

COWRA SHIRE

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2018 – 2022

VISION

To build an achievable and sustainable path to long-term economic prosperity while maintaining the quality of life of Cowra Shire residents. Leverage the favourable access to land and water, climate, lifestyle and unique history of the region and attract new residents who bring economic, social and cultural capital.





PREFACE

The NSW Government has assisted local councils and their communities to develop 37 Regional Economic Development Strategies across regional NSW. Each strategy is designed around one or more local government areas that form a functional economic region as defined by economic data and community input. While the strategies have been developed using consistent methodology, each is a product of detailed data analysis and local community consultation to ensure ownership through a ‘bottom-up’ process: it sets out a vision for the region, the strategies and early stage actions required to achieve the vision.

Regional Economic Development Strategies articulate a framework for identifying actions crucial to achieving the regional vision. Projects listed within this strategy should therefore be viewed as example projects that have emerged from the initial application of the framework. Adoption of these projects would be subject to further evaluative processes.

The power of the strategy is its ability to be used on an on-going basis to identify additional high value projects over time. By complementing existing funding processes, these strategies present new opportunities to strengthen and increase investment in regional development across NSW.

Importantly, the strategy should be viewed as the first stage of a process that will assist those with an interest in the economic development of the region, particularly councils, communities and local businesses, in planning their future economic activities. It provides a vehicle for engaging the community in a ‘conversation’ about regional needs and priorities, assists in bringing together key stakeholders and mobilising resources, and in so doing, can facilitate faster access to dedicated NSW Government funding, such as the Growing Local Economies Fund, as well as helping to capitalise on other economic opportunities.

This strategy is the culmination of collaboration between the Cowra Council, Cowra Business Chamber, Cowra community and the NSW Government’s Centre for Economic and Regional Development (CERD).

It is presented in two documents, the *Cowra Shire Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022* which allows the reader to quickly and easily determine key content, while the accompanying *Cowra Shire Regional Economic Development Strategy - Supporting Analysis 2018-2022* details the Strategy methodology, evidence and the strategy development process.

For further information about the Regional Economic Development Strategies program please contact the CERD on 02 6391 3025 or CERD@dpc.nsw.gov.au.

INTRODUCTION

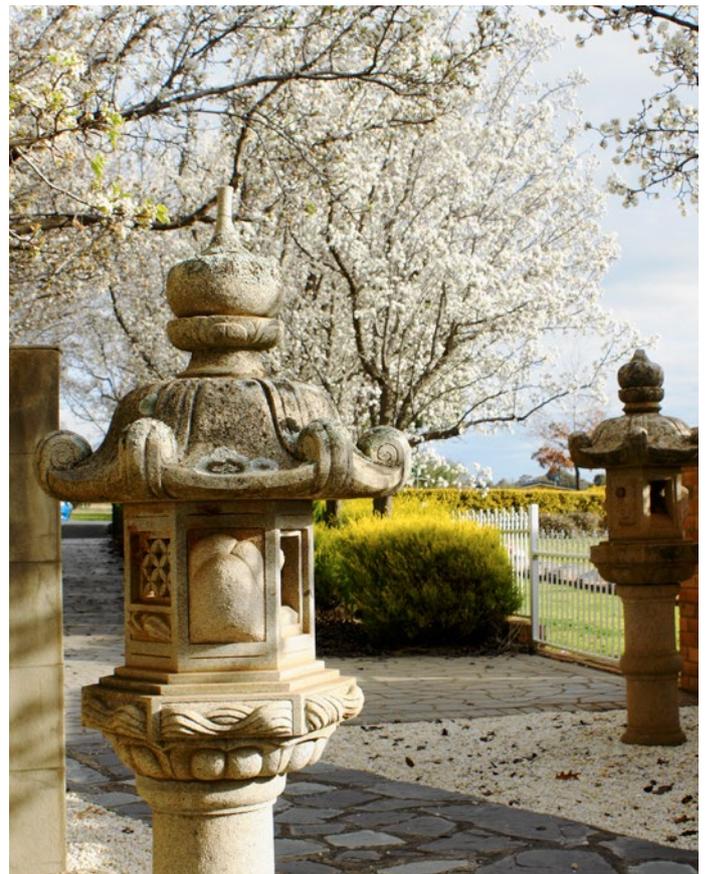
The ***Cowra Shire Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018–2022*** (the Strategy) sets out a long term economic vision and associated strategy for Cowra Shire. It builds on the region's endowments, its economic core competencies and specialisations to help guide investment over the next four years.¹ Economic principles suggest that endowments and specialisations play a key role in regional economic development.²

The Strategy leverages the region's unique history and favourable access to land and water, climate, entrepreneurial culture and lifestyle. These endowments are the basis of the region's current specialisations in dairy cattle farming; sheep, beef cattle and grain farming; crop growing; tourism; food product manufacturing; furniture manufacturing; and machinery and equipment manufacturing as well as an emerging specialisation in aviation-related services.

The objectives of this Strategy are to:

- sustain and develop the production of high-value agricultural products and subsequent distribution to markets through efficient transport links
- facilitate the growth of a successful manufacturing cluster
- attract more visitors who stay for longer to enjoy a variety of local and regional attractions
- develop an aviation hub that provides economic opportunities for new and existing businesses in Cowra Shire
- enhance the Cowra Shire community while maintaining its small-community feel by targeting the attraction of new residents who bring economic, social and cultural value to the Shire.

The first two objectives closely align with the region's existing specialisations in agriculture and manufacturing industries. Meanwhile, the third and fourth objectives focus on local opportunities in the tourism and aviation sectors. The final objective is more aspirational and aims to address key risks in the region around skill shortages, an ageing population, and hollowing-out of the working age population.



¹ Regional Economic Development Strategies, Centre for Economic and Regional Development (https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/programs_and_services/centre_for_economic_and_regional_development/projects)

² *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report (2017)*, Centre for Economic and Regional Development

BACKGROUND

At the 2016 Census, Cowra Shire was home to 12,460 people, including 8,225 people in the town of Cowra itself. The Cowra Shire forms its own functional economic region based on its highly self-contained employment market: people who work in Cowra Shire typically live in Cowra Shire. Ninety per cent of the jobs in the Shire are held by Cowra Shire residents, and 88% of the Cowra Shire workforce works in the Shire.³

The region has a small population that is growing slowly, but there is a marked imbalance in the age structure with an ageing population and a ‘hollowing-out’ of the workforce age cohorts, something common across regional Australia. There is some in-migration to the region, but also significant out-movement of younger adults.

Businesses in the region were cautiously optimistic about their futures and, to a lesser extent, the broader economy, with the majority surveyed intending to expand in the near future.

The Cowra Shire economy is largely based on agriculture—sheep, grains, beef and dairy cattle—as a result of the temperate climate and fertile alluvial soils, which produces 11.1% of the region’s output. The region also has a significant manufacturing presence, producing 7.0% of the region’s output, which is dominated by furniture manufacturing and food manufacturing, but there is also a range of smaller niche manufacturing industries. Cowra is also a popular tourism destination, based in part on its unique history as the site of a World War II prisoner of war mass breakout.

Employment in the largest industries in the Shire—Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing, Retail Trade and Manufacturing—have generally declined over the past two decades (Figure 1).⁴ This decline is consistent with broader trends associated with the labour-saving technological advancements experienced by these industries.

Employment in Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing was also impacted by the Millennium drought between 2001 and 2011. Since 2011, employment in the industry has recovered somewhat, led by strong growth in Dairy Cattle Farming, Sheep, Beef Cattle & Grain Farming, Agriculture & Fishing Support Services and Other Crop Growing.

Meanwhile, employment in Health Care & Social Assistance, Education & Training, Accommodation & Food Services and Public Administration & Safety have steadily increased over the past two decades, and there are opportunities for that to continue.

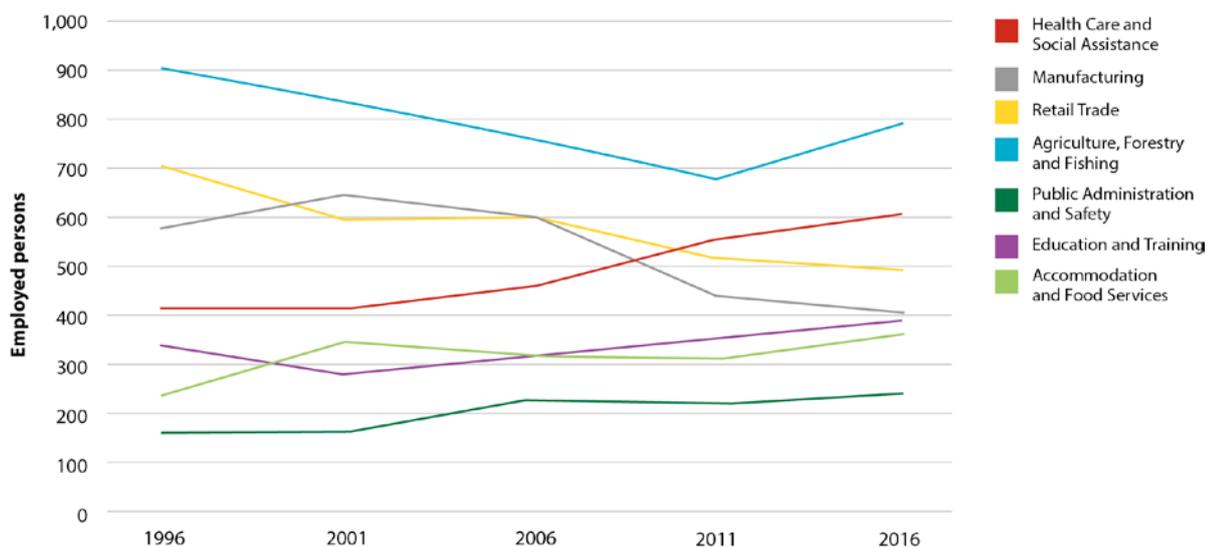


Figure 1. Historic Employment in the Cowra Shire Source: ABS, 2001 – 2016 Census

³ The most popular places of work for Cowra Shire residents outside the LGA are Cabonne (4 per cent) and Orange (2 per cent).

⁴ Detailed analysis of employment trends in the region is included in the 2018–2022 Cowra Shire REDS Supporting Analysis



ENDOWMENTS

Endowments are strengths that a regional economy possesses on which the regions can capitalise. Economic principles suggest that endowments play a key endogenous development role in the economic development and performance of a region. The CERD in its *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report (2017)* found that:

“ the future of individual regional economies is inexorably linked to their natural endowments, and attempts to retain or establish industries without an underpinning endowment are unlikely to succeed.⁵ ”

A region seeking to encourage economic development should therefore concentrate on the growth enablers of endowment-based industries, as well as building local institutional and leadership capacity and capability, to capitalise on the opportunities that the region’s endowments and industry specialisations present. Endowments can lead to opportunities from which commercial and industrial interests may leverage and develop specialisations.

TABLE 1. Cowra Shire Endowments

Water, climate and soil	Local Institutions and Leadership
<p>The Cowra region enjoys good access to water, a reliable average annual rainfall of 637.2 millimetres, and high levels of water security. Wyangala Dam, the Lachlan River and subterranean bores provide water to many agricultural businesses in the region.⁶ These enable a variety of agricultural enterprises to flourish including dairy, sheep, cattle, wheat, canola and viticulture.</p>	<p>Local institutions certainly have a strong presence and play an important role in the Cowra regional economy. The Cowra Business Chamber and Cowra Tourism Corporation both have strong levels of engagement in the region and high rates of membership. In addition, Cowra Council has strong relationships with many businesses of all sizes in the region. However, there is not a specific agency charged with pursuing economic development.</p>
Unique history and tourism	Accessibility and lifestyle benefits
<p>Cowra’s unique World War II history continues to draw visitors into the region each year, with the most popular sites being the POW Campsite, POW Theatre and the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre. Other tourism features include Wyangala Dam, Australia’s World Peace Bell, the Lachlan Valley Railway and Cowra Regional Art Gallery. Cowra is also situated on a popular ‘grey nomads’ route between Victoria and Queensland. Cowra also plays host to popular events including the annual Cowra Wine Show and Cherry Blossom Festival ‘Sakura Matsuri’ attracting thousands of visitors on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Cowra is located at the crossroads of two major highways, with several major regional centres and other similarly sized towns within 100 kilometres (e.g. Bathurst, Orange, Parkes, Forbes and Young). The region has relatively good access to international airports and capital cities (two hour’ drive to Canberra and four hour’ drive to Sydney). Its affordable house prices, small community feel and natural beauty also make the Cowra Shire a liveable region and attractive place to raise a family.</p>
Cowra Airport	Manufacturing cluster
<p>Despite having no commercial passenger services, Cowra Airport has a number of features that give it an advantage over other regional airports and make it attractive to many aviation businesses. The valley in which Cowra Airport is located enjoys a relatively high number of clear days as well as comparatively low level of aviation traffic. The site’s close proximity to the Cowra CBD, as well the availability of freehold lots give Cowra Airport an accessibility advantage over other regional airports.</p>	<p>The Cowra regional economy has a successful manufacturing cluster. Larger established manufacturers in the region have been supportive of younger, newer entrepreneurs in the sector. As a result, the Cowra Shire now has a collection of specialist manufacturers, as well as the entrepreneurs, a skilled workforce and good uptake of new technology and innovation that is typically associated with regional clusters.</p>

⁵ *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report (2017)*, Centre for Economic and Regional Development

⁶ Bureau of Meteorology http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_063023.shtml

SPECIALISATIONS

Obtaining an understanding of a region's competitive advantages⁷ is complex. A commonly used simple form of analysis is the Location Quotient (LQ) which measures the employment concentration in industry sectors within a regional economy, compared with the same sectors across NSW. The higher the LQ, the more specialised a region is in that industry relative to the rest of NSW.

For the purpose of this analysis, specialisations as defined by LQ are used as a proxy measure for those sectors and industries that represent a region's true competitive advantages. Importantly, while LQs are used in this document for that purpose, they are only a partial measure of those competitive advantages. Hence, they have been used, alongside additional qualitative evaluations and data analysis, to arrive at the findings identifying existing economic core competencies and specialisations for the region which might be leveraged for further growth of the regional economy.

Sheep, Beef Cattle and Grain farming is a key industry in the Cowra region, making up 12.1% of employment in August 2016. It is also an industry in which the region specialises when compared to the rest of NSW. Between 2011 and 2016, the industry grew at a faster rate in the Cowra region than it did across NSW (exceeding the industry growth rate across regional NSW by 12%).

The Cowra regional economy also has strong specialisations in Dairy Cattle Farming, Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing, Meat and Meat Product Manufacturing and Agriculture and Fishing Support Services. Growth in these industries in the Cowra Shire also outstripped growth in these industries across NSW during the period from 2011 to 2016.

Furniture Manufacturing is also a strong specialisation for the region. However, employment in this industry grew at approximately the same rate in the Cowra region as it did across NSW.

Over time, the region has developed a variety of specialisations in niche manufacturing industries when compared to the rest of NSW:

- Furniture Manufacturing (e.g. Sarajane Furniture)
- Fertiliser and Pesticide Manufacturing (e.g. Central Milling)
- Food Product Manufacturing (e.g. Pinnacle Bakery Ingredients, Breakout River Meats)
- Aircraft Manufacturing (e.g. Brumby Aircraft Australia)



Employment in the Accommodation industry also grew much faster in the Cowra region than it did across NSW during the period, leading to the Cowra regional economy having a specialisation in this industry (LQ = 1.38). Accommodation is one of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classifications (ANZSIC) industries that reflects the effects of tourism, but this measure does not capture all of its impacts. Analysis by CERD indicates that 14.2% of employment in the Cowra Shire is affected by Tourism (which ranks 9th out of the 37 functional economic regions analysed in the study).⁸ This makes it the second highest ranked non-coastal functional economic region in regional NSW (behind the NSW Ski fields) and supports the conclusion that the Cowra regional economy has a strong specialisation in Tourism with potential for growth.

⁷ A region's competitive advantage for an industry enables it to produce goods and services at a lower cost or differentiate its products from other regions.

⁸ *Regional Tourism Study (2017)*, Centre for Economic and Regional Development.



Figure 2 below charts the industries in the Cowra regional economy:

- Industries with a larger 'bubble' in the figure employed more people at the time of the 2016 Census
- Industries further above the horizontal line are more specialised when compared to NSW (i.e. an LQ greater than 1.25⁹), industries below the line are less specialised when compared to NSW
- Industries to the right of the vertical line grew faster between 2011 and 2016 than comparable industries across NSW, industries on the left grew more slowly.

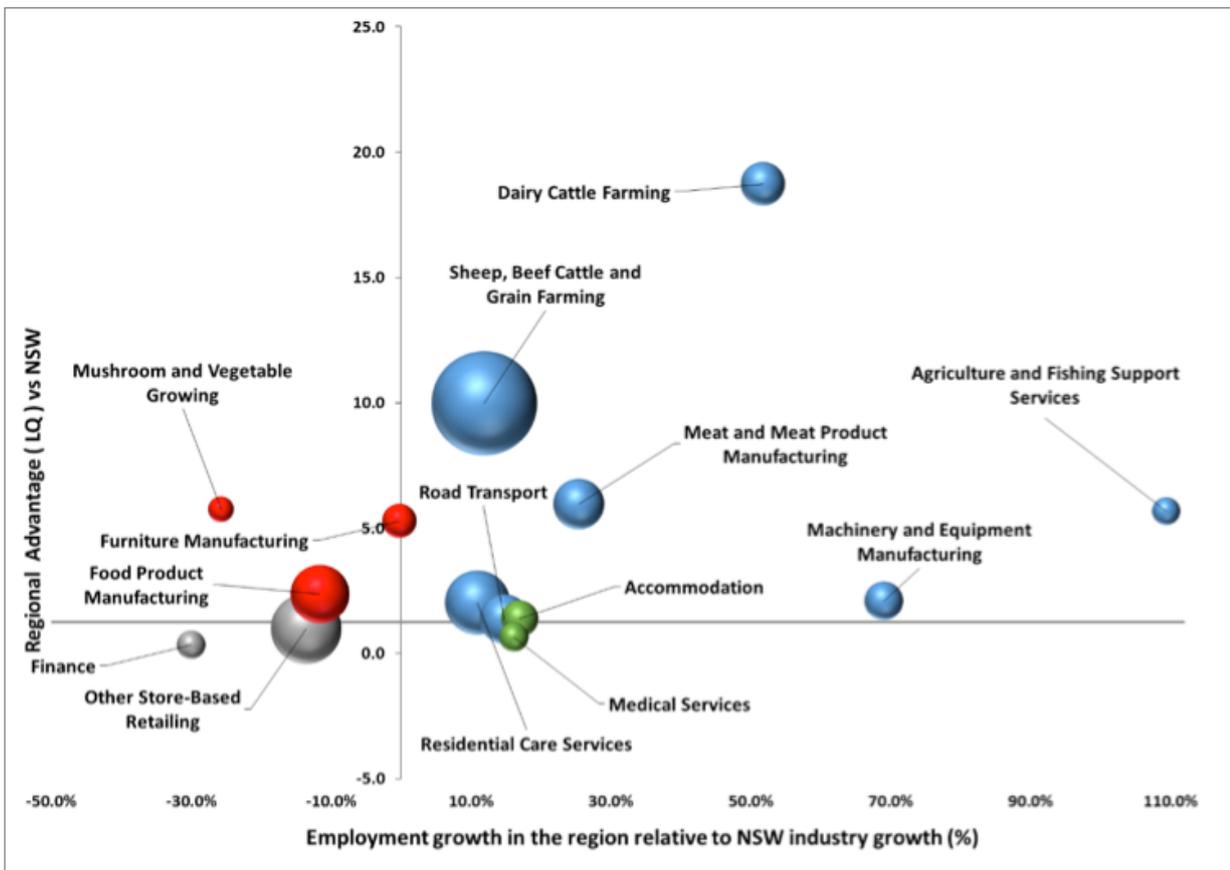


FIGURE 2. Location Quotients and Employment Growth for Industries in the Cowra Shire
Source: Centre for Economic and Regional Development

⁹ A LQ of 1.25 is identified in the literature as denoting a specialisation.

STRATEGY

The Strategy for Cowra Shire builds upon the opportunities presented by its endowments, core competencies and specialisations. It is a product of economic analysis and community consultation that also identified some of the key risks facing the region.

Strategy elements were derived from an analysis of the endowments that underpin the region's strengths, followed by examination of current industry specialisations and emerging specialisations, identified in consultation with the community and council.

Each element is accompanied by a set of early actions, which should be interpreted simply as example actions derived from the preliminary application of the Regional Economic Development Strategies framework. It is therefore expected that there will be other actions capable of contributing to the attainment of the vision that are yet to be identified. Consequently, an action's alignment with the strategy is the preminent strategic consideration rather than listing in this document, and all proposed actions will be subject to further qualitative and quantitative evaluative processes.

THERE ARE **FIVE** ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY:

- 1 Sustain and develop the region's AGRICULTURAL advantage**
Ensuring the region produces high value agricultural products and distributes these to markets through efficient transport links
- 2 Facilitate growth of the MANUFACTURING cluster**
Ensuring the region remains a competitive place to do business and maintains its manufacturing cluster
- 3 Grow the VISITOR economy**
Bringing in more visitors that stay for longer to enjoy a variety of attractions in the region
- 4 Develop the Cowra AVIATION Precinct**
Ensuring that the Cowra Airport provides economic opportunities for new and existing businesses in the region
- 5 Enhance the Cowra regional COMMUNITY and attract new residents**
Attracting new residents who bring economic, social and cultural value to the Cowra Shire



1

Sustain and develop the region's AGRICULTURAL advantage

Agriculture is the largest employing industry in the Cowra Shire and is a key engine of wealth generation for the local economy. It has strong linkages with other industries in the region such as Food Product Manufacturing. The relatively high availability and security of water in the region, as well as its reliable rainfall and fertile soils, enable a variety of agricultural enterprises to thrive, including dairy, sheep, cattle, wheat, canola and viticulture. This strategy proposes to sustain existing specialisations in the sector, as well as developing the sector by addressing some of the barriers it faces.

The strategy proposes to sustain this sector by improving the regional branding of agricultural products as well as capitalising on the presence of agricultural innovation and research facilities in the region. It also proposes to work towards improving key transport links, which were identified as key barriers to growth for industry in the region. This will involve advocating for improvements to the highways and the railway lines that link Cowra and the Central West to domestic and export markets.



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- **Road and rail transport:** successful advocacy (potentially in coordination with other economic regions) for upgrades to highways and rail links would reduce the long-term cost profile of agricultural enterprises in the region.
- **Digital Connectivity:** fast and reliable internet access (NBN rollout) as well as mobile reception in the Cowra Shire would facilitate on-farm uptake of spatial technology to enhance productivity.
- **Education infrastructure:** local training facilities that cater to the needs of the industry.

ACTIONS

- Continue to advocate for the construction of the Maldon to Dombarton Railway Line.
- Continue to advocate for the reinstatement and upgrade of the Blayney to Demondrille Rail Line.
- In conjunction with other Councils in the region continue to advocate for a fast transport corridor across the Blue Mountains connecting the regions to Sydney.
- Advocate for improvements to the Lachlan Valley Way.
- Determine the preferred route for a long term heavy vehicle bypass of the Cowra CBD.
- Replace the deteriorating low level bridge as identified to favourably connect with current and potential future transport corridors.
- Investigate options for composting organic waste at the Cowra Materials Recycling Facility.
- Continue to work closely with Cowra's DPI Agricultural Research and Advisory Station for testing innovation and technology in the sector.

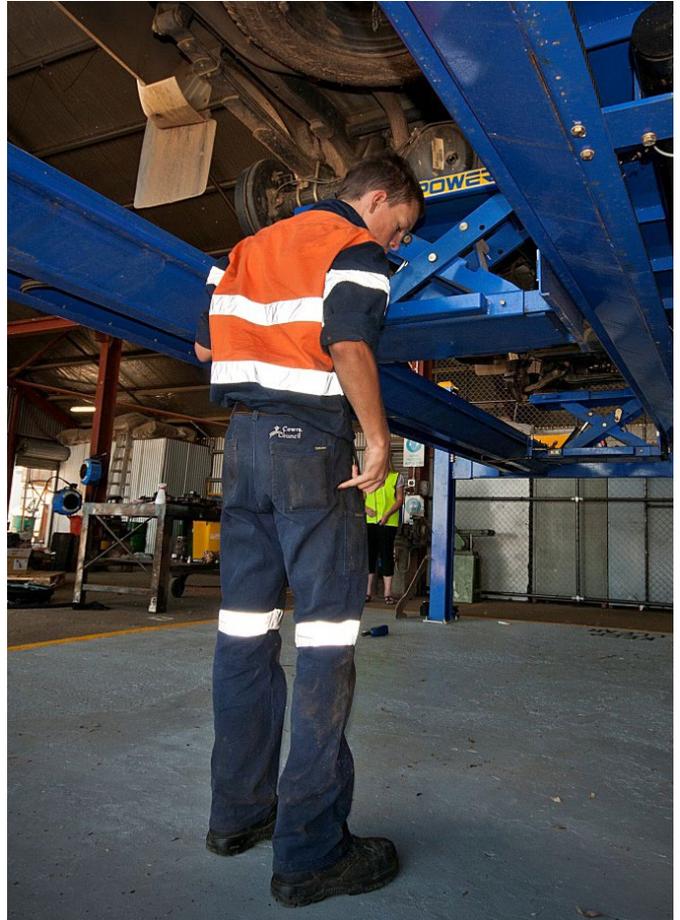
2

Facilitate growth of the MANUFACTURING cluster

The Cowra Shire economy is home to a cluster of firms that specialise in different types of niche manufacturing. This industry demonstrates high levels of entrepreneurship, a skilled workforce, and a strong uptake of new technology and innovation. The cluster has developed over many decades, partly as a result of large and established manufacturers mentoring younger, newer entrepreneurs in the sector, but it faces rising energy costs and an ongoing shortage of skilled labour. There is thus potential for mobilising further entrepreneurial innovation to further develop this industry cluster.

The strategy proposes ongoing collaborative relationships between local businesses and the Cowra Business Chamber to improve labour force skills and opportunities, as well as increasing economies of scale in training. It proposes to coordinate programs to give young people a pathway to skilled work through vocational education and industry placement, and to coordinate staff upskilling plans. These actions, combined with those aimed at attracting new residents aim to address the skill shortage risks faced by local manufacturing businesses.

It will also involve working closely with manufacturing businesses and agricultural businesses to advocate for sustainability and energy solutions, such as biomass, that leverage the existing endowments in the region and produce by-products (energy and fertiliser) that meet local demand.



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- **Road and rail transport:** continued advocacy (potentially in coordination with other functional economic regions) for upgrades to highways and rail links is crucial for the future of manufacturing in the region.
- **Digital Connectivity:** ensuring fast and reliable internet access (NBN rollout) as well as improved mobile reception.
- **Education infrastructure:** local training facilities that cater to the needs of the industry.
- **Energy infrastructure:** competitively priced and sustainable energy solutions are vital to ensuring that energy-intensive businesses remain in the region.

ACTIONS

- Facilitate the development of a Youth Attraction and Retention Plan that focuses on VET and industry placement.
- Coordinate the establishment and maintenance of a database of staff upskilling plans to identify opportunities for businesses to share training costs.
- Develop a sustainable energy strategy options report for Cowra Council facilities.
- Advocate for and support business pursuing sustainable energy projects.

3

Grow the VISITOR economy

Cowra Shire is endowed with a unique history and culture, a favourable location on a popular tourist route, nearby attractions (such as Wyangala Dam) and an exciting food and wine scene. The POW Campsite and the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre are popular day trips for visitors, but they often choose to stay longer once they have discovered some of the other attractions in the region. Despite being a popular tourist destination, there are opportunities to increase visitation to the region.

This strategy proposes actions to convert as many of these day trips into overnight trips as possible. This will require increasing awareness of all of the attractions amongst visitors, potential visitors, and creating advocacy with Cowra Shire residents who have contact with visitors. This can be done through improved cross-promotion between tourism operators, accommodation providers, and other sectors servicing tourists. It will also require Cowra Council and Cowra Tourism to work together and with other regional tourism organisations to develop a rich narrative that links all of the region’s sights, history, arts and other activities.

Improving the aesthetics of public spaces is also proposed, such as a streetscape beautification program and further development of Cowra’s POW Camp site and Japanese Gardens. Improvements to local rail infrastructure could also create further opportunities for heritage rail services in the region.



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- **Community infrastructure:** improving community buildings and multipurpose spaces to enhance the sense of community and promote the region’s unique history and culture.
- **Transport infrastructure:** maintaining high quality roads is important for the region as 89 per cent of domestic visitors travel by car.¹⁰ Advocating for improvements to major highways and the establishment of passenger rail services linking Cowra with the rest of NSW may increase tourism.

ACTIONS

- Develop a Familiarisation Program between different attractions in the region.
- Continue to further develop Cowra’s Peace Precinct.
- Seek funding for Cowra Adventure Playground to be located at Bellevue Hill.
- Continue to refurbish the Cowra CBD amenity and streetscape.
- Develop a business case for a Cowra Regional Art Gallery Upgrade and Civic Square Precinct Development.
- Develop a business case for a Tourist Steam Train line from Cowra to Woodstock.
- Advocate for improvements to the Wyangala Water State Park.

¹⁰ Destination NSW, LGA Profile - Cowra

4

Develop the Cowra AVIATION Precinct

Cowra Airport's unique location, quiet airspace, weather conditions and commercial land (with NBN FTTP¹¹) gives aviation businesses a competitive advantage over businesses located in other regional airports or industrial precincts. Local entrepreneurs have already leveraged these advantages into successful business ventures (such as flight training school Fly Oz).

The strategy proposes to develop this business precinct. This would involve improving transport linkages between the Cowra Airport and the Cowra CBD, and supporting the establishment of other businesses at the airport. As new businesses move into the precinct, it may attract advanced avionic and other specialised businesses that service the aviation industry.

Strategic planning is an important part of the developing the Cowra Aviation Precinct. This would also involve deepening relationships between aviation businesses and other industries located elsewhere in the region. Investigating options to limit further energy price increases (such as renewable options) are also part of this proposal.



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- **Transport and roads:** businesses located at the airport will require easy access to the Cowra CBD, other industrial precincts and major highways.
- **Airport infrastructure:** businesses in the precinct will require the current airport infrastructure (e.g. runways) to be maintained.
- **Energy and other utility provision:** competitively priced and sustainable energy, as well as sewerage and water services, are important for businesses in the precinct.

ACTIONS

- Develop a formal shuttle service between Cowra Airport and Cowra CBD.
- Develop Stage 3 of the Airport Subdivision.
- Prepare a New Terminal Building Options Paper for Cowra Airport to determine what facilities the site should have.

¹¹ National Broadband Network fibre to the premises

5

Enhance the Cowra regional COMMUNITY and attract new residents

The consultation process showed that Cowra Shire is a good place to enjoy country living and to raise a family. Local businesses see it as being a good place for business. The region has affordable house prices, a network of strong institutions, a small-community feel, and natural beauty, all of which contribute to a lifestyle that is considered to be a strength for the Shire and one that residents want to preserve.

However, attraction and retention of skilled labour was identified as a key risk facing the region. There is potential to attract more residents to Cowra Shire to help offset ageing population trends without compromising its lifestyle to build on these strengths. In particular, Cowra Shire presents a good alternative for young Sydney families struggling to enter the property market and empty nesters looking for a tree change option. Bringing new, skilled and diverse residents to the region will lead to a more vibrant, innovative and resilient community.

The strategy proposes a partnership between the various Cowra Shire institutions to increase the sense of community and to showcase the benefits of a Cowra Shire lifestyle. It proposes direct marketing—to tourists, prospective conference managers and prospective residents—and improving the resources and amenities available to new residents, such as the 'Welcome Pack'. This marketing will focus on specialisations and opportunities in the Shire (including manufacturing, agriculture, aviation and tourism). It also proposes exploring opportunities to promote Cowra Shire as a place for retirees.



INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

- **Community infrastructure:** improve community buildings and multipurpose spaces to enhance the sense of community and promote the region's unique history and culture.
- **Health infrastructure:** upgrade the Cowra District Hospital to ensure the health services in the region continue to meet the expectations of the community.
- **Digital connectivity:** ensure fast and reliable internet access (NBN rollout) as well as improved mobile reception.

ACTIONS

- Refresh the Council Welcome Pack.
- Seek funding for Cowra Adventure Playground to be located at Bellevue Hill.
- Investigate online options to improve communication between businesses and Cowra Council.
- Develop a Conference Attraction Program focusing on specialisations and opportunities in the region.
- Advocate for upgrade to the Cowra District Hospital
- Investigate a targeted campaign that promotes the Cowra Shire as a retirement destination.

Strategies and actions

Enablers	Sustain and develop the region's agricultural advantage	Facilitate growth of manufacturing cluster	Grow the visitor economy	Develop the Cowra Aviation Precinct	Enhance the Cowra regional community and attract new residents
People and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and build on the Skills Summit work Continue to facilitate and promote better utilisation of infrastructure and amenity at Cowra's DPI Agricultural Research and Advisory Station for testing innovation and technology in the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the development of a Youth Attraction and Retention Plan (focus on VET and industry placement) Coordinate the establishment and maintenance of a database of staff upskilling plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiarisation program between different tourism attraction staff in the Cowra Shire 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign to attract working-from-home residents
Government, regulation and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a local working group to investigate opportunities to improve regional branding of agricultural products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Specialised Manufacturing Economic Profiles and Investor Prospectuses Establish a Working Breakfast series between Manufacturing and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industries to facilitate networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate partnerships with Orange, Cabonne and Blayney Tourism Group Investigate partnerships between caravan parks to promote the region Art Gallery partnership with other regions Working group to develop a tourism narrative for Cowra Investigate indigenous awareness opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate formal linkages between airport, aviation industries and accommodation providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh Welcome Pack Investigate online options to improve communications between businesses and Council Partner placement / referral program Promotion of Cowra REDS Conference attraction program Retiree destination promotion
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to advocate for the construction of the Maldon to Dombarton Railway Line Continue to advocate for the reinstalment and upgrade of the Blayney to Demondrille Rail Line Continue to advocate (with other Councils) for a fast transport corridor across the Blue Mountains Advocate for improvements to the Lachlan Valley Way Determine the preferred route for a long term heavy vehicle bypass Replace the deteriorating low level bridge as identified to favourably connect with current and potential future transport corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a project for the delivery of a second Lachlan River Crossing based on approved option (under consideration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to refurbish the Cowra CBD amenity and streetscape Develop a business case for a Cowra Regional Art Gallery upgrade and Civic Square Precinct Investigate feasibility study for weir on the Lachlan River Business case for Tourist Steam Train line to Woodstock Develop Cowra's Peace Precinct Draft a project for improvements to the Japanese Garden car park and sculpture park Advocate for improvements to the Wyangala Water State Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for a Shuttle service between Cowra Airport and Cowra CBD Investigate new airport terminal building options Develop Stage 3 and 4 of the Airport Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding for Cowra Adventure Playground to be located at Bellevue Hill Upgrade the Cowra District Hospital
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate options for composting organic waste at the Cowra Materials Recycling Facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a sustainable energy strategy options report of Cowra Council facilities Advocate for and support business pursuing sustainable energy projects 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a renewable energy project for Cowra Airport 	



This document sets out a Vision for the Cowra Shire as well as the strategies and actions that can enable the region to achieve this Vision. This Strategy was formed through a comprehensive data analysis and consultation process, including collaboration with the Cowra Council, Cowra Business Chamber, Cowra community and the CERD. Further detail about the strategy, regional economy, regional endowments, regional risks, and economic development opportunities for the region, and the actions for implementing the strategy can be found in the *2018–2022 Cowra Shire REDS - Supporting Analysis*.



Regional Action Plan Implementation Review Process

This document includes strategies and actions that will be operated by the Cowra Council, other organisations (such as Cowra Tourism and Cowra Business Chamber), as well as private businesses.

It is recommended that Cowra Council will appoint an Advisory Committee comprising representatives from the Cowra Council, other institutions and industry to monitor the progress in implementing the Regional Action Plan. This Advisory Committee will meet quarterly to track progress on actions identified in the Action Plan.

After two years, the Advisory Committee would conduct a formal review of the Action Plan and produce a brief report card to be published as an addendum to the Economic Development Strategy. This will also provide an opportunity to update the Action Plan for new or modified actions.

After four years, the Advisory Committee would also begin the process of updating or refreshing the Regional Economic Development Strategy.

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First published: April 2018

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COWRA SHIRE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018 -2022



Cowra
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*Developed with the support of the NSW Government
as part of the Regional Economic Development Strategies program to assist local councils and their communities in regional NSW.*