



PLANNING PROPOSAL

East Cowra Growth Area Minimum Lot Size Changes

PPA - COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL

DOCUMENT CONTROL

PROJECT REPORT DETAILS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In preparing this Planning Proposal, Cowra Shire Council acknowledge the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people, and pays respect to elders both past, present and emerging.



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Executive Summary

This Planning Proposal has been initiated by Cowra Shire Council and aims to amend the existing provisions of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by removing servicing restrictions that apply to subdivision in the East Cowra Growth Area.

The East Cowra Growth Area is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential and is defined generally by Elouera Road to the north, Camp Lane to the east, Darbys Falls Road to south and Mid Western Highway to the West. Maps of the East Cowra Growth Area are included in the relevant sections of this Planning Proposal.

The East Cowra Growth Area is an established residential location within the Cowra Township. The area is recognised by the Council's strategic planning framework as an area where residential growth is planned to occur over the short, medium and longer term. The growth is to be accommodated through new residential housing constructions on existing lots and through the further subdivision of existing property holdings to create new dwelling opportunities.

The East Cowra Growth Area has been zoned to allow residential development and subdivision since at least the commencement of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 1990, which applied the 1(c1) Rural Residential zone to the land and allowed for the subdivision of land into minimum 2 ha. With the commencement of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012, the following changes to the planning framework were introduced for the East Cowra Growth Area:

- Rezoning of the land from 1(c1) Rural Residential to R5 Large Lot Residential zone. This was an exercise to translate the zoning framework consistent with the requirements of the Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (LEP Template) and consistent with guidance provided to Council by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.
- Retaining a minimum lot size of 2 hectares for new subdivision lots (or 5 hectares for land mapped in a vulnerable groundwater location), but adding a clause framework to the Local Environmental Plan requiring reticulated water to be connected for lots at this size.
- Changing the minimum lot size from 2ha to 10ha where reticulated water supply cannot be connected to the lots.

In March 2025, the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 was adopted by Cowra Council. The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 was funded by the NSW Government through the Regional Strategic Planning Fund in association with Cowra Council, and received the formal endorsement of NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on **August 2025**. One of the key objectives of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 was to review planning controls related to zoning, minimum lot size and permissible land-uses in residential zones and identify where changes may be necessary in order to ensure the sustainable use of land. One such change recommended by the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 is to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 to allow

subdivision in the R5 Large Lot Residential (East Cowra) into minimum 2 ha lots by removing the restriction in Clause 4.1(3A) relating to the need for reticulated water supply.

The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 detailed the progress that has been made by Cowra Council over the last 10 + years on the East Cowra Water Augmentation Project including:

- Augmentation of a new trunk water supply main along Evans Street / Farm Road to Elouera Road, and
- Augmentation of consumer water supply mains to parts of the East Cowra Growth Area north of the Mid Western Highway.

The continuation of the consumer reticulated water supply network further south to service the remaining areas of the East Cowra Growth Area is subject to further planning, engineering design and funding allocation. The full delivery of the project is unlikely to be realised in the shorter term.

If planning provisions in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 remain unchanged, the challenges of delivering a reticulated water supply to the R5 Large Lot Residential zone in East Cowra will inhibit subdivision potential and dwelling growth within this important housing location of Cowra Township. There are a number of strategic benefits of allowing growth to occur without (initial) connection to a water supply scheme including:

- Accelerated housing supply. The Cowra Housing Strategy has identified strong demand for large lot housing. Unlocking the development potential of the East Cowra Growth Area by refining minimum lot size controls will help Council meet housing targets and fill housing supply gaps in our local area.
- Flexibility in Infrastructure Planning. Staging the planning, financing and delivery of the East Cowra Water Augmentation Project over time allows Council to align the project with actual housing growth rather than speculative demand despite best efforts in the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 to forecast growth in this important location.
- Interim self-sufficiency. All new dwelling development will be accompanied by site-specific geotechnical analysis, which will include groundwater management, and utilise rainwater tanks, greywater recycling (and bore water systems where already available) until a reticulated water supply is made available. This promotes water conservation and resilience and sustainable water practices generally.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025, Cowra Council is now committing to a Planning Proposal that seeks to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as follows:

- Amending Lot Size Map Sheets LSZ_002F, LSZ_002G and LSZ_002H by removing “Area A” and “Area D” (to which the East Cowra Growth Area relates) and changing the nominated minimum lot size from “AB - 10ha” to “ZI - 2ha”.

- Removing Clause 4.1 (3A). By removing this clause, land in the East Cowra Growth Area can be subdivided down to minimum 2 hectare lots.

There will be no changes to:

- The primary land-use for East Cowra, which will remain for large lot residential purposes.
- The permissibility of residential development types in the zone.
- The permissibility of a dwelling in the zone, which is currently allowed on a lot of any size, regardless of whether water is or will be connected to the land.

This Planning Proposal is prepared in a form that is consistent with the recommendations of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment's Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines. It provides the necessary reporting basis for Cowra Shire Council to progress an amendment to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

A summary of the primary assessment findings is included as follows:

- The Planning Proposal is prepared as a result of Action 2.2 of the adopted Cowra Housing Strategy 2025.
- The proposal is consistent with the Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041.
- The proposal is consistent with any provisions of an applicable State Environmental Planning Policy.
- The proposal is consistent with the Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- The proposal is consistent with the requirements of other relevant strategies and planning documents of the Council including the Cowra Shire Land use Strategy 2009.
- The proposal is consistent with relevant Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.
- The likely environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposals are acceptable, and positive in the majority.
- The Planning Proposal is not determined to be of significance to State and Federal governments.
- The Planning Proposal is supported by a suite of maps that demonstrate the proposed scope of changes to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.



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PROJECT INTRODUCTION

I.1 Project Overview

This Planning Proposal has been initiated by Cowra Shire Council and aims to amend the existing provisions of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 by removing servicing restrictions that affect minimum lot size provisions for land in East Cowra that is currently zoned R5 Large Lot Residential.

The East Cowra Growth Area is an established residential location within the Cowra Township. The area is recognised by the planning framework in Cowra Township as an area where residential growth is planned to occur over the short, medium and longer term. The growth is to be accommodated through new residential housing constructions on existing lots and through the further subdivision of existing property holdings to create new dwelling opportunities.

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as follows:

- Amending Map Sheets LSZ_002F, LSZ_002G and LSZ_002G by changing the minimum lot size applying to the East Cowra Growth Area from “AB - 10ha” to “Z1 - 2ha”.
- Amending the provisions contained in Clause 4.1(3A) by removing the requirement for reticulated water supply to be connected to new subdivision lots within “Area A” (to which the East Cowra Growth Area relates).
- Amending the provisions contained in Clause 4.1(3A) by removing the requirements for reticulated water supply to be connected to new subdivision lots within “Area D” (to which the East Cowra Growth Area relates).

The preparation of this Planning Proposal is a key recommendation of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 which was adopted by Cowra Council in March 2025 and formally endorsed by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure in August 2025. Specifically, Action 2.2 of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 is as follows:

Amend Cowra LEP 2012 to allow subdivision in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone (East Cowra) into minimum 2 hectare lots. Remove the restriction relating to the need for reticulated water supply in Clause 4.1(3A).

The Planning Proposal has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Planning and Environment’s Local Environmental Plan Guideline dated August 2023.

I.2 Project Background

I.2.1 Planning Framework – East Cowra Growth Area

The East Cowra Growth Area has been zoned to allow residential development and subdivision since at least the commencement of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 1990, which applied the 1(c1) Rural Residential zone to the land and allowed for the subdivision of land into minimum 2 hectare lots. With the commencement of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012, the following changes to the planning framework were introduced for the East Cowra Growth Area:

- Rezoning of the land from 1(c1) Rural Residential to R5 Large Lot Residential zone. This was an exercise to translate the zoning framework consistent with the requirements of the Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (LEP Template) and consistent with guidance provided to Council by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.
- Retaining a minimum lot size of 2 hectares for new subdivision lots (or 5 hectares for land mapped in a vulnerable groundwater location), but adding a clause framework to the Local Environmental Plan requiring reticulated water to be connected for lots at this size.
- Changing the minimum lot size from 2ha to 10ha where reticulated water supply cannot be connected to the lots.

The planning justification to require provision of reticulated water to minimum 2 hectare lots was related to the preparation of a series of mapping by the (then) NSW Department of Water and Energy, Environment and Climate Change and the NSW Department of Primary Industries which included an Environmentally Sensitive Areas – Water Overlay Map. The map identified areas of the Cowra Shire where groundwater resources were identified to be either moderately or highly vulnerable. The map also identified areas where sensitive waterways are located which generally included the major freshwater habitats and connected riparian areas. This mapping was translated into the 'Map Sheet Series – Wetlands, Groundwater Vulnerability, Riparian Lands and Watercourses Map' in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

It was generally the view of those Government Agencies (referred to above) that:

- The Environmentally Sensitive Area Overlay was to be used by Council as a land-use decision making tool. The mapped data was high-level, broad and strategic based data designed to give general direction to land-use planning decisions that were to be implemented through the preparation of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.
- In relation to the vulnerable groundwater mapping, the likely impacts of residential settlement occurring within mapped locations (including the East Cowra Growth Area) can be mitigated by planning strategies that minimise settlement density. In areas where reticulated water supply is not available, larger lot forms were considered to provide a more sustainable approach to water resource management - allowing greater opportunities for harvesting of surface water for domestic water supply consumption.

Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 was subsequently adopted with the following minimum lot size controls for the East Cowra Growth Area.

- Minimum lot size of 10 hectares for subdivision lots to be created without connection to a reticulated water supply.
- Minimum lot size of 5 hectares for subdivision lots to be created with connection to a reticulated water supply, but where the land is impacted by vulnerable groundwater.
- Minimum lot size of 2 hectares for subdivision lots to be created with connection to a reticulated water supply, and where the land is not impacted by vulnerable groundwater.

1.2.2 Unlocking existing housing potential

Council plays a key leadership role in determining how and where housing supply will be delivered across the Cowra Shire to meet identified community needs and priorities.

A key finding of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 is the ongoing importance of large lot lifestyle living, both now and into the future. Forty-eight per cent of Cowra Housing Strategy 2026 community feedback survey respondents identified lifestyle and community values as key reasons why Cowra is an attractive location for housing and population growth.

Low-density living aligns strongly with the rural character and appeal of the Shire. It is also typical of regional areas, where residents often prefer larger properties with greater space for dwellings, outbuildings, and private open space, rather than higher-density, apartment-style development commonly found in metropolitan centres. Community consultation further indicates that many working-age residents—an important demographic Cowra is seeking to attract—prefer large lot housing.

While there may be pressure to release additional land on the urban fringe, this approach can require significant investment in infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and public services. These costs are often substantial, may not be immediately recovered through development contributions or other revenue streams, and can create barriers to timely development.

A more sustainable approach to housing growth is to maximise opportunities within existing zoned land through infill development. This involves utilising vacant or underdeveloped land within established residential areas, rather than expanding into previously undeveloped land.

As the impacts of climate change become more pronounced, it is increasingly important to deliver housing in a sustainable manner. Key drivers for sustainable housing include:

- **Environmental impact:** Energy-efficient design and environmentally responsible materials reduce the overall ecological footprint of development.
- **Economic benefit:** Sustainable housing can deliver long-term savings through reduced energy consumption and lower maintenance costs, while also enhancing property values.
- **Community resilience:** Well-planned housing supports resilient communities by strengthening infrastructure and promoting shared spaces and local connections.
- **Safety and risk reduction:** Locating housing outside high-risk areas reduces the likelihood of damage or loss from natural hazards. Recent flood and bushfire events in Cowra and across NSW reinforce the importance of avoiding hazard-prone land when planning for growth.

Removing servicing restrictions within the East Cowra Growth Area is intended to increase the utilisation of existing large lot residential land, unlock subdivision potential, and support housing supply in response to market demand.

Current planning controls already permit dwellings within the R5 Large Lot Residential zone on lots of any size without requiring connection to reticulated services. Allowing subdivision to a minimum of 2 hectares without reticulated water connection would not compromise Council's objectives for density or character. Instead, it would increase housing opportunities within existing residential zones without imposing a significant financial burden on ratepayers.

This approach is consistent with the historical planning framework for the East Cowra Growth Area. Previous controls permitted subdivision down to 2 hectares, resulting in the established development pattern and residential densities currently observed across much of the R5 zone, where development capacity has largely been realised.

It is also aligned with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Planning Reforms by facilitating and fast-tracking residential development.

1.2.3 Planning controls supporting appropriate servicing and development outcomes

Council has proactively planned for potential changes to the MLS in the East Cowra Growth Area by updating its Development Control Plan and Contributions Plans in advance of any amendments to the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

In particular, controls relating to water provision for new dwellings in the R5 zone have been revised in line with the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025. These include requirements for larger rainwater tanks and minimum storage capacities linked to roof catchment areas.

Enhanced rainwater harvesting standards will reduce reliance on groundwater and surface water sources, while avoiding common groundwater issues such as salinity, hardness, and contamination. These measures also align with NSW planning principles promoting water-sensitive urban design, providing a cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient approach to water supply in rural residential areas.

In addition, the recently adopted Cowra Council 2026 Contributions Plans have been structured to encourage development and remove barriers to subdivision. This includes the removal of residential areas from Section 7.11 contribution requirements, helping to improve development feasibility and support housing delivery.

1.2.4 East Cowra Water Augmentation Project

The East Cowra Water Augmentation Project is a strategic infrastructure project that aims to deliver a reticulated water supply to service existing and future residential developments occurring in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone applying to the East Cowra Growth Area.

At present, the key issues posing primary constraints to the further augmentation of a water supply scheme to the remaining parts of the East Cowra Growth Area are cost-benefit. The augmentation of a reticulated water supply to service the remaining parts of the East Cowra

Growth Area is an expensive infrastructure project, with cost estimates indicating a capital investment value well in excess of \$6.6M. Funding of the project is significantly dependent on State Government subsidy.

The financial implications for existing landowners and developers (of new subdivisions) is also an important cost implication for Council and the local community and requires further investigation.

The provision of a water supply scheme to service the East Cowra Growth will remain to be strategic infrastructure project for Cowra Council. Notwithstanding, the time-frame for delivery of the project is likely to mean that the objectives and intended outcomes of this Planning Proposal will not be achieved in the short to medium term. A change to existing minimum lot size provisions is proposed in order to ensure that growth and development within the East Cowra Growth Area is not compromised by long-term infrastructure provisioning.

1.3 Structure and Form

The Planning Proposal has been prepared in accordance with the NSW Planning and Environment's Local Environmental Plan Guideline dated August 2023, hereafter referred to as the Guideline.

Section 2 of the Guideline includes detailed guidance on what content needs to be included in a Planning Proposal. Table 1 includes a checklist of all of the information required by the Guideline and a reference on where the information can be found within this Planning Proposal.

The Guideline requires that the Planning Proposal must be prepared to a high standard and complying generally with the requirements detailed below.

Section 1 - Project Introduction

Section 1 includes introductory information relating to the project including a project overview and relevant background information.

Section 2 - The Existing Environment

Section 2 includes a detailed description of the project including location and title, land-use descriptions, and an assessment of the existing environmental conditions applying to the land.

Section 3 - Existing Planning Framework

Section 3 includes a description of the existing planning framework applying to the subject land including provisions under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Section 4 - Description of the Proposal

Section 4 includes a detailed description of the proposed changes to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Section 5 - Strategic Alignment

Section 5 includes detailed information describing how the proposed development aligns with the strategic planning framework applying to the subject land.

Section 6 - Planning Proposal Part 1

Section 6 addresses the Part 1 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.

Section 7 - Planning Proposal Part 2

Section 7 addresses the Part 2 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.

Section 8 - Planning Proposal Part 3

Section 8 addresses the Part 3 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.

Section 9 - Planning Proposal Part 4

Section 9 addresses the Part 4 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.

Section 10 - Planning Proposal Part 5

Section 10 addresses the Part 5 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.

Section 11 - Planning Proposal Part 6

Section 10 addresses the Part 6 matters for consideration under the NSW DPHI Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines.



02

THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT



2.1 Baseline Environmental Analysis

A base line environmental analysis is required to be completed in order to understand the relevant issues affecting land-use within the East Cowra Growth Area.

The analysis has been completed using a combination of desktop and site investigative exercises as necessary. The analysis aims to provide strategic context for the Planning Proposal and focuses on the following key issues:

- **Site Location** - A description of the geographical location of the East Cowra Growth Area and its spatial relationship to the wider Cowra Township and surrounding agricultural areas. Refer Section 2.1.
- **Land-use** - A description of the various land-use activities that are occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area. Refer Section 2.2
- **Surrounding Environment** - A description of the various land-use activities that are occurring on land surrounding the East Cowra Growth Area. Refer Section 2.3
- **Topography, Slope and Land-form** - A description of the key characteristics of the East Cowra Growth area which influence urban land-use in terms of elevation, aspect and drainage. Refer Section 2.4
- **Water Resources** - A description of the key water resource features of the East Cowra Growth Area including permanent surface waters, surface water collection dams, bores, domestic water supply infrastructure and groundwater aquifer systems. Refer Section 2.5
- **Heritage** - A description of the European and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage feature of the landscape relating to the East Cowra Growth Area. Refer Section 2.6
- **Access, Roads and Transport** - A description of the road network that services the East Cowra Growth Area. The active transport network has also been considered. Refer Section 2.7
- **Environmental Hazards** - A description of the various environmental hazards that affect land within the East Cowra Growth Area including flooding and bushfire. Refer Section 2.8.
- **Infrastructure and Services** - A description of the public infrastructure, services and utilities that are provided to land within the East Cowra Growth Area. Water, sewer and stormwater has been considered. Refer Section 2.9.
- **Biodiversity** - A description of the biodiversity features of the East Cowra Growth Area. Riparian, terrestrial and urban vegetation has been considered.

2.2 Site Location

This Planning Proposal applies to land in East Cowra that is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012. This area of land is referred to generally throughout this report as the East Cowra Growth Area.

The East Cowra Growth Area comprises a substantial area of land (approximately 460 hectares) located on the eastern edge of the Cowra urban area. The East Cowra Growth Area extends generally from the northern part of Elouera Road through to the southern part of Jukes Lane. Other key roads include Willowvale Road, Mid Western Highway, Camp Road, Porters Mount Road, Jerula Lane, Darbys Falls Road, Savages Lane and Vernon Drive. A map showing the location and extent of the East Cowra Growth Area is included in Figure 1.

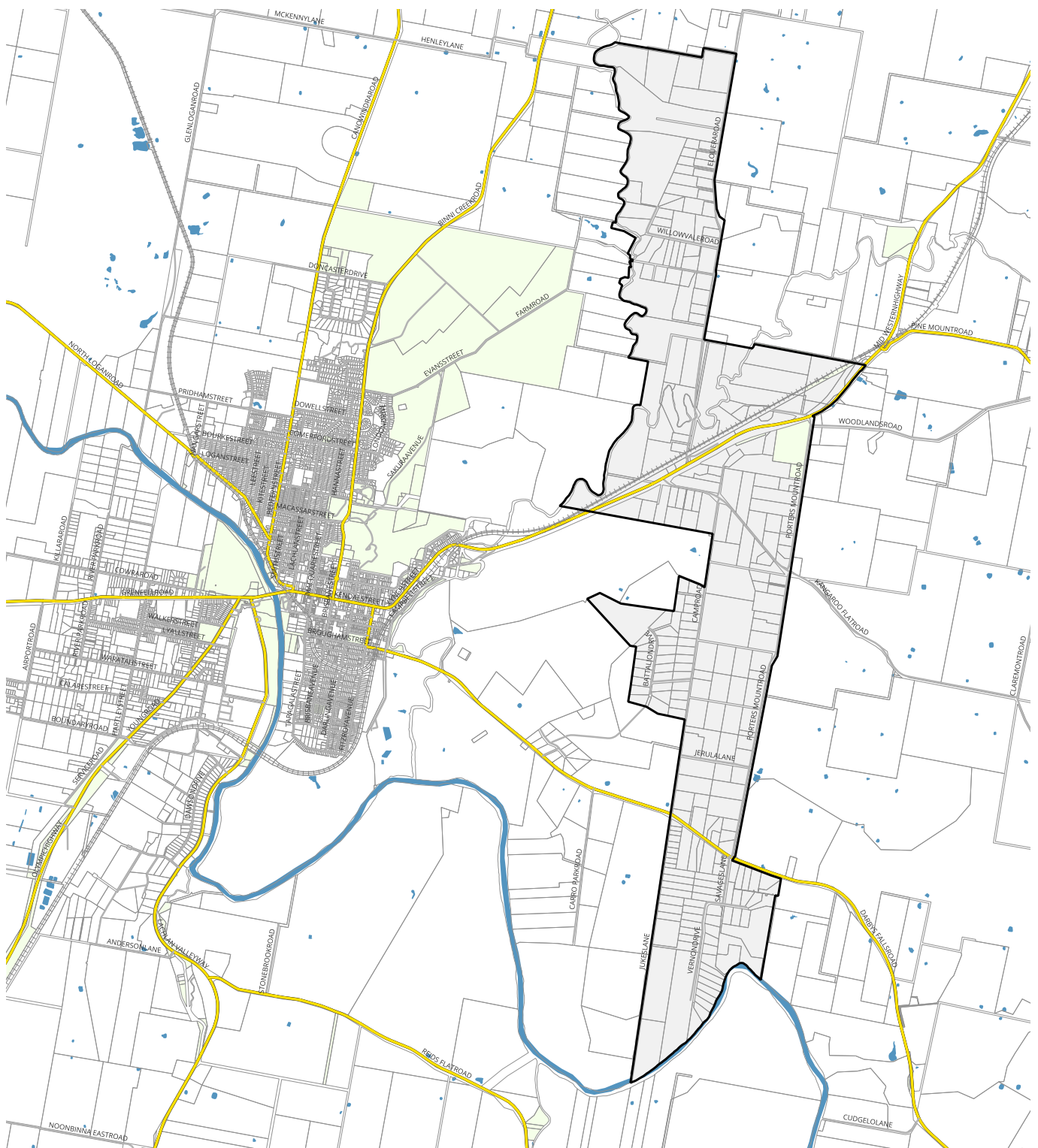


Figure 1 - Site Location Map

2.3 Land-use

The East Cowra Growth Area is an established residential location within the Cowra Township. The area is recognised by the planning framework in Cowra Township as an area where residential growth is planned to occur over the short, medium and longer term.

Figure 2 shows the existing land-use within the East Cowra Growth Area. Further analysis shows:

- According to Figure 2 there are approximately 256 existing lots within the Growth Area that are occupied by an existing residential dwelling. This leaves approximately 43 lots which are identified to be vacant. These statistics also accord with the analysis shown on Map 28 of the Cowra Housing Strategy.
- Dwelling stock consists primarily of single storey dwellings on existing subdivided lots ranging in size from 2 hectares to 10 hectares and above. Medium density housing forms are absent from the East Cowra Growth Area.
- There are a small number of properties which are utilised for a non-residential purpose. These properties are located on the Mid Western Highway and include the Cowra Holiday Park and (former) Caravan City and Fun Museum site.
- The majority of properties within the Growth Area are held under private ownership. Only a single site is held in Crown ownership and this is located on the corner of Porters Mount Road and Mid Western Highway.

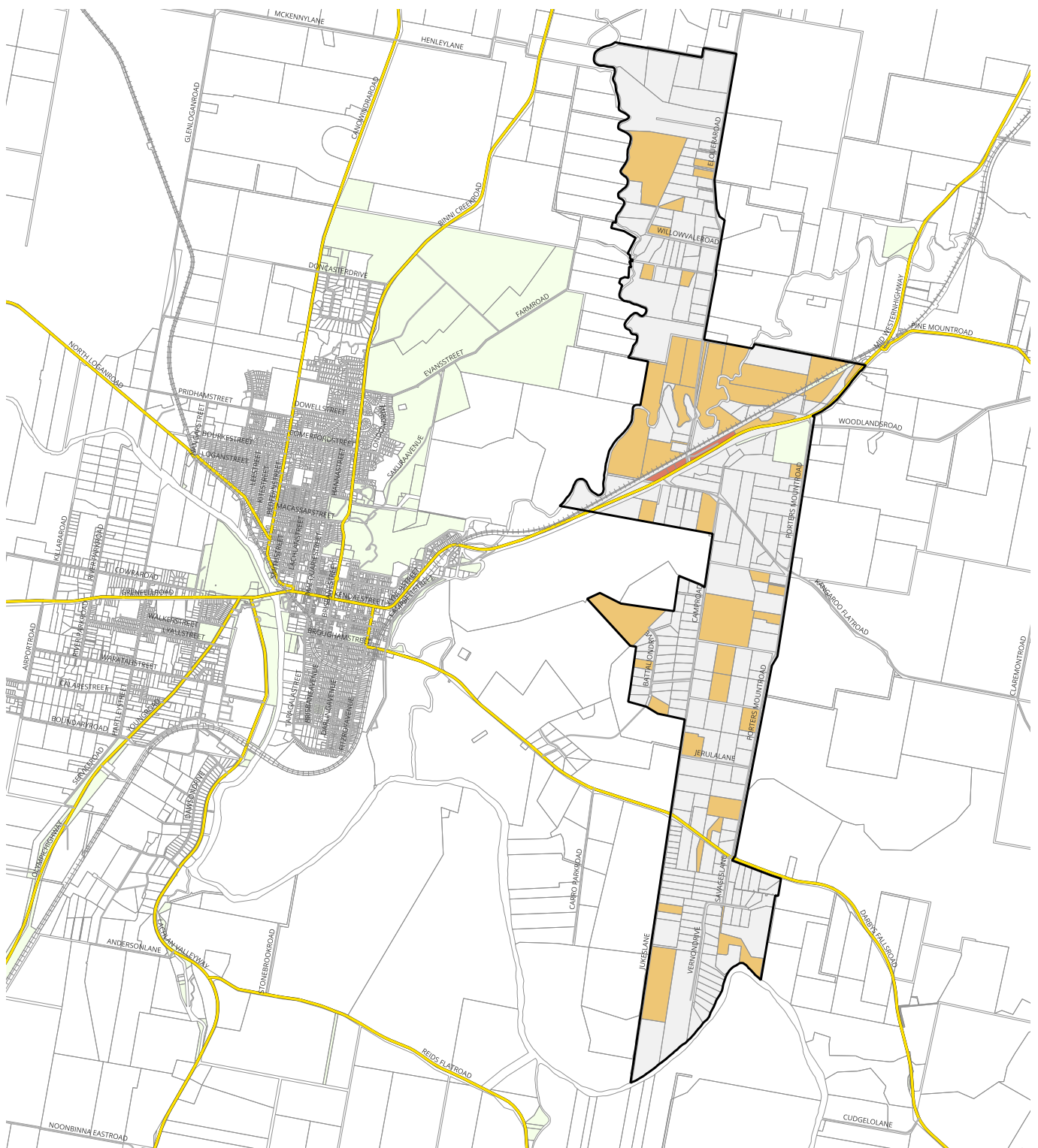


Figure 2 - Land-use Analysis Map

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| East Cowra Growth Area | Property Boundaries |
| Primary Road Network | Crown Land |
| Local Road Network | Non Residential - Occupied |
| Railway Network | Residential - Occupied |
| Hydro Features | Residential - Unoccupied |



0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

2.4 The Surrounding Environment

Figure 3 shows that the East Cowra Growth Area is surrounded by land that is zoned and used primarily for agricultural purposes.

Some of this land has been fragmented by historical subdivision patterns and is therefore being utilised for smaller-scale agricultural activities. Other properties form part of larger farm holdings and are utilised for broad-scale agriculture including a mix of cropping and livestock grazing.

Despite the existing interface between residential and agricultural land-uses, there are no long-standing or significant on-going land-use conflict issues occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area. The zoning framework for the land under Cowra LEP 2012 creates an expectation of residential land-use, and the planning standards and controls in the Cowra DCP 2026 enforce appropriate building line setbacks to the RUI Primary Production zone.

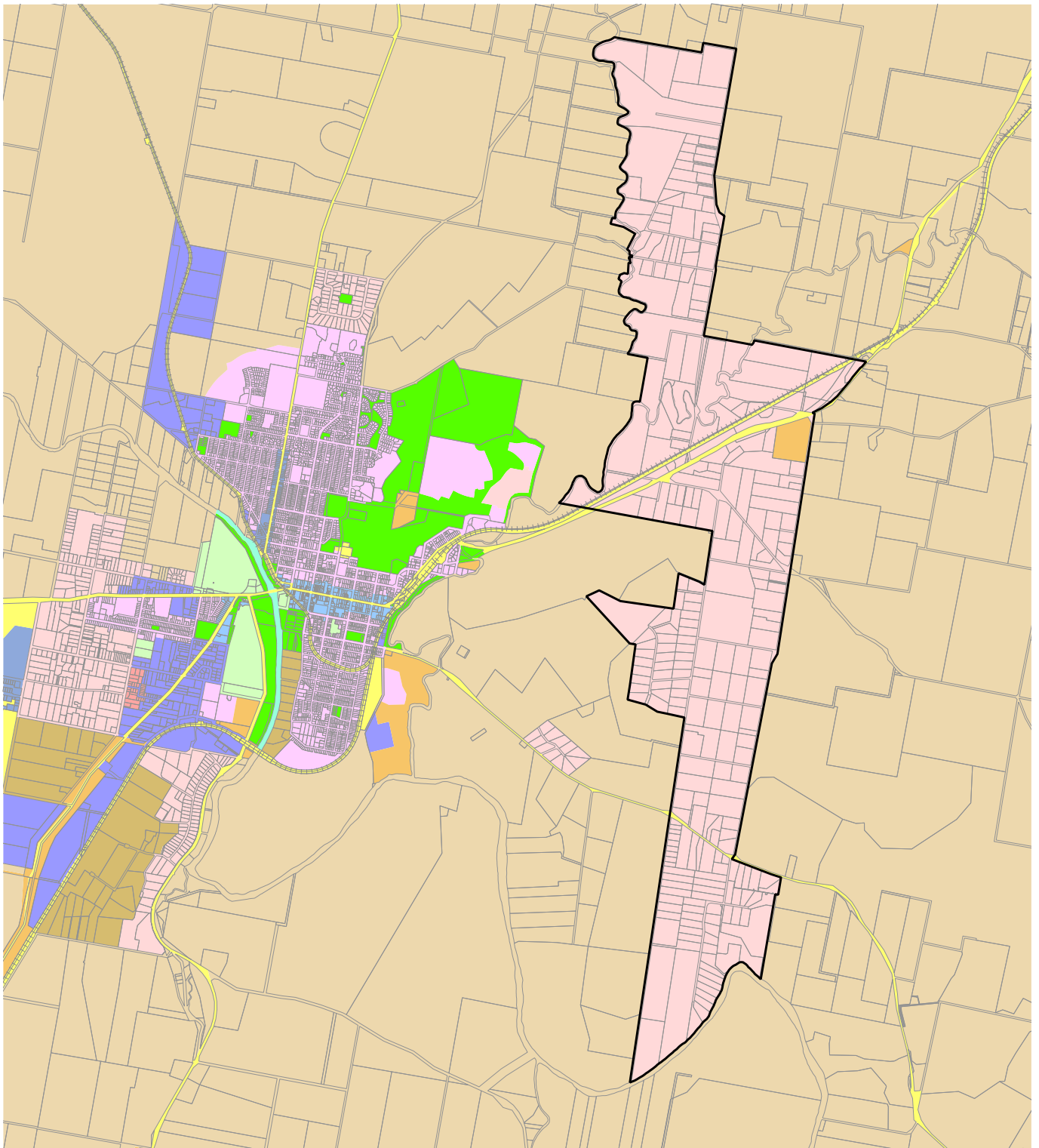
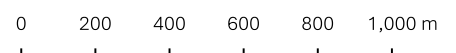


Figure 3 - Surrounding Environment Map



2.5 Topography, Slope and Land-form

Figure 4 shows the key topographical features of the East Cowra Growth Area. Further analysis shows:

- Parts of the East Cowra Growth Area exist at lower elevations, particularly along the Waugoola Creek and the Lachlan River. There are some properties in these lower elevations where land may be unsuitable for residential subdivision or housing development due to constraints posed by flooding.
- Parts of the East Cowra Growth Area exist at higher elevations, particular along Elouera Road, Willowvale Road and parts of Porters Mount Road. These locations afford residential development with sweeping views of the surrounding countryside and back towards the urban area of the Cowra Township.
- Generally, the topography can be described as gentle to undulating. There are no locations where residential development is unsuited due to steep topography, landslip risk or unstable landform. Generally, most properties are capable of accommodating a residential dwelling without requiring significant alterations to existing landform through cut and fill.

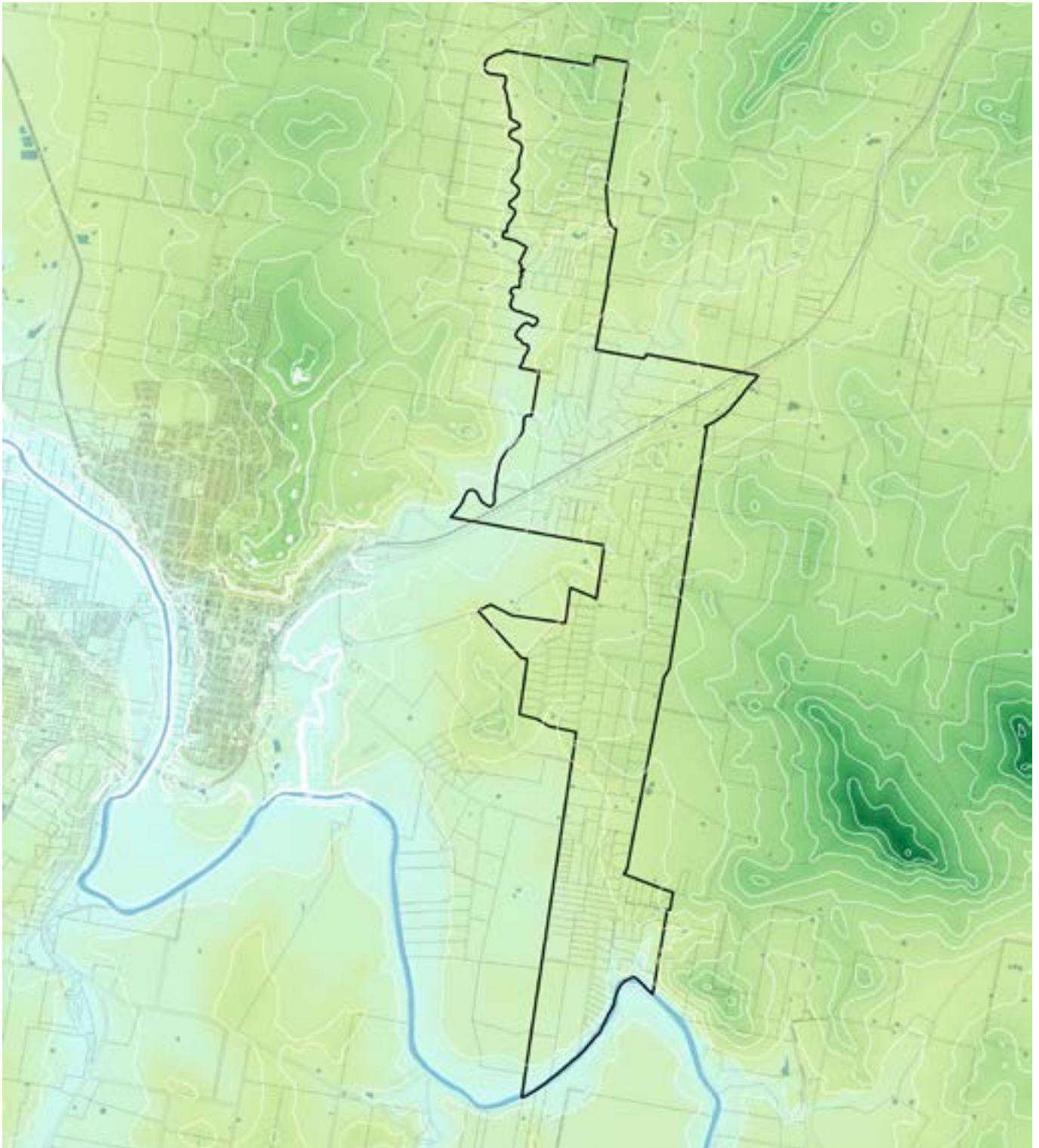


Figure 4 - Topography and Land-form Map

-  East Cowra Growth Area
-  Property Boundaries
-  Primary Road Network
-  Local Road Network
-  Railway Network
-  300 AHD Elevation
280 AHD Elevation



0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

2.6 Water Resources

Figure 5 shows the key water resource features of the East Cowra Growth Area. Further analysis shows:

- The Lachlan River is a key feature of the Cowra landscape. It provides a vital water source for agriculture and domestic water consumption in Cowra Township. The river is also a well utilised resource for local recreation and contributes generally to the regions economic well-being. Some properties at the southern end of the Growth Area have direct frontage to the Lachlan River.
- The East Cowra Growth Area is a peri-urban location of the Cowra Township with long-established residential land-use history. Parts of the Growth Area are serviced by reticulated water supply, which is being progressively augmented to the area by Cowra Council. For the remaining parts, surface water dams, groundwater bores and onsite rainwater collection tanks are utilised to secure domestic water supplies for residential land-use.
- Some parts of the East Cowra Growth are mapped in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as being impacted by vulnerable groundwater. The groundwater system is connected to the nearby Lachlan River and Waugoola Creek, both of which are important components to the environmental function of the local area.

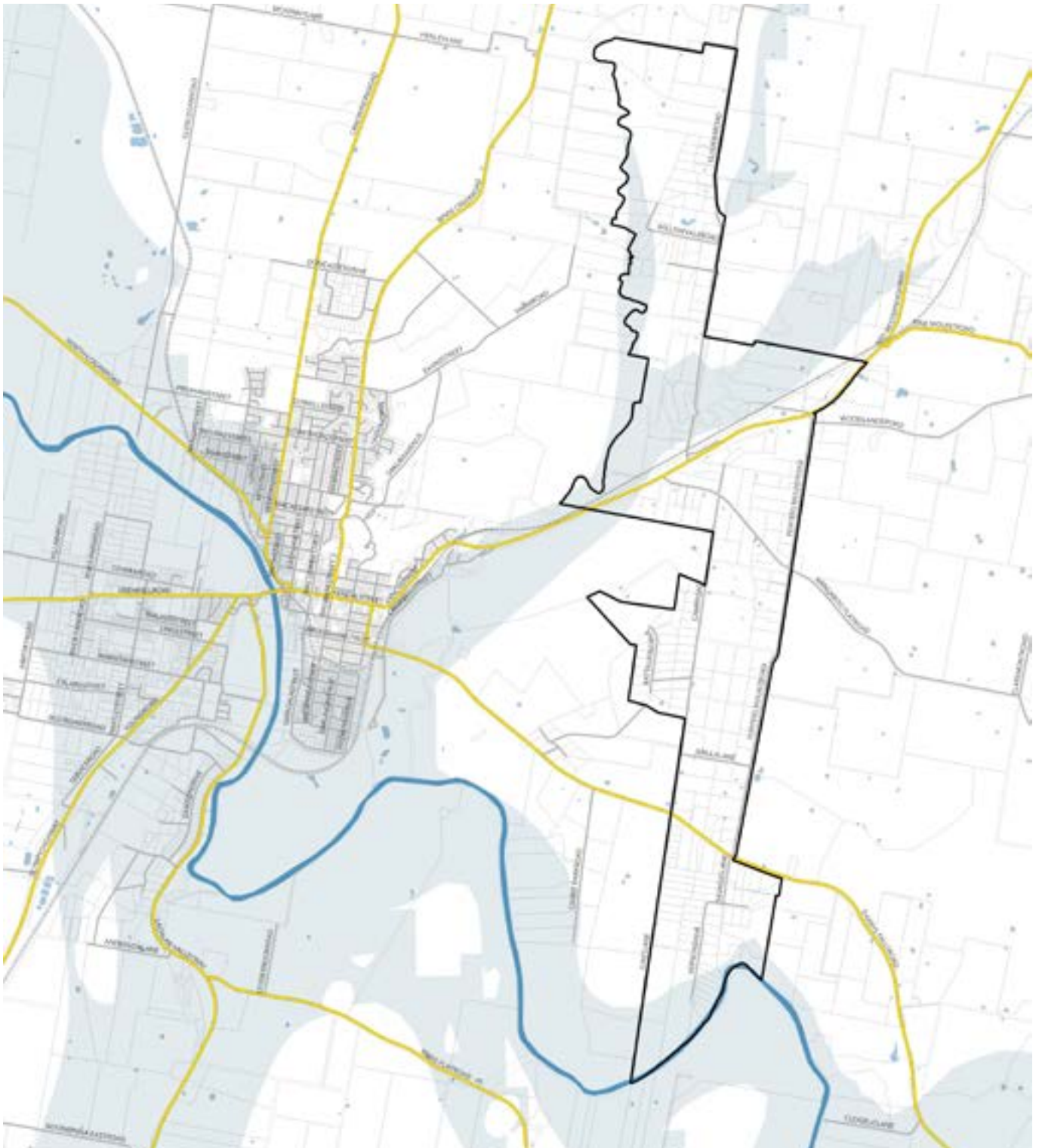


Figure 5 - Water Resources and Features Map

- East Cowra Growth Area
- Property Boundaries
- Primary Road Network
- Local Road Network
- Railway Network
- Vulnerable Groundwater
- Surface Water Feature



0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

2.7 Heritage

The East Cowra Growth Area does not contain any properties that are identified to be of local or state heritage significance in Schedule 5 of Cowra Local Environmental 2012. European heritage is generally a not a key matter for consideration for new development occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area.

A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIMS) maintained by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage indicates that there may be numerous items, relics or places that have been recorded within the East Cowra Growth Area as being of Aboriginal heritage significance. Site-specific detailed examination of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage impacts is not proposed given:

- The existing zoning for the land already establishes the suitability of the land for subdivision and housing development.
- The R5 Large Lot Residential zone covered an expansive land area, and is held in private ownership amongst many different property holdings.
- Cowra Council has development assessment and consultation procedures in place to ensure the locations of these items are properly considered when new development is proposed that could result in impacts.

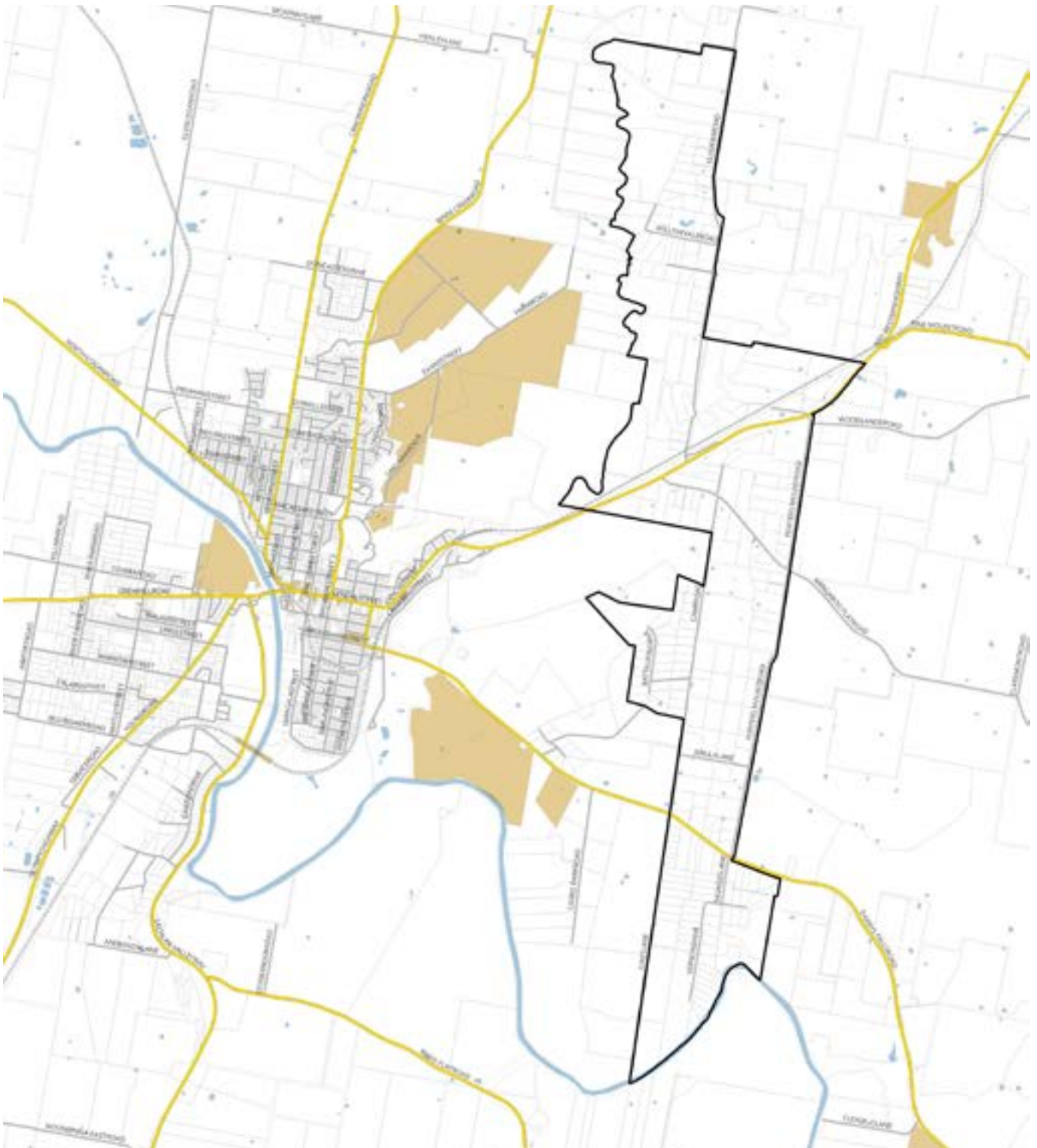


Figure 6 - Heritage Features Map

- East Cowra Growth Area
- Primary Road Network
- Local Road Network
- Railway Network
- Property Boundaries
- Heritage - Cowra LEP 2012



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2.8 Access, Roads and Transport

The East Cowra Growth Area forms part of the urban area of the Cowra Township and is generally defined by Darbys Falls Road, Camp Road, Kangaroo Flat Road and Elouera Road.

The Mid Western Highway and the Darbys Falls Roads form part of the classified road system and provide primary road connections back into the Cowra Township. The remaining network of roads throughout the East Cowra Growth Area are part of the local road system, which is owned and maintained by Cowra Shire Council and comprises a mix of sealed and gravel surface roads.

Roads are generally constructed to Council's minimum standards for rural residential road construction including minimum 7m wide sealed carriageways, roadside stormwater drainage infrastructure (generally table drains). Street lighting is absent. The road network is in good condition, provides for a high standard of access to existing properties, and is generally suitable to accommodate residential expansion / intensification within the East Cowra Growth Area.

Closer analysis of the settlement patterns within the East Cowra Growth Area shows that the majority of properties have direct frontage to the road system, with only a few examples of subdivision designs that feature battle-axe handles.

The East Cowra Growth Area is not serviced by a comprehensive active transport network, as the land is physically disconnected from the Cowra Urban Area.

The local public transportation systems service the East Cowra Growth Area including the local taxis and school bus runs.

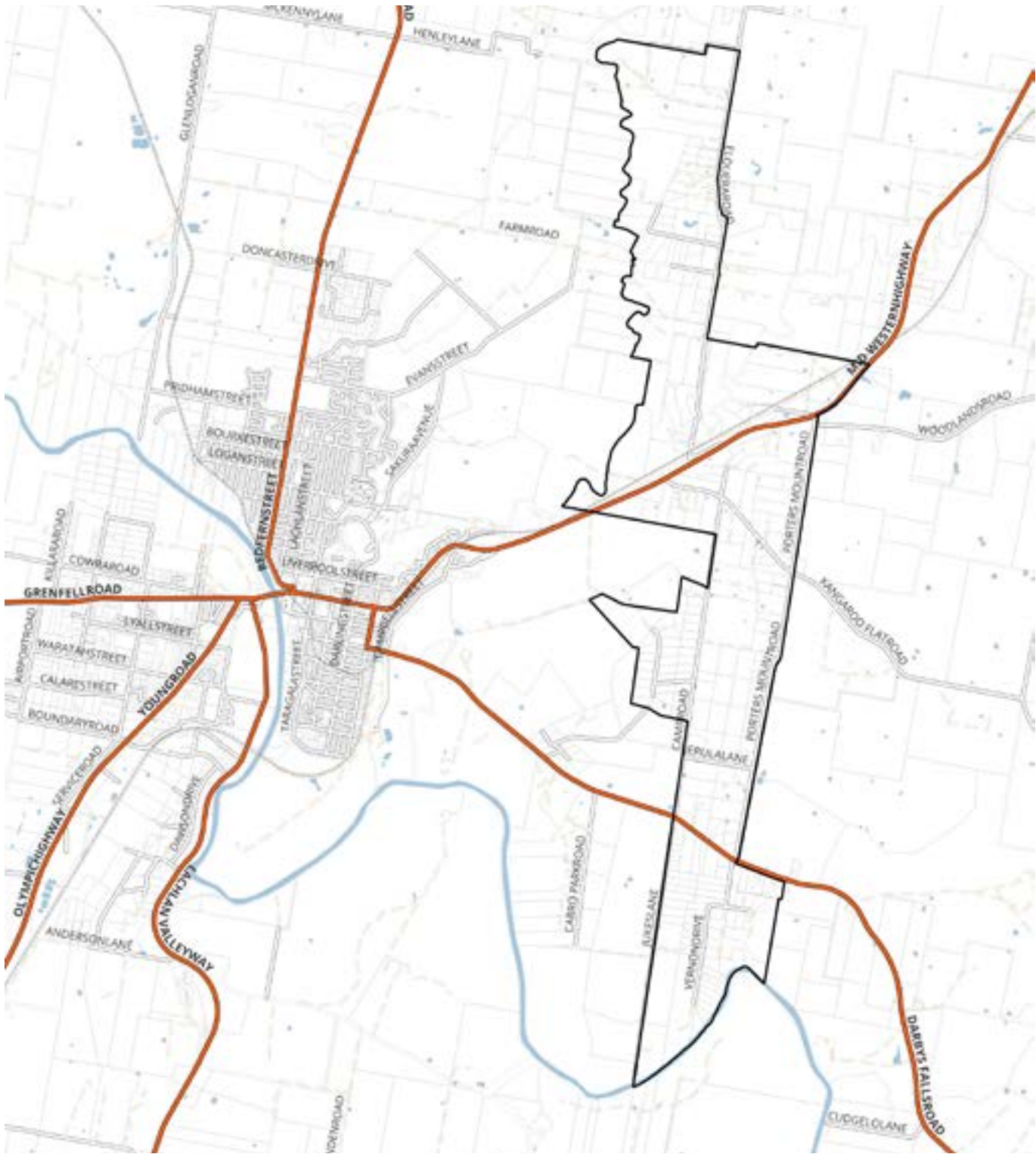
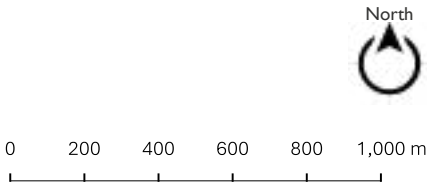


Figure 7 - Access, Roads and Transport Map

- East Cowra Growth Area
- Classified Road Network
- Local Road Network - Sealed
- Local Road Network - Unsealed
- Railway Network
- Property Boundaries



2.9 Environmental Hazards

A review of the NSW Rural Fire Service Bushfire Prone Land maps shows that the East Cowra Growth Area is not impacted by bushfire risk. Subject to site specific investigations, new development (subdivision and / or dwellings) within the East Cowra Growth Area are not required to comply with the requirements of the NSW Planning for Bushfire Protection guidelines.

The East Cowra Growth Area exists outside of the extent of mapping completed in the Cowra and Gooloogong Floodplain Risk Management Plan 2006. Based on historic flood events and local knowledge, there are some parts of the East Cowra Growth Area which are known to be impacted by flooding in a 1% AEP or Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) including:

- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Waugoola Creek.
- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Lachlan River.
- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Binni Creek.

The locations of these river and creek systems are shown in Figure 8. Certain affected land may be unsuitable for new subdivision / housing development due to localised flood constraint and subsequent limitations posed by existing development standards relating to floor levels and safe standards of access. The remaining (majority) areas of the East Cowra Growth Area are not impacted by flooding and are suitable for new housing development and intensifications of land-use through new subdivisions.

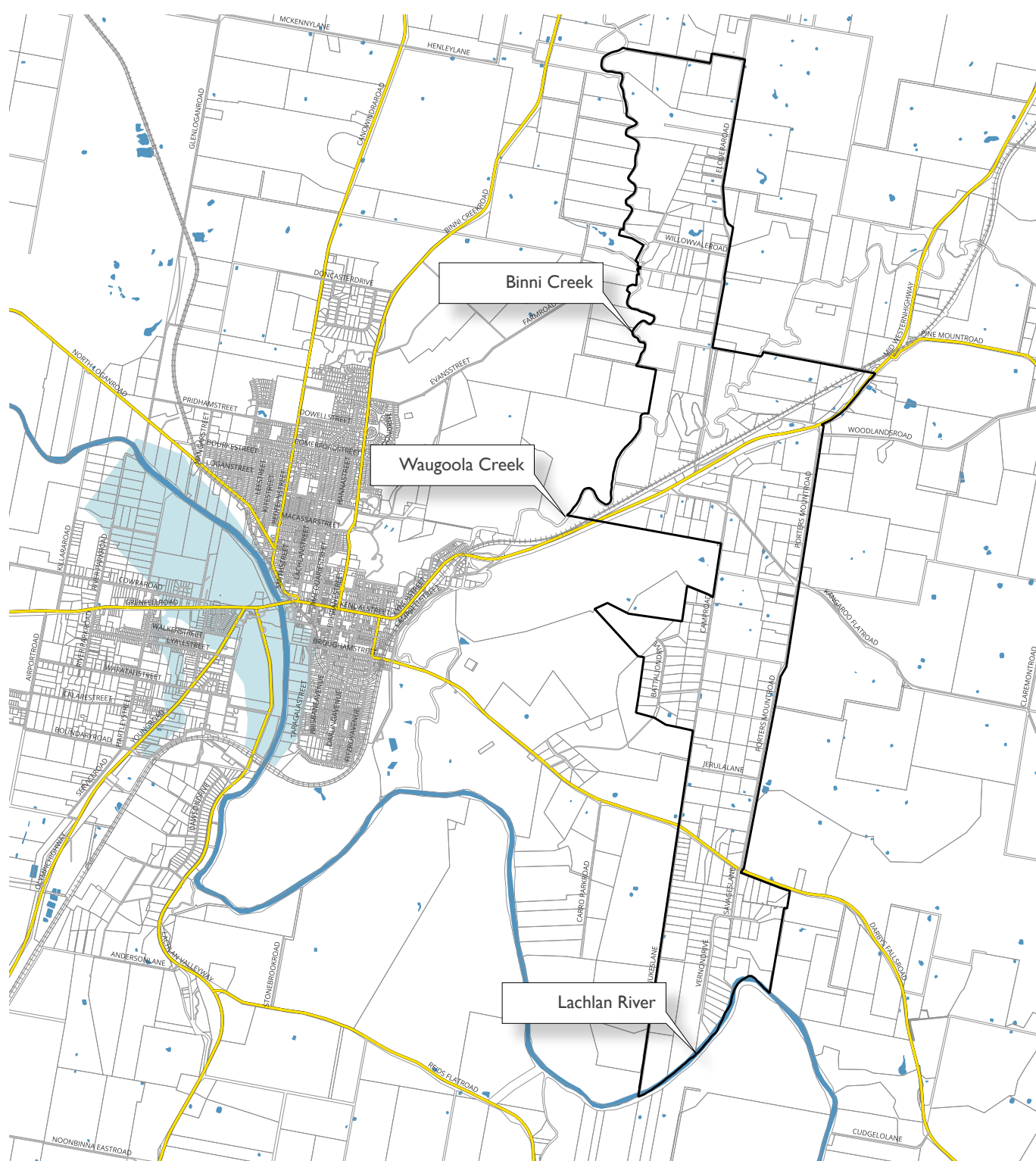
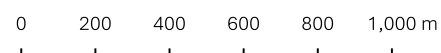


Figure 8 - Environmental Hazards Map

-  East Cowra Growth Area
  Property Boundaries
-  Primary Road Network
  Flood Planning Area - 1% AEP
-  Local Road Network
  Probable Maximum Flood (PMF)
-  Railway Network



2.10 Infrastructure and Services

2.10.1 Stormwater

The East Cowra Growth Area is located outside of the urban stormwater catchment for the Cowra Township and is generally not connected to the underground stormwater drainage system (pits and pipes) connecting back to the Lachlan River.

Generally, the lot typologies in the East Cowra Growth Area are large enough to enable stormwater generated by from built form to be managed on-site or (in some circumstances) discharged directly to roadside table drainage infrastructure.

2.10.2 Sewerage

The East Cowra Growth Area is located outside of the urban catchment for gravity sewerage supply. Under present conditions, residential development is required to be serviced by an appropriately designed, installed and operating on-site waste management system.

Cowra Council does not have a strategy for on-site waste management that is specific to the East Cowra Growth Area. As part of the Development Application / Construction Certificate Application process for new development, Council requires a Geotechnical Report to be prepared which analyses the soil for the specific development site and provides recommendations for on-site treatment of domestic waste.

2.10.3 Water Supply

Figure 9 shows the existing water supply network within and surrounding the East Cowra Growth Area. The mapping shows:

- Council has already installed trunk water supply infrastructure to northern parts of the Growth Area, extending from Evans Street (in Cowra Township) to Willowvale Road. From this location, domestic water supply mains have been installed to the north along Elouera Road, and to the south along Elouera Road to a point equal with the intersection of the Mid Western Highway.
- There is a Cowra Council owned water supply main extending from the Cowra urban area along the Darbys Falls Road to Military Parade. From this location onwards, a system of privately owned and maintained water supply mains service a number of existing subdivision lots on Battalion Drive and Jerula Lane.
- Main locations are generally aligned with road reservations, providing for efficient connections to new development.

At present, the key issues posing primary constraints to the further augmentation of a water supply scheme to the remaining parts of the East Cowra Growth Area are cost-benefit and funding allocation. The augmentation of a reticulated water supply to service the remaining parts of the East Cowra Growth Area is an expensive infrastructure project, with cost estimates indicating a capital investment value well in excess of **\$6.6M**. Funding of the project is heavily dependent on State Government subsidy.

The financial implications for existing landowners and developers (of new subdivisions) is also an important cost implication for Council and the local community and requires further investigation.

In summary, the provision of a water supply scheme to the remaining parts of the East Cowra Growth Area is likely to require a longer-term financial commitment from Cowra Council. It is also highly probable that the infrastructure project would need to be staged to ensure financial responsibilities are appropriately managed. This is likely to result in a short to medium term disadvantage for residential growth and subdivision development in East Cowra if minimum lot size controls remain unchanged.

The provision of a water supply scheme to service the East Cowra Growth will remain to be strategic infrastructure project for Cowra Council. Notwithstanding, the time-frame for delivery of the project is likely to mean that the objectives and intended outcomes of this Planning Proposal will not be achieved in the short to medium term. A change to existing minimum lot size provisions is proposed in order to ensure that growth and development within the East Cowra Growth Area is not compromised by long-term infrastructure provisioning.

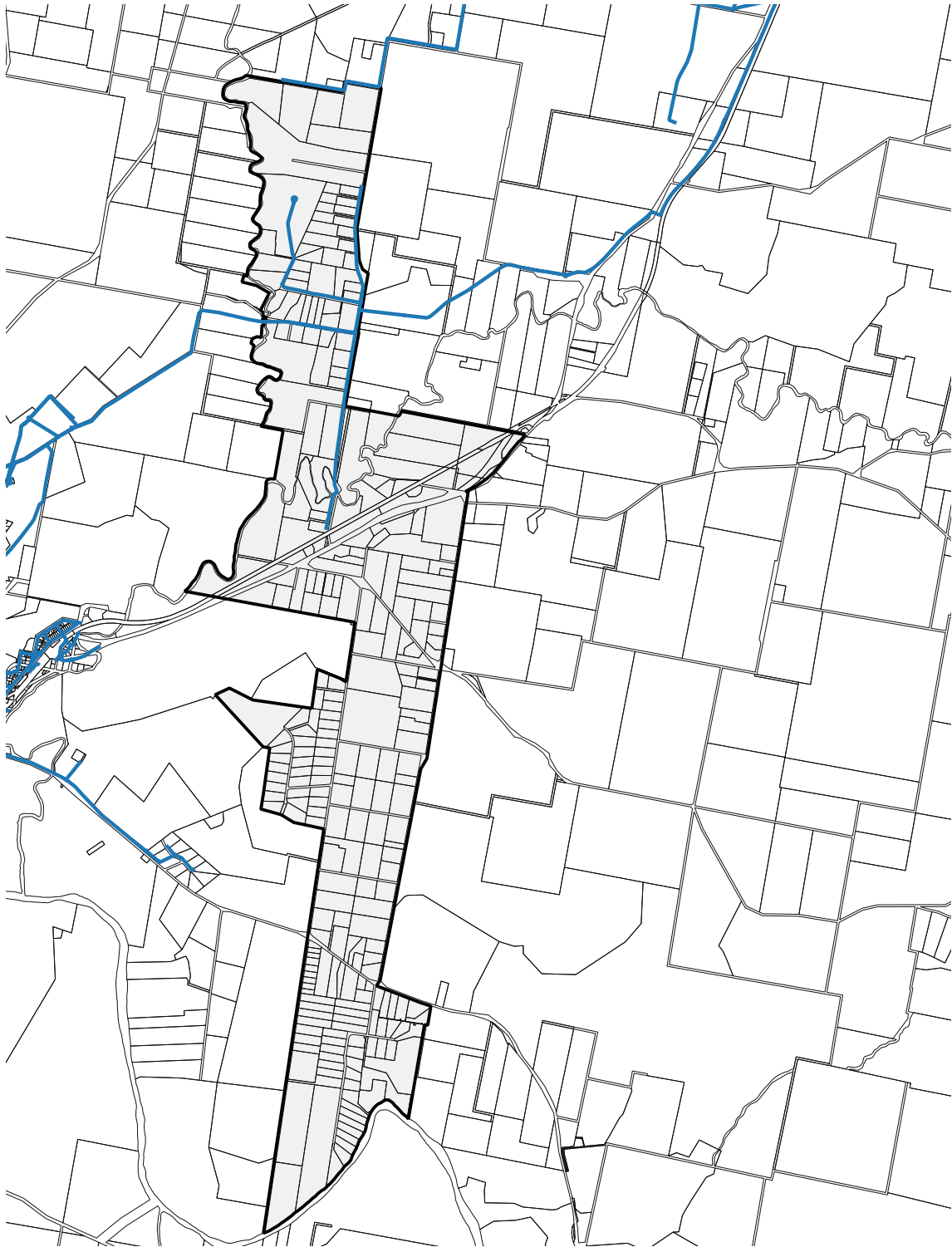


Figure 9 - Infrastructure & Servicing Map - Water, Sewer & Stormwater

- East Cowra Growth Area
- Primary Road Network
- Local Road Network
- Railway Network
- Property Boundaries
- water_mains



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2.1.1 Biodiversity

Figure 10 shows the broader biodiversity features of the East Cowra Growth Area.

Mapped areas of sensitive biodiversity resources avoid most locations in East Cowra Growth Area and are instead focused along the important riparian zones of the Lachlan River, Waugoola Creek and Binni Creek. Urban vegetation occurs primarily along roadside environments (either as street trees or remnant vegetation) and as landscaped elements on private development lots.

Generally the East Cowra Growth Area is not considered to be a location of high biodiversity value, and development generally occurs without significant impact to flora and fauna resources.

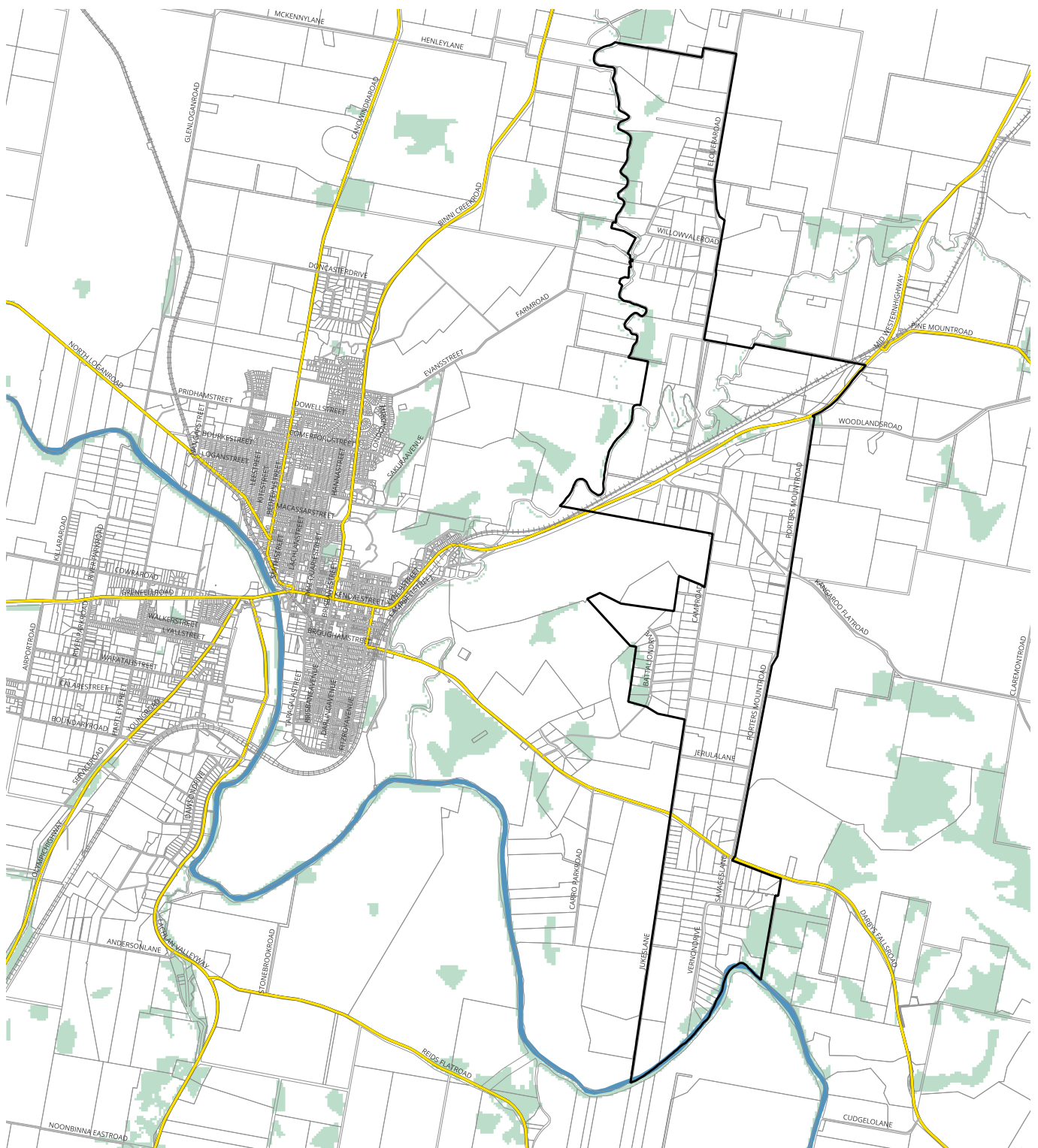


Figure 10 - Biodiversity Map

- East Cowra Growth Area
- Primary Road Network
- Local Road Network
- Railway Network
- Property Boundaries
- Terrestrial Biodiversity
- Urban Vegetation



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03

EXISTING PLANNING FRAMEWORK

3.1 Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012

Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 is the principal environmental planning instrument applying to the East Cowra Growth Area.

The Cowra LEP provides the statutory framework for planning, development and building within Cowra. It manages land use through zoning controls, development standards, planning controls and other planning provisions. This section of the report provides an overview of the primary planning controls applying to the East Cowra Growth Area under Cowra LEP including zoning, minimum lot size and other map-based controls.

3.1.1 Zoning

Figure 11 shows the existing zoning framework applying to the East Cowra Growth Area under the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012. A closer analysis of the zoning framework applying to the land shows:

- The East Cowra Growth Area is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential. It is one of three locations east of the Lachlan River that is zoned R5, with the other two locations focused on Shepherd Avenue and the Yarrabilly Urban Release Area.
- The East Cowra Growth is surrounded by agricultural land-use within the RUI Primary Production zone. The mainstay of this agricultural land is comprised of mixed farming enterprises including livestock grazing and crop rotation.

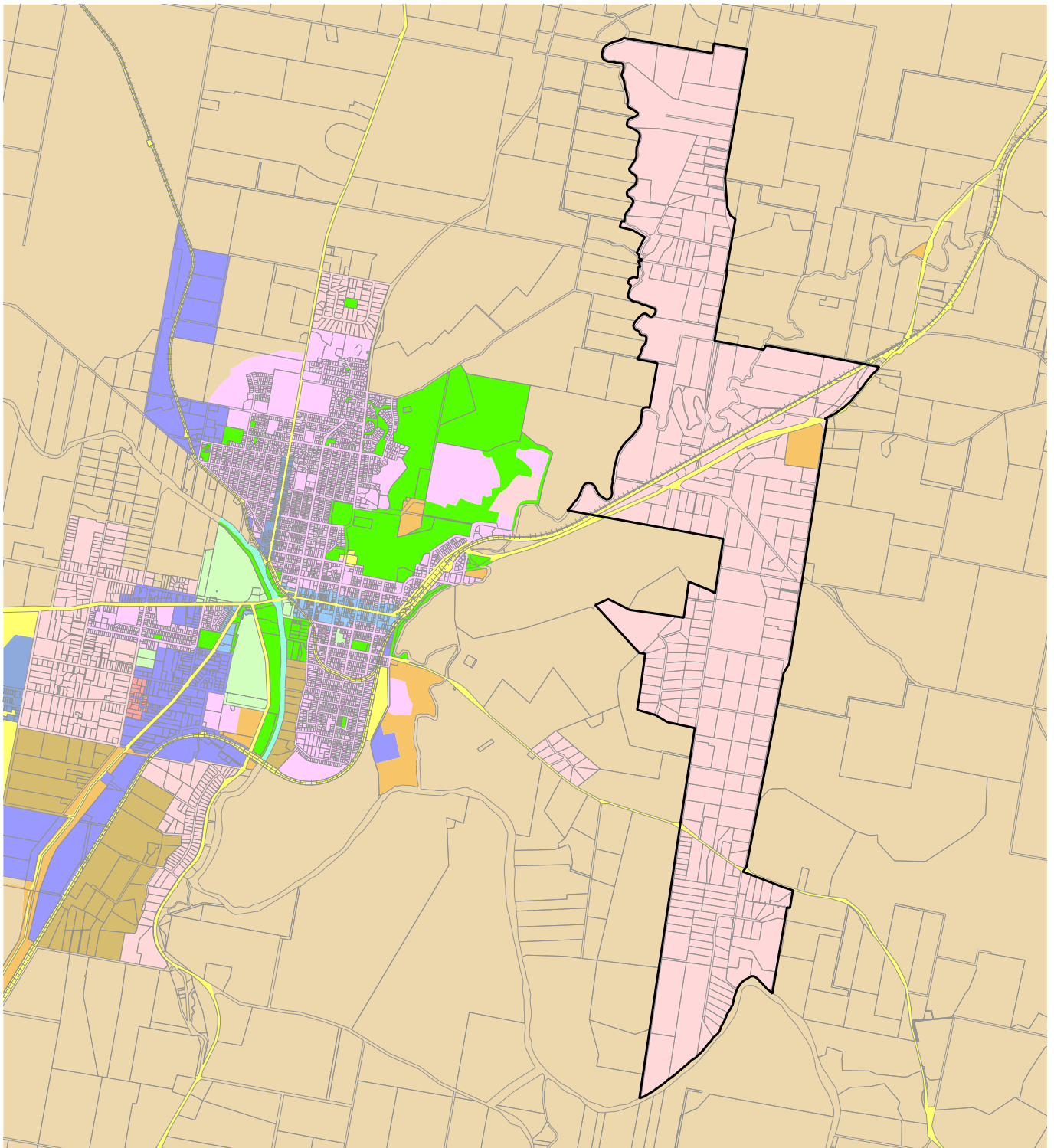


Figure 11 - Existing Land Zoning Map

LEGEND - LAND USE ZONES

E1	E1 Local Centre	RE1	Public Recreation
E3	E3 Productivity Support	RE2	Private Recreation
C1	C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves	RU1	Primary Production
C2	C2 Environmental Conservation	RU3	Forestry
C3	C3 Environmental Management	RU4	Primary Production Small Lots
E4	E4 General Industrial	RU5	Village
R1	R1 General Residential	SP2	Infrastructure
R2	R2 Low Density Residential	SP3	Tourist
R5	R5 Large Lot Residential	W2	Recreational Waterways



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3.1.2 Minimum Lot Size

Figure 12 shows that the existing minimum lot size framework applying to the East Cowra Growth Area under the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 is set at 10ha.

The minimum lot size mapping must be read together with the written instrument to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 in order to fully understand the requirements for land subdivision in the East Cowra Growth Area.

Clause 4.1 of Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 includes additional provisions that must be considered when determining the minimum lot size for subdivisions creating new lots in the East Cowra Growth Area. The provisions of Clause 4.1 are repeated in full as follows:

4.1 Minimum subdivision lot size

(1) The objectives of this clause are as follows—

- (a) to ensure that new subdivisions reflect characteristic lot sizes and patterns in the surrounding locality,
- (b) to ensure that lot sizes for dwelling houses are consistent with lot sizes on adjoining land,
- (c) to ensure that lot sizes have a practical and efficient layout to meet the intended use of the lot,
- (d) to prevent the fragmentation of rural land.

(2) This clause applies to a subdivision of any land shown on the Lot Size Map that requires development consent and that is carried out after the commencement of this Plan.

(3) The size of any lot resulting from a subdivision of land to which this clause applies is not to be less than the minimum size shown on the Lot Size Map in relation to that land.

(3A) Despite subclause (3), if the consent authority is satisfied that each lot is, or will be, serviced by a water reticulation system—

- (a) land identified as “Area A” on the Lot Size Map may be subdivided to create lots of at least 2 hectares, and
- (b) land identified as “Area D” on the Lot Size Map may be subdivided to create lots of at least 5 hectares.

(3B) Despite subclause (3), if the consent authority is satisfied that each lot is, or will be, serviced by a sewage reticulation system—

- (a) land identified as “Area B” on the Lot Size Map may be subdivided to create lots of at least 4,000 square metres, and
- (b) land identified as “Area C” on the Lot Size Map may be subdivided to create lots of at least 1,000 square metres.

(4) This clause does not apply in relation to the subdivision of any land—

(a) by the registration of a strata plan or strata plan of subdivision under the Strata Schemes Development Act 2015, or

(b) by any kind of subdivision under the Community Land Development Act 2021.

The effect of clauses 4.1(3A)(a) and (b) is that land within the East Cowra Growth Area may only be subdivided to create lots with an area of not less than 2ha (for land in Area A) or 5ha (for land in Area D) if the lots will be connected to a reticulated water supply system.

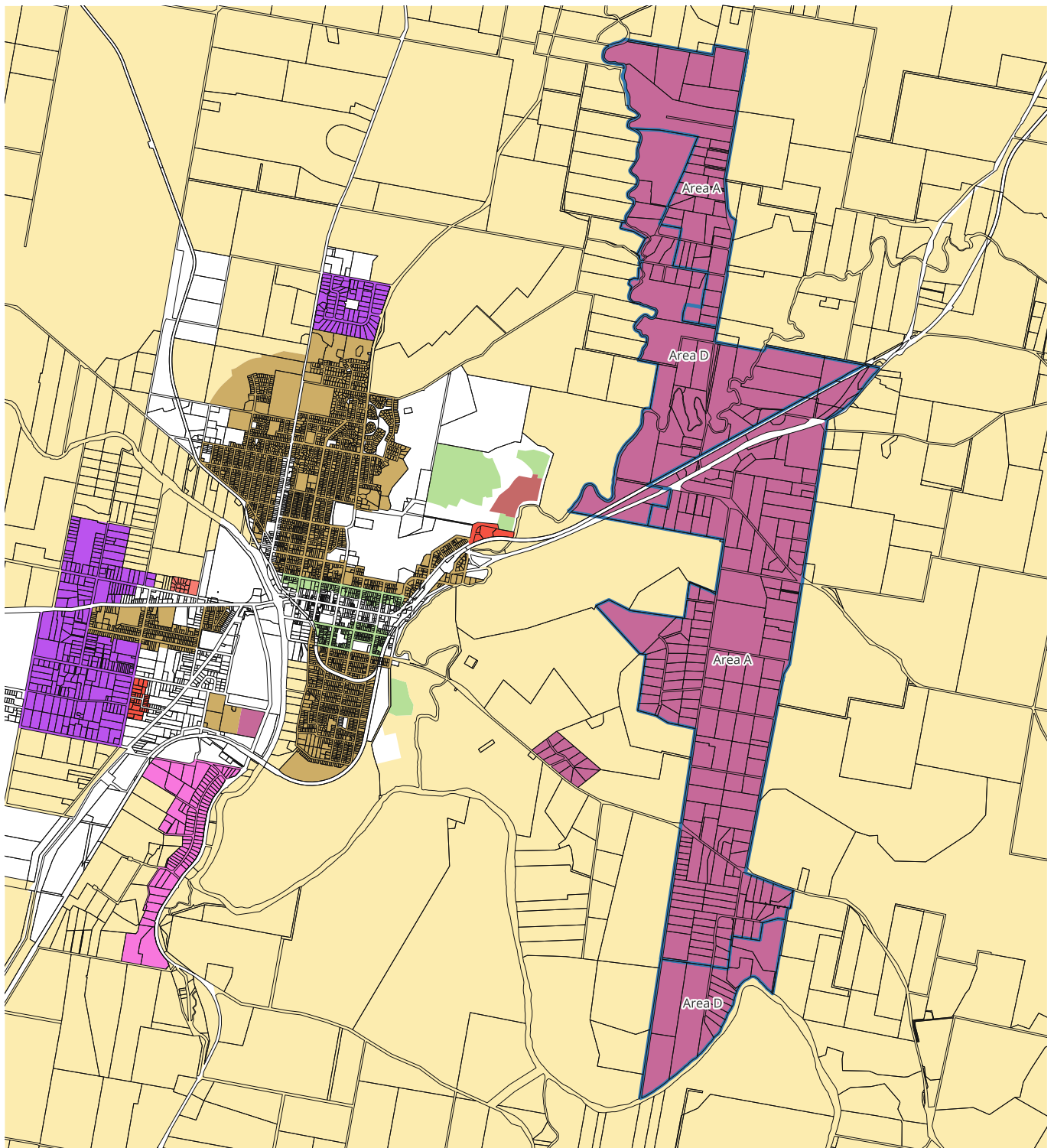


Figure 12 - Existing Minimum Lot Size Map

- East Cowra Growth Area - 10ha**
- 5ha (5,000m²)
- 100ha
- 700m²
- 2000m²
- 2ha (20,000m²)



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3.2 Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026

The Cowra Council Development Control Plan 2026 (Cowra DCP) provides detailed planning and design guidelines to support the Cowra LEP 2012. The Cowra DCP provides development controls relating to a variety of land-use activities and also includes controls relating to specific issues including subdivision, car parking, advertising and signage, landscaping, biodiversity management and environmental hazard management.

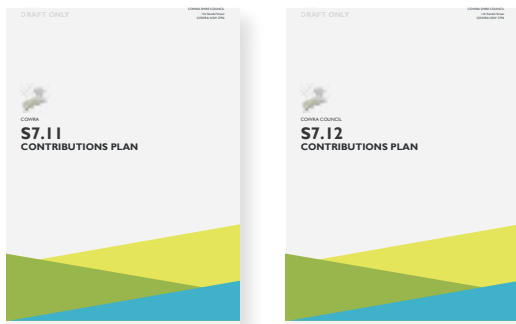
Council has recently adopted Cowra DCP 2026, which includes new planning controls to address water supply to dwellings in areas without reticulated water. The basis for these controls was initially outlined in the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 and was developed inline with similar planning controls utilised by other NSW councils. The controls increase the minimum on-site rainwater tank storage requirements for new dwellings in the R5 zone in East Cowra where reticulated water connections are not available.

The following parts of the Cowra DCP contain provisions which are relevant to new development in the East Cowra Growth Area. A brief description of relevant provisions is also included.

Table 1 - Cowra DCP 2026 Overview

Part / Heading		Description
A	Plan Introduction	Part A of the DCP provides introductory information relating to the DCP including date of commencement, relationship to other plans and processes applying to applications involving variation to controls. Part A of the DCP must be considered for new development occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area.
B	Land Management	Part B of the DCP outlines Council's requirements for soil erosion and sediment control on construction sites within the Cowra LGA. Part B of the DCP must be considered for new development occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area.

Part / Heading	Description
C Biodiversity Management	Part C of the DCP applies to all development in the Cowra Shire that proposes to directly remove or indirectly impact native vegetation or is in the proximity of an area that contains native vegetation. The controls contained in Part C detail and clarify the application of biodiversity legislation in NSW, and more specifically, within the Cowra Shire Local Government Area. Due to the nature of existing land-form and land-use occurring within East Cowra Growth Area, biodiversity issues do not feature prominently in new development processes. Site analysis shows that there are generally a limited number of properties where significant communities of native vegetation exist, or where new subdivision / housing development is likely to exceed the clearing thresholds.
D Subdivision Development	Part D of the DCP applies to all new subdivision development in the Cowra Local Government Area and includes specific controls relating to greenfield and infill residential subdivision, large lot residential subdivision, village subdivision, rural subdivision, industrial subdivision and strata and community title subdivisions. The East Cowra Growth Area is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential and therefore the controls contained in Part D.4 must be considered for new subdivision development in this location.
G Large Lot Development	Part G of the DCP applies to all new residential and ancillary development in the R5 Large Lot Residential zones in the Cowra Local Government Area. Part G must be considered for new development occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area.



3.3 Cowra Council S7.11 & S7.12 Development Contribution Plans 2026

3.3.1 Cowra Section 7.11 Contributions Plan 2026

Section 7.11 (formerly Section 94) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 enables Council to seek contributions from developers where the development is likely to increase the demand for public facilities. The power to levy a Section 7.11 contribution relies on there being a clear link between the development being levied the contribution and the need for the public amenity or service for which the levy is required.

The payment of a Section 7.11 Contribution will not be required in connection with the future subdivision of the land within the East Cowra Growth Area, as the Cowra S7.11 Contributions Plan 2026 does not apply.

3.3.2 Cowra Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026

Section 7.12 (formerly Section 94A) of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 also enables Council to seek contributions towards the provision, extension or augmentation of public facilities or toward recouping their costs.

A Section 7.12 contribution can be applied to development on any land in the Cowra Shire outside of the 'growth areas' to which the Section 7.11 Contributions plan applies. Unlike Section 7.11 contributions, there does not have to be a clear link between the development being levied and the need for the public amenity or service for which the levy is required.

The East Cowra Growth Area is land to which the Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026 applies. The payment of a Section 7.12 Contribution Levee will be required in connection with any development that exceeds \$100K in total capital cost and is to be constructed on land that has not previously been the subject of a contribution payment in accordance with Section 7.11 of the Act.



04

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

4.1 Changes to Written Instrument

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the written instrument relating to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as follows:

- Removing Clause 4.1(3A).

The effect of removing Clause 4.1(3A) is that land within the R5 Large Lot Residential zone in the East Cowra Growth Area could be subdivided into minimum 2 hectare lots, irrespective of whether a reticulated water supply will be connected to those lots.

4.2 Changes to Mapping

The Planning Proposal seeks to amend the mapping relating to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as follows:

- Amending Lot Size Map Sheets LSZ_002F, LSZ_002G and LSZ_002H by removing “Area A” and “Area D” (to which the East Cowra Growth Area relates) and changing the nominated minimum lot size from “AB - 10ha” to “Z1 - 2ha”.

There is no proposal to change the zoning framework which currently applies to the East Cowra Growth Area. This is to remain R5 Large Lot Residential which continues to represent the primary land-use activity within the area – being detached residential dwellings on larger lot forms.

Figure 15 shows that the minimum lot size for the East Cowra Growth area is proposed at 2 hectares, irrespective of whether a water supply is proposed to service a new subdivision lot.

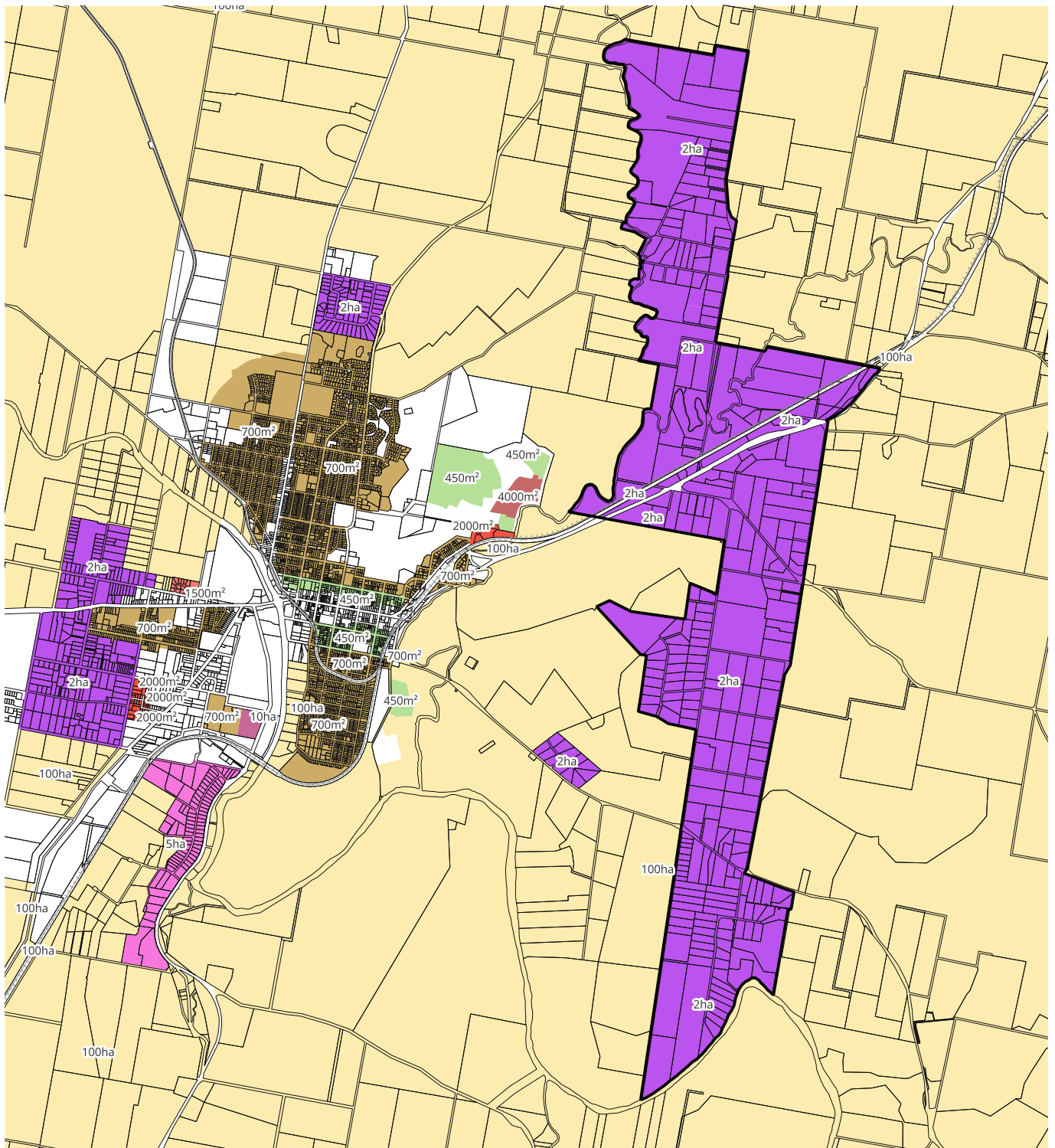


Figure 13 - Proposed Minimum Lot Size Map

- 5ha (5,000m²)
- 100ha
- 700m²
- 2000m²
- 2ha (20,000m²)
- 4,000m²



0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m



05

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

5.1 Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy

The Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy 2009 (the Cowra LUS) provides a comprehensive strategic framework for land-use planning in the Cowra Shire. The Cowra LUS provided primary strategic recommendations that ultimately informed the preparation of the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

A review of the Cowra LUS shows that a number of key recommendations were made relating to the East Cowra Growth Area, and rural residential growth for the Cowra Township in general. Key excerpts from the Cowra LUS relating to rural residential land-use in Cowra Township are shown in Table 2.

The proposed changes to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 remain generally consistent with the findings of the Cowra LUS and in particular:

- The East Cowra Growth Area is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential, which is similar to other rural residential locations of the Cowra Township. The application of a consistent zoning framework for these areas was a key recommendation of the Strategy. The Planning Proposal does not seek to change the zoning for the East Cowra Growth Area.
- Historically, planning controls applying to the East Cowra Growth Area (former I(c) Rural Small Holdings zone) have enabled subdivision and dwelling development on holding sizes down to 2 hectares. The Planning Proposal is not seeking to reduce the minimum lot size to less than 2 hectares in the East Cowra Growth Area.
- The Strategy identified a healthy supply of land within the East Cowra Growth area to accommodate future growth. Higher lot yields were expected if minimum lot size controls remained at 2 hectares, consistent with historic controls. The Planning Proposal recognises that the East Cowra Growth Area remains to be a key location for housing growth in the Cowra Township, and that subdivision of land into 2 hectare lots is necessary in order to realise the growth potential of the area.
- The Planning Proposal aligns with the planning principles for rural residential land. The Planning Proposal also seeks to demonstrate that a 2 hectare lot size for the East Cowra Growth Area will provide for the continued and improved social and economic well-being of the community, and is within the environmental capacity of the land.
- The Planning Proposal will seek to demonstrate that development within the East Cowra Growth Area can occur in accordance with a 2 hectare lot size without impacting on environmentally sensitive lands and water resources created by inappropriate settlement density.
- The Planning Proposal aligns with an identified key action to 'investigate a range of suitable minimum lot sizes for the various existing and proposed rural residential areas.

Table 2 - Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy - Assessment

Section Heading		Relevant LUS Recommendation / Detail
7.1	Planning Context	There are two zones in the Cowra Shire that provide specifically for rural residential subdivision and living opportunities; being the I(c) Rural Small Holdings zone and the I(c1) Rural Residential zone. Geographically, the I(c) Rural Small Holdings zone is located to the north and south west of the Cowra Township and the I(c1) Rural Residential zone is located to the east of the Cowra Township. A key objective of the Strategy is to promote rural residential style development in appropriately zoned and located areas that are capable of meeting future rural residential growth requirements in a planned and sustainable manner.
7.1.1	Applications of Existing Zoning and Development Controls	The development standards prescribed under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 1990 relating to the subdivision of I(c1) zoned land require new dwelling lots to have an area of not less than 2 ha. The development standards prescribed under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 1990 allow for the erection of a dwelling on land zoned I(c1) that has an area of 2 hectares, and has sufficient area to permit a house without giving rise to complaints about normal farming practices.
7.2	Supply and Demand Forecasts	In terms of I(c1) Rural Residential zoned land, the Cowra Shire Issues Paper showed that there is 825 hectares of land that is available for further subdivision and development. Using current subdivision standards and based on historic lot yields, a further 313 lots could be created. The areas of existing I(c) Rural Small Holdings and I(c1) Rural Residential zoned land are considered to be well placed to continue to supply the future needs of rural residential market demand in the Cowra Shire. Any demand for additional rural residential zoned land would be best served by extending the existing areas of I(c) Rural Small Holdings and I(c1) Rural Residential zoned land.

Section Heading	Relevant LUS Recommendation / Detail
7.3 Planning Principles	The planning principles to be used to guide and shape the future management and development of rural residential land in the Cowra Shire are provided below. • Ensure that all rural residential areas are included under the one appropriate zone. • Ensure that the mainstay of rural residential development occurs in appropriately zoned and located areas. • Ensure that future rural residential zoned areas are located in close proximity to the Cowra Township. • Ensure that future rural residential zoned areas can be easily integrated into existing rural residential zoned areas. • Minimise the potential for land-use conflicts to occur resulting from inappropriately located rural residential development. • Provide for the continued and improved social and economic well-being of the community. • Ensure that rural residential style development has regard to the natural and cultural values and features of the Cowra Shire. • Consider the environmental capacity of the land and ensure that any development within rural residential zones is within the capability and is suitable to the land, having regard to the environmental sensitivity and hazard mapping. • Encourage the development of rural residential zoned land in such a manner that maximises the potential infrastructure and service provision.

Section Heading	Relevant LUS Recommendation / Detail
7.4 Future Land Requirements	A Rural Residential Framework Plan has been developed to address the future rural residential land requirements for the Cowra Shire. A copy of this plan is included in Map No. 40 of the Cowra LUS. There are two zones in the Cowra Shire that provide specifically for rural residential subdivision and living opportunities, these being the I(c) Rural Small Holdings zone and the I(c1) Rural Residential zone. Whilst the I(c) and I(c1) Rural Residential zones are separated in terms of their physical location, they are both characteristically similar and function as the one zone by accommodating the same rural residential living opportunities in the Cowra Shire. The infrastructure and servicing requirements and land management issues for both zones are also similar. It is considered appropriate for both zones to be consolidated into the one rural residential zone.
7.5 Development Controls and Design Criteria	It is important to provide adequate infrastructure and services to the new rural residential zone and to ensure that environmentally sensitive lands and water resources are protected from over development. Much of the necessary strategic planning work required to achieve these objectives and guide sustainable rural residential growth and development in the Cowra Shire has already been undertaken as part of the recently developed Cowra Shire Council Development Control Plan – I(c1) Rural Residential. The Development Control Plan provides a sound framework for the strategic planning of rural residential land in the Cowra Shire and addresses environmental land sensitivity, design and siting issues, water supply requirements, infrastructure and service provisions, and minimum lot size requirements.

Section Heading	Relevant LUS Recommendation / Detail
7.6 Consistency with Strategic Principles	The proposed new rural residential areas in the Shire meet both the broad planning principles and the rural residential planning principles as follows. - Existing and proposed rural residential areas will provide for attractive and diverse living environments to meet the needs of a variety of residents and encourage rural residential settlement in appropriate areas. - Existing and proposed rural residential areas are confined within defined precincts that have regard to environmental constraints and opportunities and are in serviceable locations close to the Cowra Township. - Existing and proposed rural residential areas will provide for the continued and improved social and economic well-being of the community. - Existing and proposed rural residential areas can respond to natural and cultural values by ensuring that existing features are protected and that new development has regard to potential impacts on natural and cultural heritage. - Future rural residential areas will be provided subject to environmental suitability and will be planned to minimise potential land-use conflicts with adjoining agricultural land. - Future rural residential areas will be developed in such a manner that maximises the potential for infrastructure and service provision.

Section Heading	Relevant LUS Recommendation / Detail
7.7 Key Strategic Actions	• Consolidate the existing I(c) Rural Small Holdings and I(c1) Rural Residential zones into the one Standard Instrument zoning. • Rezone Battalion Drive, Military Parade and Dawson Drive for rural residential purposes. • Identify the Darbys Falls Road North Rural Residential Investigation Area for future rural residential purposes subject to environmental and planning studies and market demand. • Identify South Canowindra for rural residential purposes subject to planning and environmental studies and support from Cabonne Council. • Identify the Chardonnay Road / Andersons Lane Rural Residential Investigation Area for future rural residential purposes in the longer term. • Identify the North Cowra Urban Investigation Area for future residential and rural residential purposes subject to planning and environmental and market demand. • Investigate a range of suitable minimum lot sizes for the various existing and proposed rural residential areas.



5.2 Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement

The Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement (the Cowra LSPS) sets out the long-term vision for land-use planning in the Council area.

The Cowra LSPS is essentially a high-level based strategic plan for the whole of the Cowra Shire. To achieve the vision, a total of 9 Planning Priorities have been identified. For each Planning Priority, Council has identified a number of actions and the means by which Council will monitor progress and report back to the community.

The 9 Planning Priorities in the Cowra LSPS are detailed the following table, including brief commentary relating to strategic alignment of the PP with each priority.

Table 3 - Cowra LSPS - Assessment

Priority	Priority Name	Strategic Alignment
1	Leverage the central and strategic location of Cowra Shire to encourage growth and new economic opportunities.	The Planning Proposal will aim to facilitate a planning outcome that encourages growth.
2	Support and grow the agribusiness sector including horticultural/vegetable production, animal production and other agricultural industries by promoting sustainability, innovation and technological advancement.	The Planning Proposal does not relate to agricultural land.
3	Protect items and places with heritage significance and areas of high environmental value in Cowra Shire.	The Planning Proposal will not impact on land that is identified to be of heritage significance or of high environmental value.

Priority	Priority Name	Strategic Alignment
4	Manage water resources for the greater benefit of all users within the Shire and the Lachlan Valley.	The Planning Proposal is not expected to significantly impact on water resources. The Planning Proposal includes base-line environmental assessment and confirms that the East Cowra Growth Area is suited to continued residential subdivision and housing growth - consistent with the existing zoning of the land.
5	Advocate for new development to be supported by appropriate infrastructure.	The strategic need for the Planning Proposal is in response to an infrastructure provisioning challenge.
6	Work together with Government agencies and other stakeholders to promote beneficial outcomes for Cowra Shire.	The Planning Proposal will be progressed in consultation with relevant government agency stakeholders.
7	Improve the liveability of the Shire's villages through ongoing maintenance and improvements to services and facilities.	The Planning Proposal does not relate to village land.
8	Support the continued growth of the residential housing sector and ensure the availability of housing stock to meet the needs of the population.	The Planning Proposal will aim to facilitate a planning outcome that supports new residential development in the East Cowra Growth Area.
9	Provide recreational opportunities to meet the needs of residents and visitors to the Cowra Shire.	The Planning Proposal does not relate to recreational land.

5.3 Cowra Housing Strategy 2025

In March 2025, the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 was adopted by Cowra Council. The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 was funded by the NSW Government through the Regional Strategic Planning Fund in association with Cowra Council, and received the formal endorsement of NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on August 2025.

The specific objectives of the Cowra Housing Strategy are to:

- Respond to the current housing challenges being experienced across the shire and across the region.

- Review planning controls related to zoning, minimum lot size and permissible land-uses in residential zones and identify where changes may be necessary in order to ensure the sustainable use of land.
- Provide increased opportunities for housing diversity through infill and greenfield development.
- Manage and align the delivery of infrastructure to ensure there is an adequate supply of land for housing in the shire.
- Meet the needs of the community in a way that best fits our unique character and identity whilst planning for future growth.
- The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 provides principal strategic guidance for Council's decision making on all matters relating to housing in the Cowra Local Government Area. The Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 is a 20 year plan and identifies a range of actions for short, medium and long-term implementation by Cowra Council and other stakeholders with interests and responsibilities in local housing matters.

The key findings of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 that are of relevance to this Planning Proposal are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 - Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 - Assessment

Section	Heading	Relevant CHS Recommendation / Detail
2.2	Settlement Profiles - Cowra Township Residential Structure	The East Cowra R5 zone is identified in Map 4 as an existing residential neighbourhood of the Cowra Township.
	Settlement profiles - Cowra Township Lot Profile	Map 6 shows that the existing R5 Large Lot Residential zone in East Cowra has some capacity for further subdivision based on current planning standards.
3.2	Community Engagement	Feedback received as a result of early engagement and formal public exhibition of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 indicated strong demand and a community preference for large lot housing. A tightly held market for small-acreage properties and a lack of supply through subdivision activity has impacted affordability. The majority of residents felt strongly that it was important to strategically plan for new housing growth and development.

Section	Heading	Relevant CHS Recommendation / Detail
4.3	Housing Demand	NSW Government population forecast data predicts strong population growth for Cowra LGA in the order of 1500 people. This population growth translates to the need for an additional 1,193 new dwellings over the next 20 year period or the equivalent of 60 new dwellings per annum. For the Cowra Township, 48 new dwellings would be required per annum to meet projected demand. The Cowra Housing Strategy aims to create a planning framework that fosters the majority of this growth in the existing R1 General Residential and R5 Large Lot Residential zones of the Cowra Township.
4.4.3	Cowra Township Supply Analysis - Large Lot Residential	There are 43 vacant lots in the East Cowra Growth Area that are 'development-ready' and capable of accommodating a new residential dwelling. Until water is provided to the East Cowra Growth Area, the number of new subdivision lots that can potentially be created through new subdivision is 24 lots. Assuming subdivision is allowed to occur in the East Cowra Growth Area without connection to water, the number of new subdivision lots that can potentially be created through new subdivision is 409. Until water is provided to East Cowra, the data shows that there is a reduced capacity for new housing growth to occur in this locations. There is strategic merit to investigate amendments to minimum lot size controls for the East Cowra Growth Area to incentivise subdivision activity and increase the supply of housing lands to meet short / medium term market demand. Council's commitment to supply water to this location need not be abandoned as a result.

Section	Heading	Relevant CHS Recommendation / Detail
4.5	Environmental and Urban Form Analysis	Section 4.5 provides a strategic evaluation of the environmental constraints and opportunities impacting housing in Cowra. The evaluation includes heritage, contamination, flood, land-use, bushfire, crown land, biodiversity, water resources, land-use buffers, topography and slope. The evaluation did not identify the East Cowra Growth Area as being subject to any significant environmental constraints. The continued use of the land for large lot residential housing is supported by the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025.
4.6	Infrastructure and Servicing Analysis	Section 4.6 provides a strategic evaluation of the infrastructure and servicing issues impacting housing in Cowra. The evaluation includes electricity, water, sewerage, open space, roads, telecommunications, active transport, stormwater and gas. The evaluation did not identify the East Cowra Growth Area as being subject to any significant servicing constraints, except that the provision of water is a current infrastructure project being designed and costed by Council. Supply options are being investigated, however the cost implications and the time-frames for delivery of the project are yet to be confirmed. Without water, the existing planning controls in Cowra LEP 2012 are restricting subdivision potential and therefore dwelling growth in East Cowra.

Section	Heading	Relevant CHS Recommendation / Detail
4.7	Housing Challenges	Section 4.7.3 of the Cowra Housing Strategy provides details of the challenges associated with the delivery of a water supply scheme to the East Cowra Growth Area. In summary, delays with this project have reduced capacity for new housing growth to occur in this strategic location of Cowra. Map 29 of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 shows that there is potential for creation of only 24 new subdivision lots in the East Cowra Growth Area if minimum lot size controls in Cowra LEP 2012 remain unchanged. This is a poor planning outcome, particularly as the East Cowra R5 Large Lot Residential zone is identified by Council's strategic plans as a growth area for residential development. To address this challenge, the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 recommends that the provisions of Cowra LEP 2012 be amended to allow subdivision into the existing 2 hectare Minimum Lot Size irrespective of connection to reticulated water.

Section	Heading	Relevant CHS Recommendation / Detail
4.8	Housing Opportunities	Section 4.8 of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 provides details of the housing opportunities that could be created in the East Cowra Growth Area if changes are made to the minimum lot size controls in Cowra LEP 2012. In summary, allowing subdivision lots at 2 hectares in the East Cowra Growth Area is considered to be of strategic merit for two main reasons: • Already, planning controls permit dwellings in the R5 zones on a lot of any size without service connections. On this basis, allowing subdivision lots at 2 hectares in East Cowra, without service connections would not compromise Council objectives relating to dwelling density or character. • This approach is also consistent with the planning controls for these locations pre-dating Cowra LEP 2012, which allowed subdivision at 2 hectares and resulted in the existing development patterns and residential densities observed in most locations of the R5 Large Lot Residential zone in East Cowra where developed capacity has already been achieved.
4.9	Housing Gaps	The evidence base suggests that there is strong demand for large lot housing in Cowra LGA, with 100% of the public submissions received by Council seeking to address a perceived shortage of supply on the local market. The community survey also identified large lot living as a key housing preference. The evidence base suggests that there is already a healthy amount of land that is zoned for large lot living and that the focus of Council's planning should be to investigate strategies that allow for the increased utilisation of existing zoned areas and available infrastructure.

06

PLANNING PROPOSAL PART ONE

Plan Making Guidance – Part I

The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines require Part I of the Planning Proposal to:

- Provide a clear and concise description of the planning proposal and be written in plain English, so it is easily understood by the community.
 - Provide a description of the objectives and intended outcomes of the planning proposal so that they are specific enough to reflect the objective of the proposal yet flexible enough to allow for alternatives.
- 

6.1 Objectives and intended outcomes

Section 3.33(2)(a) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act 1979) requires a Planning Proposal to include a statement of the objectives or intended outcomes of the proposed amendments.

Objective

To amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 to enable the subdivision of land in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone to a lesser minimum lot size without requiring the connection of reticulated water supply infrastructure.

Intended Outcomes

- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the planning framework for rural residential growth in Cowra Township created by the Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy.
- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the vision for residential growth in the Cowra Township created by the Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the vision for residential growth in the Cowra Township created by the Cowra Housing Strategy.
- To ensure that the planning framework for the East Cowra Growth Area provides for new housing growth at suitable densities and within the environmental capacity of the land.
- To increase housing supply within the East Cowra Growth Area.



07

PLANNING PROPOSAL PART TWO

Plan Making Guidance – Part 2

The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines require Part 2 of the Planning Proposal to:

- Provide a detailed statement of how the objectives or intended outcomes will be achieved by amending the Cowra LEP 2012.
 - Provide an explanation of provisions, clearly stated and containing enough information on the proposal to assist legal drafting of the LEP.
 - Provide information relating to the proposed zones and / or development standards if known at this stage in the Planning Proposal.
- 

7.1 Explanation of Provisions

Section 3.33(2)(b) of the EP&A Act 1979 requires the Planning Proposal to include an explanation of the provisions that are to be included in the proposed amending instrument.

Intended Provisions

The objectives will be achieved (generally) by:

- Amending Lot Size Map Sheets LSZ_002F, LSZ_002G and LSZ_002H by removing “Area A” and “Area D” (to which the East Cowra Growth Area relates) and changing the nominated minimum lot size from “AB - 10ha” to “Z1 - 2ha”.
- Removing Clause 4.1(3A) from Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

A series of maps clearly demonstrating the proposed scope of changes to the East Cowra Growth Area has been included in previous sections of this report. Refer generally to Section 4.



08

PLANNING PROPOSAL PART THREE

Plan Making Guidance

The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines require Part 3 of the Planning Proposal to:

- Provide a detailed assessment of the proposal's strategic and site-specific merit to determine whether the Planning Proposal should be supported.
 - Integrate findings from supporting studies and investigations.
 - Provide justification for the proposed amendments to the LEP.
 - Consider the interaction between these findings and whether the proposal will align with the strategic planning framework.
 - Consider whether the proposal will have any environmental, social or economic impacts.
- 

8.1 Need for the Planning Proposal

8.1.1 Is the Planning Proposal a result of any strategic study or report?

The Planning Proposal is a result of the recommendations of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025 which was adopted by Cowra Council in March 2025 and formally endorsed by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure in August 2025. Refer to Section 5.3 of this Planning Proposal for further details on how the proposed amendments are aligned with the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025.

8.1.2 Is the Planning Proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?

As per Section 6.1.1, the objective of the Planning Proposal is to amend Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 to enable the subdivision of land in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone to a lesser minimum lot size without requiring the connection of reticulated water supply infrastructure.

As per Section 6.1.2, the intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal are:

- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the planning framework for rural residential growth in Cowra Township created by the Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy.
- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the vision for residential growth in the Cowra Township created by the Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- To enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the vision for residential growth in the Cowra Township created by the Cowra Housing Strategy.
- To ensure that the planning framework for the East Cowra Growth Area provides for new housing growth at suitable densities and within the environmental capacity of the land.
- To increase housing supply within the East Cowra Growth Area.

Council has given consideration to a number of different options for achieving the objectives and intended outcomes. The details and merits of each option has been explored in Table 5 below.

Table 5 - Strategic Options Assessment

Option	Overview	Description and Planning Comment
1	Do nothing	Council has considered the option of doing nothing. This would involve retaining the provisions of Cowra LEP 2012 in its current format. The option lacks strategic merit as the development potential of the East Cowra Growth Area is unlikely to be realised in the short to medium term if the provision of reticulated water supply infrastructure is delayed. This option would also be inconsistent with the recommendations of the adopted Cowra Housing Strategy 2025.
2	Rezoning of land	Council has the option of rezoning land in the East Cowra Growth Area from R5 Large Lot Residential to another land-use zone. The R1 General Residential or the R2 Low Density Residential Zone could be considered as these zones are already utilised in other areas of the Cowra Township to provide for residential land-use activity at densities smaller than is currently allowed for in the East Cowra Growth Area. Rezoning land in the East Cowra Growth Area lacks strategic merit and will not achieve the objectives and intended outcomes for the following reasons: • The strategic intent for land-use in the East Cowra Growth Area is for rural residential style housing (dwellings on larger lots). This is reinforced through the strategic framework developed for the Cowra Township in the Cowra LUS, Cowra LSPS and Cowra Housing Strategy 2025. The existing R5 zone is identified to be the most suitable zone to provide for the strategic intent of land-use within the East Cowra Growth Area. • As a stand-alone response, the rezoning of land would not enable subdivision development to occur in the East Cowra Growth Area at minimum 2 hectare lots. A change to minimum lot size controls is required.

Option	Overview	Description and Planning Comment
3	Changing the MLS	Changing the minimum lot size for land in the East Cowra Growth Area is identified to be the preferred planning response for achieving the objectives and intended outcomes. This options holds strategic merit for the following reasons: • It will enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area in a way that is consistent with the planning framework for rural residential growth created by the Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy. • It will enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the vision for residential growth created by the Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement. • It will enable the development of the East Cowra Growth Area consistent with the recommendations of the adopted Cowra Housing Strategy 2025. • It will enable housing growth within the East Cowra Growth Area at higher densities (than are currently allowed) within the environmental and servicing capacity of the land. • It will increase housing supply in the East Cowra Growth Area.
4	Changing land-use	This option will not achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal. The existing R5 Large Lot Residential zone that applies to the East Cowra Growth Area already permits development for the purposes of new dwellings.
5	Using Schedule I	Schedule I allows Council to nominate a permissible land-use activity on a site by site basis where that land-use activity is ordinarily prohibited within the land-use zone. This option will not achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal. The existing R5 Large Lot Residential zone that applies to the East Cowra Growth Area already permits development for the purposes of new dwellings. Schedule I cannot be utilised to allow subdivision of land into smaller lot sizes.

Option	Overview	Description and Planning Comment
6	Using Clause 4.6	Clause 4.6 is a provision in the Standard Instrument LEP (and therefore Cowra LEP 2012) that allows an applicant to request a variation to a particular development standard including, for example, a minimum lot size. In the context of the Cowra LEP 2012, Clause 4.6 cannot be utilised in the following circumstances: - The subdivision involves land in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone, and the subdivision will result in 2 or more lots of less than minimum area specified for the land, or at least 1 lot that is less than 90% of the minimum area specified for the land. The use of Clause 4.6 of the LEP will not achieve the objectives and intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal for the following reasons: - The use of Clause 4.6 for every subdivision proposal creating lots less than the current minimum lot size of 10ha (where no water connection is proposed) would result in an inefficient use of planning resources both at Cowra Council and at NSW Planning. - The need for widespread use of Clause 4.6 of the LEP may place landowners at a disadvantage by creating additional complexities for preparing routine Development Applications to subdivide land. - The limitations created by Clause 4.6(6) of the LEP means that the majority of new subdivisions in the East Cowra Growth Area would not qualify for approval using this pathway.

Option	Overview	Description and Planning Comment
7	Extending reticulated water to service the East Cowra Growth Area	The provision of reticulated water to service the East Cowra Growth Area is an infrastructure project that has been the subject of continued investment and investigation from Cowra Shire Council over a number of years. Section 1.2 of this Planning Proposal provides further detail relating to the status of the project and key outcomes of the planning and design work completed by Cowra Council (and others) to date. In summary, the provision of a water supply scheme to the East Cowra Growth Area is now identified to require a long-term financial (and staged) commitment from Cowra Shire Council. This infrastructure project cannot be realistically relied upon as the primary option to unlocking the future development potential of land within the East Cowra Growth Area. The provision of a water supply scheme to East Cowra has not been discounted by Council at this stage and investigations are ongoing. Notwithstanding, the time-frame for delivery of the project is likely to mean that the objectives and intended outcomes of this Planning Proposal will not be achieved in the short to medium term.

8.2 Relationship to the strategic planning framework

8.2.1 Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional plan?

The Central West and Orana Regional Plan 2041 establishes a strategic framework, vision and direction for land use, addressing future needs for housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment, access to green spaces and connected communities. It leverages the region's central location and builds on its strengths to provide smart, efficient and reliable connections that bring residents and visitors closer to jobs, centres, education and the natural environment.

The CWORP is structured around 23 objectives, which belong to the following themes:

- Region-shaping investment
- A sustainable and resilient place
- People, centres, housing and communities
- Prosperity, productivity and innovation.

The following objectives are particularly relevant in the context of the Planning Proposal:

- Objective 7 - Plan for resilient places and communities
- Objective 12 - Sustain a network of healthy and prosperous centres.
- Objective 13 - Provide well located housing options to meet demand.
- Objective 14 - Plan for diverse, affordable, resilient and inclusive housing.

The following Local Government Priorities for Cowra are also particularly relevant in the context of this Planning Proposal:

- Ensuring suitable housing supply by supporting a diversity in housing supply and clearly planned land releases.

Table 6 includes a brief assessment of the Planning Proposal against the relevant objectives and priorities in the Regional Plan.

Table 6 - Regional Plan Assessment

Objective / Priority	Planning Comment
Plan for resilient places and communities	Implementation of the lot size changes in this Planning Proposal will allow for the subdivision of the land to create new housing opportunities for a key growth precinct of the Cowra Township. The Planning Proposal demonstrates that the land is not environmentally constrained and is generally suitable to accommodate planned residential growth.
Sustain a network of healthy and prosperous centres	According to the Regional Plan, the growth of regional cities, strategic centres and smaller centres across the region, will encourage investment, increase housing choice, diversify industry and create new job opportunities – all of which will benefit the immediate and broader regional community. Cowra is identified in the Regional Plan as a strategic centre, with a stable population base, and with opportunities to grow and prosper by leveraging economic opportunities related to its proximity to the nearby larger centres of Bathurst, Orange and Canberra. The Planning Proposal seeks changes to Cowra LEP 2012 that will unlock development potential within the East Cowra Growth Area, creating opportunities for new housing growth and diverse housing types. This is a priority for Council and will assist Cowra in sustaining its role as a healthy and prosperous strategic centre in the Central West region of NSW.
Provide well located housing options to meet demand.	The East Cowra Growth Area is an established residential location within the Cowra Township. The area is recognised by the planning framework in Cowra Township as an area suitable to accommodate residential growth over the short, medium and longer term. The growth is to be accommodated through new residential housing constructions on existing lots and through the further subdivision of existing property holdings to create new dwelling opportunities. The East Cowra Growth Area is ideally located on the eastern fringe of the Cowra Township, with established road connections back into the Cowra CBD, key commercial and industrial precincts and primary locations for public open space and recreation.

Objective / Priority	Planning Comment
Plan for diverse, affordable, resilient and inclusive housing.	The current planning framework for the East Cowra Growth Area aims to facilitate residential land-use on larger lot forms. Higher density residential forms (including affordable housing etc) are not permitted in the current R5 Large Lot Residential zone and are to be accommodated in other parts of Cowra including land in the R1 General Residential and E1 Local Centre zones.

8.2.2 Is the planning proposal consistent with a council LSPS that has been endorsed by the Planning Secretary or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?

Section 5 of this Planning Proposal includes a detailed analysis of the Planning Proposal against the Cowra Shire Land-use Strategy, the Cowra Local Strategic Planning Statement and the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025, all of which are endorsed by NSW Planning.

8.2.3 Is the planning proposal consistent with any other applicable State or Regional studies or strategies?

There are no specific State or Regional studies / strategies that are known to have applicability to this Planning Proposal.

8.2.4 Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?

Table 7 shows a list of the State Environmental Planning Policies that have applicability to land within the Cowra Local Government Area. Table 7 also includes an assessment about whether there are provisions within the each SEPP that need to be considered in relation to the Planning Proposal. Where it is identified that further assessment is required, this work is presented in the following pages.

Table 7 - Preliminary SEPP Assessment

Name of SEPP	Applicability	Further Assessment Warranted?
SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Sustainable Buildings) 2022	Not applicable	No

Name of SEPP	Applicability	Further Assessment Warranted?
SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Housing) 2021	Applicable	Yes
SEPP (Industry and Employment) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Planning Systems) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Primary Production) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Precincts - Central River City) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Precincts - Eastern Harbour City) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Precincts - Western Parkland City) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Precincts - Regional) 2021	Not applicable	No
SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021	Applicable	Yes
SEPP (Resources and Energy) 2021	Not applicable	No.
SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021	Not applicable	No

SEPP (Housing) 2021

This SEPP aims to enable the delivery of diverse housing types, encourage housing that meets the needs of more vulnerable members of the community, and promote the delivery of appropriately designed housing in appropriately planned locations. The Housing SEPP includes the planning provisions for:

- Boarding houses
- Built-to-rent housing

- Seniors housing
- Caravan parks and manufactured home estates
- Group homes
- Retention of existing affordable rental housing
- Secondary dwellings (granny flats)
- Social and affordable housing
- Short-term rental accommodation
- Design of quality residential apartment development

The Planning Proposal relates to land in the East Cowra Growth Area which is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential. There is no proposal to change the range of permissible uses within the R5 Large Lot Residential zone. Development for the purposes of affordable housing, secondary dwellings, group homes, co-living housing, build-to-rent housing, and housing for seniors and people with a disability will remain permissible in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone.

The Planning Proposal will not create any inconsistencies with the Housing SEPP 2021.

SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

This SEPP contains planning provisions for land use planning within the coastal zone and for managing hazardous and offensive development. The SEPP requires that a consent authority must consider the contamination potential of the land, and if the land is contaminated, it is satisfied that the land is suitable for the development in its contaminated state, or that appropriate arrangements have been made to remediate the site prior to the development being carried out.

Section 2.2 of the Planning Proposal includes an analysis of the existing land-use activities which are carried out on land within the East Cowra Growth Area. The analysis shows that residential land-use predominates and there are only a few specific sites where non-residential land-use is occurring, none of which are cause for concern about contamination risk. On the basis of this land-use analysis, contamination risk within the East Cowra Growth Area is not considered to be a significant issue. Furthermore, as the Planning Proposal is not seeking to change the permissibility of land-use within the East Cowra Growth Area, the need for additional studies relating to potential land contamination is not considered to be necessary.

8.2.5 Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (Section 9.1 Directions)?

An assessment of the Planning Proposal against each Section 9.1 Ministerial Direction is included as follows.

Focus Area 1 - Planning Systems

Direction 1.1 - Implementation of Regional Plans

The Direction applies to the Planning Proposal as it relates to land to which the Central West and Orana Regional Plan applies. The Direction requires the Planning Proposal to be consistent with the requirements of the Central West and Orana Regional Plan.

A detailed assessment against the Regional Plan is included in Section 8.2 of this Planning Proposal. No inconsistencies have been identified.

Direction 1.2 - Development of Aboriginal Land Council Land

The Direction does not apply to the Planning proposal as it does not relate to any land that is shown on the Land Application Map of chapter 3 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021.

Direction 1.3 - Approval and referral requirements

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals. The Direction generally requires that the Planning Proposal must not include provisions which require concurrence, consultation or referral of Development Applications to a Minister of public authority without prior approval.

The proposed changes to Cowra LEP 2012 will not change any existing consultation or concurrence obligations for Council in assessing a future Development Application for the land. The Planning Proposal is assessed to be consistent with Ministerial Direction 1.3.

Direction 1.4 - Site specific provisions

The Direction applies when a Planning Proposal will allow a particular development to be carried out.

Direction 1.4(1) does not apply because the Planning Proposal does not include a request to introduce or change the permissibility of a land-use on any of the existing zonings that affect the subject land.

Direction 1.4(2) requires that the Planning Proposal must contain or refer to drawings that show details of the proposed development. The Planning Proposal is assessed to be consistent with Ministerial Direction 1.4(2).

Focus Area 1 - Planning Systems - Place Based

Ministerial Directions 1.5 to 1.22 have no applicability to the subject land. Further consideration is not considered to be necessary.

Focus Area 2 - Design and Place

This Focus Area was blank when the Directions were made.

Focus Area 3 - Biodiversity and Conservation

Direction 3.1 - Conservation Zones

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals.

Direction 3.1(1) requires that the Planning Proposal must include provisions that facilitate the protection and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas.

Direction 3.1(2) requires that the Planning Proposal must not reduce the conservation standards that apply to the land.

The Planning Proposal is not inconsistent. There are no changes to existing conservation zones and no proposal to change any of the existing standards in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 which are designed to facilitate conservation measures.

Direction 3.2 - Heritage Conservation

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals.

Direction 3.2(1) requires that the Planning Proposal must contain provisions that facilitate the conservation of any environmental heritage items identified in a study of the environmental heritage of the area, Aboriginal objects or places protected under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 or identified by an Aboriginal heritage survey prepared by or on behalf an Aboriginal Land Council, Aboriginal body or public authority.

The planning proposal is assessed to be consistent with this Ministerial Direction for the following reasons:

- The Planning Proposal does not impact specifically on any known items of Aboriginal significance.
- The subject land is not mapped in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 as containing any items of environmental heritage significance.
- The suitability of the land for large lot residential purposes has already been established by the existing zoning framework in the Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

- The Planning Proposal does not change, alter or reduce any of the existing provisions in Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012 which facilitate the protection and conservation of heritage areas. Clause 5.10 would continue to apply to any future development on the land, and provides an appropriately regulatory framework for the assessment of heritage issues and matters as part of a Development Application to Cowra Council.

Direction 3.3 - Sydney Drinking Water Catchments

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect land in any of the Local Government Areas located within the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment.

Direction 3.4 - Application of C2 and C3 zones and Environmental Overlays in Far North Coast LEPs.

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect land on the New South Wales Far North Coast.

Direction 3.5 - Recreation Vehicle Areas

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals. Direction 3.5(1) requires that a Planning Proposal must not enable land to be developed for the purposes of a recreation vehicle area where:

- The land is within a conservation zone,
- The land comprises a beach or a dune adjacent to or adjoining a beach.
- The land is not within an area or zone referred to in paragraphs (a) or (b) unless the relevant planning authority has taken into consideration the provisions of the guidelines entitled Guidelines for Selection, Establishment and Maintenance of Recreation Vehicle Areas, Soil Conservation Service of New South Wales, September, 1985, and
- The provisions of the guidelines entitled Recreation Vehicles Act 1983, Guidelines for Selection, Design, and Operation of Recreation Vehicle Areas, State Pollution Control Commission, September 1985.

The planning proposal is assessed to be consistent with this Ministerial Direction as there are no planned changes to the permissibility of a Recreation Vehicle Area (currently prohibited) in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone under Cowra LEP 2012.

Direction 3.6 - Strategic Conservation Planning

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land that is identified as 'avoided land' or a 'strategic conservation area' under State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021.

Direction 3.7 - Public Bushland

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land in a prescribed Local Government Area.

Direction 3.8 - Willandra Lakes Region

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land identified as the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Property.

Direction 3.9 - Sydney Harbour Foreshores and Waterways area

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land within the Foreshores and Waterways Area.

Direction 3.10 - Water Catchment Protection

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land within a regulated catchment.

Focus Area 4 - Resilience and Hazards**Direction 4.1 – Flooding**

The Direction applies to the Planning Proposal as it relates to some land which is located within the flood planning area.

Direction 4.1(1) requires that the planning proposal must include provisions that give effect to and are consistent with:

- The NSW Flood Prone Land Policy,
- The principles of the Floodplain Development Manual 2005,
- The Considering flooding in land use planning guideline 2021, and
- Any adopted flood study and/or floodplain risk management plan prepared in accordance with the principles of the Floodplain Development Manual 2005 and adopted by the relevant council.

Direction 4.1(2) requires that the planning proposal must not rezone land within the flood planning area from Recreation, Rural, Special Purpose or Conservation Zones to a Residential, Employment, Mixed Use, W4 Working Waterfront or Special Purpose zone.

Direction 4.1(3) requires that the planning proposal must not contain provisions that apply to the flood planning area which:

- a. Permit development in flood-way areas,

- b. Permit development that will result in significant flood impacts to other properties,
- c. Permit development for the purposes of residential accommodation in high hazard areas,
- d. Permit a significant increase in the development and/or dwelling density of that land,
- e. Permit development for the purpose of centre-based childcare facilities, hostels, boarding houses, group homes, hospitals, residential care facilities, respite day care centres and seniors housing in areas where the occupants of the development cannot effectively evacuate,
- f. Permit development to be carried out without development consent except for the purposes of exempt development or agriculture. Dams, drainage canals, levees, still require development consent,
- g. Are likely to result in a significantly increased requirement for government spending on emergency management services, flood mitigation and emergency response measures, which can include but are not limited to the provision of road infrastructure, flood mitigation infrastructure and utilities, or
- h. Permit hazardous industries or hazardous storage establishments where hazardous materials cannot be effectively contained during the occurrence of a flood event.

Direction 4.1(4) requires that a planning proposal must not contain provisions that apply to areas between the flood planning area and probable maximum flood to which Special Flood Considerations apply which:

- a. Permit development in floodway areas,
- b. Permit development that will result in significant flood impacts to other properties,
- c. Permit a significant increase in the dwelling density of that land,
- d. Permit the development of centre-based childcare facilities, hostels, boarding houses, group homes, hospitals, residential care facilities, respite day care centres and seniors housing in areas where the occupants of the development cannot effectively evacuate,
- e. Are likely to affect the safe occupation of and efficient evacuation of the lot, or
- f. Are likely to result in a significantly increased requirement for government spending on emergency management services, and flood mitigation and emergency response measures, which can include but not limited to road infrastructure, flood mitigation infrastructure and utilities.

Section 2.8 of this Planning Proposal provides an analysis of flood impact relating to the East Cowra Growth Area. Figure 8 shows that the majority of the East Cowra Growth Area exists outside of the extent of mapping completed in the Cowra and Gooloogong Floodplain Risk Management Plan 2006. Based on historic flood events and local knowledge, there are some parts of the East Cowra Growth Area which are known to be impacted by flooding in a 1% AEP or Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) including:

- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Waugoola Creek.

- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Lachlan River.
- Land that directly adjoins the banks of the Binni Creek.

Certain affected land may be unsuitable for new subdivision / housing development due to localised flood constraint and subsequent limitations posed by existing development standards relating to floor levels and safe standards of access. The remaining (majority) areas of the East Cowra Growth Area are not impacted by flooding and are suitable for new housing development and intensifications of land-use through new subdivisions. No rezoning is proposed.

The Planning Proposal is consistent with all of the requirements of Ministerial Direction 4.1. As the proposal does not seek to allow the subdivision of land below 2 hectares (being the existing minimum lot size that can be achieved with connection to reticulated water supply), there will be no practical increase in the dwelling density permitted for the land.

Direction 4.2 – Coast Management

The Direction does not apply to the Planning proposal as it does not relate to any land that is within the coastal zone, as defined under the Coastal Management Act 2016 - comprising the coastal wetlands and littoral rain-forests area, coastal vulnerability area, coastal environment area and coastal use area - and as identified by chapter 2 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021.

Direction 4.3 Planning For Bushfire Protection

The Direction does not apply to the Planning proposal as it does not relate to any land that is mapped as bushfire prone.

Direction 4.4 – Remediation of Contaminated Land

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not propose any changes to the range of land-use activities currently permissible in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone under Cowra LEP 2012. There are also no changes proposed to the extent of the R5 Large Lot Residential zone.

Direction 4.5 – Acid Sulfate Soils

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to any land that is identified on the Acid Sulfate Soils Planning Maps held by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Direction 4.6 – Mine Subsidence and Unstable Land

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to any land that is within a declared mine subsidence district in the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Regulation 2017 pursuant to section 20 of the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017, or other land that has been identified as unstable in a study, strategy or other assessment undertaken by or on behalf of the relevant planning authority.

Focus Area 5 – Transport and Infrastructure**Direction 5.1 – Integrating Land Use and Transport**

The Direction applies to the Planning Proposal as it proposes to alter a provision relating to urban land, including land zoned for residential, employment, village or tourist purposes.

Direction 5.1(1) requires that the planning proposal must locate zones for urban purposes and include provisions that give effect to and are consistent with the aims, objectives and principles of:

- a. Improving Transport Choice – Guidelines for planning and development (DUAP 2001), and
- a. The Right Place for Business and Services – Planning Policy (DUAP 2001).

Section 2.7 of this Planning Proposal provides an analysis of the East Cowra Growth Area in terms of access, roads and transport. The analysis shows that the East Cowra Growth Area forms part of the urban area of the Cowra Township and is generally defined by Darbys Falls Road, Camp Road, Kangaroo Flat Road and Elouera Road. The Mid Western Highway and the Darbys Falls Roads form part of the classified road system and provide primary road connections back into the Cowra Township. The remaining network of roads throughout the East Cowra Growth Area are part of the local road system, which is owned and maintained by Cowra Shire Council and comprises a mix of sealed and gravel surface roads. The road network is in good condition, provides for a high standard of access to existing properties, and is generally suitable to accommodate residential expansion / intensification within the East Cowra Growth Area.

The East Cowra Growth Area is not serviced by a comprehensive active transport network, as the land is physically disconnected from the Cowra Urban Area.

The local public transportation systems service the East Cowra Growth Area including the local taxis and school bus runs.

The planning proposal is assessed to be consistent with this Ministerial Direction, having regard to the nature of the changes to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Direction 5.2 – Reserving Land for Public Purposes

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals.

Direction 5.2(1) requires that the planning proposal must not create, alter or reduce existing zonings or reservations of land for public purposes without the approval of the relevant public authority and the Planning Secretary (or an officer of the Department nominated by the Secretary). The planning proposal does not relate to land reserve for public purposes. The Planning Proposal is consistent with the requirements of the Ministerial Direction.

Direction 5.3 – Development Near Regulated Airports and Defence Airfields

This Direction does not apply as the Planning Proposal does not intend to create, alter or remove a zone or provision relating to land near a regulated airport (which includes a defence airfield).

Direction 5.4 – Shooting Ranges

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect, create, alter or remove a zone or a provision relating to land adjacent to and/ or adjoining an existing shooting range.

Direction 5.5 – High pressure dangerous goods pipelines

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not permit development for one or more of the specified uses in the application area of relevant pipelines. The proposal does not intend to rezone and none of the specified uses are permitted in the existing R5 Large Lot Zone. The R5 zone also does not permit development that may result in a significant population increase, as per pipelines guidelines.

Focus Area 6 - Housing**Direction 6.1 – Residential Zones**

This direction applies to the Planning Proposal as it will affect land within an existing or proposed residential zone, which includes the R5 Large Lot Residential zone.

Direction 6.1(1) requires the planning proposal must

- a. Broaden the choice of building types and locations available in the housing market, and
- b. Make more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, and
- c. Reduce the consumption of land for housing and associated urban development on the urban fringe, and
- d. Be of good design

Direction 6.1(2) requires the planning proposal must,

- a. Contain a requirement that residential development is not permitted until land is adequately serviced (or arrangements satisfactory to the council, or other appropriate authority, have been made to service it), and
- b. Not contain provisions which will reduce the permissible residential density of land.

The Planning Proposal is consistent with all of the requirements of Ministerial Direction 6.1, and in particular:

- c. The Planning Proposal reinforces the East Cowra Growth Area as a strategic area for housing growth in the Cowra Township. There is no proposal to change the zoning of the land. The R5 Large Lot Residential will continue to apply to the East Cowra Growth Area, and this zone currently permits a range of residential building types.
- d. Section 1.2.2 of this Planning Proposal provides further details on the East Cowra Water Augmentation Project. The cost implications and anticipated time frame for the delivery of this infrastructure project means that the objectives and intended outcomes of the Planning Proposal will not be achieved in the short to medium term. A change to the minimum lot size provisions is proposed in order to ensure that growth and development in East Cowra is not compromised by long-term infrastructure provisioning.
- e. The proposed minimum lot size changes to the R5 Large Lot Residential zone in the East Cowra Growth Area will reduce the consumption of land for housing and associated urban development on the urban fringe by enabling development in already zoned locations.
- f. The Planning Proposal seeks to demonstrate that the East Cowra Growth Area is suitable for subdivision and housing growth on the basis that Council will continue working towards the staged provision of water supply infrastructure to this location.
- g. The Planning Proposal does not reduce the permissible residential density of land. The minimum lot size changes will instead increase the permissible density.

On the basis of the above, the Planning Proposal is consistent with the requirements of Ministerial Direction 6.1.

Direction 6.2 – Caravan Parks and Manufactured Home Estates

The Direction applies to all Planning Proposals.

Direction 6.2(1) requires that a Planning Proposal must retain provisions that permit development for the purposes of a caravan park to be carried out on land, and retain the zonings of existing caravan parks.

The Planning Proposal does not propose to change the permissibility of caravan parks in the existing R5 Large Lot Residential. The Planning Proposal is not inconsistent with the requirements of Ministerial Direction 6.2.

Focus Area 7: Industry and Employment

Direction 7.1 – Employment Zones

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land within an existing or proposed Employment zone.

Direction 7.2 – Reduction in non-hosted short-term rental accommodation period

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to within the Bryon Shire Council.

Direction 7.3 – Commercial and Retail Development along the Pacific Highway, North Coast

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to within those council areas on the North Coast that the Pacific Highway traverses.

Focus Area 8: Resources and Energy

Direction 8.1 – Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries

The Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it would not have the effect of:

- a. Prohibiting the mining of coal or other minerals, production of petroleum, or winning or obtaining of extractive materials, or
- b. Restricting the potential development of resources of coal, other minerals, petroleum or extractive materials which are of State or regional significance by permitting a land use that is likely to be incompatible with such development.

Focus Area 9: Primary Production

Direction 9.1 – Rural Zones

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not relate to land within an existing or proposed rural zone.

Direction 9.2 – Rural Lands

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect land within an existing or proposed rural or conservation zone, or change the existing minimum lot size on land within a rural or conservation zone.

Direction 9.3 – Oyster Aquaculture

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect land within 'Priority Oyster Aquaculture Areas' and oyster aquaculture outside such an as identified in the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy (2006).

Direction 9.4 – Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast

This Direction does not apply to the Planning Proposal as it does not affect land within Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Kyogle Shire, Lismore City, Richmond Valley or Tweed Shire Local Government Areas.

8.3 Relationship to the strategic planning framework

8.3.1 Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected because of the proposal?

Section 2 of the Planning Proposal includes a desktop based environmental analysis of the land within the East Cowra Growth Area. Figure 12 shows the broader biodiversity features of the East Cowra Growth Area.

Mapped areas of sensitive biodiversity resources avoid most locations in East Cowra Growth Area and are instead focused along the important riparian zones of the Lachlan River, Waugoola Creek and Binni Creek. Urban vegetation occurs primarily along roadside environments (either as street trees or remnant vegetation) and as landscaped elements on private development lots.

Generally the East Cowra Growth Area is not considered to be a location of high biodiversity value, and development generally occurs without significant impact to flora and fauna resources.

There is a low likelihood of significant impacts on a critical habitat, threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats. The Planning Proposal is capable of proceeding without a more detailed impact statement being prepared. The lodgement of a DA with Council for new proposals on individual lots will provide further opportunity for relevant issues to be assessed by Council.

8.3.2 Are there any other likely environmental effects of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

Water

It is necessary that the Planning Proposal considers the environmental impacts of allowing intensification of residential growth and development in East Cowra without connection to a reticulated water supply. This issue was also considered in Section 4.7.3 of the Cowra Housing Strategy 2025.

Without connection to a reticulated water supply scheme, new dwellings would need to secure a domestic water supply using on-site rainwater collection techniques. The following research suggests on-site rainwater collection is a sustainable option for the R5 zone in the interim period between now and the delivery of the East Cowra Augmentation Project:

- Cowra's climate is typified by warm summers and cool winters. The long term (1889-2023) average annual rainfall for Cowra is 595mm per annum and is evenly spread. Generally, the LGA experiences a safe and reliable amount of rainfall, which makes it suitable for rainwater harvesting, and dependable for securing residential water supplies.

- According to Water NSW, the maximum harvestable water rights for a land holding are calculated based on 10% of the average annual regional rainfall runoff. Using the methodology, the harvestable water rights for a land holding of 2 hectares in the Cowra Shire is calculated to be 0.13 megalitres, or 130,000 litres per annum.
- In addition to harvesting surface water, land holdings in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone have options to secure rainwater supply utilising on-site rainwater collection, and groundwater bores for stock and domestic purposes (subject to appropriate permits / licences).
- Based on Cowra's average rainfall data, and accounting for a typical roof area of 380m² connected to at least 77,000 litres of rainwater tank storage, a household in Cowra LGA can harvest 230,000 litres of water annually. These calculations account for the storage being emptied and refilled three times per year.
- If new dwellings are required to install a minimum of 120,000 litres of on-site rainwater storage, this would represent an additional 40,000 litres of storage compared to the calculations above on a smaller tank. This also reflects projections for the region's annual average rainfall due to climate change, which range from a decrease (drying) of 12% to an increase (wetting) of 11% by 2030 and still span both wetting and drying scenarios (-10% to 22%) by 2070.

Cowra Council has recently implemented Cowra Council DCP 2026. As part of the DCP review process, Council changed the standards and controls for new dwellings in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone in East Cowra to ensure sufficient on-site rainwater collection storage is provided for land that is not connected to a reticulated water supply, based on the information above. Minimum tank size controls will be 90,000 litres, ranging to 120,000 for a 4-bedroom plus dwelling.

Effluent Management

The East Cowra Growth Area is not connected to reticulated sewerage and as a result, dwelling development in this location of Cowra relies on on-site effluent disposal for the management of domestic waste.

The historic requirement for new subdivision lots in the East Cowra Growth Area to be at least 2 hectares in land area has resulted in sustainable on-site effluent management practices. At 2 hectares, lots generally have a generous area with ample space for placement of residential and ancillary buildings, disposal systems (such as septic tanks or aerated wastewater treatment systems) and associated disposal / dispersal areas. At this density, there is also a reduced risk of system overload, cross-contamination between lots, and cumulative impacts on groundwater or surface water resources. The combination of low-density settlement patterns, suitable soils and minimal environmental constraints means that onsite effluent management disposal has remained an effective, low-cost and environmentally sustainable solution over time for the East Cowra Growth Area.

As the Planning Proposal is not seeking to allow subdivision development into lot sizes smaller than 2 hectares, there is unlikely to be an increase in environmental impact associated with the use of land for domestic effluent disposal.

Through the Development Application process, Council will continue to require new subdivision and / or dwelling proposals to demonstrate that sufficient land area and environmental conditions are in place to enable the sustainable on-site management of domestic waste. All future On Site Sewage Management Systems (OSSMS) will be accompanied by a site-specific Geotechnical Analysis report recommending the appropriate effluent management to manage any groundwater risk.

Other

Section 2 of this Planning Proposal includes a base line analysis of the existing environment relating to land within the East Cowra Growth Area. This analysis did not identify any issues that are of significant concern, or which could impact on the ongoing suitability of the East Cowra Growth for residential purposes. In summary:

- The East Cowra Growth Area is an established residential location of the Cowra Township.
- The East Cowra Growth Area is surrounded by land that is zoned and used primarily for agricultural purposes. Despite the existing interface between residential and agricultural land uses, there are no long-standing or significant ongoing land-use conflict issues occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area. The zoning framework for the land under Cowra LEP 2012 creates an expectation of residential land-use, and the planning standards and controls in the Cowra DCP 2026 enforce appropriate building line setbacks to the RUI zone.
- The topographical attributes of the East Cowra Growth Area have been examined and there are no location where residential development is unsuited due to steep topography, landslip risk or unstable landform.
- Parts of the East Cowra Growth are impacted by vulnerable groundwater systems connected to the nearby Lachlan River and Waugoola Creek (both of which are important components to the environmental function of the area). Water supply and sewage management are key impact areas that have already been considered in a previous section of this report. Due to the nature of the planned changes to Cowra LEP 2012, the Planning Proposal is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on vulnerable groundwater systems in proximity to the East Cowra Growth Area.
- European heritage is generally not a key matter for consideration for new development occurring within the East Cowra Growth Area. A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information System (AHIMS) maintained by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage indicates there are a small number of recorded sites located on private land holdings within the East Cowra Growth Area. Site specific examination of these sites is not proposed due to the nature of the planned changes to Cowra LEP 2012. In addition, Council has development assessment and consultation procedures in place to ensure the locations of these items are properly considered when new development is proposed.
- The East Cowra Growth Area forms part of the urban area of the Cowra Township and is generally defined by Darbys Falls Road, Camp Road, Kangaroo Flat Road and Elouera Road. The Mid Western Highway and the Darbys Falls Roads form part of the classified road system and provide primary road connections back into the Cowra Township. The remaining network of roads throughout the East Cowra Growth Area are part of the local road system, which is owned and maintained by Cowra Shire Council and comprises a mix of sealed and gravel surface roads. The road network is in good condition, provides for a high standard of access to existing properties, and is generally suitable to accommodate residential expansion / intensification within the East Cowra Growth Area.

- A review of the NSW Rural Fire Service Bushfire Prone Land maps shows that the East Cowra Growth Area is not impacted by bushfire risk. Subject to site specific investigations, new development (subdivision and / or dwellings) within the East Cowra Growth Area are not required to comply with the requirements of the NSW Planning for Bushfire Protection guideline.
- The East Cowra Growth Area exists outside of the extent of mapping completed in the Cowra and Gooloogong Floodplain Risk Management Plan 2006. Based on historic flood events and local knowledge, there are some parts of the East Cowra Growth Area which are known to be impacted by flooding in a 1% AEP or Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) including land that directly adjoins the banks of the Waugoola Creek, Lachlan River and Binni Creek. Certain affected land may be unsuitable for new subdivision / housing development due to localised flood constraint and subsequent limitations posed by existing development standards relating to floor levels and safe standards of access. The remaining (majority) areas of the East Cowra Growth Area are not impacted by flooding and are suitable for new housing development.

8.3.3 Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

Social Impact Assessment

An assessment of potential impacts of the Planning Proposal has been undertaken with regards to scoping methodology outlined in the Social Impact Assessment Guideline 2017 (SIA Guideline), published by the Department of Planning and Environment. Table 8 provides an assessment of the proposal against the criteria in the SIA Guideline.

Table 8 - Social Impact Assessment

Matters	Key links to social impacts	Risk of impact without action	Nature of impact	Assessment findings
Amenity				
Acoustic	Way of life	Unlikely	Negative	Acoustic impacts are unlikely to result from the PP
Visual	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	The PP will not alter the existing residential setting of the East Cowra Growth Area.
Odour	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	Acoustic impacts are unlikely to result from the PP
Micro-climate	Surroundings	Unlikely	Nil	The PP will not significantly impact micro climate
Access				
Access to property	Way of life	N/A	Nil	The PP will not impact on access to property

Matters	Key links to social impacts	Risk of impact without action	Nature of impact	Assessment findings
Utilities and public transport	Access to infrastructure, services and facilities	Likely.	Negative	Cowra Council has identified the provision of a water supply scheme to East Cowra as a longer term proposition. The PP is required as an interim measure to ensure residential growth is not restricted by infrastructure capacity.
Road and rail	Personal and property rights	Unlikely	Negative	The East Cowra Growth Area has a suitable standard of access. Rail is not identified as a key issue
Built Environmental				
Public domain	Community	Unlikely	Nil	The PP will not impact the public domain. Residents in East Cowra have adequate access to public recreation land in nearby Cowra Township.
Public infrastructure	Access to infrastructure, services and facilities	Unlikely	Negative	Cowra Council has identified the provision of a water scheme to East Cowra as a long term proposition. The PP is required as an interim measure to ensure residential growth is not restricted by infrastructure capacity.
Other built assets	Surroundings; Personal and property rights	Unlikely	Nil	The PP will not preclude public access to built assets
Heritage				
Natural	Way of life	Unlikely	Nil	Natural heritage is not compromised by the PP
Cultural	Community	Unlikely	Negative	The PP will not impact on cultural values in the public domain
Aboriginal culture	Culture	Unlikely	Negative	The PP has considered the likelihood that the land contains items of Aboriginal cultural significance. Impacts are unlikely

Matters	Key links to social impacts	Risk of impact without action	Nature of impact	Assessment findings
Built	Surroundings	Unlikely	Nil	There are no built heritage items located within the East Cowra Growth Area.
Community				
Health	Health and wellbeing	Unlikely	Nil	The PP is unlikely to generate impacts
Safety	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	Environmental hazards have been identified and assessed. The PP has been assessed as not increasing a known safety risk
Services and facilities	Way of life, Access to infrastructure, services and facilities	Likely	Negative	Cowra Council has identified the provision of a water supply scheme to East Cowra as a medium to long term proposition requiring staging. The PP is required as an interim measure to ensure residential growth is not restricted by Council's ability to provide water supply infrastructure as an immediate / short term priority.
Cohesion, capital and resilience	Way of life; Community; Culture	Unlikely	Nil	The PP is unlikely to generate impacts
Housing	Way of life, Personal and property rights	Likely	Negative	The PP will facilitate a planning outcome that is likely to create new housing opportunities for Cowra. Positive impacts are likely to result
Economic				
Natural resource area	Way of life	Unlikely	Nil	The PP is unlikely to generate impacts
Livelihood	Surroundings	Unlikely	Nil	The PP is unlikely to generate impacts

Matters	Key links to social impacts	Risk of impact without action	Nature of impact	Assessment findings
Opportunity cost	Personal and property rights	Unlikely	Negative	The net benefit of the PP in providing opportunities for new housing allotments outweighs the utilisation of building costs and resources
Air				
Air emissions	Surroundings	Unlikely	Nil.	The PP is unlikely to generate impacts
Biodiversity				
Native vegetation and fauna	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	Vegetation clearing is not proposed
Land				
Structural stability, land capability, topography	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	The PP has demonstrated that the MLS changes to the East Cowra Growth Area will facilitate a planning outcome that is within the environmental capability of the land
Water				
Quality, availability, hydrological flows	Surroundings	Unlikely	Negative	The PP has demonstrated that the MLS changes to the East Cowra Growth Area will facilitate a planning outcome that is within the environmental capability of the land

Economic Impact Assessment

Section 1.2.2 of the Planning Proposal provides an overview of the East Cowra Water Project including details of the financial implications to Cowra Council and the local community of providing a water supply scheme to service the East Cowra Growth Area.

The augmentation of a reticulated water supply to service the East Cowra Growth Area is an expensive infrastructure project, with cost estimates indicating a total capital investment value in the order of **\$6.6M**. Funding of the project is heavily dependent on State Government subsidy. The infrastructure project is likely to require a longer-term financial commitment from Cowra Council.

The provision of a water supply scheme to the remaining parts of the East Cowra Growth Area remains to be supported by Cowra Council as an important infrastructure project. Notwithstanding, the time-frame for delivery of the project is likely to mean that the objectives and intended outcomes of this Planning Proposal will not be achieved in the short to medium term. A change to existing minimum lot size provisions is proposed in order to ensure that growth and development within the East Cowra Growth Area is not compromised by long-term infrastructure provisioning.

8.4 Infrastructure (Local, State and Commonwealth)

8.4.1 Is there adequate public infrastructure for the Planning Proposal

Section 3.2 of this Planning Proposal includes an environmental analysis of the East Cowra Growth Area including base-line assessment of public infrastructure including roads, stormwater, sewerage and water supply.

The East Cowra Growth Area is an established location of the Cowra Township, with subdivision and housing growth occurring in this area since at least 1990 when the land was originally rezoned for rural residential purposes. There is capacity in existing public infrastructure to support further subdivision and housing growth, except that the provision of a reticulated water supply requires a longer term financial commitment from Cowra Council. Further details regarding the East Cowra Water Project is included in Section 1.2.2 of this Planning Proposal.

Council has the following contributions plans in place which apply to the East Cowra Growth Area,

- Cowra S7.11 Contributions Plan 2026. This plan applies to new subdivision and (certain) dwelling proposals and levies contributions towards open space, civic and community facilities and transport infrastructure.
- Cowra S7.12 Contributions Plan 2026. This plan applies generally to any new development with a cost estimate exceeding \$100K and levies contributions towards open space, civic and community facilities and transport infrastructure.
- Cowra Developer Servicing Plan for Water Supply Services 2008. The plan applies to new subdivision and (certain) dwelling proposals and levies contributions towards the supply and maintenance of water supply infrastructure across the shire, including trunk and supply mains to land in the East Cowra Growth Area.

With the exception of a reticulated water supply, there is capacity in existing public infrastructure to support further subdivision and housing growth in the East Cowra Growth Area.

The East Cowra Growth Area is land to which the proposed Cowra Council Section 7.12 Contributions Plan 2026 will apply. The payment of a Section 7.12 Contribution Levy will be required in connection with the future construction on the land, with contributions payable as a fixed percentage on the cost of development.

The analysis has not identified any significant infrastructure related issues which are likely to result from the planning outcomes that are to be facilitated by this Planning Proposal.

8.5 State and Commonwealth Interests

8.5.1 What are the views of state and federal public authorities and government agencies consulted in order to inform the Gateway determination?

State Government Interests

Given the East Cowra Growth Area contains land that is mapped in Cowra LEP 2012 as having vulnerable groundwater, Council has begun consulting with the NSW Office of Water. It is envisioned this would continue as part of the public exhibition of the Planning Proposal and as per recommendation from NSW Planning. Feedback, if any, can be conditioned as part of the Gateway Determination/

The Planning Proposal is unlikely to be of interest to most other State Government agencies. Council will however complete consultation with specific agencies if this is conditioned in the Gateway Determination issued by NSW Planning.

Federal Government Interests

Due to the nature of the Planning Proposal, Federal Government interests are expected to be limited. The Planning Proposal relates to a matter that is of local planning significance.



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PLANNING PROPOSAL PART FOUR

Plan Making Guidance – Part 4

The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines provides the following guidance:

- Mapping must be consistent with the Department's Standard Technical Requirements for Spatial Datasets and Maps, using the same format, symbology, labeling and appropriate scale.
- All existing and proposed mapping submitted to the Department as part of a Planning Proposal should be accompanied by GIS data. All LEP mapping should commence as early as possible in GIS, particularly with complex planning proposals or Principal LEPs.
- Mapping may include the subject site and immediate surrounds, current zoning, current development standards and any alternative zones if a change is proposed.
- Other relevant maps or figures may include maps illustrating changes of development standards, extent of heritage conservation areas, location of specific heritage items, extent of native vegetation, extent of environmental conservation areas and areas to which a local provision will apply.
- Additional material such as aerial photographs clearly identifying the subject site should also be included where appropriate.

9.1 Project Mapping

This Planning Proposal has been prepared to include a number of different maps and visuals that:

- Show the location of the subject land both in terms of the immediately surrounding environment and the wider locality
- Demonstrate an understanding of the existing environmental conditions applying to the subject land.
- Shows the existing and proposed planning controls applying to the land under Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

The mapping presented in this Planning Proposal is adequate to enable assessment of the key issues by the Planning Proposal Authority (Cowra Council) and to enable the community to understand the scope of the proposed amendments to Cowra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

Cowra Shire Council will arrange for the preparation of final map datasets consistent with the Department's Standard Technical Requirements for Spatial Datasets and Maps.



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PLANNING PROPOSAL PART FIVE

Plan Making Guidance – Part 5

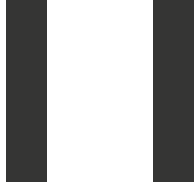
Plan Making Guidance - Part 5 The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines provides that Part 5 of the Planning should describe:

- Consultation and outcomes undertaken with council, state agencies or authorities during the pre-lodgement stage.
 - Any community consultation undertaken, or consultation with other key stakeholders
 - The extent of consultation having regard for the public exhibition requirements in Section 1 of the guideline.
 - The required public exhibition period based on the different planning proposal categories.
- Community consultation will be considered at the Gateway stage, with the Gateway determination confirming the requirements.
 - The Gateway determination may also specify additional information or studies to be finalised before any consultation commences, often to make sure that everyone can make an informed opinion. In some cases, the Gateway determination may require the PPA to submit studies to the Department for review prior to public exhibition.

10.1 Consultation

In accordance with the Cowra Community Participation Plan 2020, the Planning Proposal will require public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days, or any other period as might be specified in a Gateway Determination issued by NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

Cowra Shire Council will complete all tasks involved in the public exhibition of the Planning Proposal in accordance with the Cowra Community Participation Plan and any requirements of the Gateway Determination.



PLANNING PROPOSAL PART SIX

Plan Making Guidance – Part 6

The NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines provides that Part 6 of the Planning should describe the project timeline as a tool for the Planning Proposal Authority, the Department and the Parliamentary Counsel's Office to monitor the project through the LEP making process and manage resources accordingly.

As a minimum, the project timeline should describe:

- Anticipated commencement date (date of Gateway determination)
- Anticipated time frame to finalise the infrastructure studies/plan
- Anticipated time frame for completion of any additional technical studies, not completed prior to Gateway
- Time frame for public agency consultation
- Anticipated dates of public exhibition and, if required, a public hearing
- Time frame for submissions to be considered
- Time frame for the consideration of a proposal after the exhibition.
- Date the plan will be made (where council is the LPMA) or date of submission to the Department to finalise the LEP
- Date of notification

11.1 Project Timeline

An anticipated timeline has been developed for the project and is based on the maximum time frame recommendations provided in the NSW DPE Local Environmental Plan Making Guidelines for a Basic category Planning Proposal.

The timeline is estimated in Figure 14. The Planning Proposal is deemed to fall into the Basic Planning Proposal Category.

Figure 14 - Planning Proposal - Project Timeline

