	Regional Development Australia
Rural	Broadscale agricultural operations usually over 100 hectares. (See Section 5.4 for detail)
Rural living	Estate style development with lots generally around 2-10 ha (See Section 5.1.2 for detail)
Rural residential	Rural land uses encompassing rural living, small lot agriculture and hamlets, that provide for residential land use in a rural environment
Small lot agriculture	Scattered or clustered small lot farms mostly under 50 hectares in agricultural areas. (See Section 5.1.3 for further detail).

SEPP	A NSW Government State Environmental Planning Policy prepared and gazetted under the provisions of the <i>NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment</i>
Soft infrastructure	The institutions required to maintain economic, health and cultural and social standards sought by a country, they include the financial, health care and law enforcement and emergency services.
Urban	City, town or village
Urban cluster	Large urban settlement in a rural area that does not contain all the features of a large town or city

Following the exhibition of the draft Rural Lands Strategy, it was determined that naming of specific rural residential land use options should avoid any confusion with the general description of rural residential lands. Accordingly, the different rural residential land use styles have been renamed to eliminate this confusion and to better describe the associated land use options. . A description of the land use types is provided in section 5.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

Following the preparation of the *Palerang Local Environmental Plan 2014* (PLEP), the former Palerang Council resolved to undertake a Rural Lands Study. The aim of the study was to determine a 20-year strategic direction for rural, rural residential and environmental land in the former Palerang Local Government Area (LGA). Determining a strategic direction has included the following work:

- the identification and examination of the strategic and legislative context, primary trends and the social, economic (including agriculture), infrastructure and environmental issues affecting rural, rural residential and environmental land in the Palerang LGA
- consultation with the community and government agencies
- a review of current land use zones
- the identification of actions that are within Council's role, which would secure a positive future for commercial agriculture in the former Palerang LGA
- a review of the supply and demand of small rural properties and the economic implications of the supply and demand of these property types
- a review of subdivision provisions for broadacre areas with a focus on minimum lot size and 'averaging' provisions
- a review of the minimum lot size provisions for dwellings on rural, rural residential and environmental land
- a review of requests for rezoning and the ability to erect a dwelling on a lot where it is currently not permissible.
- The requirements of Section 117 Ministerial Directions and the regional land use strategy

Garret Barry Planning Services Pty Ltd was engaged by the former Palerang Council to undertake the Rural Lands Study, the final products being a Rural Lands Study and Rural Lands Strategy.

The Rural Lands Strategy takes into account the NSW government regional strategy and policies, the data contained in the Rural Lands Study, community and government agency comment on the exhibition of the Study and the principles developed by the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee.

The Rural Lands Strategy will allow Council to review development control guidelines, contributions plans and asset plans for the rural area and to have a coordinated approach to future local environmental plan amendments which will reflect the Strategy's principles.

The Rural Lands Study was managed by the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee which consisted of all the former Palerang Council councillors, the Director of Planning

and Environmental Services, the Strategic Planning Co-ordinator and representatives from the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

The Rural Lands Strategy commences by setting out the aims of the Strategy. This is followed by an outline of the existing situation in the former Palerang LGA. The matters listed in this section directly influence the ability of Council, the community and non-government organisations in achieving the Rural Lands Strategy. However, it is recognised that Council has limited control over these matters but it is acknowledged that it is necessary to work with them. These matters have been referred to as 'givens' in the Strategy.

The third section focuses on issues of importance to land use planning in the rural areas. Section 5 details the characteristics of the five categories of rural land use identified by the Committee. Following this, section 6 of the Strategy sets out the principles developed by the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee. A table listing strategies and actions to achieve the principles is included. Section 7 lists the criteria against which existing requests for the rezoning of rural land and dwelling eligibility will be assessed.

## 2.2 READING THE RURAL LANDS STRATEGY

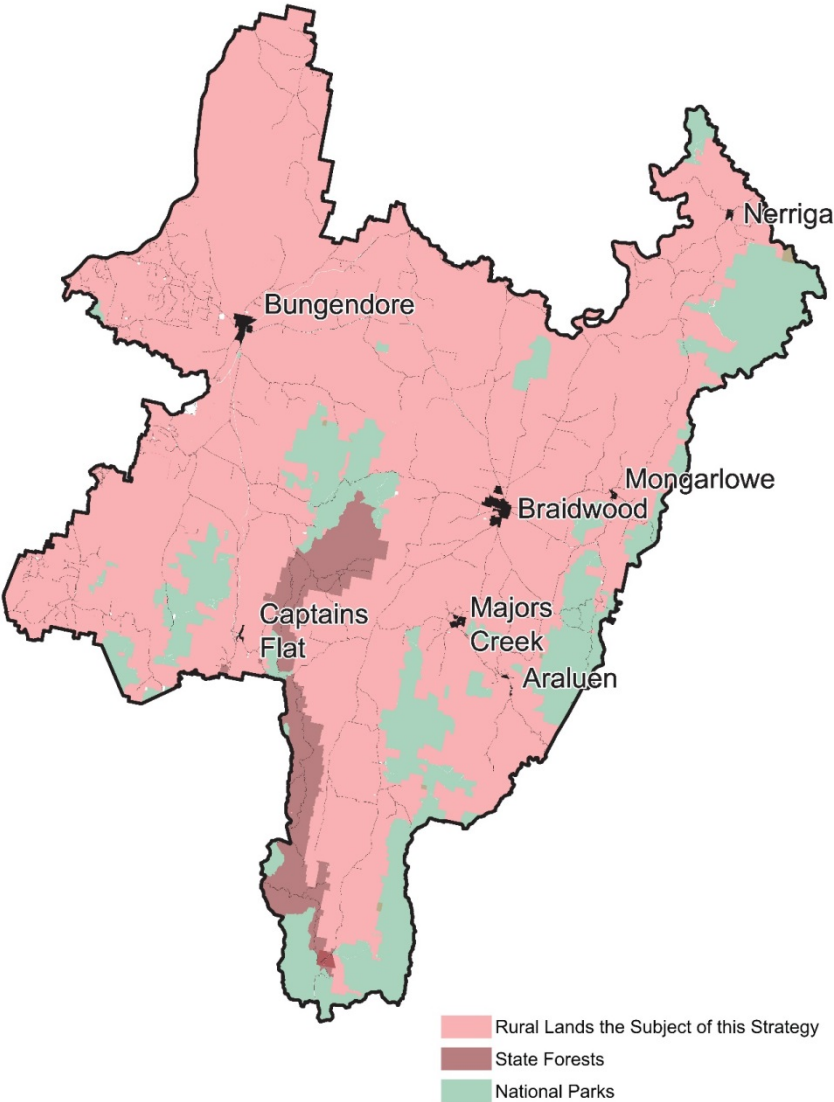
It is recommended that the Rural Lands Strategy is read in association with the documents listed below:

- *Palerang Rural Lands Study Report, Information, issues and options for future land use of the Palerang rural areas, 2015.* The Study provides qualitative and quantitative data on rural, rural residential and environmental land in the Palerang LGA.
- *Commercial Agriculture in Palerang LGA, 2015*
- *Palerang Economic Profile, 2014*
- Report to the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee regarding the exhibition of the Rural Lands Study, 13 August 2015
- The Discussion Paper produced by the consultants aims to guide the development of the Rural Lands Strategy in relation to some of the more challenging issues such as subdivision provisions for rural areas and general land supply options

## 2.3 THE STRATEGY AREA

The Strategy applies to all privately owned rural, rural residential and environmental land in the former Palerang LGA. It excludes public lands such as state forests and national parks and urban zoned lands and villages beyond the consideration of their rural land use needs and impacts. Map 1 below defines the Strategy area.

**MAP 1: THE STRATEGY AREA**



**2.4 AIMS OF THE RURAL LANDS STRATEGY**

**2.4.1 Aims**

The Rural Lands Strategy provides a strategic direction for rural, rural residential and environmental land in the former Palerang LGA from 2016 to 2036. The Strategy seeks to find a balance between the competing pressures from a diverse range of land uses and to protect the agricultural, environmental, and landscape values of the former Palerang non-urban lands.

The Rural Lands Strategy will provide guidance on the location and nature of the land use categories (see below) which will assist Council and government agencies plan and



manage hard and soft infrastructure outside of the town and village areas and for Council to prepare land use and development control provisions which aim to achieve the Strategy principles.

## **2.4.2 Objectives**

- To consult the community in the development of the Strategy.
- To develop principles, strategies and actions for land use across the rural areas of the former Palerang LGA
- To assist with the development of a secure and positive future for commercial agriculture in the former Palerang LGA
- To set strategies to address the following issues, (within the context of a local government council):
  - an adequate supply of rural small holdings. To ensure diversity in choice of rural land use opportunities
  - the management of rural water
  - the protection and enhancement of commercial and emerging agriculture in the former Palerang LGA
  - appropriate subdivision and dwelling provisions for rural, rural residential and environmental land
  - the protection of extractive resource areas
  - the management of rural scenic and cultural landscapes
  - planning for climate change at a local level
- The development of a land use strategy for each of the following economic initiatives:
  - emerging niche agricultural industries
  - rural tourism
  - the expansion of rural land use options to attract new arrivals to the former Palerang LGA and expand the population and economic base

## **2.5 STEPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL LANDS STRATEGY**

- The formation of the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee
- Gathering and assessment of qualitative and quantitative data to form the Rural Lands Study Report, the identification of the current situation and issues. Preparation of a report detailing the agricultural situation in the former Palerang LGA

- Community and government agency consultation on the Rural Lands Study Report and agricultural report via community meetings, the placement of the documents on Council's website and comment from the committee
- The preparation of a report to the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee on the consultation which included the identification of the current situation including the 'givens' and issues
- A discussion paper on the challenging issues in the rural areas in the former Palerang LGA based on consultation and the Rural Lands Report
- The development of land use categories and principles by the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee
- The bringing together of the above work to develop strategies and actions to achieve the principles

## 3 THE EXISTING SITUATION

The Rural Lands Study has identified a number of 'givens' about the former Palerang LGA. Each of these 'givens' are viewed as directly influencing the ability of Council, the community and non-government organisations in trying to achieve the principles and strategies in the Rural Lands Strategy. It is acknowledged that it is not possible to control these 'givens' but there is a need to work with them. This situation has been taken into account in developing the Rural Lands Strategy. The 'givens' are in no particular order:

### 3.1 THE PROXIMITY TO CANBERRA AND QUEANBEYAN AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR RURAL LAND USE IN THE FORMER PALERANG LGA

The presence of two urban centres to the immediate north-west of the former Palerang LGA (Canberra and Queanbeyan) with a combined population of over 400,000 people has a significant impact on the former Palerang LGA.

Neither centre has a supply of rural residential or farming opportunities and as a result there is strong interest from people working in these centres for rural development opportunities in adjacent areas. The local government areas surrounding Canberra/Queanbeyan therefore provides a supply of rural residential land and farming opportunities.

This influence is responsible for almost all of the growth of the former Palerang LGA over the past 40 years and while there has been some lessening of demand in recent years, the demand for rural development opportunities is still strong. The Rural Lands

Study estimated an average of 30 to 50 new rural dwellings per year for the coming 20 years (for the former Palerang LGA).

The growth pressures in the former Palerang LGA mean that the land market has long ago factored in the potential value of the subdivision of rural properties. This situation presents challenges for the protection of broadacre commercial agricultural lands. On the one hand fragmentation of commercial properties can weaken the agricultural economy but on the other the growth pressures are such that current owners have an economic interest in fragmenting their properties.

There are advantages and disadvantages for the former Palerang LGA from this external population and its economic influence.

Advantages include:

- much of the economic activity of the former Palerang LGA depends on these centres, be it new subdivision and home construction, the sale of extractive materials or local tourism
- approximately 65% of all employment for current former Palerang residents is in these centres

Disadvantages include:

- limitations on opportunities for business within the former Palerang LGA. A significant proportion of retail expenditure, for example, goes to these other centres given the large proportion of people working in Canberra or Queanbeyan and the accessibility of retail and other services in these large centres
- similarly, there is a limited focus and feeling of 'Palerang community' when such a large proportion of the population live in areas having close proximity to external services of the scale and diversity of Canberra/Queanbeyan compared to the range of services small towns such as Bungendore can provide. The growth of business activity in a local former Palerang centre is further constrained by this influence
- accommodating the significant demand for rural residential development options in close proximity to a major centre , yet protect:
  - commercial scale farms
  - biodiversity and landscape quality
  - water supplies

### **3.2 RURAL ROADS ARE EXPENSIVE TO CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN**

The former Palerang LGA has over 720 km of gravel roads to maintain and approximately 570 km of sealed roads. Road upgrades are expensive and a major cost burden on Council and residents.

### 3.3 THE AVAILABILITY OF WATER

Water supply for Palerang rural residents comes from rain water tanks, bores or the collection of surface run-off in dams.

There are natural limitations on these sources and climate change may further limit supply. The actions Council and other levels of government can take to ensure adequate supply have limitations, for example requiring large storage areas, the monitoring and controlling of groundwater use and the control of the proportion of surface run-off being contained in dams.

### 3.4 CLIMATE CHANGE

#### **A snapshot of climate change impacts**

The possible impacts of climate change for the former Palerang LGA are:

- increased number of extreme weather events
- more pressure/competition on water resources
- increased chance of bushfires
- as the number of very hot days (above 35 degrees Celsius) increases, the number of illnesses and heat-related deaths could more than double, with the elderly being particularly vulnerable
- change in flora and fauna location and type. A need to plan for species retreat corridors and similar as habitats face accelerated modification
- changes in water availability, temperatures, bushfires and to the distribution of pest species will impact on natural environments
- the projected changes could directly affect the productivity of the former Palerang LGA agricultural industries
- the major impacts seem to be mostly beyond the 2035 horizon of this Study, but all indications are that serious consideration of the implications needs to be under way now. For example, while average catchment runoff is predicted to decline by around 10% by 2030, by 2070 the estimates range from at least 25% to 50%

While Council and the community can play a part in reducing greenhouse gases, this aspect is really a response for national government and international processes. Council can support reduction strategies and community education in relation to reducing greenhouse gases. Within budget capacity, Council might continue to reduce its own energy consumption.

### 3.5 NATIVE VEGETATION

The former Palerang LGA contains numerous endangered ecological communities and threatened species some of which are endemic to the region. The existence of threatened species invokes federal or state legislation. Whilst this may be a constraint on some forms of development, the conservation of native vegetation and important habitat can also be viewed as contributing to a rich and diverse landscape and is important in the protection of biodiversity.

The conservation of the native vegetation that is an important aspect of the former Palerang rural landscape and ecology, is currently primarily the responsibility of the state government as Council's regulatory powers are mostly confined to the controls on siting the of new development such as new buildings, roads and subdivision patterns. Council can also assist with the planning of corridors and habitat re-establishment as part of subdivision and dwelling requirements or planning proposals to rezone land for new uses. Overall the area involved in new development in the rural context is small.

The state government has recently reviewed NSW biodiversity legislation and gazetted new legislation. The new legislation will commence in 2017.

### 3.6 LEGISLATION

Local government is required to work within the legislation of the state and federal governments. Within the legislation there are provisions that councils are obliged to enforce regardless of local views and opinion. For example, the current planning legislation has been in force largely unaltered for 36 years, but the responsibility for its reform is a state matter.

Federal legislation such as the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, requires certain specified actions of Council, for example the assessment of Natural Temperate Grasslands. The principles of the legislation have merit but sometimes the detail loses relevance or is inflexible at local scale.

The state government has retained most of the power relating to land clearing and hence conserving biodiversity on private land. Similarly the state sets most water policy and administers the bulk of the licencing and controls on dams and bores.

Additionally, legislation such as the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* places a number of requirements on councils but does not address the issue of funds to achieve the objectives of major weed control.

The NSW state government controls the rate income of councils. While in principle this is to ensure efficiency, there is evidence to demonstrate it also means many councils struggle to service basic requirements let alone a plan for a visionary future.

### 3.7 FRAGMENTATION AND SPECULATION

The early settlement of the former Palerang LGA, as with many parts of NSW, saw a large number of lots created below the area required for a current commercially viable broadscale agricultural property to be a productive farm. This has resulted in many larger rural properties comprising multiple titles. Such titles can be legally transferred to other people without any reference to Council.

In the absence of planning controls on the use of such smaller parcels, the fragmentation of commercial agriculture into hobby scale land use can occur and speculative practices result where there are competing land uses such as that created by proximity to Canberra.

### 3.8 WEEDS AND PEST ANIMALS

Noxious weeds and pest animals can adversely impact on agricultural production. The associated losses can be significant where an infestation is large. The former Palerang LGA has some significant areas affected by problem weeds like serrated tussock-so much so that full control is sometimes not possible within available budgets.

Council administers the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* which gives Council a suite of powers to order weed control, but if infestations are already extensive, property owners may not be able to finance the control to desired levels. Council has limited powers to require the reduction of infestation in new developments.

Council is a landholder with extensive rural road verges and public reserves and similar lands where weed control is a Council responsibility. Council income limitations may restrict the ability for full control on Council lands.

Pest animal regulation comes under the duties of the Local Lands Service.

State authorities, such as State Forests and National Parks and Wildlife Service, manage large areas of public land and are responsible for weeds and pests in these areas. These agencies also can struggle to obtain funding for complete control.

It is important that weed and pest control actions are co-ordinated across state agencies, Council and local land holders. The land use planning functions of Council are a very limited tool for weed and pest control.

## 4 LAND USE PLANNING ISSUES

The Rural Lands Study Report and consultation with government agencies and the community identified a range of issues that required consideration in the development of the Rural Lands Strategy. It is recognised that the Rural Lands Strategy and land use planning are not the only means of addressing these issues and in most instances a

multi-faceted approach is required. However, as land use planning is under Council's control the major focus of this Strategy is on land use planning.

## 4.1 RURAL RESIDENTIAL LAND

There has been significant demand for rural residential land away from urban areas particularly in the western part of the local government area and such demand, while slowing in recent times, nonetheless is continuing. Section 3.1 of the Rural Lands Study Report analyses the demand and concludes that while there is no shortage in the supply of land, Council needs to commence a process to increase supply over the next five years.

Of the various types of rural development opportunities, the small lot farming component is considered the category of least supply. Section 4 of the Discussion Paper explores that need and in sub-section 4.8 identifies some areas that Council could investigate to address such supply.

Any expansion of estate style rural development needs to be in areas where the current hard and soft infrastructure can be economically extended and funded by the new development.

For development options that do not require land for part-time commercial agriculture, it is important to ensure quality agricultural land is not wasted by being zoned for such use. Additional options such as hamlets may accommodate supply with less land demand. Areas for non-commercial agriculture related settlement should be confined to areas with agricultural classifications 4 or 5.

The impact of rural residential supply stocks requires ongoing monitoring. It is preferable that there is a co-ordinated approach to monitoring across the LGAs surrounding Canberra, given the interrelationship and impacts of the supply and demand of land across all of these LGAs.

## 4.2 RURAL LAND AND COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE

Most of the commercial agricultural activity in the former Palerang LGA is located in the current RU1 Primary Production land use zone (the broadacre areas). There is pressure for more living options that are not related to commercial agriculture in these broadacre areas. Some sections of the former Palerang LGA are already significantly fragmented, where agriculture is either a hobby scale or at a best small scale part-time operation.

Defining commercial agriculture and measures to protect it is not simple in an area with the competing land use pressures of the former Palerang LGA. It is inappropriate for Council to set lot size controls based on a 'full-time income' from a rural property. Many properties from 100 ha upward make some agricultural contribution as do some smaller ones (less than 100 ha) in areas where land quality is high and where the operator is successful in value adding. However, many properties under about 50 ha

would struggle to make any meaningful commercial income from traditional sheep or cattle grazing.

Properties that do provide a part-time agricultural income for their owners combined with off farm or non-farm based on farm employment, is strong in the region. This is a complex issue and Section 3 of the Discussion Paper explores this in detail. The conclusion points to there being limited benefit in increasing lot sizes above 80 ha in the former Palerang LGA. However, there is also evidence of the fragmentation of larger ownerships which is facilitated by the relatively low 40 ha lot size. The limiting of further fragmentation may have economic benefits for the former Palerang LGA in the long term.

The trend towards more and a wider range of on-farm businesses with minimal agricultural connection is growing. There is also a growing range of boutique agricultural activities and businesses for which there seems demand for their products e.g. expanded local food.

Supporting these trends is an economic development policy matter rather than one of land use planning. Land use planning provisions already allow a wide range of uses in the broadacre zones. There is also an adequate supply of most types of rural residential opportunities for the short term, and options for Council to ensure ongoing supply through medium term reviews of the PLEP.

A more comprehensive strategy is needed to manage vacant existing holdings and dwelling lots that are below the minimum lot size. The current procedures are complex, costly to administer and confusing for the public.

The management of extractive resources and the protection of rural amenity from extractive industry activity is important. The state government has introduced detailed mapping and buffer controls that seem to be an adequate land use planning response.

## **4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL LAND**

### **4.3.1 Protection of Biodiversity**

The application of the revised terrestrial biodiversity GIS layer in the PLEP is considered to be an adequate land use planning response for most rural lands given the role of Council land use planning in biodiversity protection is limited to the small areas in development applications and the protection of biodiversity in areas proposed for rezoning to a more intensive use.

The wider issue of encouragement or the regulation of property owners to retain and expand important areas of native vegetation is currently a role for state and federal governments.

A strategy is needed on the further use of the E3 Environmental Management land use zone. Indications from research associated with the Discussion Paper point to there being limited benefit in having extensive areas of E3, and in fact, there is a perception that the land use zone has a negative impact on commercial agriculture which,



throughout the former Palerang LGA, uses some environmental lands for extensive grazing.

### **4.3.2 Protection of Scenic and Cultural Rural Landscape**

The rural scenic landscapes of quality in the former Palerang LGA is created by native vegetation, diversity of topographic relief and broadscale and extensive grazing activities. There are also strong cultural aspects of what people consider is quality landscape. The Aboriginal community has strong cultural and spiritual links to many features in the landscape and European history also has impacted and added to elements of landscape appreciation.

Threats to that quality of landscape can arise from more intensive land use, more industrialised agriculture (especially where many large buildings are required) and from the extensive clearing of remnant native vegetation.

Currently, the management of the rural landscape is mostly limited to controlling the vegetation affected by new development and the rezoning of land. Council has some DCP controls in place to guide the siting of structures that might adversely impact on more important landscapes and may further develop such controls. The rezoning process is an appropriate mechanism to ensure the modelling of landscape impacts is included in the planning proposal.

State government regulates the clearing of native vegetation, outside of the relatively small areas impacted by development applications or planning proposals for rezoning, under Council control. While Council powers are limited, Council can seek to influence the review of legislation and lobby for effective and meaningful funding incentives for landholders to conserve native vegetation where it otherwise has economic potential if cleared.

Work on the mapping of Aboriginal cultural heritage will assist in managing the cultural aspects of the landscape.

## **4.4 WATER FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS**

New areas for rural residential development may need to be selected in catchments where the existing and proposed impacts are not excessive. Lower densities of development might also be trialled to lessen impacts. Continuing research and the application of water conservation measures has value. For example many rural dams are inefficient storages due to evaporation. On small holdings more tank storage of collected run-off could have benefits.

New residential development in drinking water catchments beyond that allowed in the current local environmental plan provisions may need to be limited. Council's ability to control dams and bores is limited and additional state measures may be warranted. Council and the community need to plan for a loss of available water.

There is evidence that some catchments are heavily utilised now. All of the former Palerang LGA is within an upper catchment and there are the implications for downstream users if the LGA responds merely by collecting more of the scarce run-off.

Improved monitoring of ground water seems desirable but this is not a local government function. There might be scope for the state government to increase licensing requirements to include level monitoring, etc. allowing data to be gathered in a structured way to monitor water table and quality. Council might approach the NSW Office of Water to put a case for a more systematic program of monitoring of ground water.

Outwardly, few people interviewed for the Rural Lands Study have raised water as a major issue linked to rural residential development, but it was an issue in some of the submissions on the draft LEP 2012. However, environmental monitoring by Council is identifying worrying trends in catchment flow reductions. The tendency for encouraging the regeneration of native vegetation on many rural living estates has created bushfire issues which then generate further water storage needs for fire suppression. The major impacts of climate change on water availability seem to be mostly beyond the 2036 horizon of this Study, but all indications are that serious consideration of the implications needs to be under way now. For example, while average catchment runoff is predicted to decline by around 10% by 2030, the estimates range from at least 25% to 50% by 2070.

Agriculture and other rural lifestyle options are heavily dependent on this run-off for all aspects of their operation – from stock and domestic water to bushfire protection – and bushfire frequency and intensity are predicted to rise.

The PLEP contains drinking water catchment overlay mapping for the three main drinking water catchments of Googong, Captains Flat and Sydney. It also contains riparian lands and watercourses overlays. These overlays and the related PLEP clauses are considered in association with the assessment of development applications. Further intensive rural small property development in the Googong and Captains Flat catchments should be avoided but some lower density, small lot farm infill may be acceptable. In the large Sydney catchment, development intensification should be well buffered from waterways.

## 4.5 ECONOMICS

There are numerous opportunities in Councils' rural land use planning that can influence economic opportunity and local business development.

Diverse home business opportunities will strengthen the rural economic base and support agriculture by making part-time farming viable. Council has already defined a wide range of permissible land uses in the PLEP. Most suitable businesses are either exempt from requiring a development application or able to be considered subject to one being submitted to Council.

There is in the order of five years supply of all types of rural residential development opportunity in the former Palerang LGA currently and it is time for Council to

incrementally progress planning proposals to zone further land over the coming five years. Small lot farming warrants priority and there is a need to resolve the lot size option for the broadacre areas to limit the fragmentation of commercial farming land stock.

## 4.6 AGEING OF THE POPULATION AND RURAL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVISION

With over 11% of the population over 65 years, the former Palerang LGA is in line with the national trend of an ageing population but the overall older person percentage is even greater in the former Palerang LGA than the regional average. Even within the former LGA the proportions vary: for example the rural east area has nearly 17% over 65 years while in the west it is 9%.

Current projections are that the already high proportion of over 65s will continue to grow and that has implications and demands for aged care services such as health and transport.

There is evidence in rural areas of frail aged having to sell up and move to more urban style accommodation. As the provision of this type of accommodation is limited in the former Palerang LGA this often means a move by the frail aged away from the former Palerang LGA. There are also increasing numbers of able bodied older people residing in rural areas and many operating agricultural and other businesses, managing larger garden blocks and similar activities. Areas requiring further work are:

- improving community transport
- the provision of community facilities which cater for older people
- the planning of emergency responses to assist older people in extreme weather conditions and the projected increase in extreme events due to climate change
- improving opportunities for accommodation for the frail aged in the former Palerang LGA towns and villages.

## 4.7 THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

There are adverse impacts associated with proximity to a large urban centre such as Canberra. One relates to the potential for sections of the Palerang LGA residents to have limited identity with the area. There are economic and social benefits to growing the sense of a community identity and siting development so it links with and supports towns and villages.

There was a submission for a new urban satellite area before Council that would create a 'Googong' style urban cluster in rural areas of the former Palerang with the focus of services being on Canberra and Queanbeyan. There seems limited value in supporting such options (and the associated servicing implications) compared to supporting an expanded Bungendore and perhaps more commuter villages or smaller scale hamlets

where there can be an identity and links to existing Council services and the general LGA economy.

Urban expansion needs to also be directed to lands either already fragmented with respect to agricultural production or of lesser agricultural quality.

A priority needs to be the monitoring of land use trends across the ACT and surrounding NSW councils, and secondly, improving the regional strategy with respect to the mix, extent and preferred location of urban, rural residential and rural uses.

## 4.8 THE PRODUCTION OF LOCAL FOOD

Conventional beef and sheep operations generate 77% of the gross agricultural production value of the former Palerang (Palerang Rural Lands Study Report, 2015, p.151). There is little evidence that there will be any significant change to the commercial dominance of traditional agriculture. However, there are new broader initiatives like organic products and grass fed beef which have some growth potential and may influence future styles of beef and sheep production.

There is also an increasing interest in boutique agricultural activities and the 'provenance' of food (i.e. mapping out to the consumer where food products come from and how they are produced).

The line separating true hobby farming and commercial agriculture is vague.

There are a number of mixed produce operations in the former Palerang LGA that appear to be beyond the hobby scale. They produce a range of products such as beef, chicken, ducks, sheep, eggs, vegetables, fruits, truffles, berries and honey. Production methods tend to focus on organic, biodynamic or permaculture principles.

The success of these producers is partly due to their proximity to Canberra as their produce is usually sold at farmer's markets in Canberra at the Capital Region Farmers Market, the North Side Farmers Market and the South Side Farmers Market as well as at the Braidwood and Bungendore Farmers Markets. There is scope to encourage more local retailers to stock local food products.

Regional Development Australia Southern Inland consider opportunities exist to expand on the scale and diversity of local food production in and adjacent to existing major production locations such as Bungendore, Braidwood and Araluen.

Council already permits (with consent) roadside stalls and cellar door sales across the RU1 Primary Production, R5 Large Lot Residential and E4 Environmental Living land use zones and home industries are also permissible – which allows for 'on farm' produced and value added products to be retailed 'farm door'.

Council also permits business identification signs subject to development consent.

## 5 CATEGORIES OF LAND USES

In developing the Rural Lands Strategy, five categories of rural land use were identified by the Rural Lands Committee (as shown in the sub-sections below) as being appropriate in various rural areas of the former Palerang LGA. It is noted that there is no legal definition for any of these land use categories and that they do not equate to any particular land use zone included in the Standard Instrument. The desirable characteristics provide an illustration of the land use category, but it would not be necessary for all characteristics to exist or to be achieved. These land use categories have been used throughout the Strategy.

### 5.1 RURAL RESIDENTIAL

#### 5.1.1 HAMLET

Possible features and desirable characteristics:

- Clusters of small lots (2,000 m<sup>2</sup> - 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>) in a rural area
- no shops
- the lots are large enough for effluent disposal or there is a shared on-site sewerage system
- shared water supply
- surrounded by rural land
- maybe a community title approach with shared rural land
- lots which would contain structures are not on a visually prominent ridge

#### 5.1.2 RURAL LIVING

Possible features and desirable characteristics:

- estate style development with lot sizes ranging from 2-10 hectares
- lots are directly accessed from a sealed public road
- boutique agriculture (except intensive animal) can be undertaken on lots and the produce sold at local markets
- lots are preferably less than 15 minutes drive from local shops and a public primary school
- local community infrastructure such as a community hall, playground, tennis courts and skate parks are within a short car drive/bike ride or reasonable walking distance
- the land is mostly class 4 or 5 agricultural land

- compatible non-agricultural activities could be undertaken
- there is a sustainable ground water supply which may be used for residential purposes
- tourism land uses that involve low traffic volumes can be undertaken
- the lots are not in a stressed water catchment
- the residential lots are not in an endangered ecological community or an area containing threatened species
- the lots are not in an area of Aboriginal significance
- the lots are not in an extractive industries area (shown on the NSW Department of Primary Industries 117 Direction map)
- lots which would contain structures are not on a visually prominent ridge

### 5.1.3 SMALL LOT AGRICULTURE

Possible features and desirable characteristics:

- scattered or clustered small lot farms mostly under 50 hectares in agricultural areas
- industry and agriculture is an appropriate distance from urban areas where lights, noise and dust from agricultural may cause conflict
- limited local community infrastructure such as a community hall.
- compatible non-agricultural activities could be undertaken depending on the lot size
- the land is class 3 or 4 agricultural land
- there is access to non-potable water
- there are few environmental assets
- land that is class 3 agricultural land should have a minimum lot size equal to or greater than 16 hectares
- agricultural/education/cultural tourism land uses
- small lot farms and boutique agriculture (except intensive animal) can be undertaken on lots and produce sold at the property gate
- lots which would contain structures are not on a visually prominent ridge

### 5.2 RURAL

Possible features and desirable characteristics:

- broadscale agricultural operations usually over 100 hectares

- includes forestry and extractive industries
- lots are more than 40 minutes from local shops and a public primary school
- class 2-4 agricultural land
- land is used for sustainable agriculture, there is:
  - access to water
  - access to transport infrastructure (roads and bridges)
- agricultural education/cultural tourism land uses (that do not conflict with agricultural activities)
- non-agricultural land uses (that do not involve large traffic volumes)
- land uses include hard infrastructure, including telecommunications
- lots which would contain structures are not on a visually prominent ridge

### 5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL LAND

Possible features and desirable characteristics:

- generally, more remote natural areas over 50 hectares with low impact and low density living
- there is a good coverage of native vegetation which may include endangered ecological communities and threatened species
- agriculture is less intensive
- may be a drinking water catchment
- areas of visual prominence/importance, Aboriginal heritage and prominent ridges
- agricultural/education/cultural tourism land uses
- low levels of hard and soft infrastructure
- lots which would contain structures are not on a visually prominent ridge

## 6 PRINCIPLES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Nine principles were developed by the Palerang Rural Lands Study Committee following the exhibition of the Rural Lands Study. The principles form the basis of the Rural Lands Strategy. To implement the principles a series of strategies and actions have been developed and the actions prioritised in accordance with the following:

- A within two years of the Rural Lands Strategy being adopted by Council
- B within five years of the Rural Lands Strategy being adopted by Council
- C within ten years of the Rural Lands Strategy being adopted by Council
- O ongoing

Each year, Council would determine which actions are going to be funded in its Delivery Program, which is a subsidiary document to the Community Strategic Plan.



## 6.1 SUPPORT BROADSCALE AGRICULTURE ON SUITABLE LAND

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
1	<p><b>Support broadscale agriculture on suitable land</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> Commercial broadscale agricultural industries are a vital part of the rural and Queanbeyan-Palerang economy. Part-time commercial agriculture is increasing with the number of full-time farms declining however, an economy of scale is needed to ensure commercial return.</p>	1A	Strategically site urban and rural residential development.	1A1	Unless the land is part of an urban or rural residential strategy, limit the rezoning of rural land or subdivision of properties under 80 ha for urban or rural residential purposes.	O
		1B	Encourage rural land being used for food and fibre whilst implementing principle 6 managing environmental assets.			
		1C	Minimise fragmentation of existing agricultural properties with over 80 ha of class 2 to 4 land, but retain some equity with respect to current subdivision potential under the PLEP	1C1	Review community feedback on options for lot sizes and subdivision provisions in the broadacre areas as presented in the Discussion Paper. Prepare a planning proposal if a change in provisions is determined as required by Council is warranted	A
		1D	Facilitate economic development related to commercial broadscale agriculture.	1D1	Support agricultural economic development opportunities. Support industry applications for grant/research.	O
		1D2	Utilise Council webpage for promoting commercial agricultural opportunities.			

		1E	Commence strategies to prepare commercial agriculture for climate change impacts and where possible mitigate adverse impacts.	1E1	Limit additional rural residential development planning proposals in commercial farming catchments so as to conserve run-off.	B
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## 6.2 PRINCIPLE TWO: SUPPORT BOUTIQUE AGRICULTURE

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
2	<p><b>Support boutique agriculture</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> Local food and fibre initiatives show considerable potential in the former Palerang LGA given the expanding interest in fresh local food in the Canberra region. Activities at the boutique scale range from hobby production associated with rural living through to part-time and even a few emerging full-time small lot farms with value added rural products. Encouraging boutique farming will be beneficial to the general Queanbeyan-Palerang economy, improve the diversity of local food choice and contribute to employment, in particular part-time and supplementary income for rural residents. Boutique farming will also assist in maximising lifestyle options and potential.</p>	2A	Support local markets and other local outlets for the sale of Queanbeyan-Palerang produce.	2A1	Review fees and costs for markets that focus on local produce sales to possibly grant reductions or fee waivers where market organisations invest the savings in training, market development programs or similar economic development benefits.	0
		2B	Ensure there is an adequate supply and diversity of small lot farms to meet emerging needs of boutique producers.	2B1	Ensure there is a proportion of new rural residential opportunities on class 2 to 4 agricultural land – but only where it is subdivided from fragmented areas. Create a larger minimum lot size for some small lot farming areas – say 16 ha.	B
		2C	Improve access to water for small lot agriculture.	2C1	Liaise with NSW Water to determine the opportunities for further small scale irrigation operations or better use of existing water resources.	B
		2D	Improve the skills and training opportunities for both new and	2D1	Facilitate education and training programs in small lot farming,	0

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
			established boutique farmers.	2D2	weed and pest management and emerging rural food and fibre markets.  Continue to co-operate with Southern Harvest to further assist local food and fibre initiatives.	
		2E	Facilitate improved access for Queanbeyan-Palerang producers to the Canberra markets and other sales outlets.	2E1	Liaise with ACT Government for increased opportunities for marketing.	B
				2E2	Assist local groups develop shared transport and stall management.	
		2F	Promote boutique farming	2F1	Integrate local food and fibre production information into Council community and tourist information websites.	A
				2F2	Promote Queanbeyan-Palerang as a place where small scale agriculture is encouraged	A
				2F3	Develop a self-help DA kit specifically aimed at clarifying planning guidelines on exempt and low scale development and the works most commonly sought by small agricultural producers.	B

### 6.3 PRINCIPLE THREE: SUPPORT MULTIPLE COMPLEMENTARY LAND USES

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority	
3	<p><b>Support multiple complementary land uses</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> There is a diversity of uses for rural land in the former Palerang LGA and many can be complementary. Conservation of biodiversity can complement rural commercial production or rural residential development if well planned. This combination supports tourism through the conservation of scenic landscapes and the retention of opportunities for rural recreation. A good cover of native vegetation can conserve soils and maintain or improve the health of the catchment. There is a growing demand for 'on property' businesses to supplement income from conventional agriculture. Some of these businesses do not relate directly to agriculture e.g. information technology based businesses or small scale home industries.</p>	3A	Allow a wide range of businesses in the rural areas where they can complement commercial rural production and rural lifestyles.	3A1	Review the range of permissible uses to be accommodating of all suitable activities.	A	
					3A2	Review the DCP to ensure primary rural activities and living enjoyment are protected.	B
		3B	Investigate incentives for encouraging appropriate 'on property' businesses. (See strategy 5A).				

## 6.4 PRINCIPLE FOUR: PROVIDE A RANGE OF OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE IN A RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
4	<p><b>Provide a range of options for people to live in a rural environment</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> Interests in rural residential options range from a desire for a dwelling with a small area to have a pony and a large household vegetable garden to a property which can provide part-time agricultural opportunities to substantial properties which are operated on a full-time basis. Five major categories of rural land use types have been identified in the Strategy (refer to Section 5 for detail).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural residential               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hamlet</li> <li>○ Rural living</li> <li>○ Small lot agriculture</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Rural</li> <li>• Environmental land</li> </ul>	4A	Give emphasis to new rural land use opportunities that foster a sense of local focus and identity with Queanbeyan-Palerang..	4A1	Give priority to new areas where former Palerang towns are in proximity and existing hard and soft infrastructure can be economically extended. See also Principle 9.	A
		4B	Ensure an adequate supply of all five categories of rural land use commensurate with the need to conserve agricultural and biodiversity lands.	4B1	Develop criteria and undertake an analysis (predominantly using GIS) of land that could meet the land use category features.	B
				4B2	Include the recommended areas in the Discussion Paper in the analysis.	B
				4B3	Produce a report on supply options for the five categories.	A
				4B4	Review community feedback on the range of options for lot sizes in the broadacre areas as presented in the Discussion Paper. Then resolve to prepare a Planning Proposal if a change is warranted	B
4B5	Establish a land monitor. It	B				

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
					would be preferable to seek the cooperation of all NSW councils surrounding Canberra to participate in a common supply monitor given the interrelationships of supply across these councils.	
		4C	Ensure new rural land use opportunities are not economic burdens for government	4C1	Limit siting of additional living opportunities where infrastructure cannot be upgraded to required standards at the developer's cost.	A
				4C2	Develop indicators in association with the state of environment report to monitor the impacts. Undertake a five-year review of rural residential and use.	B
				4C3	Review existing development contributions plans. (See strategy 8A).	B
				4C4	Negotiate planning agreements as part of rezoning land where infrastructure needs upgrading at the developer's expense.	B

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
		4D	Ensure appropriate zoning is used.	4D1	The current state review of use of environmental zones will continue to be monitored.	B
				4D2	A range of zones and lot sizes may be applied to address the five identified living categories. This will be managed as part of planning proposals for rezoning	B
		4E	Simplify administration and public identification of Existing Holdings and related dwelling permissibility in the general rural areas.	4E1	Undertake a Holdings analysis and dwelling eligibility analysis and mark on a map. Consider whether a new 'holding' date should replace all of the existing holding dates.	B
		4F	Protect broadacre commercial agriculture	4F1	Minimise further zoning for additional rural residential development in areas where property sizes are over 80 ha. Guide this type of development to fragmented areas.	B
		4G	Protect extractive resources from rural residential encroachment.	4G1	Using the 117 Directions map make an extractive industries buffer map for inclusion in the DCP.	A

## 6.5 PRINCIPLE FIVE: SUPPORT LIFESTYLE LIVING AND WORKING

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
5	<p><b>Support lifestyle living and working (even if the urban areas such as Bungendore increase in size).</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> The majority of people in non-urban areas in the western part of the former Palerang LGA choose to live in a rural environment and commute to their employment rather than live and work in the same urban environment. This trend extends to areas beyond Captains Flat and surrounding Braidwood and the village of Majors Creek. However, the model of commuter driven work is likely to change. Increasingly, home-based work may be possible for people in rural areas as the speed of the internet increases. Additionally, there is growth in the range of home and small scale businesses able to be conducted from rural properties and part-time commercial agriculture is becoming the norm.</p>	5A	Council may make positive policy statements to support diversity of rural living and working.	5A1	Produce a paper of supported businesses and opportunities and promote on council web page.	A
		5B	Strategies such as 2A, 3A and 4B, above will help facilitate lifestyle living and working.			
		5C	Specific requirements or attributes for the defined categories of rural living opportunity are detailed in Section 4.			
		5D	Improve communications.	5D1	Liaise with government and telecommunication organisations for efficient telecommunications infrastructure.	A
		5E	Improve public transport options.	5E1	Facilitate commuter transport which can accommodate those living in rural areas.	B
		5F	Improve private commuting opportunities	5F1	Continual upgrade of the road network.	O
				5G	Support increased opportunities for people to work in Braidwood or Bungendore at business centres	5G1



## 6.6 PRINCIPLE SIX: MANAGE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
6	<p><b>Manage environmental assets</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> The rural areas of the former Palerang LGA contain extensive areas of medium to high biodiversity, water courses and quality soils. Even many lands that appear as cleared grazing lands can contain important native grasses. Good management and minimal disturbance of these areas prevents the loss of soil, growth of weeds and water pollution each of which has an impact on agricultural productivity, biodiversity and drinking water quality. Natural assets form the foundation of the landscape and tourist assets of the local government area.</p> <p>There are a growing number of people seeking lifestyles that are closely in contact with natural systems. This can necessitate management in its own right to avoid adverse impacts on the natural system but can also be sensitively managed to both improve biodiversity and enhance environmental living.</p>	6A	Maintain and continue to improve a comprehensive biodiversity overlay in the Palerang LEP and supporting provisions in the DCP	6A1	Process an amendment to the LEP to update the Terrestrial Biodiversity Map to reflect the revised GIS layer	A
				6A2	Assessment of areas of modified grassland around Bungendore and other target rural residential sites.	B
				6A3	Implement actions in vegetation layer report *	A
				6A4	Expand corridor planning to incorporate needs of species affected by climate change	B
		6B	Facilitate biodiversity improvement through the development application and rezoning processes.	6B1	Continue facilitation of discussions between the Office of Environment and Heritage and developers of rural lands to participate in biodiversity offset and mitigation programs.	O
				6B2	Review requests received from residents for recognition of environmental values within their properties	B

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
		6C	Maximise economic incentives for protection of high biodiversity areas	6C1	Continue to make representations to state and federal governments for improved funding to support rural land owners in biodiversity conservation. These measures may include direct funds and measures such as tax concessions for permanent protection of rural lands of high biodiversity.	A
		6D	Maximise planning incentives for protection of high value biodiversity.	6D1	Include proposed biodiversity corridors and developer incentives to improve such corridors in Council's policies	A
				6D2	Consider requiring planning agreements with biodiversity protection measures as part of rezoning planning proposals	A and O
		6E	Reduce the impact of weeds and pests.	6E1	Continue a firm program of property weed inspections.	O
				6E2	Support Local Land Service pest control programs.	
				6E3	Continue to lobby for improved funding for weed and pest controls on public lands.	

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
		6F	Improve community awareness and education on environmental assets.	6F1	Produce pamphlets and guides to assist landowners in understanding and implementing environmental responsibilities.	B
				6F2	Assist private groups develop training programs.	
		6G	Land use planning for climate change impacts.	6G1	Land use planning controls include bigger buffers from areas of higher flood or fire risk.	B
				6G2	Greater emphasis may have to be placed on secure water supply on rural lots. But these should be developed in the medium term with support and research from state and federal governments to ensure a coordinated approach.	
				6G3	Plan for improved species retreat corridors in new subdivisions. Encourage state and federal funding to allow farmers to be compensated for improving such corridors.	B
		6H	Improve landscape conservation in the development approvals process.	6H1	Develop a visual amenity map for the PLEP in consultation with the community that identifies the higher quality elements of the Palerang landscape.	A

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
				6H2	Develop further DCP level controls to protect high value landscapes when Council is considering new development.	B
		6I	Increase protection of water resources	6I1	Further intensive rural small property development in the Googong Dam and Captains Flat catchments should be avoided but some lower density, small lot farm infill may be acceptable. In the large Sydney Drinking Water catchment, development intensification should be well buffered from waterways.	B
				6I2	Base groundwater resource data and ongoing monitoring needs to be developed, but it is noted that this is not a local government function. Council might approach the NSW Office of Water to put a case for a more systematic program of monitoring of ground water.	
				6I3	Future rural residential areas should be selected in catchments unconstrained by the existence of numerous dams.	

\* Native Vegetation of the Palerang Local Government Area, November 2015.

## 6.7 PRINCIPLE SEVEN: SUPPORT NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES THAT COMPLEMENT RURAL INDUSTRIES

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
7	<p><b>Support non-agricultural industries that complement rural industries and settings</b></p> <p><i>Background to the principle</i> Businesses that are located in rural areas that do not have a direct link to conventional agriculture are becoming a significant future land use. Even with large commercial agricultural operations, there is an increasing need for 'off farm' income. The Queanbeyan-Palerang LGA is ideally located to take advantage of information technology, government and service provision business opportunities.</p> <p>Improvements to internet speed in rural areas offers opportunities for home businesses that are not directly connected to the agricultural property.</p> <p>Provided that there is adequate planning, assessment and mitigation of adverse impacts many non-agricultural businesses can operate profitably and without a loss of amenity in rural areas.</p>	7A	Allow a wide range of businesses in the rural zones where they can complement commercial rural production and rural lifestyles. (See Strategy 3A).	7A1	Council to review its permissible uses in the rural zones to facilitate a wider range of non-agricultural business opportunity. But in association with possible wider permissibility, review DCP and other guidelines to ensure rural living amenity, environmental values and service standards are maintained.	A
		7B	Promote that Council is supportive of specified types of business activity in the rural areas and of the linkages for such business to achieving diverse and flexible living opportunities for rural residents.(See Strategy 5A).	7B1	Develop a rural economic development strategy, conduct workshops for intending residents, publicise information on Council webpage, etc.	B
		7C	Facilitate the expansion of rural tourism.	7C1	Ensure the LEP provisions permit a wide range of tourism options in the rural areas.	A
				7C2	In Council's economic development promotion for rural areas, give emphasis to promoting rural tourism initiatives associated with markets, local food, rural heritage and short stay boutique accommodation.	

## 6.8 PRINCIPLE EIGHT: EFFICIENT USE OF HARD AND SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
8	<b>Efficient use of hard and soft infrastructure</b>  <i>Background to the principle</i> Unplanned expansion of rural residential opportunities and associated land uses can have significant implications for existing rural communities in needing to fund the expansion of hard and soft infrastructure, especially roads and community facilities. As a general principle, new rural residential development should cover its own cost of infrastructure.	8A	Avoid increasing rural development opportunities where road standards are inadequate for the scale of traffic increase and where the new development cannot fund the full costs of the needed road upgrade.	8A1	Review existing development contributions plans.	A
				8A2	Negotiate planning agreements for planning proposals to ensure essential infrastructure for the category of use is at developer's cost for new zonings.	O
		8B	Ensure new rural residential is sited to maximise access to existing soft infrastructure.	8B1	As part of the investigations for additional areas for rural residential give weight in the selection criteria to lands well serviced with hard and soft infrastructure.	A
		8C	Limit supply of additional rural and environmental land uses in areas where the increase may generate demands for infrastructure improvements beyond what the development can fund.	8C1	Use development cost requirements to constrain additional rural residential development in poorly serviced areas.	O
				8C2	Possibly review lot sizes and lot 'averaging' subdivision provisions.	A
				8C3	Possible development trade-offs. For example, a planning proposal may be supported that would allow cluster development in a well serviced part of a property and the other parts of the property would protect natural resources.	B

## 6.9 PRINCIPLE NINE: FOSTER A SENSE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY

Principle No.	Principle	Strategy No.	Strategy	Action No.	Action	Action Priority
9	<b>Foster a sense of local community</b>  <i>Background to the principle</i> The geography and history of the former Palerang LGA has seen some new rural residential development expand with a limited community connection to the LGA and a greater link with Queanbeyan and Canberra. Greater emphasis should be given to ensuring new rural living opportunities relate to existing LGA employment, communities and facilities.	9A	Seek to create new rural living and small lot agriculture areas in proximity to existing Queanbeyan-Palerang towns and villages.	9A1	Give additional weight in the assessment of new areas to land where there is close proximity (15 minutes' drive) to a Queanbeyan-Palerang town or village.  Apply the supply principles defined in Section 5.7 of the Discussion Paper.	B
		9B	Improve opportunities for home based businesses so that more residents can earn income from their rural properties and lessen the need for full-time commuting to Canberra and other external employment.	9B1	Implement Principle 7 with additional emphasis on local farm based business that links with Queanbeyan-Palerang communities.	0
				9B2	Continue to press for improved communications and flexibility in the employment options (particularly for public service workers in Federal and Canberra Government) to increase "working from home" options.	0

## 7 REZONING REQUESTS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALERANG LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2014 PROCESS

Council has received a number of requests for the rezoning of rural land and dwelling eligibility as part of the exhibitions of the Draft LEP and in some subsequent submissions. Council has deferred a decision on these individual requests pending a coordinated review once the Rural Lands Strategy has been finalised. Each request will be assessed against the principles and actions in the final Rural Land Use Strategy..

It is important any review of land zoning be effected in a strategic way. Incremental rezoning without a strategic overview can lead to poor, ad hoc land use outcomes, inequitable treatment of some landowners over others and generally 'clog up' the strategic planning process with cases that may not have high or indeed any strategic merit for the LGA.

In assessing the individual requests, the following criteria should be applied:

- Is the land an anomaly with regard to the current land use or are there other factors that warrant one-off support?
- If the proposal is not an anomaly or justified on special grounds as an ad hoc rezoning, the proposal must fit a broader pattern of logical extension of development. For example, fit a logical extension of an existing small properties zone or form part of a potential new zone
- If it is possible to support the proposal, what ranking and timeline should be set for the particular proposal? Is there sufficient data from the applicant or should more be supplied to finalise a decision?
- Will the development of the land be self-funding with regard to adequate road access, power and bushfire protection measures
- Does the proposal add benefit to the Queanbeyan-Palerang LGA i.e. not just a commuter satellite for Canberra?