

Enquiries
Please ask for Theresa Folpp
Direct 02 6549 3700
Our reference CM 24/30642

29 May 2024

Lauren Clear
Assessment Officer
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Dear Ms Clear

Hunter Transmission Project – Muswellbrook Shire Council (Staff) input to the Draft Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)

Reference is made to the following:

- ‘*Hunter Transmission Project Scoping Report*’ (2024) (Scoping Report); and
- Request to provide input on the Draft Planning Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (Draft SEARs) via the Major Projects Portal.

The Hunter Transmission Project (HTP) is Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) and ‘*must be built by the end of 2028 to protect energy security in NSW as the remaining coal-fired power stations close*’ (Scoping Report, Section 1).

Key components and activities of the HTP include:

- A new overhead 500 kilovolt (kV) double circuit transmission line of around 100 kilometres connecting the existing transmission line at Bayswater to a substation in Olney State Forest;
- Two new substations (Bayswater and Olney);
- Associated works including upgrades to the existing Bayswater and Eraring substations, adjustments to existing transmission lines, road upgrades, access tracks, temporary construction facilities such as laydown areas, stringing sites, construction support sites and workers accommodation;
- Provision of 5 gigawatts (GW) of additional transfer capacity between Bayswater and Eraring;
- Workforce of between 300 – 700 people in HTP North (to be determined);
- Construction to start in 2026 and operation by the end of 2028; and
- Access to the Bayswater site via the New England Highway.

The HTP has been divided into three distinct corridors. HTP north runs mostly through power station, mining and government land between Bayswater and Broke. HTP North will connect to the Bayswater substation, located at the edge of the Muswellbrook Shire Local Government Area boundary (see Figure 1). This area has previously been disturbed and is devoid of vegetation.

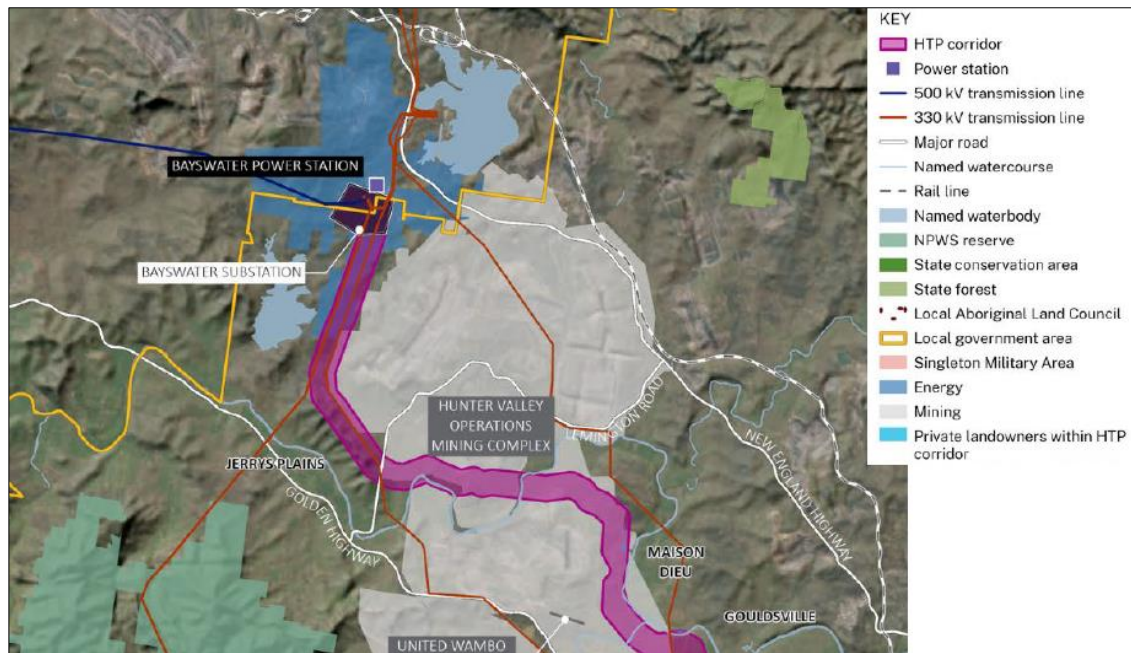


Figure 1 – Location of HTP North in relation to the Muswellbrook LGA

Council staff have reviewed the Scoping Report and its associated appendices and provide the following input.

Cumulative Impacts

The following is noted from Section 2.6 of the Scoping Report

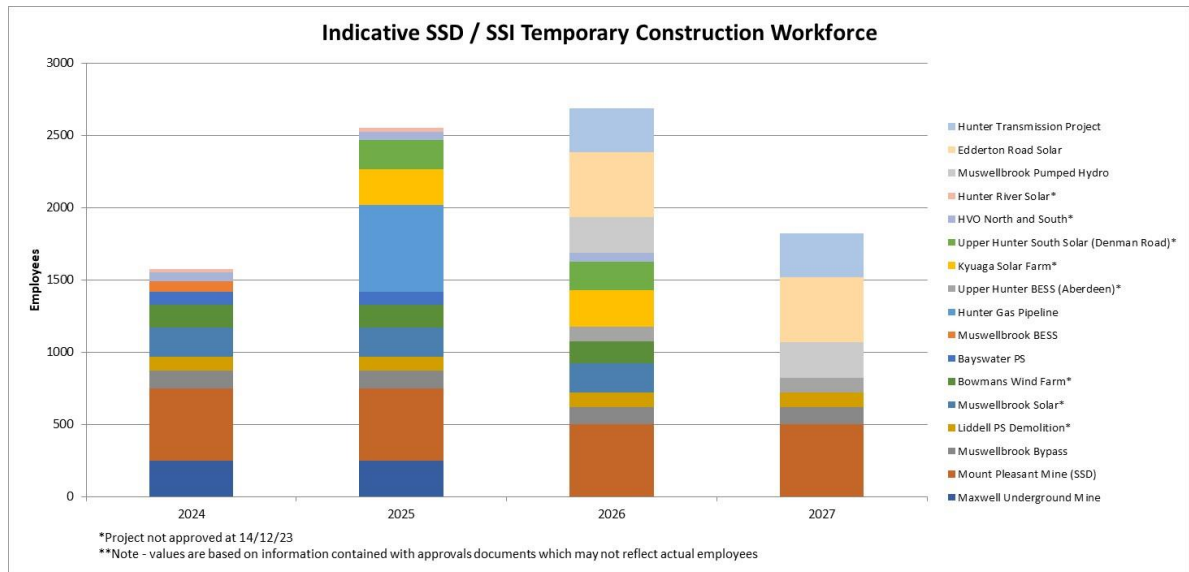
Most other projects are located too far away from the HTP corridor or will be out of sync with its construction to cause any significant cumulative impacts, apart from the potential impacts on traffic and people (demand for infrastructure and services). This includes renewable energy projects around Muswellbrook: Hunter River Solar Farm, Muswellbrook Solar Farm, Muswellbrook Battery Energy Storage System, Bowmans Creek Wind Farm, Maxwell Underground Coal Mine Maxwell Solar Farm and Hunter Gas Pipeline.

1. There are multiple projects proposed within the Muswellbrook Local Government Area with overlapping construction periods commencing in 2026, as shown in the figure below. The Proponent must consider temporary construction workforce requirements for these projects.

It should be noted that a cumulative construction labour force assessment was undertaken in 2023 for the Muswellbrook Solar Farm which found:

there will not be enough rooms to accommodate this workforce.

It is also noted that there is a level of uncertainty about all these projects progressing post-approval or in the timeframes indicated in the various EIS documents.



Temporary Housing

Staff note the Scoping Report states that a construction support facility is likely to be placed near Bayswater to accommodate the construction workforce in HTP North. 'This will be a temporary accommodation facility at existing industrial locations and after the HTP is built this accommodation will be removed'.

Council generally does not support the use of temporary, out-of-town camps to mitigate cumulative impacts to housing and accommodation if that means there will be no economic benefit to the Shire (i.e. all income expenditure will occur outside the LGA).

2. The Proponent is requested to commit to preparation of an Accommodation Strategy be post approval, and prepared in accordance with DPE's *'Temporary and seasonal workers' accommodation draft guideline'*. At a minimum, any Accommodation Strategy should:
 - a) Demonstrate how accommodation demand will be managed during periods of high demand e.g during key regional events;
 - b) Document an approach to informing regional accommodation providers of project workforce accommodation demands including anticipated timing;
 - c) Enable the coordinated placement of the workforce in short-term accommodation throughout the Shire;
 - d) Keep key stakeholders informed of predicted project accommodation demands with six month lead times preferable; and
 - e) Contain a monitoring framework incorporating 'triggers' in decisions about additional accommodation options.

Staff are currently liaising with NSW EnergyCo in relation to cumulative housing impacts of REZ projects.

Social and Employment

3. The impact of the cumulative construction labour force on social and community services should be assessed.

The cumulative impact of the various REZ projects (and construction of Muswellbrook Bypass) will significantly affect local services, infrastructure, and housing including from increased water demand, waste generation, strain on emergency services, and the need for more classrooms, as highlighted in the report '*Managing the impacts of State Significant Development*', prepared for the Mid-Western Regional Council in 2023.

4. The Proponent should consider partnering with local organisations to implement an employment program for disadvantaged people (e.g. St Helliers Correctional Centre).

5. A local procurement strategy should be prepared in consultation with Council including a target of 10% of required goods/services supplied by local businesses within 50km of the site.

Benefit Sharing

Staff support the following commitments for Benefit Sharing as outlined in Section 6.2.1 and Appendix C of the Scoping Report.

During the preparation of the EIS, EnergyCo will develop a benefit sharing program for the HTP in consultation with local councils, affected landowners, local communities and other key stakeholders such as the local Aboriginal community. This program will include:

- *Funding for strategic initiatives to directly benefit local communities affected by the HTP;*
- *Strategic benefit payments (\$200,000 per kilometre) for private landowners hosting transmission infrastructure on top of regular compensation for easements or land*
- *At least 1.5% of the design and build contract value to go towards increased income and job opportunities for local Aboriginal communities*
- *Maximising the employment of locals and the purchase of local goods and services*
- *Creating education and training opportunities for the community to participate in the transition to renewable energy, including the HTP.*

We're engaging with both Singleton Council and Muswellbrook Council as well as Aboriginal groups and service providers, peak regional business groups, education and training providers to identify benefit sharing opportunities.

Regional Reference Group

Staff note Appendix C of the Scoping Report that states a 'Regional Reference Group (RRG) consisting of the Mayors of Singleton, Cessnock and Lake Macquarie, as well as other representatives has been formed'.

It is also noted that the Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire has not been invited to be on the RRG and should be.

Traffic

Staff note the following from Table 6.2 of the Scoping Report:

There will be cumulative traffic impacts with other relevant projects in HTP North (see section 2.6) but these will be focused on the New England Highway and Golden Highway. Both are major roads built to accommodate high traffic volumes.

As the HTP North site will be accessed from a State Road, Staff have no further comments.

Visual

6. Of concern to Muswellbrook Shire Council are the visual impacts to motorists travelling along the Golden Highway toward Muswellbrook. Particularly, the combined landscape and visual / aesthetic effect of the presence of coal mines and other infrastructure adjacent the Golden Highway, and how they impact the perception of Muswellbrook.

Gyde (consulting firm) completed a landscape character and scenic value assessment along the Golden Highway for the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and Council. The assessment report is still to receive sign-off from DPHI, therefore the entire document is not available. However, relevant pages are provided in Attachment A, specifically Precinct 3 relates to the land proposed nearby HTP North.

7. Staff request an assessment of views travelling north along the Golden Highway, including a figure showing existing visual treatments (if any) and options for additional treatments to mitigate cumulative impacts adjacent each road.
8. A plan to manage any visual screen tree plantings and ensure their growth and ongoing survival should be provided.

Waste

9. A Waste Management Plan will be required and is to be prepared in consultation with the relevant authority and Council's Waste Operations unit. A copy of the plan should be provided to Council's Waste Operations unit to prepare for incoming waste volumes, types and disposal methods outlined in the plan.

Muswellbrook Shire Council operates the Muswellbrook Waste & Recycling Facility located on Coal Road, Muswellbrook. Environment Protection Licence 5980 applies to the site and specifies the nature and classification of materials that may be landfilled.

The landfill is licenced to accept the following classifications of waste:

- General Solid waste (putrescible)
- General Solid Waste (non-putrescible)
- Asbestos, safely delivered as per legislated requirements.

No other waste types are permitted for landfill disposal. The site licence specifically excludes disposal of liquid waste, chemical waste, dangerous or hazardous substances in the landfill.

Council staff appreciates the opportunity to provide input and would be pleased to provide additional information if requested. Should you need to discuss the above, please contact Theresa Folpp, Environmental Planning Officer on 02 6549 3700 or email council@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'SP', written in a cursive style.

Sharon Pope
Director Environment and Planning

**Attachment A – Extracts from Landscape Character and Scenic Value Assessment
(GYDE, ND)**

5. PLANNING FOR PRECINCTS

The Structure Plan is underpinned by a series of smaller precincts, recognising that the size of the study area gives rise to a wide diversity of activities with associated considerations for planning.

The iterative method for establishing precinct boundaries with the study area is briefly summarised below.

1. **Landscape character units.** Field work undertaken by a qualified specialist led to the identification of 23 broad landscape character units, which are mapped and described in detail in the supporting *Scenic Landscapes Overview Study*. Each unit has identifiable characteristics that can be used for evaluation purposes (e.g. determining scenic value, and considering the capacity to absorb visual change).
2. **Strategic land use review.** Additional desktop research and field work was undertaken to consider broader land use considerations in context, such as (but not limited to) existing activities and built form, accessibility, and hazard risks. The outputs of these investigations were then reviewed in conjunction with the landscape character units, resulting in some landscape character units being aggregated into larger planning precincts.
3. **Stakeholder feedback.** Precinct boundaries emerging from steps 1 and 2 were then refined based on stakeholder feedback, including through workshops with key Council stakeholders and in response to feedback from local business operators participating in individual interviews.

Eight (8) distinct Planning Precincts emerged from the process described above. These are further categorised into:

- **Town precincts**, which a higher degree of accessibility to services and major thoroughfares, driving greater demands for a diversity of uses.
- **Valley precincts**, which are more removed from services and major thoroughfares, necessitating a more prudent approach to managing development demands.

Boundaries for all Town and Valley Precincts are shown in **Figure 4**.

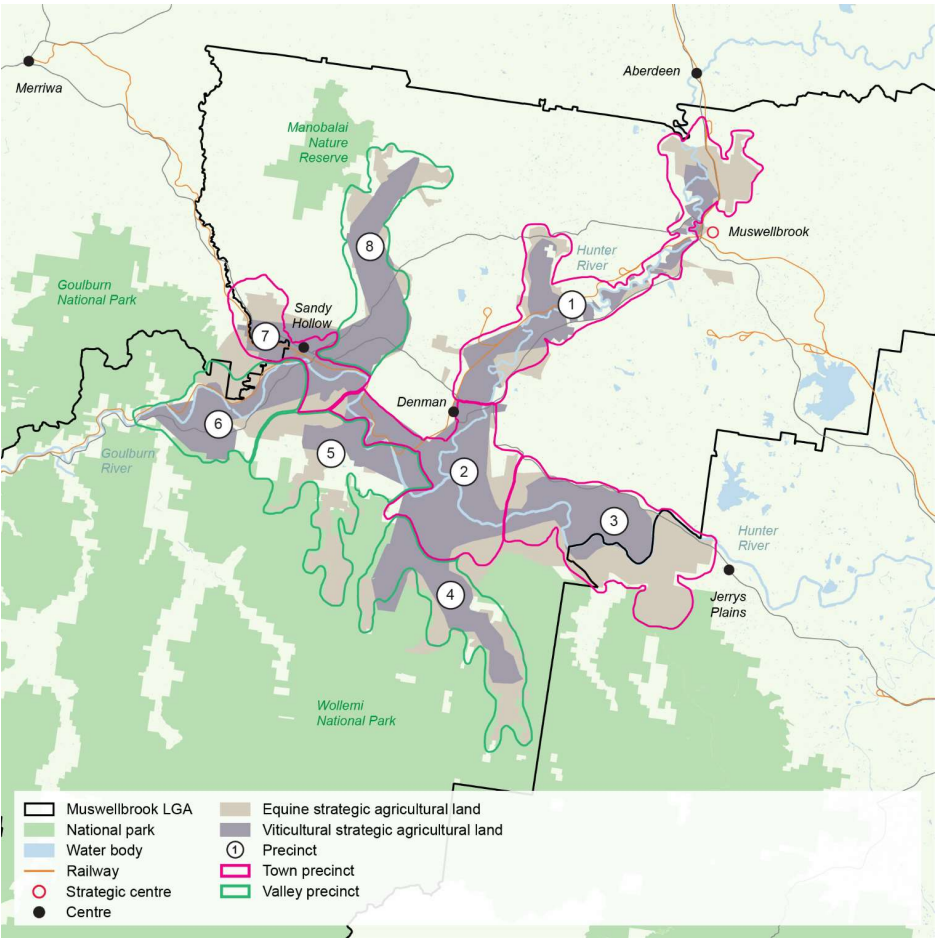


Figure 4: Precinct Boundary Overview

5.1. [Precinct level outcomes](#)

The delineation of Precincts provides an opportunity to describe what District-wide outcomes will look like in each and establish a framework for achieving these outcomes. For each Precinct, this section provides:

- A Precinct **map** highlighting strategically important focus areas and features.
- A snapshot of the landscape character units underpinning the Precinct, including each unit's ranking with respect to scenic **values** and **capacity** to absorb landscape changes.
- A brief description of the Precinct's **attributes** relative to the Area-wide Planning Principles, and
- [Precinct-specific land use planning outcomes to be considered or delivered through future planning or plan-making.](#)

5.1.1. Precinct 1 (Muswellbrook Town Precinct)

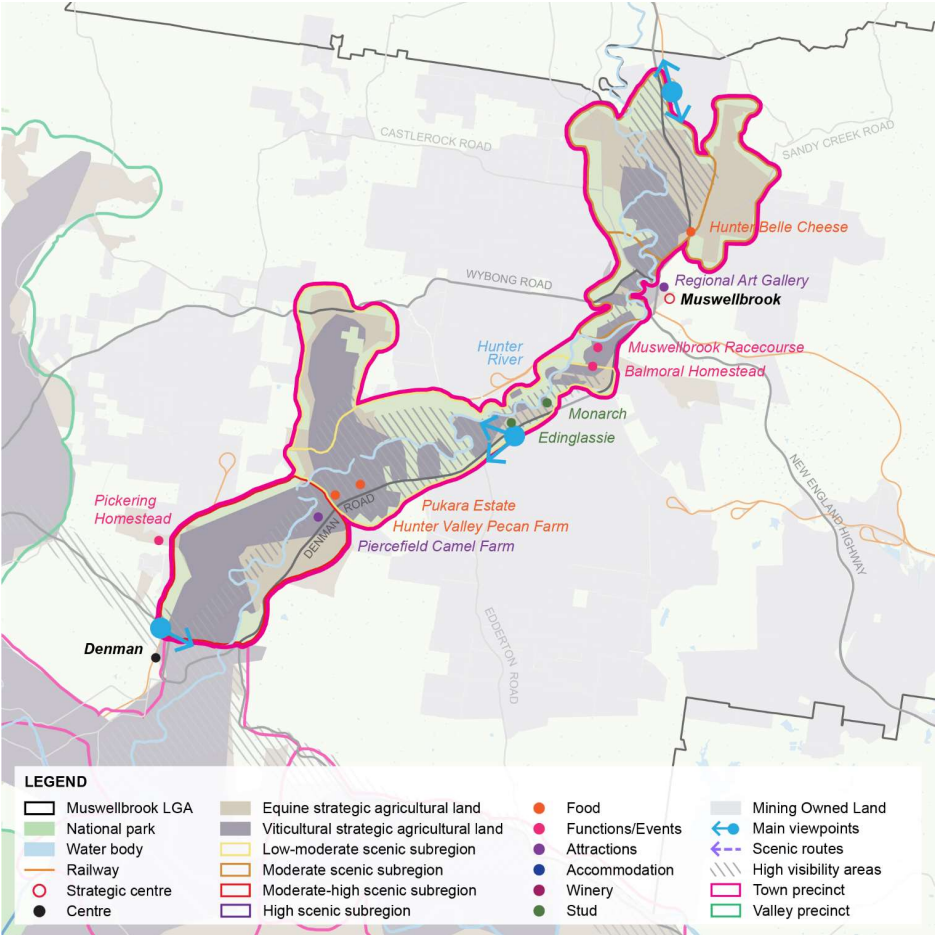


Figure 5: Precinct 1 Overview

PRECINCT 1 ATTRIBUTES

Precinct 1 encompasses Muswellbrook town and the Denman Road corridor, and contains a wide range of services and amenities, industry and infrastructure, housing, accommodation, business and tourist activity. The Hunter River extends through this Precinct, creating rich agricultural land along alluvial floodplains.

Landscape Units Underpinning Precinct 1		
Name	Description	
Denman floodplain/eastern fringe	Values: MODERATE HIGH	Capacity: LOW
	An attractive part of the long, broad valley of the upper Hunter River that connects Denman to Muswellbrook to the east. The primary landscape difference with the eastern part of the valley is the absence of dominant views of open-cut mining which becomes more visible as one travels east on Denman Road. When travelling west (towards Denman) there are no mining views.	
Northern Muswellbrook entry – rural/floodplain	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: LOW TO MODERATE
	Area to the west of main northern entry to/exit from Muswellbrook (on northern side). Unit flanks the descent from the northern hill from where the town edge becomes visible.	
Northern Muswellbrook entry – semi-rural	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: LOW TO MODERATE
	Area to the east of main northern entry to/exit from Muswellbrook (on northern side).	
Western Muswellbrook semi-rural edge	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: LOW TO MODERATE
	Floodplain western edge to Muswellbrook, abutting urban boundary.	
Wybong Road rural	Values: LOW-MODERATE	Capacity: MODERATE
	Shallow valley and undulating hills south of Wybong Road, situated between Mangoola Mine and Bengalla Mine.	
Muswellbrook Denman Road approach	Values: LOW-MODERATE	Capacity: MODERATE
	South-western rural/semi-rural approach to Muswellbrook along Denman Road.	

Land in this Precinct varies from flat, open, and improved pastures to undulating hills. Views of the open-cut mining landscape and infrastructure such as mining structures, vehicles and transmission lines are prevalent, particularly along the northern extent of Denman Road.

This Precinct is well-connected, well-serviced and highly visible within a major thoroughfare. It is located along the New England Highway and Denman Road and already features a wide range of visitor services within Muswellbrook and along Denman Road, making it a favourable location for attracting tourist activity into the future.

While the Hunter River sustains rich agricultural land throughout this Precinct, associated flood risks also constrain the area. 100-year flood mapping identifies potential flooding over the major thoroughfare of Denman Road, across agricultural land and parts of Muswellbrook.

The prevalence of mining activities and operational requirements for existing businesses within Precinct 1 means the area does not offer the amenity suited to overnight visitor stays. This recognises the cumulative impact of noise, vibration, and odour emissions occurring around the clock.

While this area is also not expected to attract further investment in wine growing whilst mining remains an active and prevalent neighbouring use, land along the Denman Road corridor currently offers the most unique and diverse mix of other rural and semi-rural uses in the district, including the Pukara Olive Farm, Hunter Pecan Farm, and the Hunter Valley Camels. Lot pattern in this Precinct varies significantly, and many agribusinesses appear to be comprised of more than one lot. A deliberate effort will need to be made to preserve strategic viticultural land over the long term to enable the industry to return in time.

PRECINCT 1 LAND USE PLANNING OUTCOMES

Centralise activity in Muswellbrook town

- Mitigate urban encroachment into productive agricultural lands while optimising amenity and services in town.
- Encourage larger-scale tourist developments, including accommodation within the Strategic Centre, leveraging a range of existing businesses, services, and infrastructure.
- Discourage overnight accommodation outside town to avoid conflicts with mining activities and rural business operations and protect the integrity of scenic landscapes.
- Create a memorable landscape character, screen some views of the mines and enhance the existing main viewpoints to and from the northern approach to Muswellbrook (refer Figure 6) through large street tree plantings.



Figure 6: New England Highway, Muswellbrook approach.



Figure 7: Denman Road, facing west.

Retain vistas over rural landscapes and towards the vegetated and rocky hills of Wollemi National Park

- Manage the bulk and scale of built form as seen from the main viewpoint heading south of Muswellbrook on Denman Road (refer Figure 7). This may be achieved through LEP controls (building height and FSR standards) and DCP controls (materials, colours, landscape requirements, avoiding non-rural fencing).
- Review DCP controls to minimise the impact of development on ridgelines by larger rural homes, sheds and other infrastructure. Appropriate controls could include discouraging tree clearing, discouraging extensive earthworks, limiting overall visible building scale and encouraging additional tree planting.
- Vistas towards the rocky bluffs of Wollemi National Park are to remain undisrupted by built development.

- New development proposed within or as seen from High Visibility Areas are recommended to be subject to a detailed Visual Impact Assessment.

Grow on-farm tourism offerings in conjunction with diverse agricultural products

- Balance tourist offerings, such as on-farm experiences, with consideration for landscape values and the ongoing viability of agricultural lands.
- Prioritise the preservation and adaptive re-use of heritage assets both in and around Muswellbrook town. This includes using historical homesteads and other cultural assets for tourist offerings, such as function centres.
- Discourage on-farm overnight accommodation, given the area's proximity to Muswellbrook where tourist accommodation can remain centralised and accessible.
- Provide appropriate and cohesive signage to allow visitors to navigate wine country and other agribusinesses along Denman Road and at the gateway to Muswellbrook.
- Engage operators in the process of change to ensure existing business needs are understood.

Preserve the potential for wine-growing activities to return in future

- Minimise land fragmentation to allow larger scale vineyard plantings and wine growing operations in the longer term.
- Undertake flood analysis to understand the implications of regular flooding on the long-term potential for viticultural development.

Improve Denman Road to cater for a mix of heavy vehicle, commuter and visitor traffic

- Balance road safety considerations with the function and efficiency of Denman Road as a key logistics route.
- Enhance business visibility, allowing for clear and appropriate signage and prioritising safe access to properties offering visitor attractions.
- Flood resilience measures are to be built-in to road upgrades.

The following initiatives should be considered to facilitate these outcomes:

- A business needs analysis focusing on Denman Road and Aberdeen Street.
- A detailed study to investigate flood-sensitive development and road resilience options along Denman Road.

5.1.2. Precinct 2 (Denman Town Precinct)

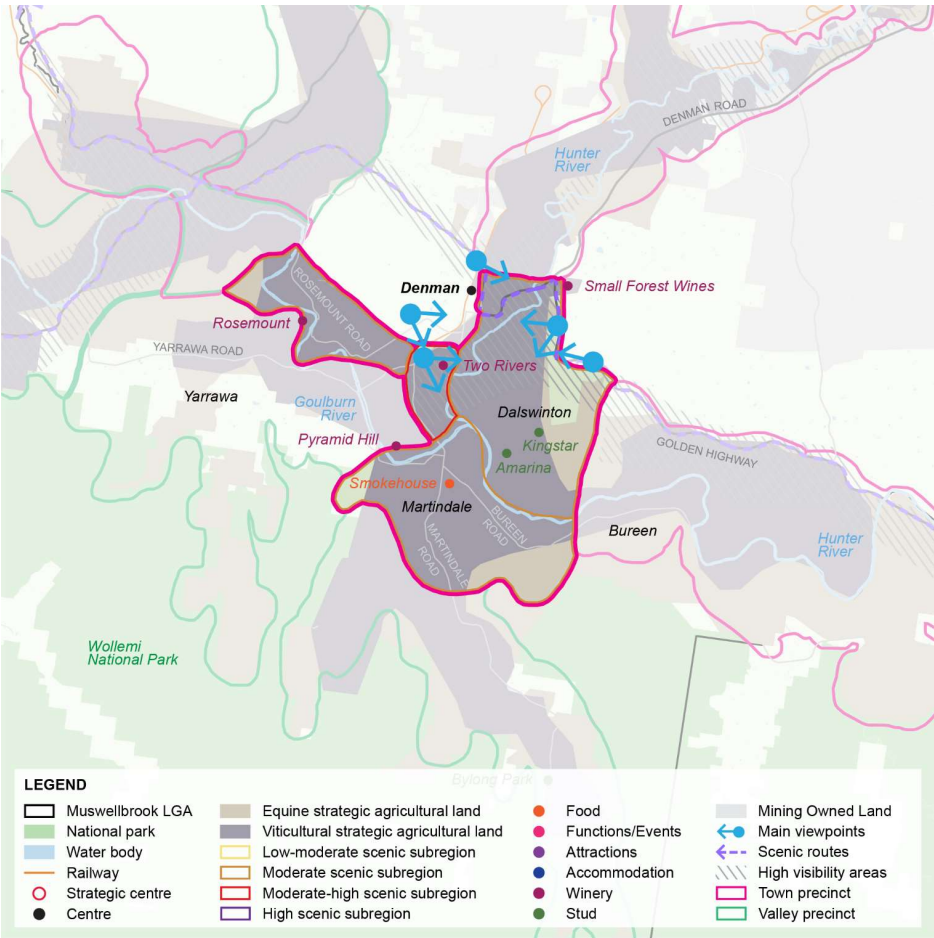


Figure 8: Precinct 2 Overview

PRECINCT 2 ATTRIBUTES

Precinct 2 is centred around the town of Denman, extending from the northern approach into Denman along the Denman Road, south to the rural floodplain of the Martindale-Bureen area. It encompasses land from Dalswinton in the east and includes the extent of Rosemount Road to the west.

Landscape Unit underpinning Precinct 2		
Name	Description	
Semi-rural footslopes, Rosemount Road	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: MODERATE
	This is a small, narrow unit is on the northern side of the Yarrawa Creek valley, east of the Goulburn River, along Rosemount Road.	
Bureen rural floodplain	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: MODERATE
	This is part of the broad rural floodplain on the southern side of the Hunter River in the Martindale-Bureen area.	
Dalswinton rural floodplain	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: LOW TO MODERATE
	An attractive part of the broad rural floodplain south-east of Denman.	
Denman Hills	Values: MODERATE HIGH	Capacity: VERY LOW TO LOW
	The Denman hills unit dominated by vineyards and situated just west of the town of Denman, forming an attractive landscape that defines the town's edge. The hilly landscape allows for wide views in all directions, with panoramic views possible to the east around to the west, with a strong background of vegetated hills and the rocky bluffs of Wollemi National Park.	

Denman is located along the Golden Highway, close to the confluence of the Hunter and Goulburn Rivers. It is approximately 25km south-west of Muswellbrook and has developed into a well-established country town and a popular day-trip destination. Gently undulating hills and expansive floodplains provide for productive agricultural land throughout the Precinct, where the study area's largest cluster of wineries can be found.

Precinct 2, located along the major thoroughfare of the Golden Highway, benefits from existing town services in Denman and is still a convenient distance to the strategic centre of Muswellbrook. It also benefits from greater separation to large-scale mining activities to the north. These features, in conjunction with the strong scenic values reflected across the Precinct make it highly attractive from a visitor's perspective.

The area already features an established cluster of wineries and horse studs set amongst rolling hills. These businesses may have capacity to expand existing tourist offerings, along with diversification into tourist activities associated with other agribusinesses, heritage assets, scenic drives, and recreation spaces.

Denman is the second-largest town in the District after Muswellbrook, and its central location makes it a convenient overnight stay location for business and leisure visitors. Maintaining an adequate supply of housing for residents and visitor accommodation will be important to ensuring the long-term ability of the town to sustain itself, and for the broader District to maintain an adequate supply of housing for a workforce operating throughout the rural areas. Land around the town of Denman has already been identified to support future population growth. Additional efforts may be required to consider visitor accommodation needs in parallel with planning for housing.

The Precinct has seen a rise in developments featuring larger scale renewables, particularly solar farms. A considered effort will need to be made to preserve scenic amenity and viticultural land in conjunction with these uses.

PRECINCT 2 LAND USE PLANNING OUTCOMES

Reinforce the role of Denman as the heart and hub of the District

- **Deliver** more diverse housing and visitor accommodation options in Denman town to enable tourism growth and economic development more broadly.
- **Encourage** larger-scale tourist developments, including accommodation within the town, leveraging a range of existing businesses, services, and infrastructure.
- **Discourage** overnight visitor accommodation outside town to avoid conflicts with rural business operations and protect scenic landscape values.
- **Develop** wayfinding/signage in Denman to direct visitors to attractions throughout the District.

Protect Denman's special landscape and cultural setting

- **Maintain** urban breaks to the surrounding rural area to define the town's boundary.
- **Discourage** large industrial or commercial buildings in highly visible locations on town edges to provide an attractive and welcoming visual gateway.
- **Protect** the valuable panoramic views of undulating hills that surround the precinct (refer **Figure 9** and **Figure 10**), by managing the scale and appearance of development through LEP and DCP controls, and ensuring development outside of town remains of a rural character.
- **New** development proposed within or as seen from High Visibility Areas are recommended to be subject to a detailed Visual Impact Assessment.
- **Encourage** historical homesteads and other cultural assets to be activated by tourist uses.
- **Enhance** the town's public domain through improvements to street tree planting, additional visitor facilities and signage. This includes enhancing existing active and green links (such as the river corridor and bicycle trails).



Figure 9: Vegetated hills and rocky bluffs of the Wollemi National Park.



Figure 10: The Denman hills are surrounded by scenic vineyards.

Retain and grow existing vineyards and safeguard future viticultural potential

- Undertake ongoing engagement with existing to ensure their business needs are understood and considered in long-term strategic plans.
- Manage land fragmentation on properties not currently used for viticulture to allow for potential larger scale vineyard plantings and wine growing operations in the longer term.
- Maintain urban breaks to the surrounding rural area so encroachment does not threaten current or future viticultural viability.

Enhance accessibility to the existing winery cluster

- Improve connectivity south of Denman along Yarrawa Road and Martindale Road.
- Enhance the potential for access to individual properties welcoming visitors through local road improvements, including shared access points to service roads.
- Ensure alternative transport links, including active travel options, between Denman and local wineries are available to allow visitors access to wine experiences without having to drive.
- Deliver road upgrades along routes popular with visitors, particularly in the vicinity of Denman town, to improve safety and access.
- Improve wayfinding infrastructure to better signpost cellar doors along Yarrawa Road south of Denman.

Reinforce wine country character throughout the Precinct

- Allow appropriate and cohesive signage to permit visitors to navigate wine country and other agribusinesses along Denman Road and at the gateway to Denman.
- Create a memorable landscape character at the entry to Denman and on the Golden Highway in the vicinity of wineries through larger street tree plantings. For example, deciduous species with attractive autumnal colours could complement and reflect the seasonal aspects of the vines.
- Support tourist offerings to build on the wine experience and leverage the area's strong scenic values, without compromising those assets. Uses like larger restaurants or smaller scale overnight accommodation may be considered in conjunction with an agricultural use in this Precinct.

Support connectivity and integration with Rosemount Road

- Integrate the Rosemount Road area's future character with the surrounding wine country region through landscape features, wayfinding, and LEP and DCP controls to ensure a rural built character is achieved.
- Provide clear directions for visitors leaving Denman. This includes improving connection between Denman's town centre and Rosemount Road (via Virginia Street).
- Enhance the appearance of Rosemount Road through street tree planting to provide a scenic alternative to the Golden Highway.

The following initiatives should be considered to facilitate these outcomes:

- A Master Plan for Denman, to
 - define an urban growth boundary, managing the interface to agricultural land and protecting the scenic values of surrounding rural landscapes,
 - identify strategies to consolidate the urban core,
 - identify strategies to expand the visitor accommodation offering, and
 - establish public domain priorities.

- A Precinct-wide local access and wayfinding strategy to identify priorities for road improvements, landscaping, and signage, in consultation with key stakeholders.

5.1.3. Precinct 3 (Eastern District Gateway / Jerrys Plains Town Precinct)

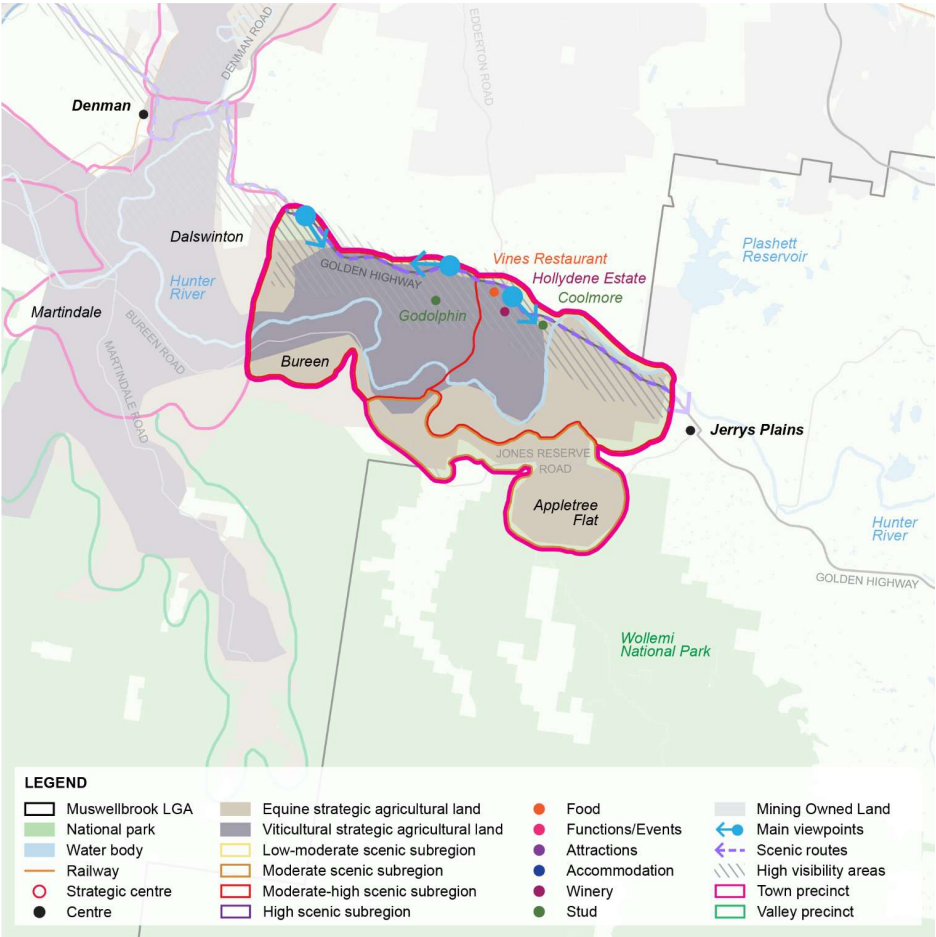


Figure 11: Precinct 3 Overview

PRECINCT 3 ATTRIBUTES

Precinct 3 extends from the town of Jerrys Plains² in the east to Dalswinton in the west, and consists of a mix of pastoral land, vineyards and horse studs between the Golden Highway and the fringes of the Wollemi National Park to the south. Land in this Precinct is carved by the passage of the Hunter River, which supports wide, rolling pastures and vegetated hills.

Landscape Units underpinning Precinct 3		
Name	Description	
Hunter River rural, Jerrys Plains	Values: MODERATE HIGH	Capacity: LOW
	An attractive unit that extends from the northern side of Jerrys Plains (near Coolmore horse stud), north to the ridge of Hollydene winery.	
Saddlers Creek rural valley	Values: MODERATE HIGH	Capacity: LOW
	The eastern part of an attractive broad valley, tracing along the Golden Highway from south-east of Denman Gap to near Edderton Road and extending west to the Hunter River.	
Apple Tree Flat, rural footslopes	Values: MODERATE	Capacity: MODERATE
	This rural unit is at the base of the Wollemi National Park just north of Jerrys Plains.	

This Precinct forms the eastern-most edge of the study area, with the arrival at Jerrys Plains acting as the initial gateway into the wider District for travellers approaching from Newcastle and Sydney. This gateway currently offers a small cluster of services and amenities available in Jerrys Plains, and a strong equine and viticultural presence anchored by Godolphin, Coolmore, and Hollydene Estate that reinforce this Precinct's prominent scenic values.

Larger scale renewables, such as solar farms, are present in this Precinct. The protection of scenic values and agricultural capacity must be balanced with the rise in renewable developments.

The Golden Highway provides challenges and opportunities from a visitor perspective. It serves as a major inter-regional thoroughfare to a high volume of traffic, making the District convenient to day visitor markets. However, increasing freight volumes and heavier vehicles may limit options for enhancing pedestrian amenity. The cost of vehicle access improvements required to safely increase visitor traffic into individual properties fronting the Golden Highway may also be prohibitive.

² This Precinct is integrated with strategically important equine lands and the urban services located in Jerry's Plains, causing it to extend into the Singleton LGA.

PRECINCT 3 LAND USE PLANNING OUTCOMES

Reinforce the District character gateway in and around Jerrys Plains

- **Undertake** public domain treatments (such as signage, landscaping, or public art) along the Golden Highway in Jerrys Plains to convey a sense of arrival into the district.
- **Instigate a program** of landscape treatments along the Golden Highway at the District entry and through Jerrys Plains to soften the visual impacts of built infrastructure (mines, quarries, transmission lines etc).
- **Improve wayfinding infrastructure**, including road upgrades, landscaping or signage, to provide clear directions for visitors entering the district.

Protect high value vistas towards the west and south of the Golden Highway

- Discourage non-agricultural development, particularly large-scale or highly visible operations on rural lands.
- Review DCP controls to minimise the impact of development on ridgelines by larger rural homes, sheds and other infrastructure. Appropriate controls could include discouraging tree clearing, discouraging extensive earthworks, limiting overall visible building scale and encouraging additional tree planting.
- Discourage built form visible from the main viewpoint facing south-east on the Golden Highway near Hollydene Estate and from the main viewpoint facing north-west on the Golden Highway over Saddlers Creek valley (refer **Figure 12** and **Figure 13**).
- Vistas towards the rocky bluffs of Wollemi National Park are to remain undisrupted by built development.
- New development proposed within or as seen from High Visibility Areas are recommended to be subject to a detailed Visual Impact Assessment.



Figure 12: Golden Highway facing south-east near Hollydene Estate.



Figure 13: Golden Highway facing north-west over Saddlers Creek valley.

Enhance Jerrys Plains as a service centre and visitor rest stop

- **Develop** roadside service offerings clustered along the Golden Highway in Jerrys Plains, providing a more prominent and diverse visitor experience (e.g., new café/retail uses).
- **Enhance** visitor facilities with landscaping treatments and street furniture, improving amenity and encouraging travellers to stop.

- Jerrys Plains, at the eastern gateway to the Precinct and as a service and visitor stop, would be encouraged as a location to accommodate a potential caravan and RV park. Design of the parks is to complement the surrounding rural landscape character, with landscape buffers and low-lying 'cabin-like' structures. Consideration should be made to ensure safe vehicular entry and egress, and public domain enhancements such as footpaths and crossings should be investigated where necessary. It is recommended that camping and caravan parks are well-integrated with open, green or recreational spaces, connecting to facilities such as picnic tables, public barbeques and public toilets, as well as walking and cycling paths.
- Implement a landscape buffer between Jerrys Plains and the Golden Highway, where safe and practicable. Traffic efficiency priorities along the Golden Highway are to be balanced with pedestrian safety and accessibility concerns.

Support the functional demands of existing businesses along the Golden Highway

- **Balance** road safety considerations to cater for a mix of heavy vehicles, commuters, and visitor traffic.
- **Prioritise** road upgrades to enable properties fronting the Golden Highway to be safely accessed.
- **Permit appropriate and cohesive highway signage** where safe and practicable to direct tourist activity along the corridor.
- Landscaping and signage cues are to complement those already established by the Godolphin, Coolmore, and Hollydene Estate cluster.
- Maintain long views over and from heritage and cultural assets, such as those across the Godolphin, Coolmore, and Hollydene Estate cluster, to preserve scenic quality and historical relevance.
- **Undertake** ongoing engagement with business owners to understand long-term operational needs.

Enable on-farm activities that can diversify income streams without compromising agricultural operations

- **Discourage** fragmentation of established larger landholdings, particularly in prominent locations, to preserve capacity for larger scale operations and the ongoing viability of viticultural activity.
- **Maintain** the quality of Jones Reserve Road and Bureen Road to support the function of agricultural activity around Bureen and Appletree Flat.

The following initiatives should be considered to facilitate outcomes in Precinct 3:

- A Gateway access strategy for the Golden Highway in and around Jerry's Plains (including the Godolphin, Coolmore, and Hollydene Estate cluster) to
 - Establish a wayfinding strategy to identify priorities and parameters for roadway improvements, landscaping, and signage,
 - identify vehicle access improvement requirements associated with visitor growth potential, in consultation with key stakeholders and existing operators, and
 - Consider options to apportion costs for vehicle access improvements.