



# **Housing Roadmap**

# **Dubbo Region**

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**June 2022**

## 1 Background

The Dubbo Regional Local Government Area continues to experience significant increases in housing demand. This increase can be attributed to continued economic development, enhancement of both Dubbo and Wellington as well as the impacts of incoming migration as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Between 2017 and 2021, the growth profile in the LGA represents an increase of 2,062 persons, or some 3.8% (as at 2021), with an estimated total population of 54,195 persons in the Dubbo Regional Local Government Area.

In July 2021, the NSW Government established the Regional Housing Taskforce to respond to increasing pressures on the supply and affordability of housing in Regional NSW. In October 2021, the NSW Government released an independent report which found that a combination of factors is putting more pressure on housing supply in regional NSW. These include the need for greater prioritisation on the coordination and delivery of infrastructure to support new homes; a need for collaboration between all levels of Government, improved planning processes; and demand for more affordable and diverse housing in line with changing demographics, jobs growth, natural disasters, and migration trends. It is understood that the State Government is undertaking the preparation of a Housing Strategy which will incorporate the LGA.

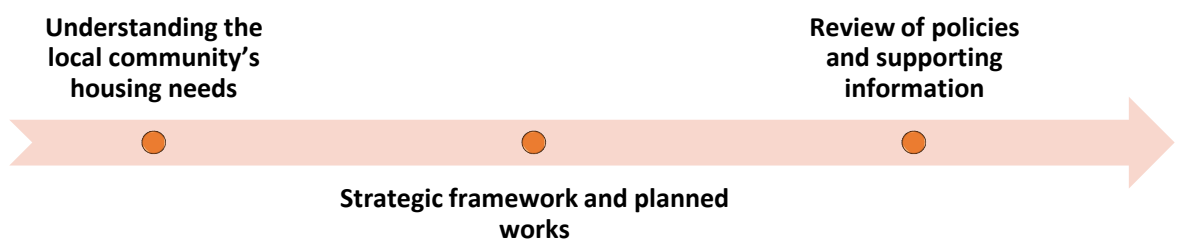
Council, as the Local Government Authority, is already responding to the housing demand in the community by undertaking a number of strategic actions and initiatives for the Dubbo and Wellington Housing Markets. It is recognised that Council's actions, will be critical to assist the delivery of housing across our community.

## 2 Purpose of the Housing Roadmap

This Housing Roadmap includes Council's actions and initiatives and actions over the immediate term (2022 to 2024, in line with Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan) and longer term actions that will aim to assist the community's housing needs.

The Housing Roadmap consists of three sections:

- (1) Understanding the local community's housing needs (demographic analysis),
- (2) Strategic framework and planned works (works program), and
- (3) Review of policies and supporting information.



Housing Roadmap

### 3 Demographic Trends

#### 3.1 Housing in Dubbo and Wellington

Separate houses are the primary dwelling stock in Dubbo and Wellington and account for 82% and 85% of total stock respectively. Townhouses, and units/flats make up only 8% and 10% of dwellings in Dubbo and 5% and 2% of dwellings in Wellington respectively (ABS 2016). The household statistics for Dubbo at the 2016 Census show a relatively even split between households owning property outright, owing property by mortgage and renting, as follows:

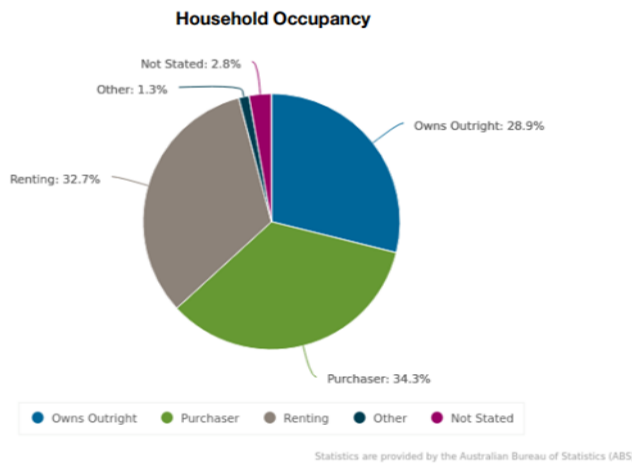


Figure 1 Dubbo Household Occupancy

In Wellington, the statistics vary with a higher percentage renting and a lower percentage with a mortgage.

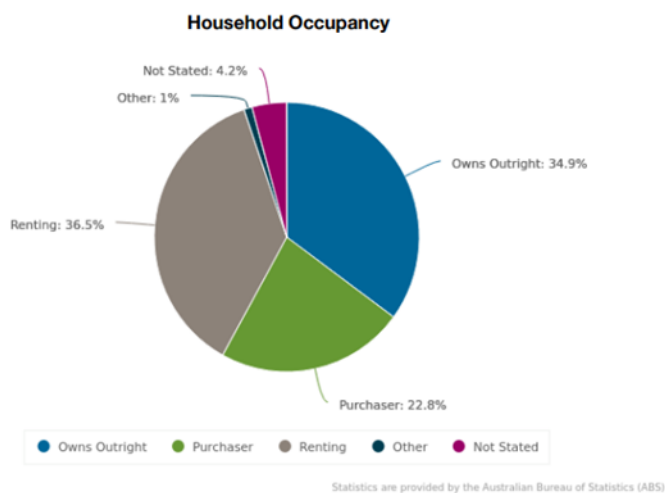


Figure 2 Wellington Household Occupancy

### 3.2 Meeting the housing needs of our community

Demographic analysis continues to show a mismatch between dwelling stock and household composition in the Dubbo Regional LGA. At the last census, four plus bedroom dwellings accounted for 41.5% of total stock in Dubbo (an increase of 6% from 2011) and three bedroom dwellings accounted for 50.8% of dwellings in Wellington.

One person households and couple only households made up a total of 55% of total households in the LGA. However, only 2.9% of dwellings in Dubbo and 3.4% of dwellings in Wellington are one bedroom. Two bedroom dwellings make up 15.4% of stock in Dubbo and 17.8% in Wellington. The Dubbo Household Structure is as follows:

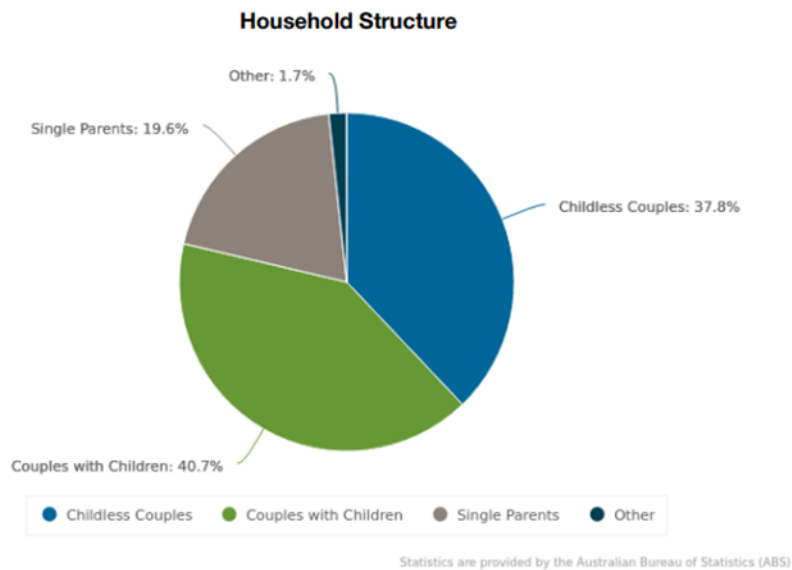


Figure 3 Dubbo Household Structure

In Wellington, there are more single parent households and less couples with children than in Dubbo.

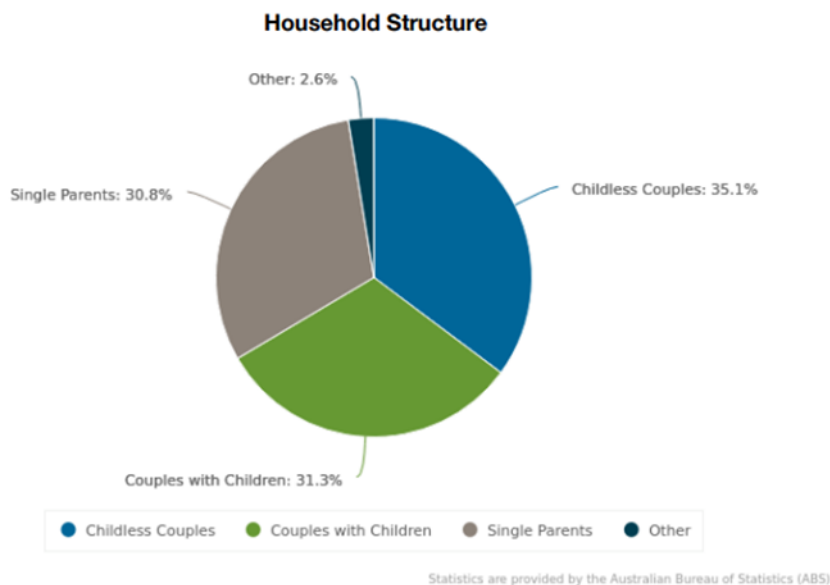


Figure 4 Wellington Household Structure

Demographic analysis also indicates that by 2041 the elderly (80+) age cohort is forecast to experience the largest increase in the LGA. Coupled with more single person households, it shows a considerable demand for smaller dwellings which could also assist the range of housing options available to our community.

### 3.3 The local housing market

#### Dubbo

The median house price in Dubbo between January 2021 and December 2021 has increased from \$385,000 to \$455,444. Median unit prices in Dubbo over the last 12 months to December 2021 increased from \$270,000 to \$309,500. The median price of land in Dubbo increased by 15.53% to \$199,000 over the last 12 months to December 2021.

#### Wellington

In Wellington, the median house price between January 2021 and December 2021 increased from \$177,000 to \$230,000. Land in Wellington has seen a significant increase in price between December 2020 and November 2021, with data showing the median price in this time increasing from \$28,000 to \$68,500.

### 3.4 Rental Vacancy Rates

Figure 5 shows the rental vacancy rates for Dubbo over time from 2005 to April 2022. The rental vacancy rate as at April 2022 was 0.6%, highlighting the difficulty faced by residents in finding property.

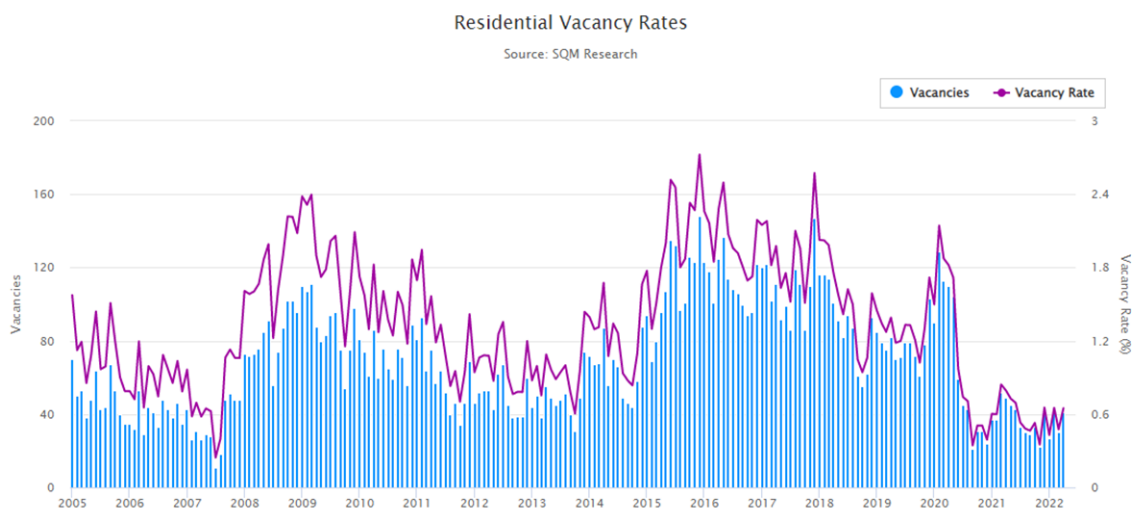


Figure 5 Dubbo Rental Vacancy Rate

In respect of rental vacancy rates for Wellington, the data in Figure 6 shows a rental vacancy rate of 3.7% in April 2022.

However, it is also acknowledged that the rental vacancy figures do not show the total state of the rental market with this data representative only of properties being actively offered for rent and does not represent actual total properties active in the market at any one time.

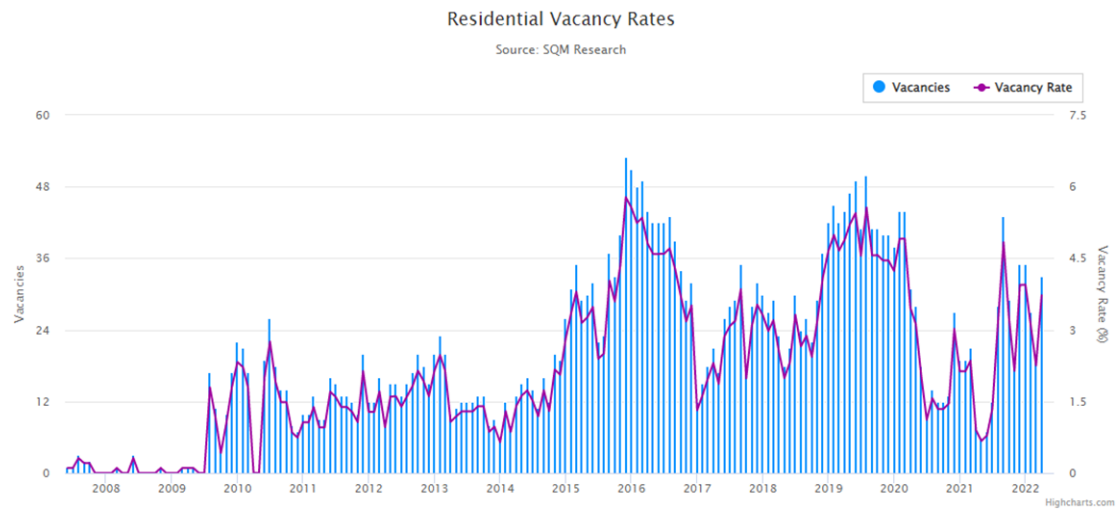


Figure 6 Wellington Residential Vacancy Rate

Overall, analysing demographic trends for the region has shown that there is a significant need for a range of housing types and densities in both Dubbo and Wellington.

To respond to the local community’s housing needs, Council has a number of strategic actions and plans in place, as well as a number of initiatives that will work towards providing housing in the community. These are highlighted in the next section of the Housing roadmap.

## 4. Strategic Framework and Planned Works

### 4.1 Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan

The new Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2022 commenced operation in March 2022. To ensure the Local Environmental Plan can continue to deliver the required lands for our future growth and development in addition to managing the natural environment, a review process for the new LEP will be undertaken. The first stage of this body of work will include scoping and project planning.

Action	Timeframe
Review of the Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan 2022 (Project Planning)	December 2022

Following this project planning and scoping phase, the next stages of this project will form the basis of further reports to Council.

### 4.2 Dubbo Residential Areas Development Strategy

The Dubbo Residential Areas Development Strategy forms the major background analysis and review of the demands for housing in Dubbo and originally identified the residential expansion opportunities in West Dubbo and South-East Dubbo over time.

Given the actions of the NSW State Government in respect of the preparation of a 'Housing Strategy' for the Dubbo Regional and Narromine Local Government Areas, a further review processes will take place after the preparation of this State led strategy. As such, a timeframe for this body of work cannot be confirmed at the present time.

Action	Timeframe
Review of the Dubbo Residential Areas Development Strategy	To be confirmed

Following the receipt of further project information from the State Government in respect of a regional housing strategy, further reports will be provided to Council for consideration.

### 4.3 Infrastructure Contributions - planning for future growth

Infrastructure Contributions help with housing delivery in the local community. Council already has a Developer Contributions Framework for Dubbo. This includes the following:

- Section 94 Contributions Plan for Roads, Traffic Management and Car Parking;
- Section 94 Contributions Plan for Stormwater;
- Section 7.11 Contributions Plan for Open Space and Recreation Facilities;
- Section 7.11 Contributions Plan for South-East Stormwater; and
- Section 64 Developer Contributions Policy for Water and Sewer.

In respect of Wellington, the following Developer Contributions Framework is in place:

- Section 94A Developer Contributions Plans; and
- Developer Servicing Plan for Water and Sewer.

Emphasis has been placed on the preparation of a new Developer Contributions Plan for Urban Roads and a new Developer Servicing Plan for Water and Sewer Infrastructure for Dubbo.

Action	Timeframe
New Developer Contributions Plan for Urban Roads	July 2023
New Developer Servicing Plan for Water and Sewer Dubbo	July 2023

#### 4.4 Strategic planning activities in Dubbo’s Urban Release Areas

The Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan 2022 contains a number of residential growth areas in West Dubbo. The subject lands are shown in Figure 7. These areas, along with land in South-East Dubbo, will facilitate the future growth and development of the City over the next 30 years. Analysis has shown that these lands, in addition to lands in South-East Dubbo (development already underway) will provide in excess of some 11,000 residential allotments over time.

The first component of this work is the preparation of Structure Plans for each of the three areas. The role of a Structure Plan is to guide the development of the area through the identification of strategic constraints, infrastructure planning and development density to ensure we can provide liveable neighbourhoods into the future.

A key component in examining each of these areas is ensuring we can provide housing choice and flexibility to meet our housing requirements in the future through identifying a range of housing opportunities.

Action	Timeframe
North West Urban Release Area Structure Plan	September 2022
Central West Urban Release Area Structure Plan	December 2022
South West Urban Release Area Structure Plan	July 2023



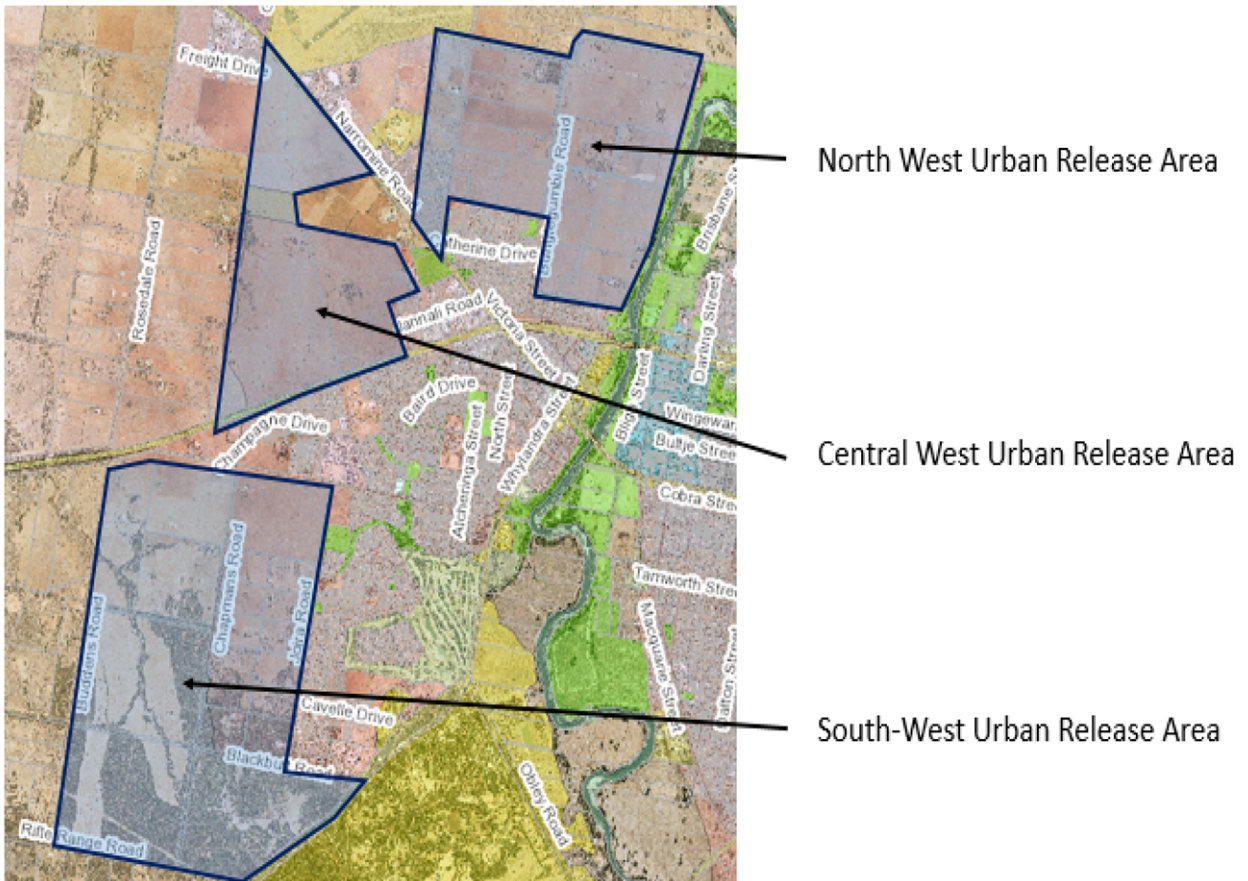


Figure 7 West Dubbo Urban Release Areas

The second component of our Urban Release Area planning activities includes the preparation of specific Development Control Plans for each of the Release Areas.

The role of a Development Control Plan is to clearly articulate and guide the development of the various precincts by easy to understand information and controls. The key to a successful Development Control Plan will include significant consultation with stakeholders

Action	Timeframe
North West Urban Release Area Development Control Plan	December 2022
Central West Urban Release Area Development Control Plan	December 2022
South West Urban Release Area Development Control Plan	July 2023

#### 4.5 Review of the Wellington Town Strategy

The general growth and development in Wellington is centred on factors regarding general affordability, the character and size of Wellington and the increasing development of the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone.

Development of the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone has seen a significant increase in activity around Wellington, with the planning and development of large scale renewable energy projects currently underway and the potential for a significant increase in renewable energy development activity in the future.

Action	Timeframe
Preparation of a Structure Plan for Montefiores - Wellington	July 2023
Review of the Wellington Town Strategy, including plans to identify and investigate future residential growth areas for Wellington, having regard to infrastructure provision, development constraints and community need	December 2023

#### 4.6 Short Term Worker Accommodation Planning

The Local Government Area is experiencing a significant increase in economic activity, which is driving the need for the provision of short term worker accommodation in both Dubbo and Wellington. The drivers of this need for short term worker accommodation include the following:

- Upcoming renewable energy projects associated with the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone;
- Being recognised as the first Critical Minerals Hub in the State, including the development of the Australian Strategic Minerals project at Toongi;
- Inland Rail project at Narromine;
- The needs of the different industries - including Fletchers International and others in the region
- Accommodation requirements for health and other key industry workers in the LGA.

It is understood that the State Government and other industry participants are also examining various methodologies for the development of short term worker accommodation.

Action	Timeframe
Consultancy project to understand the overall demand for short term worker accommodation in the LGA moving forward, the models available and to seek the financial modelling of a proposal for Dubbo and a proposal for Wellington	September 2022

## 5 Review of Policies and Supporting Information

### 5.1 Industry Guidance Materials

A key issue raised by Industry stakeholders is the need for better and effective promotion of development opportunities and a review of Council's guidance material. This is particular in respect of residential development and generally includes the following:

- The need for promotional material around Council's planning controls and their meaning, this is for secondary dwellings, dual occupancy and residential development in general;
- The need for promotional material around where medium density residential development can be undertaken; and
- Residential subdivision requirements

Similar guidance materials will also be prepared for residential development in Wellington.

Action	Timeframe
Review of Council's planning information on Council's website and identification of information gaps and currency of information	October 2022
Preparation of secondary dwelling toolkit	October 2022
Preparation of residential development toolkit	October 2022

### 5.2 Policy Initiatives

#### Policy for Housing Choice in Greenfields Subdivisions

This Policy would provide explanation around the possible pathways towards the potential proponent led changes to planning controls in limited areas in Greenfield subdivisions.

This may be in the form of lowering a minimum allotment size for the subdivision of land to provide a more affordable house and land product to market.

Action	Timeframe
Consultation with industry stakeholders and the State Government Department of Planning and Environment around suitability of a Policy position	November 2022

#### Community Housing Policy

Development of a Community Housing Policy, which will examine ways social housing can be incentivised to deliver further opportunities for development in the LGA.

Action	Timeframe
Consultation with industry stakeholders and Council around suitability of a Policy Position	November 2022

### 5.3 Process Improvements

The systems and processes of Council, whilst operating in accordance with Legislation and Policy provided predominantly by the NSW State Government, are important steps in the development processes towards the delivery of housing. This also includes the facilitation of timely land release to market.

A key component of these systems and processes is the Subdivision process. This includes the processes Council employs in the phases between development approvals through to subdivision lot delivery.

Council, as a component of our service review framework is currently undertaking a review of this process to ensure it can operate as efficiently and effectively as possible across the organisation and more importantly, ensure the customer experience is at the forefront of our operations.

Action	Timeframe
Undertake regular service reviews as determined by Council	Ongoing

### 5.4 Information availability

Council is the holder of a significant amount of information around housing and housing delivery, which ranges from general population demographics, strategic planning information, land availability, pipelines, development application processing figures and timelines.

It is recommended that a dashboard system be developed for inclusion on Council's website, which includes the following:

- Development data including trends and insights; and
- Strategic planning works program.

Action	Timeframe
Undertake a review of Council's REMPLAN forecast data and include on Council's website	October 2022

## 6 Implementation and Review

Council's role in housing is the facilitator and regulator of housing in the Region. It is considered that we need to ensure our Policy settings, strategic planning, procedures and activities are suitable to ensure the Region can continue to realise the positive economic development opportunities available. In addition, we must also ensure that our actions and initiatives can cater for all members of society and not leave anyone outside of the housing spectrum.

Progress towards the various elements of the Roadmap will be reported to Council on a six monthly basis.