

Muswellbrook Shire Council

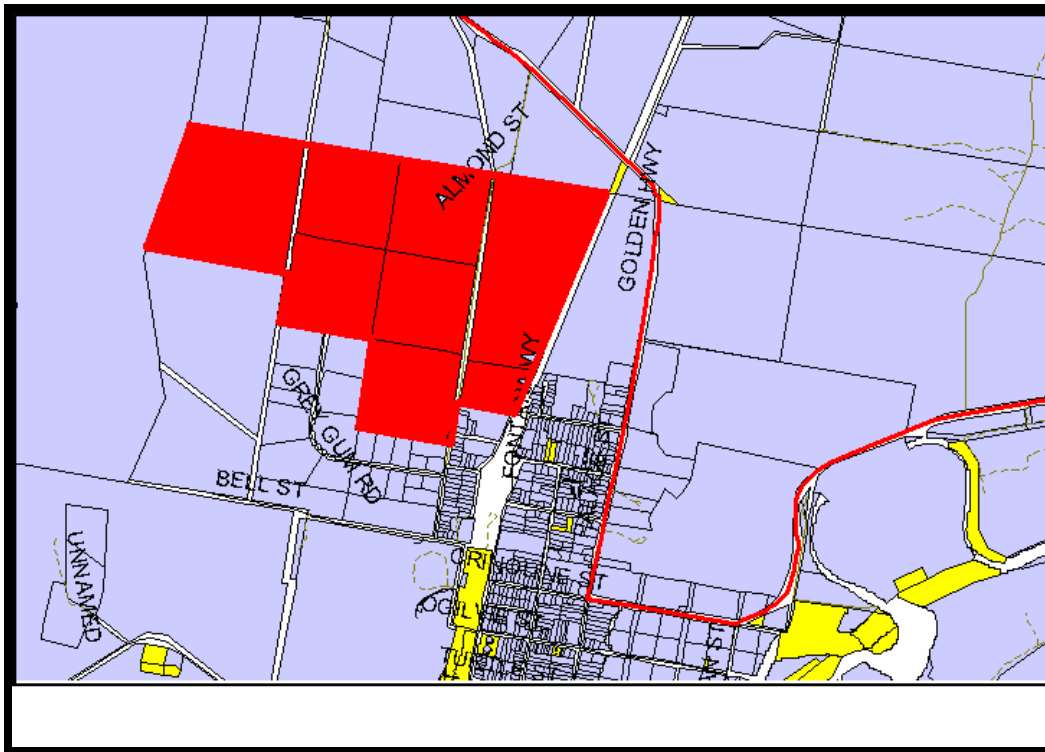
WEST DENMAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

West Denman Development Strategy

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Area subject to West Denman Development Strategy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Shire of Muswellbrook is centrally located in the Upper Hunter Valley, and covers an area of 3401.55 km² being located approximately 130 km north-west of Newcastle (Figure 1). Lake Liddell delineates the Muswellbrook Shire boundaries to the East, Wollemi National Park to the West, Aberdeen to the North and Coricudgy State Forest to the South. Muswellbrook is located at Latitude 32°15' South, Longitude 150°53' East, with an elevation of 144.2 metres above sea level.

Muswellbrook is located in the Upper Hunter Valley of NSW and dates from 1823 when Henry Dangar, government surveyor, set aside 640 acres at the junction of a small creek and the Hunter River as a village reserve. As settlers began to arrive, the colonial surveyors set out to explore and choose town sites. Muswellbrook was strategically situated in relation to the Hunter River and as it grew in population, it replaced Merton (Denman) as the dominant service centre.

By 1841 Muswellbrook was a recognisable town with 215 residents, some shops, several hotels and a flourmill. The plan to develop a railway further up the Hunter Valley gave the district the boost it needed. The railway reached Muswellbrook in 1869. The Muswellbrook area continued to develop as a cattle, horse and sheep centre with agriculture (cropping) also important where water was available.

The rise of large-scale commercial dairying towards the end of the century was the next force to shape the development of Muswellbrook Shire. With fertile soils, the potential to irrigate and a reliable, quick transport system, dairying was a rewarding proposition. The first creameries opened in the 1890s and dairying provided the economic basis for political and social pressures pushing the Colony into closer settlement programs.

Early exposures noted that the area contained coal but there was little need for it until last century when small-scale mining for local use began with Cox's Kayuga colliery. For several more decades mining remained unimportant but the presence of massive coal seams close to the surface led, after World War Two, to the transformation of Muswellbrook into a rapidly growing, economically diverse regional centre. Since 1944, when the first open-cut mine was established on the town common, the coal industry has grown to dominate the Shire's economy and has brought new developments in engineering and technical education. Around the same period, traditional industries have either grown or declined as a consequence of deregulation and market trends i.e. dairying and viticulture.

The combination of large scale coal mining and electricity generating stations at Liddell and Bayswater changed the landscape and the socialscape of the Shire. In 1947, the town's population was recorded as 3,939 growing in 1994 to 10,116. This rapid population growth has had significant effects on the built environment of the Muswellbrook Shire, creating new housing subdivisions and contributing to the pressures to redevelop existing commercial and residential areas. The continuing development of open-cut coal mining is the most important contemporary issue in the Shire.

A major planning study was carried out in the 1980s to formulate the Muswellbrook Local Environmental Plan introduced in 1985. Since this time expectations and requirements have altered. As such, Muswellbrook Shire Council commissioned Andrews Neil to undertake a review of Councils LEP, develop a Shire-Wide Development Strategy and specific strategies for potential development at West Denman. The review of Councils LEP and development of a Shire Wide Development Strategy has been completed. This document outlines strategic directions for development at West Denman.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives relevant to the policy are:

- 1 To consciously control and monitor the physical environment to achieve a balance between new development and preservation of the existing desired environment so as to deliver a balance of health, social and economic benefits to the community as a whole;
- 2 To stimulate, encourage and facilitate desirable economic development in the Muswellbrook Shire in order to ensure the long term future of the community;
- 3 To provide recreational, cultural, social and welfare services to encourage and assist community cohesiveness, well being and spirit;
- 4 To ensure developments are compatible with the environmental qualities of the area,

increase diversity of the district's economic base whilst reinforcing the Shire's character;

- 5 To ensure that the current urban form comprising distinct commercial and industrial sectors with residential neighbourhoods, is maintained and enhanced;
- 6 To ensure the economic and efficient provision of public infrastructure to service new development;
- 7 To ensure developments facilitate the conservation of items of environmental heritage;
- 8 To facilitate and provide guidance for the spatial distribution and diversity of housing type;
- 9 To promote innovative housing and subdivision of a high design quality consistent with the capability of the land;
- 10 To identify the preferred type and density of development of the land in order to meet resident and developer expectations as to the future character of the neighbourhood;
- 11 To ensure compliance with the Department of Planning Section 117 Ministerial Directions and the provisions of the Hunter Regional Environmental Plan 1989.

3.0 CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Prior to the identification of potential development areas, a constraints analysis was undertaken to determine the areas most suitable for future development. The constraints that were identified and mapped include drainage, provisions for water services, open space, land ownership and road networks. These are explained in more detail below.

3.1 Drainage

The study area drains from the west from a mountain range. Figure 2 Water Issues shows the drainage corridors to identify buffers surrounding the creek lines. A 40 metre buffer must be included for Part 3A permit requirements for development within 40 metres of a creek line under the Rivers and Foreshores Protection Act. This buffer will protect any vegetation evident along the creek lines. A 100 metre buffer should be included around the creek lines. This is to ensure protection of the creeks from any proposed urban impacts.

3.2 Water Services

Muswellbrook Shire Council has advised that the limit of development that can be serviced via the town water supply is shown in Figure 3 – Water Issues. Council's system at present can only service to RL 180 and development above this point will require further infrastructure works to be provided at the cost of the developer. RL 210 is the limit that future proposed reservoirs can service. Development should not occur above this RL with the planned system. If a developer wished to develop above this point, a high lift reservoir will be needed at the developers cost.

3.3 Open Space

Council requires that the ridgelines be maintained free of any development and dwellings with existing vegetation retained. This is required to ensure that the skyline is protected and remains as a tree lined horizon.

3.4 Sewer Services

The development of Lots 87, 118, 119, 120, 121 & 122 in DP750924, and Lot 1 & 2 in DP616013 must only occur if a sewerage system and associated infrastructure can be designed and installed prior to any of that land being developed. This is to ensure that the developers fully fund the provision of infrastructure of the lots benefiting from such infrastructure, and that infrastructure planning, funding, design, installation and commissioning is borne on a proportional basis by those properties that benefit from the provision of sewer.

Council is currently considering preferred design outcomes for the extension of the sewerage system to service this land at the cost of the developer, which will be included in this strategy once the calculations have been completed.

3.4 Road Networks

The proposed road network is to facilitate the orderly and progressive development outwards from the existing road network. The network aims to provides north-south and east-west links to join nodal points, with provision for the future development of adjoining properties. The preferred network is identified in Council's adopted West Denman Road Strategy.

The construction standard for these roads will be investigated at each stage; however, prior

to any development taking place, Council would require an area traffic report to evaluate the expected volumes of traffic thus enabling Council to properly size all roads within this area.

3.5 Soils

Soil erodibility and shallow soils can limit the development potential of land unless carefully planned to address such issues through mitigation measures at the earliest design stages.

On site effluent disposal is a potential issue in West Denman where existing lots are not connected to a sewerage system. Further development in West Denman must address sewer servicing for areas to be included within the Village zone. Other areas must demonstrate that sewer servicing is not viable, and on site effluent disposal can be accommodated over an extended period in accordance with a geotechnical investigation of the area.

3.6 Vegetation

The retention of native and non-riparian vegetation underpins the provisions of the Native Vegetation Act. The tests applied to development of land that contains such remnant vegetation are generally to maintain or improve the quality of that vegetation.

Development in West Denman will be located on the lower slopes of a vegetated escarpment, and any development will need to ensure that native and non-riparian vegetation is retained or replaced elsewhere. Flora and fauna studies will be required for all development proposals involving land containing remnant vegetation.

3.7 Slope

Land with a slope of 15 degrees or more are generally not suitable for residential development, and larger lots may need to be considered for these areas.

3.8 Salinity

Intending developers will need to identify and acknowledge areas of high salinity, including the existence or likely existence of discharge and recharge areas.

3.9 Demand

The demand for additional lots in Denman will be dependent on moving to the area. This outcome will occur over time, but will be accelerated if the Anvil Hill Coal Mine is approved. At this time there is little potential for expansion of the village zone in Sandy Hollow due to servicing issues. Intending developers will need to address staging and land release issues.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

To assist Council with the assessment of rezoning proposals, the following development objectives have been prepared:

4.1 Development Management

- Require any rezoning to be either for a specific catchment and/or the designated development precinct.
- Ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made with servicing authorities to provide appropriate and coordinated reticulated utility services for all components of the proposed development.
- Avoid unreasonable pressure on servicing authorities for timing and extent of supply.
- Ensure that appropriate buffer zones are provided between differing zones and land uses, as well as the railway line.

4.2 Environmental Design

- Design and construct dwelling houses that maximise thermal performance, including optimising natural ventilation, natural lighting, and opportunities for use of solar energy for clothes drying; that conserve the use of water and the rate of stormwater runoff; and that encourage the use of renewable energy sources.
- Ensure that buffer zones provided to adjoining land use areas and railway line incorporate measures that will provide visual and acoustic screening, by implementing appropriate separation distances, use of landforms that complement existing terrain and native vegetation.
- Ensure that dwellings adjacent to railway lines and other land uses have acoustic measures incorporated into their design to mitigate potential noise impacts.

4.3 Soil and Water Management

- Ensure that incidences of land degradation are minimised and restorative action occurs.
- Require development to demonstrate that it has a minimal impact on water quality and quantity and also strives to improve the water quality of the surrounding rivers and creeks.
- Design developments to incorporate contemporary best practice in terms of engineering devices to manage stormwater.

4.4 Heritage

- Identify and conserve items and sites of Aboriginal Archaeological significance and ensure that the local aboriginal community has access to any sites of significance to them.
- Provide for continuity with the past through the retention of heritage items, and heritage conservation areas.

4.5 Bushfire Management

- Design and manage development having regard to acceptable principles of bushfire management and, where appropriate, in accordance with the Bushfire Planning Guidelines.

4.6 Threatened Species and Vegetation Management

- Retain and protect, as is reasonably possible, all remnant woodland located within the area for the purpose of preserving natural habitat and enhancing both the character of the local landscape and the amenity of the developed area.
- Ensure that any new development provides for protection and rehabilitation of important habitat areas and maintenance of native vegetation generally.

4.7 Landscaping and Scenic Character

- Maintain and enhance the rural and scenic character of the locality.
- Ensure new developments complement the topography and natural features of the surrounding landscape and are designed with regard to site conditions and minimize the impact on landform.
- Provide attractive landscapes which reinforce the function of a street and enhance the amenity of the area.
- Encourage the use of plant species which are suitable for the microclimate and soils of the Shire.
- Ensure that site stability is not compromised by proposed development
- Minimise visual intrusion into the skyline that detracts from the natural scenic qualities of the locality
- Require that developments consider the relationship between future and existing adjoining and surrounding development.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Some preliminary directions for development principles are detailed as follows. This is to be expanded further.

- New roads to provide connectivity between precincts, where appropriate.
- Subdivision layouts to promote ordered but varied development.
- Encourage diversity in lot size and opportunities for housing choice
- Promote lot shape and orientation that facilitates the design and construction of development which is:
 - Attractive,
 - Functional,
 - Energy efficient,
 - Environmentally sustainable,
 - Variety of housing types,
 - Capacity to provide a quality lifestyle and encourage community activity, and
 - Energy efficient design
- To ensure that the road reserve adequately caters for all required functions including:
 - Safe and efficient movement of all users
 - Provision for parked vehicles
 - Provision for landscaping and street furniture
 - Construction and maintenance of public utilities.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT YIELDS

Table 1.0 – Proposed Development Areas (Village)

| Proposed Use | Development Strategy | Area (ha) | Development Potential (Yield) |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Residential | Lot 87 (large lots) | 32 | 96 |
| | Lot 119 (medium) | 16.2 | 113 |
| | Lot 118 (medium) | 16.6 | 116 |
| | Lot 120 (medium) | 16.4 | 115 |
| | Lot 121 (medium) | 16.1 | 113 |
| | Lot 122 (medium) | 16.2 | 113 |
| | Lot 1 (large) | 33.3 | 100 |
| TOTAL YIELD | | | 766 lots |

The development potential (yield) for large-medium lots can be calculated by using an average of 3 lots per hectare. The development potential (yield) can also be calculated by using an average of 7 lots per hectare for small-medium lot sizes.

To cater for the expanding needs for rural residential alternatives, that area to the north west of the existing residential areas is proposed for extension of the village zone and rural residential living on lots approaching 4000m².

Lot sizes would be controlled via the lot size map, and large lots in the expansion of west Denman would be approximately 2500m² in area. Remaining lots would be approximately 750m² on average.

7.0 NEXT STEPS

More detailed planning will need to be conducted to ascertain the exact area in each precinct capable of supporting the types of development identified. This may require specialist studies including threatened species, road layout, traffic generation, visual impacts, servicing and open space.

It is imperative that development in West Denman is carried out in such a way that it complements the existing services available in Denman and can be connected to a town reticulated water supply and sewer infrastructure. The plans produced to accompany this strategy are conceptual and were produced to guide future developers in the submission of a detailed proposal to Council.

FIGURE 1 – Muswellbrook LGA

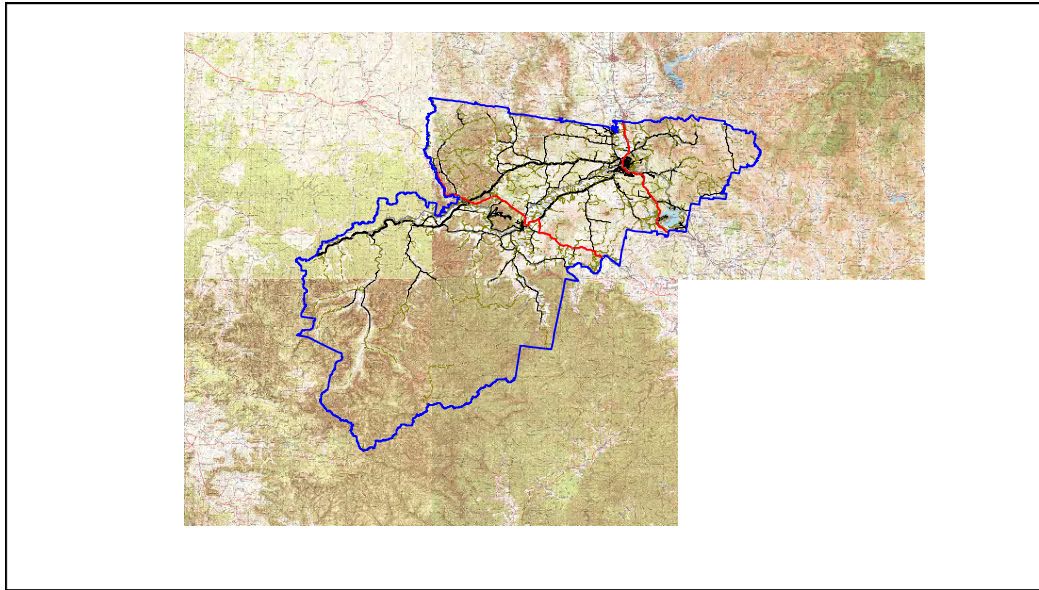


FIGURE 2 – Water Issues

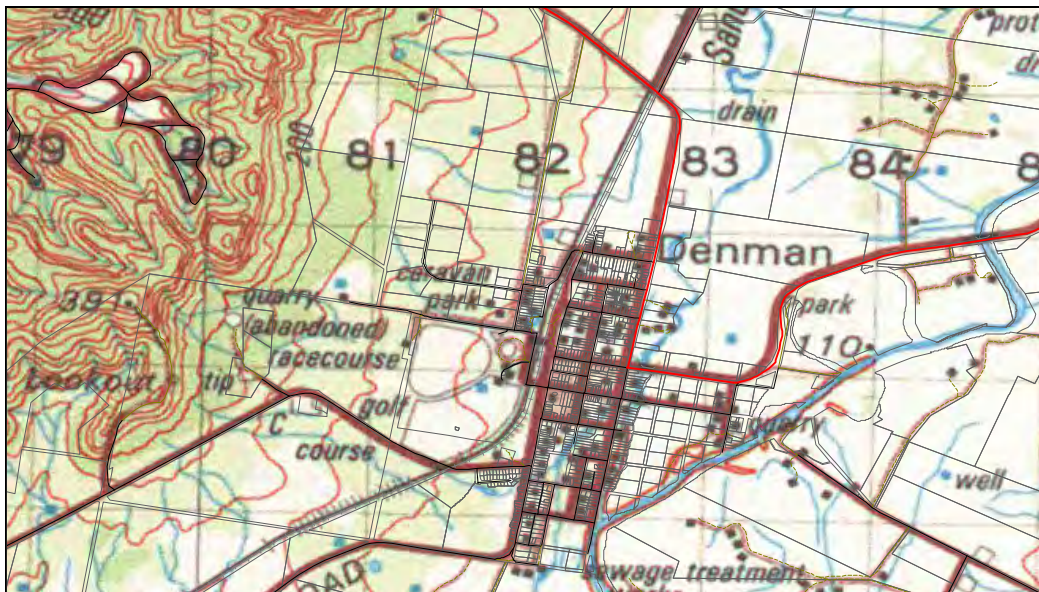


FIGURE 3 – Water Issues

