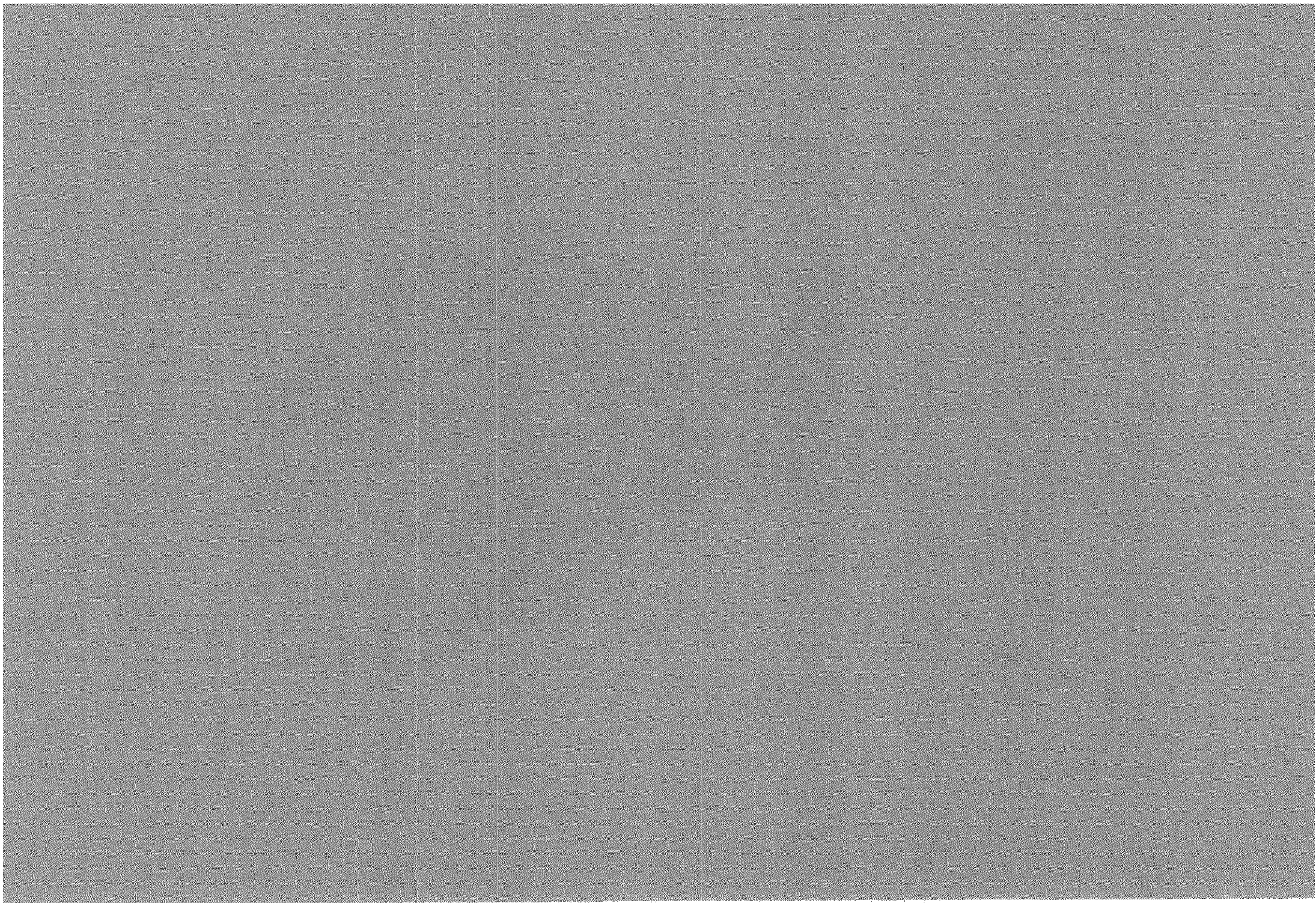


BENLONG DISTRICT STRATEGY



- (1) *The development of the District should (a) reflect the overall Rural Strategy objectives but (b) emphasise the particular development opportunities and environmental constraints of the District.*
- (2) *The District Strategy defines the future role of the District within the Dubbo Rural Area Development Strategy and describes the main opportunities and constraints on which development of the District is to be based.*



**DUBBO CITY
RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
1995 - 2015**

Adoption

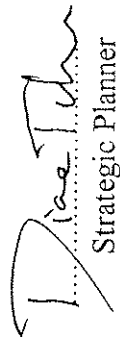
The Rural Area Development Strategy was adopted by Council as the rural policy package for Dubbo City Council at its meeting held on 4 December 1995 (refer clause 95/1116 - Works and Services Committee meeting held 9/11/95).

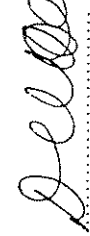
Application

The plan applies to all rural lands within the City of Dubbo that are included in each or any of the 7 rural districts (and including the Central District) as shown on page 6 of the Strategy dated September 1995. The Strategy shall be the basis of all of Councils' future decisions on the rural area.

Relationship To Other Plans

The Rural Area Development Strategy is designed to implement Councils' responsibilities under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. All of Councils' rural regulatory instruments (namely the Rural Area LEP 1996 and set of district DCP's when adopted) will act as mechanisms to further implement the concepts and direction of this Strategy.


.....
Strategic Planner


.....
Director
Environmental Services Division


.....
General Manager

BENELONG DISTRICT STRATEGY

OVERVIEW

The Benelong District features large areas of highly productive irrigatable land within the Macquarie River floodplain merging into the lighter country of the Southern District. There are also isolated hills with outcrops of rockier lighter country within the Benelong District. This topographic variability makes the district quite unique. Nevertheless it is dominated by large productive agricultural holdings and is perhaps the most stable agricultural district because of the lack of fragmentation.

The main environmental constraints relate to flooding, dryland salinity and erosion.

DESCRIPTION

ENVIRONMENT	DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER	ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE
<u>CATCHMENT</u> Generally very high capability Lower Catchments Undulating - flat Predominantly cleared Note: Some outcrops of poor timbered lighter lands	Exclusively agricultural, broadacre cropping and sheep and cattle grazing Large holdings No subdivision impact Distant from city	High Agricultural Production - cropping - grazing
<u>FLOODPLAIN</u> Macquarie River floodplain High capability/suitability Gentle slopes with steep outcrops Predominantly cleared	Broadacre cropping and grazing with more intensive use, increased carrying capacity if irrigated Large holdings No subdivision impact Distant from city	High Agricultural Production - cropping - grazing

FEATURES Obley Road, Molong Railway line, Toongi Settlement

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Continued extensive grazing production
- Continued broadacre cropping production
- Aggregation of vacant holdings to improve overall agricultural productivity
- Tourism/recreation - rivers and cultural features/farmstays
- Intensive agriculture potential along floodplain
- Transport - rail to Molong

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE IN THIS DISTRICT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STRATEGY (See the Appendix)

	High	Medium	Low	Nil
Agriculture	✓			
Forestry			✓	
Tourism		✓		
Recreation		✓		
Transport		✓		
Settlement				✓
Mining			✓	
See Action Plan				
See Appendix				

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

- Remnant Vegetation (along TSRs, Little River, Macquarie River, on some elevated outcrops) - wildlife habitat and corridor value.
- Rocky outcrops - erosion risk if cleared
- Macquarie River and floodplain
- Catchment area for Macquarie River and city
- Groundwater recharge area
- Dryland salinity - Wambangalang/Paddys Creek
- Aboriginal heritage sites along River

BENOLONG DISTRICT ACTION PLAN

Council can influence outcomes in three main ways:-

- | | |
|-----|---|
| (1) | <i>Information, advice and advocacy</i> |
| (2) | <i>Regulation and control</i> |
| (3) | <i>Direct action and assistance</i> |

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(1) AGRICULTURE

OBJECTIVE:

A MORE SECURE FUTURE FOR AGRICULTURE IN DUBBO AND EXPANSION OF ITS ECONOMIC VALUE

The Benolong District is by virtue of its separation from the city, and its large holdings and generally high land quality, a relatively stable established, broadacre farming area which is believed to make a considerable contribution to the Dubbo economy. It also has potential for more intensive uses along the floodplain area of the Macquarie River. Council should take the opportunity to reinforce the existing agricultural industry in this district and assist it in increasing its economic productivity by preventing the threats of speculation and conflicting land uses from undermining its security and efficiency.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS

- * Confidence to continue, expand and diversify existing agricultural enterprises.
- * A reliable local source of primary products for use in local value adding industries.
- * Protection and expansion of the city's existing agricultural economic base.
- * Maximise output from areas of high agricultural value
- * Continuing opportunities for on-farm employment.

APPROACH

The highest development priority of the Strategy is to support and encourage the existing agricultural sector of Dubbo. This means ensuring the agricultural industry functions without operational or management restraints due to land use conflicts. It also means promoting further agricultural development where the land can support it (i.e. where unused capability exists). So the strategy is designed to promote a larger, more secure and productive agricultural industry in the Dubbo area in the long term.

Council has an important responsibility to ensure that the resources agriculture depends on remain available, and are able to be used effectively (e.g. without conflicts from other uses). Specific farm management issues Council can influence include:-

- * land use conflicts which tend to limit farming operations;
- * dogs, weeds, fire hazards;
- * uncertainty about the future use of land - speculation;

- * fragmentation of the land resource; and
- * rating policy.

Furthermore, Council is never the sole player. It can also act to involve other bodies (eg DLWC) in addressing some of the wider needs and problems of this most important local industry.

To fulfil its role Council must determine which areas of Dubbo should expect to have a long term agricultural future, then encourage and protect agricultural investment in those areas.

For the purpose of the Strategy any land capable of agricultural production is agricultural land. However, the degree to which this production can be realised also depends upon the management skill of the farmer, the quality of the land and its condition (eg contamination, land degradation) the size of the holding in relation to the land quality and the potential for the holding to be expanded.

In developing policies to promote agriculture in and around Dubbo, Council should recognise that there are two (2) main types of agriculture in this area

- (1) Extensive Agriculture
- (2) Intensive Agriculture

(1) EXTENSIVE AGRICULTURE*

*Definition - Extensive Agriculture here refers to those farming activities that do not require high capability lands. It includes broadacre cropping and dryland stock grazing.

Locations	Extensive agriculture is suited to the mid catchment areas of the Macquarie and Talbragar river systems and in a more extensive form in their upper catchment areas.
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The size of a property in relation to its productive capacity. - The extent of land degradation or contamination. - Environmental sustainability. - Over capitalisation. - Inflated land prices due to speculation for other less productive land uses. - Excessive rating based on unrealistic valuations. - Conflicting land uses that could compromise the efficiency of farming. - Dogs, fires, weeds.

Interested Parties Landowners, NSW Ag, DCDC, NSW Farmers, DCC Environmental Services Division, DLWC, Landcare Groups, Agri-businesses, Fire Control Officers.

ACTION PLAN FOR EXTENSIVE AGRICULTURE**POLICIES:**

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Encourage | <p>(1) Encourage improved information exchange between landowners and between NSW Agriculture and the industry by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Sponsoring an annual agricultural forum on local agricultural issues, and (b) encouraging NSW Agriculture to publish an annual program of agricultural seminars for this area. <p>(2) Encourage farmers to approach Council with local problems that make farm management difficult (eg dogs, weeds, water management, land use conflicts, land degradation problems).</p> <p>(3) Minimise further speculation of non-farming development that doesn't conform to the strategy by promoting awareness of the strategies aims to financial institutions and valuers.</p> <p>(4) Educate landowners in clusters of hobby farms in agricultural areas of the responsibilities and understanding attached to living in a farming area (see Settlement: clusters).</p> <p>(5) Encourage consolidation of lots into larger holdings.</p> |
| Control | <p>(1) In consultation with NSW Agriculture and DLWC identify extensive agricultural areas by differential zoning in the LEP/DCP.</p> <p>(2) Protect or enlarge current holding sizes in extensive agricultural areas by:-</p> |

- (a) facilitating subdivision but only for those activities that advance the objectives of the strategy; and
 - (b) permitting boundary alterations without subdivision requirements, to enable farm adjustments without creating additional allotments.
- (3) Extensive agriculture to be a use that is permitted without the need for Council consent.
 - (4) Permit dwellings only where they are ancillary to productive and sustainable agriculture and necessary for its continuation or for other non conflicting activities that are defined as appropriate to the particular district.
 - (5) Consider allowing second dwellings for a manager, worker or relative employed in the farming activity on the site where the dwelling is to be contained within the same lot as the existing dwelling, uses the same access and is attached to the main dwelling or is of transportable construction.
 - (6) Allow supporting and small scale and compatible value adding industries in extensive agricultural areas.
 - (7) Inform neighbours of applications to create a new title and/or an additional dwelling in agricultural areas.
 - (8) Prevent potentially conflicting land uses (eg residential subdivision) from locating in extensive agricultural areas.
 - (9) Policies for the clusters are to be designed to overcome conflicts with larger scale surrounding agricultural activity.
- Assist**
- (1) Resolve conflicts between land uses in crucial areas by most effective means (see clusters).
 - (2) Council's program and priorities for rural services (eg road maintenance and improvements, hazard and weed reduction and dog control) to better reflect the reasonable needs of the agricultural industry.
 - (3) Identify sites for large scale value adding industries as part of Council's urban strategy.
 - (4) Lobby for drought relief when appropriate.
 - (5) Approach DUAP and other local Councils about developing a regional policy or environmental plan to co-ordinate actions to provide a more secure environment for the agricultural industry in the Central West.

(2) INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE*

* Definition - Intensive Agriculture comprises those highly productive agricultural activities which need high quality land and a secure water supply. Examples include lucerne growing, market gardening, turf farming, vineyards, dairies and horse studs. These uses require relatively small areas of land.

Locations	The Macquarie River floodplain.
Issues	The land quality in relation to the area of land available. Security of water supply The proximity of conflicting uses (eg urban/residential) and the effectiveness of buffering. Overcapitalisation Electricity supply Access to urban markets and transport networks Environmental sustainability.

Interested Parties Landowners, NSW Agriculture, DLWC, EPA, NSW Farmers, DCC Environmental Services Division, Western Power, DCDC, Landcare Groups, Macquarie River Advisory Council, Agribusinesses, Fire Control Officer.

ACTION PLAN FOR INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE**POLICIES:**

- Encourage**
- (1) Encourage improved information exchange between landowners and between NSW Agriculture and the industry by:-
 - (a) Sponsoring an annual agricultural forum on local agricultural issues, and
 - (b) encouraging NSW Agriculture to publish an annual program of agricultural seminars for this area.
 - (2) Minimise further speculation of non-farming development that doesn't conform to the strategy by promoting awareness of the strategies aims to financial institutions and valuers.
 - (3) Encourage farmers to approach Council with local problems that make farm management difficult (eg dogs, weeds, water management, land use conflicts, land degradation problems).
 - (4) Educate landowners in clusters of hobby farms in or near intensive agricultural areas of the responsibilities and understanding attached to living in a farming area (see Settlement: clusters).
 - (5)* Encourage retention of a secure water supply to facilitate full use of the productive capacities of the land in intensive agricultural areas.
 - (6)* Encourage acquisition of highly productive areas for re-subdivision/consolidation into more productive and sustainable layouts where necessary.
- Control**
- (1)* In consultation with NSW Agriculture and DLWC identify intensive agriculture areas by differential zoning in the LEP/DCP.
 - (2)* Intensive agricultural activities to require Council consent and be subject to a satisfactory farm management plan to ensure sustainability.
 - (3)* Allow subdivision of large holdings into smaller lots in these areas but only if subject to farm management plans which can demonstrate that overall productivity will be enhanced.

- (4)* Require buffers around the perimeter of new intensive agricultural subdivision areas to protect them from conflicts with existing landuses where necessary. (eg by distance, trees, mounds, dwelling separation for spraying purposes etc).
- (5)* Prevent further small lot subdivision expressly for dwellings adjoining intensive agriculture areas.
- (6) Extensive agriculture to be a use that is permitted without the need for Council consent.
- (7) Permit dwellings only where they are ancillary to productive and sustainable agriculture and necessary for its continuation or for other non conflicting activities that are defined as appropriate to the particular district.
- (8) Consider allowing second dwellings for a manager, worker or relative employed in the farming activity on the site where the dwelling is to be contained within the same lot as the existing dwelling, uses the same access, and is physically attached to the main dwelling or is of transportable construction.
- (9) Only allow supporting, small scale and compatible value adding industries in intensive agricultural areas where ancillary, otherwise direct to a nearby non-intensive site.
- (10) Inform neighbours of applications to create a new title and/or an additional dwelling in agricultural areas.
- (11) Prevent potentially conflicting land uses (eg residential subdivision) from locating in intensive agricultural areas.
- (12) Policies for the clusters are to be designed to overcome conflicts with larger scale surrounding agricultural activity.

Assist

- (1) Provide certainty to landowners adjoining vacant small holdings by resolving once and for all, whether they can be built upon.
- (2) Resolve conflicts between land uses in crucial areas by most effective means (see clusters).
- (3) Council's program and priorities for rural services (eg road maintenance and improvements, hazard and weed reduction and dog control) to better reflect the reasonable needs of the agricultural industry.
- (4) Identify sites for large scale value adding industries as part of Council's urban strategy.
- (5) Approach DUAP and other local Councils about developing a regional policy or environmental plan to co-ordinate actions to provide a more secure environment for the agricultural industry in the Central West.

(2) TRANSPORT

OBJECTIVE:

SAFE, EFFICIENT TRANSPORT LINKS BETWEEN DUBBO AND OTHER MAJOR CENTRES, WITH CAPACITY FOR FUTURE EXPANSION

The Benolong District includes the Dubbo-Molong rail link which should be recognised and protected as a potentially valuable corridor for the future.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS

- * Safeguards Dubbo's role as a transport hub in the state and national systems
- * Ensures road and rail operations remain free of conflicts or pressure from other land uses.
- * Anticipates future growth in use of road and rail through Dubbo.

APPROACH

Council's transport corridor strategy for road and rail seeks to protect the existing main corridors from local development pressures which could impair their future operation.

In the case of the major road system this means ensuring there is not an incremental proliferation of access points which increase hazards and lead to further speed limited sections, and ensuring the road reservation and geometry is adequate to accommodate future expansion.

In the case of rail it means ensuring there is not a proliferation of crossing points.

The retention for future use of established publicly owned local lines is an important matter of Council's policy, particularly as a preferred means of freight movement over road.

(2) RAIL CORRIDOR PROTECTION**Relevant****Lines**

All existing lines (ie Main Western Line, Merrygoen, Molong and Coonamble Rail Lines)

Issues

Existing rail infrastructure is an expensive and valuable asset.

Government policy has neglected rail in past decades, in favour of road, for freight movement.

Role of rail can be expected to strengthen in the long term.

Passenger and freight rail functions are both important to Dubbo Cities status and promotion.

Interested**Parties**

SRA, State and Federal Transport Ministers, DCDC, DCC Technical Services Division, National Rail Corporation, RTA, Dubbo Coachline, Fletchers International, Walkers Transport, Orana Regional Development Board (ORDB), Orana Group of Council's.

ACTION PLAN FOR RAIL CORRIDOR PROTECTION**POLICIES:****Encourage**

- (1) Increased use of rail for freight by encouraging DCDC and ORDB to lobby for this to become State and Federal Policy
- (2) Security of XPT service to Dubbo by encouraging DCDC and ORDB to lobby for this to become State Policy
- (3) Retention of disused and seasonal lines
- (4) Continued support and action on the Dubbo 21 Policy relating to the relocation of Dubbo rail operations yard to an efficient site and retention of threatened lines, as already adopted by Council.
- (5) Encourage recognition of the importance of the rail network to Dubbo's economy by interested parties and State and Federal Government departments.
- (6) Encourage landowners to use a building setback of 100m to rail lines where possible, for noise mitigation.

Control

- (1) Develop regulations and development control guidelines appropriate to ensure that new development proposals do not conflict with the efficiency or safety of the rail network.

Assist

- (1) Support DCDC's pursuit for relocation of the yard and retention of threatened lines by providing technical assistance where possible.
- (2) Promote the development of a regional policy on transport to the Orana Regional Development Board and the Orana Group of Councils.

The details on protection of major roads are not directly relevant to this district and details can be found on page 14 of the Rural Development Strategy.

(3) TOURISM**OBJECTIVE:****EXPAND DUBBO'S RURAL BASED TOURISM INDUSTRY**

The traditional farming character and scenic appeal of the district are tourism assets. There is potential for a scenic drive along The Springs Road - Paddy's Creek Road loop and promoting the Obley Road and Benelong Roads as alternate routes to Orange and Wellington respectively. Both roads and sites along them can exploit the scenic open farming character and existing heritage sites or the Macquarie River where appropriate.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS

- * Diversify local rural economic base
- * Diversify local tourism industry
- * Broaden accommodation choice in respect of costs, type, location

APPROACH

Tourism in Dubbo needs more diversity in accommodation choice and a greater range of activities for visitors, especially with the recent trend into experiential tourism.

Tourism proposals in the rural area can cause conflicts with agriculture so the Tourism aspects of the Strategy are subordinate. Tourism must be complimentary to and compatible with agriculture in the vicinity.

The Development Corporation Tourism Strategy needs to be guided and supported by Councils planning and control functions. The Council, the Corporation and the industry will need to cooperate closely to achieve this.

The rural area of Dubbo can be part of the asset base for that strategy. It provides prospects in bed and breakfast, farm-stay, as a potential base for experience or environmental tourism focussed on unique aspects of the local ecology, archaeology, history and rural lifestyle, and perhaps as a "gateway" to the Outback for the Sydney market. The strategy (and subsequent LEP) must protect the relevant assets and facilitate their development.

The Strategy recognises four (4) main opportunities to promote tourism in Dubbo's rural areas:-

- (1) Bed and Breakfast Accommodation
- (2) Rural Experience Holidays eg Farm stays
- (3) Interpretive/Educational tourism eg historic sites
- (4) Leisure Facilities

(2) RURAL EXPERIENCE HOLIDAYS/FARMSTAYS*

*Definition - accommodation and activity packages where visitors become involved in rural activities typically over a few days.

Locations	Established farms and the villages of Wongarbon and Ballimore.
Issues	Accommodation standards and facilities. A diverse range of activities on-site and in the area (eg horse riding, fishing, bushwalking). Access Proximity to main travel routes. Directional signage Non-conflicting land use
Interested Parties	Landowners, DCDC, Visitors Information Centre, NSW Agriculture, NRMA, DCC Environmental Services Division.

ACTION PLAN FOR FARMSTAYS**POLICIES:**

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Encourage (E) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) DCDC and DCC to co-operate to promote community awareness of the tourist value of the rural landscape (eg through photographic and art competitions and displays) (2) Encourage the Visitors Centre to collect data on tourist needs and interests (eg costs and form of accommodation, interpretive tourism for students). (3) Encourage use of heritage and Council's heritage advisor in rural areas by attaching this information on 149 Certificates and rate notices for historic properties. (4) Encourage the Visitors Centre to co-ordinate Schools' visit to Western Plains Zoo with other attractions. (5) Encourage the DCDC/visitors centre/tour companies to provide a local directory of accommodation, sites and attractions and tours. (6) DCDC/DCC to seek grants for rural heritage development. |
| Control (C) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Allow for tourist facilities and attractions subject to consent. (2) Allow for subdivision for the purposes of tourism subject to consent and submission of a farm management tourism plan that demonstrates the compatibility of the proposal with other productive land uses. (3) Prepare a register of historic sites and require consent for any development thereon (including demolition). (4) Allow for signage conforming with the relevant standards advertising on-farm tourism on the major traffic routes and on the site and directional signage on road signs, subject to consent. (5) Adopt development control policies/guidelines that reflect the States' minimum standards for differing types and scales of tourist facilities and also ensure that no conflicts arise between on-farm tourism and other productive landuses. |

(6)* Require a farm management plan with applications for farm-stay operations to ensure the agricultural base - farming - is itself genuine and sustainable.

Assist (A)

- (1) DCDC to approach adjoining towns seeking more co-ordinated tours through the Central West and West that include Dubbo.
- (2) Identify and promote through signage a local rural tourist drive.
- (3) DCDC/DCC to consider purchase of threatened historic sites where grant funds are available.
- (4) Lobby the RTA, the Orana Regional Development Board and other Councils to identify Dubbo on signs at turnoffs outside the city onto the Newcastle Link, onto the Obley/Molong Link and onto the Old Dubbo Road.

(3) INTERPRETIVE/EDUCATIONAL TOURISM*

*Definition - tourism focussed on a particular interest, eg Aboriginal Heritage, historic buildings, eco-tourism, or particular farming enterprises. It may be for day excursions or tours or involve overnight stays (eg spotlighting) for students or other interested parties

Locations

Aboriginal Sites - Terramungamine Reserve, Beni/Barbigal sites etc
 Historic Buildings/and Heritage Sites - eg Pioneer Cemetery
 Eco tourism - Little River Area, Wongarbon and Coolbaggie Nature Reserves, State Forests, Macquarie River, Wambangalang Field Studies Centre, Old Harbour etc
 Farming, agro-forestry areas

Issues

Points of interest
 Access
 Protection and Management of the asset
 Interpretation eg documentation, signage, tour guides
 Non conflicting landuse

Interested Parties

Landowners, Aboriginal Groups, Heritage Advisor and Committees, Dubbo Museum, NPWS, Landcare Groups, NSW Ag, DCC Parks and Landcare, Western Plains Zoo, DLWC, National Trust

ACTION PLAN FOR INTERPRETIVE TOURISM**Encourage**

- (1) DCDC and DCC to co-operate to promote community awareness of the tourist value of the rural landscape (eg through photographic and art competitions and displays)
- (2) Encourage the Visitors Centre to collect data on tourist needs and interests (eg costs and form of accommodation, interpretive tourism for students).
- (3) Encourage use of heritage and Council's heritage advisor in rural areas by attaching this information on 149 Certificates and rate notices for historic properties.
- (4) Encourage the Visitors Centre to co-ordinate school visit to Western Plains Zoo with other attractions.
- (5) Encourage the DCDC/visitors centre/tour companies to provide a local directory of accommodation, sites and attractions and tours.
- (6) DCDC/DCC to seek grants for rural heritage development.

Control

- (1) Allow for tourist facilities and attractions subject to consent.
- (2) Allow for subdivision for the purposes of tourism subject to consent and submission of a farm management tourism plan that demonstrates the compatibility of the proposal with other productive land uses.
- (3) Prepare a register of historic sites and require consent for any development thereon (including demolition).
- (4) Allow for signage conforming with the relevant standards advertising on-farm tourism on the major traffic routes and on the site and directional signage on road signs, subject to consent.
- (5) Adopt development control policies/guidelines that reflect the States' minimum standards for differing types and scales of tourist facilities and also ensure that no conflicts arise between on-farm tourism and other productive landuses.

- (6)* Allow for one caretakers residence where supervision and/or security is necessary (eg for Aboriginal artefacts)
- Assist**
- (1) DCDC to approach adjoining towns seeking more co-ordinated tours through the Central West and West that include Dubbo.
 - (2) Identify and promote through signage a local rural tourist drive.
 - (3) DCDC/DCC to consider purchase of threatened historic sites where grant funds are available.
 - (4) Lobby the RTA, the Orana Regional Development Board and other Councils to identify Dubbo on signs at turnoffs outside the city onto the Newcastle Link, onto the Obley/Molong Link and onto the Old Dubbo Road.
 - (5)* Consider providing support facilities where appropriate for educational based tourism (eg interpretation signs, information).

The other types of tourism are of less relevant and details can be found on pages 16, 17 and 23 of the Rural Development Strategy.

- (4) *Forestry is another landuse that could be promoted in rural Dubbo. However it is not a priority in this particular district, details can be found on pages 13 and 14 of the Rural Development Strategy.*

- (5) *Mining is another land use opportunity in rural Dubbo. However it is not a priority in this district and details can be found on page 27 and 28 of the Rural Development Strategy.*

(6) RECREATION**OBJECTIVE:****USE THE RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL OF THE RURAL AREA**

This Benolong District is bounded on two (2) sides by the Macquarie River and Little River which both have recreational potential for fishing, picnicking, boating and walking. However, such uses must be secondary to agriculture and maintaining high water quality.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS

- * Wider range of activities available to visitors which would complement the tourism industry.
- * Wider range of recreation opportunities for the Dubbo community
- * Promote wider community appreciation of the rural area.

APPROACH

Recreation proposals in the rural area are principally valued as an adjunct to tourism, providing opportunities to add interesting activities to rural based tourism. They should be subject to being compatible with agriculture in the vicinity and careful management.

A recreational lands strategy for the Dubbo rural area should reflect such issues as:-

- * the need to widen the range of recreational activities available to visitors, especially of an exploratory or non commercial nature, to encourage longer stays.
- * the lack of state recreation or national park reserves within or close to Dubbo.
- * the resulting relative lack of opportunity and facilities for informal outdoor recreation such as walking, riding, camping, boating.
- * the prospects for more recreational use of forest areas, the river system and other scenic assets as adjuncts to rural based tourism ventures.

Council's strategy should be based on the findings of its recreation and leisure needs study. Council could function (depending on the case) as provider or facilitator (eg in the case of privately held land to which public access is desirable), or as a regulator (eg to ensure compatibility with other objectives).

The strategy identifies opportunities in the rural area which appear relevant to meeting these various needs, and which may need to be reflected in the Rural LEP.

*Definition - this includes all recreation that uses the rural waterways such as fishing, canoeing, power boating and swimming as well as land based activities such as bushwalking, horse riding, orienteering, picnicking and cycling.

Locations Primarily the Macquarie River but also includes the major tributaries such as the Talbragar and Little Rivers, Coolbaggie and Wambalang Creek, State Forests, Nature Reserves and village parks. Council reserves and crown lands in the Little River Area and Sappa Bulga areas, TSRs in scenic areas, disused railway lines (as appropriate and where publicly owned).

Issues Vehicle accessibility
Support Facilities
Scenic Value or features of interest
Environmental Management Plans (sustainability, habitat resilience, water quality, rehabilitation)
Risk and Fire Hazard Management
Compatibility with adjoining land uses

Interested Parties Land Owners, DCC Technical Services Division, DCC Parks and Landcare Division, RTA, DLWC (Water), SRA, NPWS, DLWC (Soils), relevant recreation/sporting groups, DCDC and Tourism Strategy, Visitors Centre, Recreation Study Consultants., TCM groups, NSW Ag, State Forests, Landcare Groups, Fire Control Officers, DCC Community Services Division

ACTION PLAN FOR RURAL RECREATION

POLICIES:

- Encourage (E)**
- (1) Advise the community of appropriate existing accessible public reserves.
 - (2) Encourage landowners to approach Council with problems associated with public access to rural recreational sites.
 - (3) Encourage landowners to consult with Council on the development potential of sites of recreational value (possibly in conjunction with tourism proposals).
 - (4) DCC to encourage State Forests to convert Beni National Forest to a State Recreation Area.
- Control (C)**
- (1) Protect existing sites from inappropriate development and recognise potential recreation sites in the LEP/DCP.
 - (2) Permit commercial recreational use and associated development, subject to consent and appropriate management plans.
 - (3) Develop guidelines for recreation proposals to ensure compatibility with adjoining land uses.
- Assist (A)**
- (1) Council may prepare management plans as appropriate and at its discretion for specific proposals, at the cost of the developer.
 - (2) Direct developers to use DCC as a facilitator between landowners and user groups where necessary.
 - (3) Provide for pre-development application discussion of recreation proposals between developers and Council.
 - (4) Consider provision of Council assistance in seeking grants, where appropriate.
 - (5) Provision and maintenance of safe legal access to recreational sites.
 - (6) Consider provision of support facilities on public reserves of recreational value (eg toilets, boat ramps, directional signage, BBQ facilities, litter bins) and program them as appropriate.

- (7) Consider acquiring sites of important recreational value. (eg potential lookouts)
 - (8) Consider assisting landowners adjoining public reserves to provide fencing where it is necessary.
 - (9) Consider forming connecting riding trails and bush walks within Council recreational areas where appropriate and subject to managing any potential conflict with other land uses.
 - (10) Consider pursuing grants for development of rural recreation facilities
 - (11) Consider simplifying boundaries of Crown Reserves through negotiation and exchange of land where necessary and practical.
 - (12) Protect the quality of Waterways to ensure safe use and a plentiful supply of native freshwater fish (see waterways).
 - (13) DCC to consider acquisition of private timbered lands for public recreation purposes (eg. Little River Area) if clearing is refused and where amenable to the owners.
- (7) *Settlement is another land use opportunity in rural Dubbo. However it is not a priority in this district and details can be found on pages 30 - 34 of the Rural Development Strategy.*

KEY

DISTRICTS

- 1. Southern
- 2. Minore
- 3. Coolbaggie
- 4. Goonoo
- 5. Talbragar
- 6. Macquarie
- 7. Benlong

- Intensive agriculture
- Alluvial/broadacre agriculture
- Dryland/extensive agriculture
- Forestry and Forestry expansion
- Tourism Value *
- Recreational opportunities
- Major transport routes
- Settlement
- Mining assets
- Uncleared Lands
- Existing urban-rural L.E.P. boundary
- Proposed urban-rural L.E.P. boundary

MACQUARIE RIVER FLOODPLAIN

- intensive agriculture value

BENLONG CROSSING

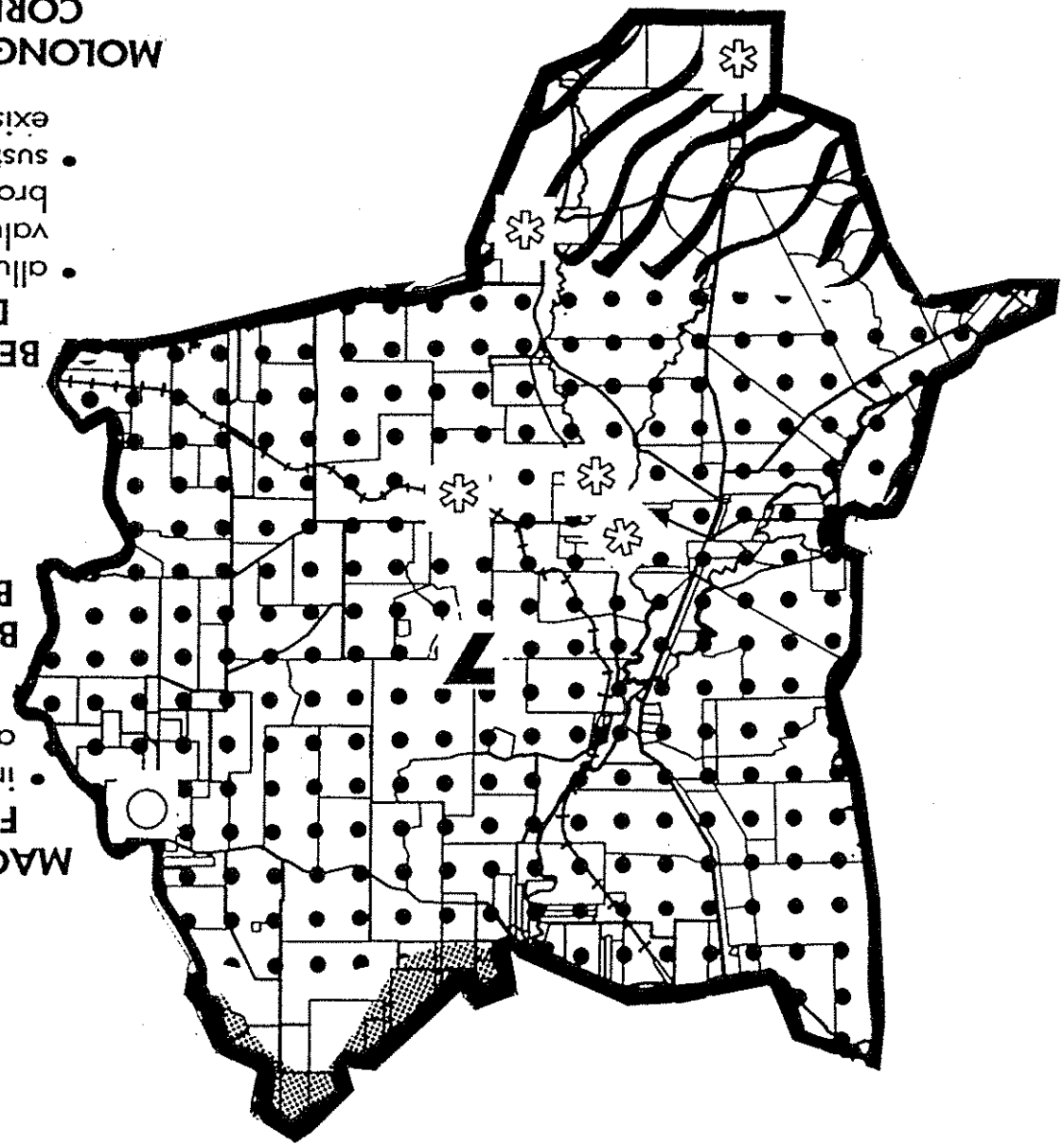
- recreational/ tourism potential
- fishing, scenic appeal

BENLONG DISTRICT

- alluvial areas valued for broadacre farming
- sustain and protect existing uses

MOLONG RAIL LINE CORRIDOR

- retain line to realise opportunity for freight and/or tourism/recreation use



THE SPRINGS RD

- potential tourist drive (scenic farming area, historic properties, Aboriginal heritage)
- national heritage status – tourist value

THE SPRINGS'

- retain line to realise opportunity for freight and/or tourism/recreation use



ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

(1) WATERWAYS

OBJECTIVE:

SAFE, SUSTAINABLE AND MULTIFUNCTIONAL RIVERINE ENVIRONMENTS.

The Benolong District drains into the Macquarie River upstream of the city. As the River is Dubbo's Water Supply it is important that the river itself and all runoff into this catchment area from the district be carefully managed. So the objective on catchment management is particularly relevant to this district.

Locations Macquarie, Talbragar and Little Rivers.

Issues Pollution and degradation of rivers and tributaries resulting from:-

- * Silting
- * Chemical residues
- * Human and animal wastes
- * Inadequate natural flushing, (evaporation, drought)
- * Reduced runoff
- * Dams
- * Algae
- * Flooding
- * Recreational use
- * European Carp
- * Exotic vegetation/trees

Interested

Parties

Landowners, DLWC (Water), EPA, CMC's, Landcare Groups, DLWC (Soils), MSB and other user groups, Macquarie River Advisory Council, DCC Environmental Services, Parks and Landcare and Technical Services Divisions, Department of Fisheries.

ACTION PLAN FOR WATERWAYS

POLICIES:

- Inform** (1) Inform the community of:-
- (a) typical water quality problems eg agricultural chemicals, inappropriate farm practices, wastes, contaminated lands, erosion, algae, inadequate water flow, European Carp, nutrients;
 - (b) water quantity problems eg dams, bores, drought, flood, evaporation; and
 - (c) the economic impacts of water problems, eg lost production, remedial costs
- through information packages attached to zoning certificates and/or rate notices or DA's and displays in Council's foyer.
- (2) Promote good practice in Riparian corridor management by encouraging farmers to become involved in landcare groups and the formulation of stream management plans, to seek DLWC grants for fencing or revegetation where appropriate or necessary, and to consult with NSW Agriculture and DLWC on good farming practices.

- Control**
- (1) DLWC and Council to identify riparian corridors and promote separate management of them through the LEP/DCP.
 - (2) Require consent for all development within the riparian corridor.
 - (3) Require a management plan to be submitted with applications for new development in the riparian corridor indicating appropriate measures for erosion control, habitat protection, pollution control and protection of channel form.
 - (4) No habitable buildings, septic tanks or other human waste treatment to be permitted in the riparian corridor.
- Assist**
- (1) Council involvement in local landcare groups and phosphorus action campaigns through MEH.
 - (2) DCC Environmental Services Division, through the MEH to investigate all notified problems and determine appropriate action.
 - (3) DCC Parks and Landcare to provide trees for revegetation of cleared Riparian Corridors where requested by landowners and considered appropriate.
 - (4) DCC Technical Services in co-operation with the Department of Fisheries to continue restocking the Macquarie with native fish.
 - (5) DCC Technical Services to prepare and use urban stormwater runoff plans to ensure runoff is of an acceptable quality.
 - (6) DCDC to investigate export potential of European Carp or processing for agricultural use.
 - (7) DCC Environmental Services Division to identify site specific sources of water quality and quantity issues by the implementation of joint monitoring programs with the DLWC (Water).

(2) AQUIFERS**OBJECTIVE:****STABILISE WATER LEVELS AND WATER QUALITY IN THE AQUIFER.**

The Benelong District includes a large part of the recharge area for the groundwater supply for the city and the pressure for, and impacts, of bore water for rural properties may be-in competition with the urban areas needs. So, the Objective and Action Plan policies relating to aquifer management is particularly relevant to this district.

Locations	Known aquifers and their recharge areas as defined by DLWC.
Issues	Health implications of contamination, reliability of information and adverse effects on aquifers as a consequence of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Subsurface geology, * land uses in recharge areas, * water tables, * number and location of bores, * DLWC licensing policy, * unregulated and illegal water extraction, * pollution, * surface runoff patterns,

Interested**Parties**

DCC Environmental Services and Technical Services Divisions, landowners, DLWC (Water), EPA, Dept of Health, NSW Ag, DLWC (Soils), CMC's.

ACTION PLAN FOR PROTECTION OF AQUIFERS**POLICIES:**

Inform	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) DLWC to inform Council of all existing bores and their status. (2) Council to promote community awareness of:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the need for an unpolluted and reliable groundwater supply (eg for agricultural productivity and city water supply); (b) sources of groundwater pollution (eg pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers, erosion, and flooding, animal wastes, contaminated lands); and (c) the impacts of bores in recharge areas on groundwater levels through information packages, rate notices, 149's, displays in foyer etc. (3) Advise landowners of the potential for prosecution of polluters or unlicensed use of water.
Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) DLWC and Council to identify aquifers and recharge areas in the LEP/DCP. (2) Require aerobic septic disposal systems for all new residences and industries in recharge areas. (3) Require consent for intensive agricultural activities subject to property management plans and details of satisfactory waste disposal and runoff management.

- (4) Require consent and management plans to control wastes and chemicals from other potentially polluting developments (eg including all designated developments).
- (5) Where appropriate, Council to require designated developments to commission an independent system to annually monitor continued compliance with conditions of consent. Failure to meet minimum standards may result in a requirement to cease operations.

Assist

- (1) Consider incentives to relocate potential polluters to new sites away from the recharge area in conjunction with the DCDC, EPA and DLWC.
- (2) Evolve monitoring process/database in co-operation with EPA, DLWC and Dept of Health.

(3) FLOODING**OBJECTIVE:****MANAGE DUBBO'S FLOODPLAINS TO MINIMISE THE DAMAGE OF FLOODING.**

The Benolong District is defined to the North by the Macquarie River which can and does inundate large areas of the district when in flood. So, the Objective and Action Plan relating to flood management and damage control is relevant to this district.

Locations

Principally the Macquarie and Talbragar River and corridors and Castlereagh River Catchment area and the villages of Eumungerie, Ballimore and Wongarbon but also any other rural locations that have potential for flooding.

Issues

Matters of relevance include:-

- * Identification and management of the Floodplain (including Floodway and Flood fringe) and the 1 in 100 year flood level,
- * access,
- * new and existing development in the floodplain,
- * relative hazard for differing land uses.

Interested**Parties**

Landowners, DLWC (Water), EPA, Dept of Health, DCC Environmental Services and Technical Services Divisions, Floodplain Management Committee, SES Controller.

ACTION PLAN FOR FLOODING**POLICIES:****Inform**

- (1) Section 149/Zoning Certificates should inform landowners in the floodplain of a potential flood hazard and that they should seek independent advice for their site
- (2) Promote relocation of habitable structures from within the floodway to flood free areas.
- (3) Discourage new development in the flood fringe area.

Control

- (1) Define the term floodplain, floodway and flood fringe in the LEP/DCP.
- (2) DLWC and Council to determine an indicative 1 in 100 year floodline and identify it on the LEP/DCP.
- (3) Prohibit new habitable buildings or extensions to existing habitable buildings in the floodway.
- (4) Dwellings in the flood fringe in the villages to be subject to elevation of the floor levels at least 500mm above an agreed upon 1 in 100 year flood level.
- (5) Dwellings within the 1 in 100 year flood areas to be prohibited unless no other alternative exists. Where permitted floor levels are to be at least 500mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level.
- (6) Require building approval for all other structures and works (as defined in the Act) that may affect flood patterns in the floodway.
- (7) Require flood free access within the site to new developments subject to there being no other negative impacts on flood patterns.

- (8) No uncontrolled fill in the floodway or floodplain
- (9) Council to consider the potential impacts of global warming, increased development, urbanisation and clearing when determining a flood standard/building standard in subsequent reviews of the rural LEP.

Assist

- (1) Council's Technical Service Division to investigate the need for flood mitigation measures in the villages (eg retaining basin, levees) and prepare recommendations for Council.
- (2) Council in its capacity as representative on the floodplain management committee to assist the SES.
- (3) Council to assist community in its executive role in the local emergency management committee.
- (4) Install flood level markers in villages and residential clusters and road crossings where appropriate
- (5) Where requested and available provide information to landowners in support of applications to the State Bank for flood proofing of existing developments in the floodplain.
- (6) Liaise with the Bureau of Meteorology and DWR where appropriate to improve the flood warning system.

(4) EROSION**OBJECTIVE:****PREVENT THE SPREAD OF EROSION AND REMEDY EXISTING AREAS.**

Some parts of the Benelong District are particularly susceptible to erosion so any measures to manage and remedy erosion in the rural area are relevant to the Benelong District.

- Locations** Principally the drainage systems, cleared lands and class VII and VIII capability lands. All other areas are susceptible.
- Issues** Effectiveness of SEPP 46 and events and practices that may result in erosion:
- * Drought,
 - * flood,
 - * clearing,
 - * farming practices,
 - * riparian management.
 - * soil depletion and siltation

Interested Parties

Landowners, Landcare Groups, DLWC, NSW Agriculture, NSW Farmers, DCC, Local Schools, NPWS.

ACTION PLAN FOR EROSION**POLICIES:**

- Inform**
- (1) Obtain the assistance of DLWC and NSW Agriculture to identify and inform the community on:-
 - (a) the causes of erosion (eg surface clearing, inappropriate cropping, overstocking, lack of windbreaks, poor drainage control);
 - (b) the impact of erosion (eg decreased agricultural productivity, devaluation of land, pollution, restorative costs, loss of habitats); and
 - (c) the solutions to erosion (eg tree planting, sustainable farming techniques, riparian management) by providing information with 149 Certificates, rate notices, displays in Council's foyer and encouraging landowners to seek further advice from DLWC.
- Control**
- (1) DLWC and Council to identify susceptible sites such as drainage systems and class VII and VIII lands on the LEP/DCP and update the Strategy as necessary.
 - (2) DCC to support implementation of SEPP No. 46 by DLWC and NPWS.
 - (3) Require consent and erosion control plans for any "work" (as defined in the Act) likely to cause erosion.
 - (4) Any further development of susceptible sites to be conditional on rehabilitation by the developer.
 - (5) Farm management plans where they are required (see Agriculture) should include provisions on contour ploughing/banks, and other sustainable farming techniques for erosion control.

- Assist
- (1) DCC Technical Services and Parks and Landcare Division to lead by example in remedying erosion and limiting ground cover removal along road reserves through roadside management strategies.
 - (2) Council support of and involvement in landcare groups, through Director Parks and Landcare.
 - (3) DCC Technical Services Division to consider practical assistance to landowners (machinery, expertise) when approached.
 - (4) DCC Technical Services and Parks and Landcare Division to rehabilitate existing disturbed sites that are Council owned or controlled (eg old quarries).
 - (5) DCC, through MEH, to liaise with DLWC and NPWS to ensure Council awareness of the operation of SEPP No. 46 and DLWC and NPWS's monitoring of clearing in the Dubbo area.

(5) DRYLAND SALINITY**OBJECTIVE****PREVENT THE SPREAD OF DRYLAND SALINITY AND REMEDY EXISTING AREAS.**

The Wambangalang/Paddy's Creek catchment areas at the Southern end of this district are seriously affected by Dryland Salinity so remedying this problem must be a priority in the Benolong District.

Locations Principally the existing surface outbreaks of salinity as identified by DLWC on their maps. Other areas are susceptible.

Issues Effectiveness of SEPP No. 46 and other matters which may effect or promote salinity:-

- * Clearing,
- * geology,
- * water tables,
- * farming practices.

Interested**Parties**

Landowners, Landcare Groups, DLWC, NSW Ag, NSW Farmers, Murray Darling Basin Commission, local schools and NPWS

ACTION PLAN FOR SALINITY**POLICIES:**

- Inform**
- (1) Obtain the assistance of DLWC to identify and inform the community on:-
 - (a) the causes of Dryland Salinity (eg geology, clearing and rising water tables);
 - (b) the impacts of Dryland Salinity (eg reduced agricultural productivity, impeded natural plant growth, devalues land, loss of habitats, restorative costs) and;
 - (c) solutions to Dryland Salinity (eg reafforestation and lowering of water tables)
 by providing information with 149 Certificates, Rate Notices, displays in Council's foyer and encouraging landowners to seek further advice from DLWC and NSW Agriculture.
- Control**
- (1) DLWC and Council to identify affected and susceptible sites separately in the LEP/DCP and update the Strategy as necessary.
 - (2) DCC to support implementation of SEPP No. 46 by DLWC and NPWS.
 - (3) Farm management plans, where they are required (see Agriculture), should include provisions for sustainable farming techniques to prevent salinity.
 - (4) Any further development of susceptible sites to be conditional on rehabilitation by the developer.
 - (5) Require consent for any "works" likely to cause the water table to rise.

- Assist
- (1) Council, through MEH and when approached by landowners regarding a new salinity problem to provide a referral service to the relevant landcare co-ordinator.
 - (2) Council to consider providing salt resistant trees and shrubs and planting advice to landowners and Landcare groups when approached.
 - (3) Support landcare group applications for SALT-ACTION funding through DLWC
 - (4) Commence a remedial program (eg planting salt resistant trees and shrubs) on all Council controlled land affected by Dryland Salinity.
 - (5) DCC through MEH to liaise with DLWC and NPWS to ensure Council awareness of the operation of SEPP No. 46 and the DLWC and NPWS's monitoring of clearing in the Dubbo area.
- (6) *Habitat Protection is important in the wider picture but is not the focus for future management of this district. Details can be found on pages 49 - 50 of the Rural Development Strategy.*
- (7) *Contaminated lands may exist in this district but have not yet been identified. So, the policies for contaminated lands can be found on page 51 of the Rural Development Strategy.*

KEY

DISTRICTS

1. Southern
2. Milners
3. Coolbaggie
4. Geeneo
5. Talbragar
6. Macquarie
7. Benolong



Flood liable lands (1 in 100 year approx)



Groundwater recharge areas



Vegetation & habitat value



Soil erosion hazards

Significant creeks & rivers

Existing urban-rural L.E.P. boundary and district boundaries

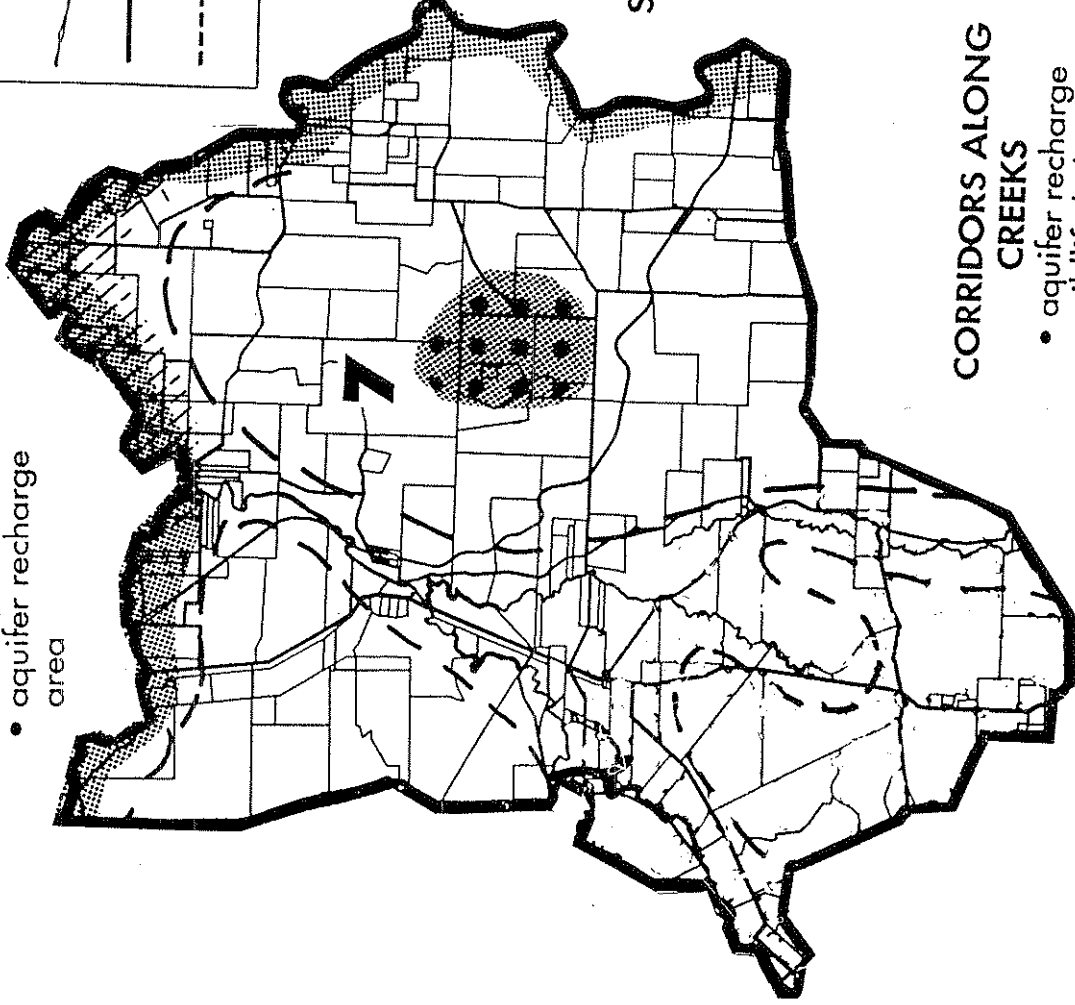
Proposed urban-rural L.E.P. boundary

TRIBUTARIES

- corridors for wildlife

MACQUARIE RIVER FLOODPLAIN

- flood prone lands
- aquifer recharge area



LITTLE RIVER

- wildlife corridor
- water quality may affect Macquarie R.

SOUTHERN THREE DISTRICTS

- local water catchment for Dubbo city

LITTLE RIVER AREA

- high erosion hazard if cleared
- important habitat value
- significant ecosystem

CORRIDORS ALONG CREEKS

- aquifer recharge
- wildlife habitats

WAMBANGALANG/

PADDY'S CK CATCHMENTS

- dryland salinity
- creeks provide corridors for wildlife movement
- erosion evident

TRAVELLING STOCK ROUTES ALONG OBLEY ROAD

- habitat value



APPENDIX

RURAL STRATEGY GOAL

FULFIL THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF DUBBO'S RURAL AREA WITHIN SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY OBJECTIVES

(Fulfill the economic potential of Dubbo's Rural area)

Agriculture

A more secure future for agriculture in Dubbo and expansion of its economic value

Transport

Safe, efficient transport links between Dubbo and other major centres with capacity for future expansion.

Tourism

Expand Dubbo's rural based tourism industry

Forestry

Expansion of the Dubbo area timber industry

Mining

Allow mines and extractive industries where consistent with environmental objectives.

Recreation

Use the recreation potential of the rural area

Settlement

Direct rural settlement pressures into the rural villages and selected areas of existing fragmentation.

(Note - heritage and cultural resources (both aboriginal and non) are important considerations in the development of the rural area so a separate strategy for cultural resources is being prepared and will be incorporated at that stage)

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

(Sustainable resource management principles)

Waterways

Safe, sustainable and multifunctional riverine environments.

Aquifers

Stabilise water levels and water quality in the aquifer.

Flooding

Manage Dubbo's floodplains to minimise the damage of flooding.

Erosion

Prevent the spread of erosion and remedy existing areas.

Dryland Salinity

Prevent the spread of dryland salinity and remedy existing areas.

Wildlife Habitats

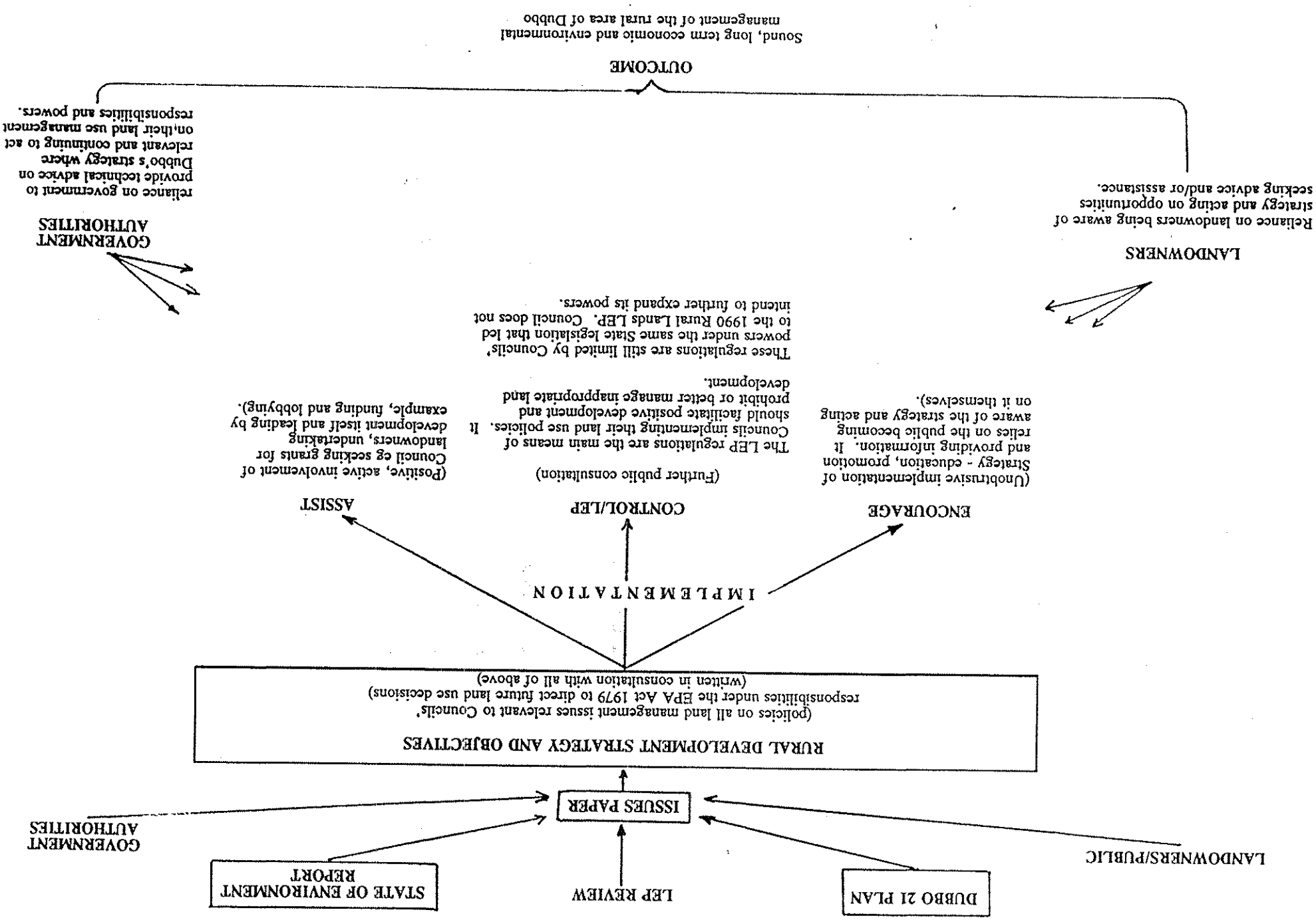
A network of habitats able to support the fauna and flora native to this area.

Contaminated Lands

Minimise and Control Contamination of Rural Lands

(Note: whilst weed and fire control are also important issues they can be addressed within the action plans for the other objectives)

Based on the Principles - as referenced - derived from the Rural Issues Paper (see appendix 2 & 3)



ABBREVIATIONS USED/GLOSSARY

ANZECC	Australia and New Zealand Environmental Conservation Council
CMCs	Catchment Management Committees
DA	Development Application
DCC	Dubbo City Council
DCDC	Dubbo City Development Corporation
DCP	Development Control Plan - set of regulations that are usually more specific to an area or an issue and are meant to supplement the LEP.
DLWC (Soil)	Department of Land and Water Conservation (Branch previously known as the Soil Conservation Service of CALM)
DLWC (Water)	Department of Land and Water Conservation (Branch previously known as Department of Water Resources)
DUAP	Department of Urban Affairs and Planning
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
LAND CAPABILITY	A scale of land classes used by SCS to identify the limits to which land can be disturbed and used before problems arise.
LAND SUITABILITY	A scale of classes used by NSW Ag, based on capability but also considers some outside factors such as access.
LEP	Local Environmental Plan - the main planning regulation used by Council to manage rural land - it introduces zones and stipulates what land uses Council will and won't allow in each zone.
MSB	Maritime Services Board
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSW AG.	New South Wales Agriculture
REP	Regional Environmental Plan
SES	State Emergency Service
TCM	Total Catchment Management
TSR	Travelling Stock Route

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