



**FEDERATION  
COUNCIL**



**FEDERATION COUNCIL  
DRAFT LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING  
STATEMENT 2020-2040**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Federation Council wish to acknowledge Aboriginal people traditional owners of this land. Through thoughtful and collaborative planning we seek to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

**WARNING:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this document may contain images of people who have died.



# 01 FORWARD

The Federation Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) defines the land-use planning priorities for the council area, which was created by the merger of the former council areas of Corowa Shire Council and Urana Shire Council in 2016.

The planning statement will direct the land use planning and development within Federation Council and links to Council's Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 and the Murray Riverina Regional Plan.

The statement acknowledges the strengths of the Federation Council area and provides clear planning framework on how the strengths can be built on while maintaining the lifestyle enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.



# 04

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

05	What Is A Local Strategic Planning Statement?	5
05	Purpose of this statement?	5
05	Policy Context	5
06	Consultation	6
06	Monitoring and Reporting	6
07	Our Unique Council	7
08	Planning for the Future - <b>Our Opportunities, Our Challenges</b>	8
09	Vision	9
10	Planning Priority 1: <b>Consistent Approach To Land Use Planning</b>	10
12	Planning Priority 2: <b>Rural Areas</b>	12
14	Planning Priority 3: <b>Town and Villages</b>	14
16	Planning Priority 4: <b>A Strong Economy</b>	16
18	Planning Priority 5: <b>A Healthy Environment</b>	18
20	Planning Priority 6: <b>Infrastructure</b>	20
22	Planning Priority 7: <b>Resilience And Natural Hazards</b>	22
23	Planning Priority 8: <b>Protecting Heritage Values</b>	23

# WHAT IS A LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT?

05

The Federation Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is a planning tool that provides direction for land use in the Federation Council area through to 2040.

The LSPS builds on and consolidates an array of strategies and policies that identify desirable land use outcomes for the Federation Council area. It includes planning priorities, strategic directions and actions that will guide decisions about how land will be used. The LSPS is primarily informed by the Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 and the Federation Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028.

## Purpose

The LSPS documents future land use intentions for Federation Council area and provides clarity on the types of development that are likely to be supported by Council in certain areas and those that may not. The document's purpose is to:

- Provide a 20-year vision for land use in the Federation Council area
- Identify planning priorities for the next 20 years
- Identify shared values to be maintained and enhanced
- Outline the characteristics that make our area special
- Direct how future development will be managed
- Identify any required changes to planning provisions in the current planning instruments
- Identify areas where further strategic planning is required.

## Policy Context

This LSPS has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.9 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (Figure 1). The LSPS will inform changes to planning controls within Council's local environmental plan and other relevant documents. NSW Government agencies will also use the LSPS to inform their future planning and service delivery to support local communities.

Monitoring and reporting of the LSPS will be undertaken through the local government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.



**Figure 1:** Role of the Local Strategic Planning Statement: Strategic-led planning framework.

**Source:** Department of planning and Environment, 2018, LSPS Guideline for Councils

## Consultation

From August 2019 until February 2020 Community consultation was undertaken to inform the preparation of the new Federation Local Environmental Plan. This consultation has been used to inform the preparation of the Federation Local Strategic Planning Statement. Consultation included face to face community session, online survey and an expression of interest period for the consideration of rezoning land within the Federation Council area.

In addition, consultation undertaken to prepare Council's Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 – Our Community, Our Opportunity was also used to inform the LSPS.

For a month over May/June 2020, a draft of this Statement was publicly exhibited. A small number of submissions were received and considered as part of this finalisation of the LSPS.

## Monitoring And Reporting

The LSPS will be implemented through amendments to the local environmental plan and other Council documents. Future strategic land use planning work programs will be prioritised in accordance with the adopted planning priorities and actions of the LSPS.

The LSPS is subject to review every 5-7 years, in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

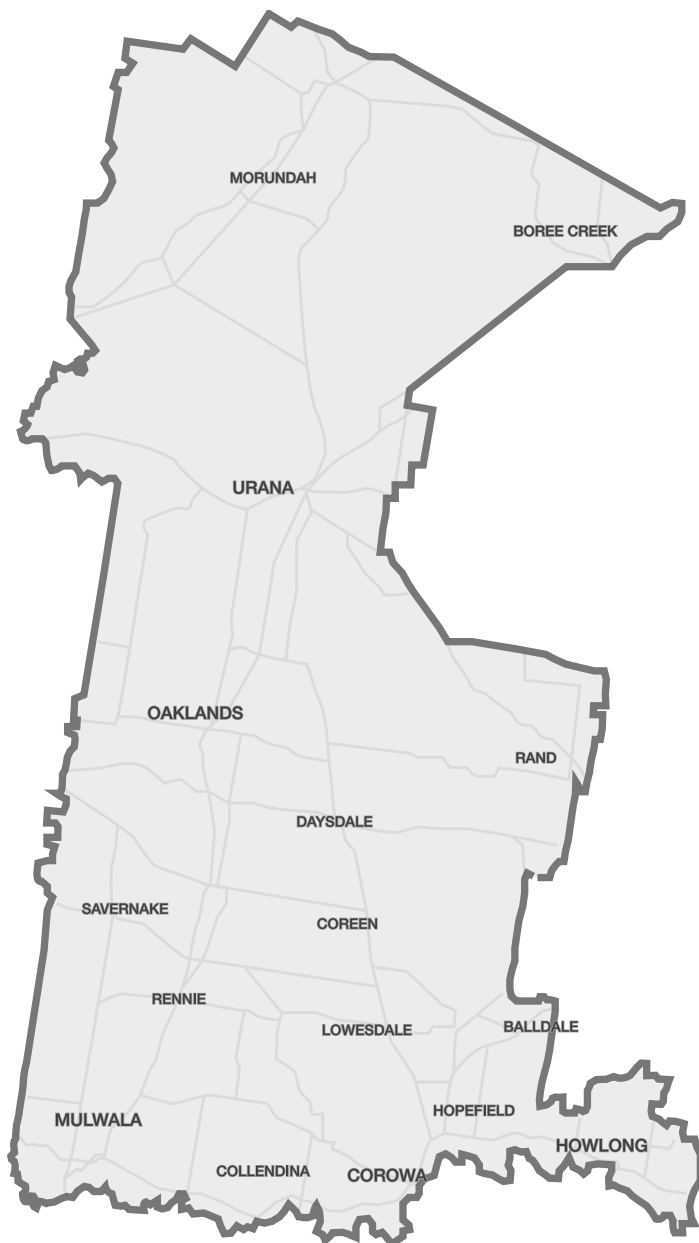
LSPS actions are allocated to a short, medium or long term implementation timeframe: this corresponds to 1-2 years, 3-5 years, and 6+ years respectively.

Council will use the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework to report on the implementation of the LSPS.



# Our Unique Shire

07



Federation Council is in the heart of the Riverina and the Murray Regions, on the nationally significant Murray River. It is home to the local centres of Corowa, Howlong, Mulwala and Urana and the towns and localities of Balldale, Boree Creek, Buraja-Lowesdale, Coreen, Daysdale, Morundah, Oaklands, Rand, Rennie and Savernake. Parts of Federation are very close to the regional city of Albury (Howlong and Corowa are 30km and 57km respectively). Other parts also have good access to the regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Griffith in NSW and Wangaratta in Victoria.

In 2016, the Federation local government area was home

to 12,450 people, most of whom live in Corowa, Mulwala and Howlong. These three settlements are located on the Murray River, and two of those share cross border communities with Victoria - Mulwala/Yarrowonga and Corowa/Wahgunyah. These communities are separated only by the Murray River. They operate together with services, commerce, infrastructure and employment provided on either side of the river. Melbourne, Victoria is approximately 3 hours drive from the Murray River towns in the Council area.

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment projects that the population of Federation Council area will reduce over the next 25 years by more than 2,000 people. Of Federation's twin towns on the Murray River, the Victorian Government projects both Wahgunyah and Yarrowonga in Victoria to grow in the next 20 years, while the NSW Government projects that Corowa and Mulwala will not. Both Shepparton in Victoria (approximately 1 hour away from Mulwala) and Albury/Wodonga (20mins-1 hour from the three river towns) are projected to grow by 24% and 37% respectively over the next 20 years. The projected strong growth in nearby regional centres and neighbouring border towns presents opportunities for Federation Shire to capture some growth from those communities to prevent decline and grow the LGA.

In 2016, 27% of Federation's population was aged 65 years and over. This is significantly higher than the regional NSW average which was 20.4%. Federation's ageing population is projected to increase to over 34% by 2041. The ageing population of the existing community and the attractiveness of the area for retirees will continue to present land use planning challenges and opportunities into the future.

Federation Council area is primarily a rural shire with established Murray River-based tourism and an extensive agriculture industry. It is host to an array of small-to medium-sized enterprises in tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. Major industries include agricultural machinery sales and services, munitions production, military facilities, cropping, food processing and tourism. These industries also result in more freight transport and tourism businesses, which together contributed an estimated \$560 million to the region's gross regional product in 2013. Economic diversification continues to create local and regional business and job opportunities.

# 08

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The population of Federation Council area is forecast to reduce over the next 20 years. Planning for future land use is complex and required careful consideration of what we want to protect and what we are willing to change. These considerations need to be made in the context of the community's likely future needs and broader trends in relation to recreation, employment, housing and goods and service provision. It involves land use planning to integrate social connection, residential needs and economic development, existing character and protecting the natural environment.

## OUR OPPORTUNITIES

By 2030, it is forecast that four of the world's largest economies will be based in Asia (China, Japan, India and Indonesia). Through access to Melbourne Airport, significant opportunities exist for farmers and manufacturers to access these markets and establish the area as a quality regional brand. The area is well placed with strategic transport linkages to Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and Brisbane, including proximity to the future Inland Rail, ensuring that local produce and products can easily reach national and international markets.

Changing social and economic values and lifestyles provides great opportunities for the area to capitalise on its strategic locations near regional centres and Melbourne. The roll out of high-speed internet allows a range of employers and employees to make lifestyle and business decisions that are not tied to traditional employment arrangements. Federation Council area's location on and near the Murray River provides a picturesque rural and semi-rural lifestyle in a range of locations to take advantage of these opportunities.

## OUR CHALLENGES

- Distance and connectivity to markets/major population centres
- Development pressure along the Murray River
- Economic growth and diversification
- Extensive infrastructure network to service small, dispersed population
- Climate resilience and adaptation
- Accommodating and servicing the ageing population
- Low rate of development
- Retaining working aged people
- Maintaining town centre vibrancy





# VISION

09

Over the next 20 years Federation Council will leverage the area's agricultural strengths to generate economic and social growth opportunities that continue to recognise the underlying agricultural value and rural strengths of the area. Agriculture and tourism will continue to drive prosperity in Federation Council area, capitalising on favourable climate conditions and fertile soils. Important agricultural and resource lands will be valued and protected. Local, regional, state and national freight networks, which provide access to national and international markets are fundamental for the success of agriculture and partnerships with industry and other levels of government will be formed to continue to effectively deliver infrastructure to support the sector.

Federation Council area will continue to recognize the importance of the regional cities of Albury, Wodonga, Wagga Wagga, Wangaratta and Shepparton (in Victoria) and the community's ability to access higher level services, such as higher education, health services and employment. Recognising and enhancing this connection will be a key driver to the success of Federation Council area. It will continue to collaborate with Victorian and NSW neighbours and it will create an 'open-for-business' culture to actively identify and promote the things that differentiate Federation Council area from cross-border neighbours.

The towns and villages of the area will capitalise on growth opportunities, so they continue to service rural communities. They will offer a variety of housing choice

to retain the ageing population but will also provide an alternate rural lifestyle that will attract people to the area. As the towns continue to support new growth, the economic base will diversify. Townships will be vibrant active places to visit and live providing a variety of basic economic and community services, within a rural heritage town setting, resilient to effects of climate change.

Federation Council area's natural environment will fully be understood and appreciated. Existing environmental assets, national parks, river and water bodies will be leveraged off, and there will be an opportunity to connect these areas through biodiversity corridors. Significant environmental areas adjoining development areas will be identified, understood and protected. New development areas will respect the environmental values and will also leverage off these features to make Federation a great place to live and visit.

Council will balance the drive for growth and prosperity with the need to secure high-value agricultural land and to protect culturally and environmentally significant areas for future generations. It will work with neighbouring Victorian and NSW areas to identify common challenges and solutions for our broader area.

The area's rich history underpins Council's valuable heritage assets, which include cultural heritage and physical heritage items. As a community, we will celebrate our heritage and acknowledge Indigenous connection to Country.



# PLANNING PRIORITY 1:

## Consistent Approach To Land Use Planning

10

Council is committed to providing strong leadership and governance supporting equity across communities and effective communication with residents. The land use planning system provides an opportunity for Federation Council to deliver on this outcome in line with Council's Community Strategic Plan. Currently, land use planning decisions are governed by two local environmental plans (LEPs) (Urana LEP 2011 and Corowa LEP 2012). These planning instruments provide development controls, land use permissibility and the lot sizes required for dwellings and subdivision. There are inconsistencies between the two documents which Council is committed to rectifying in the immediate future. In addition, cross border planning controls also need to be reviewed and aligned where possible to make development across the river towns in both states equitable.

To do this it is important to understand the individual characteristics of each town, rural and environmental areas across the Federation area. The actions and challenges identified through Planning Priorities 2-6 provide the strategic direction for each of these areas unique to the area. They identify future land use planning projects to ensure that Federation Council has a consistent approach to land use decisions whilst maintaining the character and integrity of particular areas and capitalising on their opportunities.

Heritage is important to a number of towns and villages within the council area as it provides the towns and villages with a sense of place and purpose. There are limited heritage listings and in the current local environmental plans. A review is required for all properties and locations listed. In addition, the local environmental plans do not include natural sites and significant Aboriginal sites located in the council area. One site that has been identified as having heritage significance from a geographical, geological and anthropological point of view is Lake Urana. Lake Urana is a significant geographical feature in the Council area and a known site of aboriginal significance.

### Land use Challenges:

- Understand the servicing needs of each of the towns and villages with a focus on water and sewer reticulation systems to inform changes to land use planning outcomes in the Federation Local Environmental Plan.
- Flooding impacts on towns and villages
- Heavy vehicle movement impacts on towns and villages and potential need for and by-pass routes.
- Multiple minimum lot sizes for dwellings in rural areas.
- Biodiversity requirements and limited available data.
- Cross-border issues.

### Future Directions

- Define Central business areas and surrounding mixed use zones to maintain the fabric and feel of our communities.
- Define the planning standards with flexibility to attract sustainable development.
- Master planning for our main towns and villages

### Actions:

- Develop a new Federation Local Environmental Plan. (Short-Medium Term)
- Develop a Land Use Strategy for the Council area, including the review of rural planning controls. (Medium Term)

**Linkages to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:**

- Direction 1:** Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land
- Direction 4:** Promote business activities in industrial and commercial areas
- Direction 7:** Promote tourism opportunities
- Direction 14:** Manage land uses along key river corridors
- Direction 15:** Protect and manage the region's many environmental assets
- Direction 22:** Promote the growth of regional cities and local centres
- Direction 24:** Create a connected and competitive environment for cross-border communities
- Direction 25:** Build housing capacity to meet demand
- Direction 26:** Provide greater housing choice
- Direction 27:** Manage rural residential development
- Direction 28:** Deliver healthy build environments and improved urban design
- Direction 29:** Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage



# PLANNING PRIORITY 2:

## Rural Areas

12

### Existing Situation

Federation Council area is well located and benefits from connections to the national freight network, favourable climate conditions and fertile soils to support a diverse agricultural sector. Agriculture output for 2015/2016 was \$346 million, with cereal crops accounting for 37% of the industry output. These industries account for 64.8% of Federation's 5,919 jobs. The settlement pattern is still defined by the large holdings in dry land areas and smaller holdings in the irrigation areas and river frontage areas.

Federation Council's economic drivers are Manufacturing, Transport and Warehousing, Agriculture, Construction, tourism & Retail and Trade with a total gross regional product of \$660 Million. Agriculture defines the predominant land use with 92% of the Council area zoned for agricultural purposes. Federation Council area is known for sheep grazing for lamb and wool production, grain production. The region around Corowa is the largest pork producer in NSW with the largest piggery feedmill and slaughtering facilities in the area: RIVLEA, a facility that employs 1200 people directly and indirectly. In addition, Corowa houses the 4th largest Sheep saleyards in NSW with direct links to the Sydney and Melbourne Markets.

In order to leverage these strengths and take advantage of growing demand for fresh, high quality produce, Council will protect important agricultural land. The New South Wales Government is preparing maps to identify important agricultural lands across the State. Managing emerging land uses and their potential land use conflicts and fragmentation of the land identified in the important agricultural land mapping will be a challenge for Federation Council. This planning priority reflects Council's aspirations to support its agricultural identity and to ensure a strong local economy that leverages the favourable climate and strategic connectivity to domestic and international markets via the regional freight route.

### Challenges for land use:

- Some agriculture is highly reliant on water access and irrigation which is vulnerable to changes in water allocation and prioritisation.
- Fodder production, grazing and other agricultural industries are sensitive to the physical impacts of climate change.
- Managing land use conflict between agricultural land users and adjoining non-agricultural land owners can be difficult.
- Managing development pressure, particularly in sensitive environments, such as along the Murray River and its environs.
- Consolidating planning controls across planning instruments post-amalgamation of councils into Federation Council to achieve consistency and equity across rural areas.

### Future Directions

- Protect large unbroken tracts of agricultural land and irrigable land along river valleys for future agricultural production.
- Promote and prioritise the 'right to farm' over residential purposes in rural areas.
- Encourage new farming and agribusiness on smaller parcels of agricultural land.
- Protect sensitive riverine environments.

### Actions

- Review the NSW DPIE Important Agricultural Land Mapping (or equivalent) to consider its application for protecting key agricultural land.
- Review planning controls to enable a diversified and productive agricultural sector and new agricultural industries without increasing fragmentation of identified high value agricultural land.
- Develop a new Federation Local Environmental Plan (Short term).
- Develop a land use strategy for the Federation Council area, including the review of rural planning controls (Short-Medium term).

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 1:** Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land

**Direction 2:** Promote and grow the agribusiness sector



# PLANNING PRIORITY 3:

## Towns And Villages

14

### Existing Situation

The Federation Council has many diverse communities from the rural service town and villages scattered through the landscape through to the twin towns along the Murray River.

Of Federation's twin towns on the Murray River, the Victorian Government projects both Wahgunyah and Yarrawonga in Victoria to grow in the next 20 years, while the NSW Government projects that Corowa and Mulwala will not. Both Shepparton in Victoria (approximately 1 hour away from Mulwala) and Albury/Wodonga (20mins-1 hour from the three river towns) are projected to grow significantly over the next 20 years. This presents opportunities for Federation Council area to capture some growth from those communities to prevent decline and grow the LGA.

The Federation community varies from town to town and village to village. Howlong and Mulwala are growing, while other towns and villages are not.

Mulwala's tourism industry is growing and the core of the town is limited to the east by Lake Mulwala and to the west by a defence facility and railway line. In addition, the town is experiencing a strong rate of growth and demand for housing. Further strategic planning will allow council to define suitable areas for growth and development with accompanying servicing plans to allow for the provision of key infrastructure.

Heritage is important to a number of towns and villages within the council area. There are limited heritage listings and in the current local environmental plans. A review is required for all properties and locations listed.

Lake Urana (covering approximately 6400 hectares) is yet to be fully studied, however the limited research that has been done identifies that it is a site of national significance. The importance of Lake Urana should be investigated and protected.

Three of Federation's towns are located on the Murray River and are therefore affected and restricted by its natural processes. There are also impacts on the River itself, its banks and on Lake Mulwala from recreational uses, such as boating, water skiing, structures (such as moorings and jetties) as well as impacts from urban runoff on water quality. All of federation Council's towns and villages are impacted by floodwater either by riverine flooding or overland flows. Council is currently completing the Floodplain Risk management Study and Plan for Boree Creek, Morundah, Oaklands, Rand and Urana. In 2019, Council completed a flood study for the village of Daysdale and it is about to commence work on a flood study for the urban areas of Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala. These studies will define the flood planning areas for the towns and villages and will afford greater protection and understanding of the impacts of flooding on these areas.

### Challenges for land use:

- The small population and low rate of growth results in a low rate of development, which means it can be hard to make significant short-term changes to the housing mix.
- Increased housing density and diversity, including support accommodation for seniors, is needed across the Council area to permit communities to stay intact as people move through various life stages.
- Improving the function, character and development opportunities in the business parts of Federation's main towns.
- Protecting agricultural land and areas of high environmental value from urban encroachment.
- Protecting the Murray River and its environs (including Lake Mulwala) from impacts associated with urban use and recreation.
- Providing appropriate and managed opportunities for urban and recreational use of land and water on and near the Murray River and its environs (including Lake Mulwala).
- Managing flood risks on urban development.

- Limited identification and protection of heritage items and values.

### Future Directions

- Ensure enough serviced residential land for population growth
- Increase diversity of housing
- Reinforce existing commercial centres
- Promote efficient use and provision of infrastructure and services
- Preserve agricultural land and areas of high environmental value
- Build in hazard protection and climate resilience
- Local new rural residential development close to existing urban areas and avoid or minimise potential for land use conflict with other land uses.

### Actions

- Provide for increased flexibility in planning controls to help attract and retain population in the area and rebuild the social fabric of the villages and surrounding rural areas in Federation Council. (Short term)
- Review housing needs and minimum lot sizes for dwellings within the urban areas. (Medium term)
- Review planning controls within the CBD of Mulwala to allow for increased development opportunities. (Medium term)
- Review heritage listings and heritage conservation areas within the Council area. (Medium term)
- Prepare a Master Plan for the future development of Mulwala. (Medium term)
- Review and look for opportunities to align planning controls for cross-border communities. (Long term)
- Update and review heritage listings to ensure the importance of sites and items are maintained within context. (Long term)
- Undertake further studies into the significance of Lake Urana in the history both geologically and anthropologically. (Long term)

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 1:** Promote the growth of regional cities and local centres

**Direction 23:** Build resilience in towns and villages.

**Direction 24:** Create a connected and competitive environment for cross-border communities

**Direction 25:** Build housing capacity to meet demand

**Direction 26:** Provide greater housing choice

**Direction 27:** Manage rural residential development

**Direction 29:** Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage



# PLANNING PRIORITY 4:

## A Strong Economy

# 16

### Existing Situation

Federation Council's economic drivers are Manufacturing, Transport and Warehousing, Agriculture, Construction, tourism & Retail and Trade with a total gross regional product of \$660 Million. Agriculture defines the predominant land use with 92% of the Council area zoned for agricultural purposes. The Council area is known for sheep grazing for lamb and wool production, grain production. The region around Corowa is the largest pork producer in NSW with the largest piggery feedmill and slaughtering facilities in the area: RIVLEA, a facility that employs 1200 people directly and indirectly. In addition, Corowa houses the 4th largest Sheep saleyards in NSW with direct links to the Sydney and Melbourne Markets.

The river towns on both sides of the NSW/Victorian border share not only services, but also employment. About 46% of the people living in Federation's three river towns of Howlong, Mulwala and Corowa work locally. Of the 10,400 people living in these towns, 13% travel to Albury/Wodonga for work and approximately 16% work across the border in other Victorian towns such as Yarrawonga, Wahgunyah and Wangaratta. There are also over 1000 Victorian residents that work in these NSW towns. The interconnectedness of these communities with other towns and cities is important for economic growth and opportunities.

Tourism is a growing industry for the region with increasing brand awareness and natural features such as the Murray River and the constructed Lake Mulwala being the main drawcards for visitors. In Federation Council area, over 600 people are employed either directly or indirectly by the tourism and hospitality industry. There has been a steady increase in the value of tourism and hospitality since 2013/14.

Infrastructure plays a key role in the economic viability and livability of our council area. Infrastructure such as railway lines, (used and disused) plus aerodromes and airstrips all are key to ensuring the economic and environmentally sustainability of the Council area.

The largest employer in Mulwala is Thales Australia, employing approximately 400 people. The facility at Mulwala is a munitions factory which has links to the munitions testing facility located near Oaklands. Both sites are important not only to the economy within the Council area but the security of Australia. In addition, there is a defence communications station receiver located approximately 15 km south east of Morundah.

Only two of the three military facilities within Federation have any form of planning controls in place, yet the sites are important not only to the regional economy but national security. Council is in the preliminary stages of improving the working relationship with one of facilities and it would be prudent to extend this to the other 2 sites to ensure that no planning controls prohibit the expansion or adversely impact on the operations at the sites.

### Challenges for land use:

- Provide opportunities for and capitalise on diversification and emerging industries.
- Managing land use conflicts between economic land uses and residential land uses.

### Future Directions

- Strengthen the position of the key economic drivers in the council area and facilitate diversification into additional and emerging business to improve the economic base and output of the council area.
- Ensure suitable opportunities are made available for different housing types, business, tourism, industry and agriculture. Provide suitable separation between land uses to ensure businesses are able to operate effectively without creating conflicts with other uses.



- Investigate opportunities arising from the Transgrid energy connect project to broaden the economic base of the council area.
- Ensure opportunities exist for areas near the Corowa piggery feed mill and slaughtering facility and sheep saleyards at for further development of associated ancillary businesses.

### Actions

- Define the CBD and mix use areas in all towns to allow for additional services within the towns to service the needs of our communities. (Short term)
- Review planning controls for tourist related development to aid in the diversification of the economic base of the Federation Council area. (Short term)
- Investigation into the proposed Transgrid Project Energy Connect in the north of the council area and the landuse changes required to maintain and establish businesses linked to this key piece of infrastructure. (Medium term)
- Improve relationship with the 3 military facilities in Federation to aid in maintaining existing businesses, employment and establish new businesses linked to these key pieces of infrastructure. (Long term)

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 1:** Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land

**Direction 2:** Promote and grow the agribusiness sector

**Direction 3:** Expand advance and value-added manufacturing

**Direction 4:** Promote business activities in industrial and commercial areas

**Direction 6:** Promote the expansion of education and training opportunities

**Direction 7:** Promote tourism opportunities

**Direction 10:** Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities.

**Direction 11:** Promote the diversification of energy supplies through renewable energy generation



# PLANNING PRIORITY 5:

## A Healthy Environment

18

### Existing Situation

Federation Council area is located in the heart of the Riverina along the Murray River. The waterways and forests of the River support unique ecosystems and attract visitors to the area for recreation and tourism. Our rivers and riverfront lands are attractive drawcards for residential, tourist, economic and recreational development. Access to healthy and functioning river systems is important for social and economic activity.

This historical and national significance of the Murray River has defined the settlement and development patterns of the entire Council area. The Murray River and Lake Mulwala are highly regulated sections of the river system.

Many significant areas of natural vegetation in the Federation Council area are important nodes of core habitat for threatened species and represent a range of endangered ecosystems. National Parks and Reserves are underrepresented in the area. This makes the patches of threatened species habitat on roadsides, rail reserves, riparian corridors, Travelling Stock Reserves and remnants on private land vital to the preservation of threatened species in the area.

### Challenges for land use:

- The ongoing challenge of land use implications of water and land being separated.
- Increasing trends for permanent plantings on the NSW side of the Murray River impacting riverine environments, water quality and access to water.
- Land use conflict between areas of high environmental value and recreational and/or urban land uses.
- Climate change implications, including increased risk of drought, flooding and storm events.

### Future Directions

- Protect and enhance the ecosystems within the waterways and riverine environment.
- Limit development in key environmentally significant sections of the waterway
- Advocate for the community in policy discussions surrounding water use controls.
- Limit the overall impact of recreational use and limit development to specific locations with strong planning controls to meet the objectives of protecting waterways and riverine areas.
- Advocate for equity in water sharing plans and the that cross border issues are defined for the 5 states and territories involved in the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

### Actions

- Review planning controls along waterways to ensure that development and agriculture along the waterways are clearly defined and appropriately managed. (Short term)
- Define natural waterways under the Federation Local Environmental Plan. (Short term)
- Define recreational waterways to limit the impact of recreation on overall waterways within Federation. (Medium term)

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 13:** Manage and Conserve water resources for the environment.

**Direction 14:** Manage land uses along key river corridors

**Direction 15:** Protect and manage the region's many environmental assets.



# PLANNING PRIORITY 6:

## Infrastructure

20

### Existing Situation

Infrastructure is critical to the proper functioning and wellbeing of the community both now and in the future. As the towns and villages continue to grow within Federation Council area, it is important to provide infrastructure in the right place at the right time. Understanding the current capacity and planned investments in utility infrastructure in the towns and villages will enable Council to capitalise on opportunities for economic and housing growth. Critical infrastructure investments will be identified so that growth is aligned with upgrades to town water, wastewater, electricity and telecommunication facilities. Aligning these utility infrastructure projects with future growth opportunities and Councils Delivery Program and Operational Plan is a key initiative of this planning priority.

The treatment facilities in the three river front towns of Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala are being encroached upon by urban development. To minimise land use conflict, each of the plants and their surrounds need to be evaluated to identify options about their future.

Waste disposal presents an opportunity for Federation. Council is currently exporting a large percentage of its waste to the current regional facility at Albury, however eventually that facility will be at capacity and another regional facility will be required. The Mine at Oaklands provides a site that can service 3 regional centres being Albury, Griffith, and Wagga Wagga all within 200 km of the mine. This opportunity will be further explored to provide a service and potential income for the shire.

### Challenges for land use:

- Infrastructure provision keeps pace with urban development and demand.
- Upgrading of water and sewer infrastructure can be undertaken in a timely manner.
- Land use conflicts between sensitive land uses are avoided or minimised.
- Development contributes appropriately to the cost of infrastructure provision.
- Sustainable waste management.

### Future Directions

- An Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan is required to be completed for Federation. As part of this Plan, servicing plans are required for the towns. This is a priority for the river towns of Howlong, Corowa and Mulwala as the treatment facilities and reticulation networks in all 3 towns are nearing capacity..

### Actions

- Investigate capacity and locational issues of sewerage treatment plans, water treatment plants and water storage facilities. (Short term)
- Investigate the viability of a regional waste management facility in the disused portion of the Kaolinite Mine with a co-generation power generating facility near Oaklands. (Medium term)

**Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:**

**Direction 17:** Transform the region into the eastern seaboard's freight and logistics hub

**Direction 18:** Enhance road and rail freight links

**Direction 20:** Identify and protect future transport corridors

**Direction 21:** Align and protect utility infrastructure investment.



# PLANNING PRIORITY 7:

## Resilience And Natural Hazards

22

It is anticipated that in the future, communities in the Federation Council area will experience an increased occurrence of heatwaves and hot days and an increase in average and severe fire weather days in summer and spring. Weather events will be seasonal extremes, particularly rainfall events and droughts. There will be a decrease in spring rainfall and an increase in short and intense rainfall events resulting in increased localised flooding. Understanding these changing weather patterns will be important for Council to build sustainable and resilient communities.

All of federation Council's towns and villages are impacted by floodwater either by riverine flooding or overland flows. Council is working with State government to improve the understanding of flooding in the council area and implementing planning controls as the required studies are complete. Council is currently completing the Floodplain Risk management Study and plan for Boree Creek, Morundah, Oaklands, Rand and Urana. In 2019 council completed an unfunded flood study for the village of Daysdale and is about to commence work on a flood study for the urban areas of Corowa, Howlong and Mulwala. These studies will define the flood planning areas for the towns and villages and will afford greater protection and understanding of the impacts of flooding on these areas. When planning and developing new urban areas, design and environmental considerations such as vegetation, water management (water sensitive urban design) and energy efficiency will be incorporated into the decision-making process. This will assist local communities to build resilience to climate change.

### Challenges for land use:

- Locating new residential development in areas away from natural hazards (including flooding and bushfire)
- Managing the impacts of a changing climate on existing communities.

### Future Directions

- An Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan is required to be completed for Federation. As part of this Plan, servicing plans are required for the towns. This is a priority for the river towns of Howlong, Corowa and Mulwala as the treatment facilities and reticulation networks in all 3 towns are nearing capacity..

### Actions

- Update planning controls as flood planning studies and flood plans are adopted by Council. (Medium-Long term)

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 10:** Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities

**Direction 11:** Promote the diversification of energy supplies through renewable energy generation

**Direction 16:** Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change

# PLANNING PRIORITY 8:

## Protecting Heritage Values

23

As a community, heritage is celebrated and the Indigenous connection to Country is acknowledged. Federation Council's rich history underpins valuable heritage assets which include cultural heritage and physical heritage items. The stories, history, building and artefacts of both the region and the towns are important to the local community and offer opportunities to enrich the experience of visitors.

Federation Council area is rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage. Within the Council area there are approximately 260 registered Aboriginal sites, including stone artefact sites, culturally scarred trees, mounds and ovens.

Lake Urana is one of the largest natural lakes in the Riverina Murray Region (covering approximately 6,400 hectares). While the area is yet to be fully studied, however the limited research that has been done identifies that it is a site of national significance.

Corowa township played a role in the negotiations leading up to the creation of the Federation of Australia in 1901 holding the People's Convention in 1893 and still celebrates its connection with the National Federation Festival in January of each year.

### Challenges for land use:

- Limited listings in the towns and villages merged with the former Corowa Shire in 2004 and then in 2016.
- No formal studies on indigenous heritage in the area.
- No thematic history for the new council area or the settlements withi

### Future Directions

- Celebrate and protect key heritage assets across the Council area and ensure future development is sympathetic to its surrounds.

### Actions:

- Update and review heritage listings to ensure the importance of sites and items are maintained within context. (Long term)
- Undertake further studies into the significance of Lake Urana in the history both geologically and anthropologically. (Long term)

### Links to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan:

**Direction 29:** Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage

