

## Things to Fix



### Shady Avenues:

Shade trees need to be planted to replace missing/aged trees in poor condition. Trees need better care and maintenance and adequate soil area and drainage.



### Footpath Improvements:

Seats near shade trees will encourage walking in Bingara. The roads are wide enough to provide garden beds around trees as well as new bikeways.



### Universal access:

Less abled residents need to be better catered for in town. Footpaths and bikeways are needed to accommodate gophers and vision-impaired walkers.

### Town Entries:

The town's edges can be tidied up and better defined with entry signage and planting.



### Waterways:

Stormwater outlets into the waterways need improvement to reduce scouring and bank erosion.





## Things to Keep and Promote



### **Town Medians:**

The medians with shade trees distinguish Bingara from other towns and create a greener centre.



### **Ceremonial Fruit Trees:**

The orange trees on Finch street are unique. Fruit orchards could be planted on other streets to create a town identity.



### **Rural Character:**

New homes and buildings can continue rural traditions so that Bingara does not start to look like a suburb in a city.



### **A Friendly Town:**

People feel welcome in Bingara

### **A Compact Main Street:**

A two storey main street allows for a range of uses within walking distance of nearby residents. Street awnings are essential.



### **Traditional Character:**

The older homes with front porches create a sense of a village with a community feel.



### **Footpath Activity:**

The wide awnings in town create usable space for the community. More activity on the street will encourage visitors to stay longer.





# Things to Keep and Promote



**Rural Animals and Stock:**  
Maintaining stock and horses near town keeps Bingara’s rural character, which is important for visitors.



**The river:**  
The Gwydir River is a scenic asset to promote. More activities on the river and gradual improvement of the banks are things to focus on.



**Public Art and Sculpture:**  
The town murals area featuring the work of local sculptors and artists in town would create more ambience and interest in Bingara.

**The Lookout:**  
This is a great spot for viewing the town and having a picnic. It needs small improvements to make it better for visitors.



**Big Shady Avenue Trees and Soft Swales:**  
The best streets in Bingara provide for comfortable walking and maintain the country town feel.



**Historical monuments and points of interest:**  
Elements such as the thresher can be interpreted through interesting signage and walk trail leaflets.





Social Profile of Bingara and Gwydir Shire

Employment

The drought has affected the Gwydir area for the last five years. Tourism has increased rapidly in Bingara, and in Wialda to a smaller extent. Wialda is experiencing an increase in light industrial manufacturing. The whole area is experiencing an increase in property and business services. Although the primary economic driver will continue to be agricultural production there is an indication manufacturing and tourism will expand during the next decade. The Council will be promoting a continued increase in the construction industry through the development of more residential, commercial and light industrial sites.

Enterprises

The agricultural based businesses are mainly owned by family partnerships with a few exceptions. These partnerships may employ people on a regular basis or just as the demand arises.

The retail and tourism businesses are generally operated by the owner and may have a few full time or part time employees. The largest employer in the two bigger townships is the Council, with the supermarkets as the second largest employers.

The goal of the Council is to create opportunities for businesses to expand, set-up or relocate into the Gwydir Shire. It is expected that this would bring about a greater demand for highly skilled personnel and therefore, promote a further influx in population.

The proportion of residents over 65 years of age is likely to increase in line with the general ageing of the Australian population. The isolated and ageing population in Gwydir Shire has put a strain on existing services although there is a range of aged care services to support older people living at home in Bingara and Wialda.

There are over 350 people in Gwydir Shire receiving a Disability Support Pension. This is approximately 6% of the Shire’s population and does not include those people over 65 years of age who would be receiving an Age based Pension. There is a higher proportion of the local population requiring disability services than in the state. This would chiefly be related to the higher proportion of older persons living in the Shire.

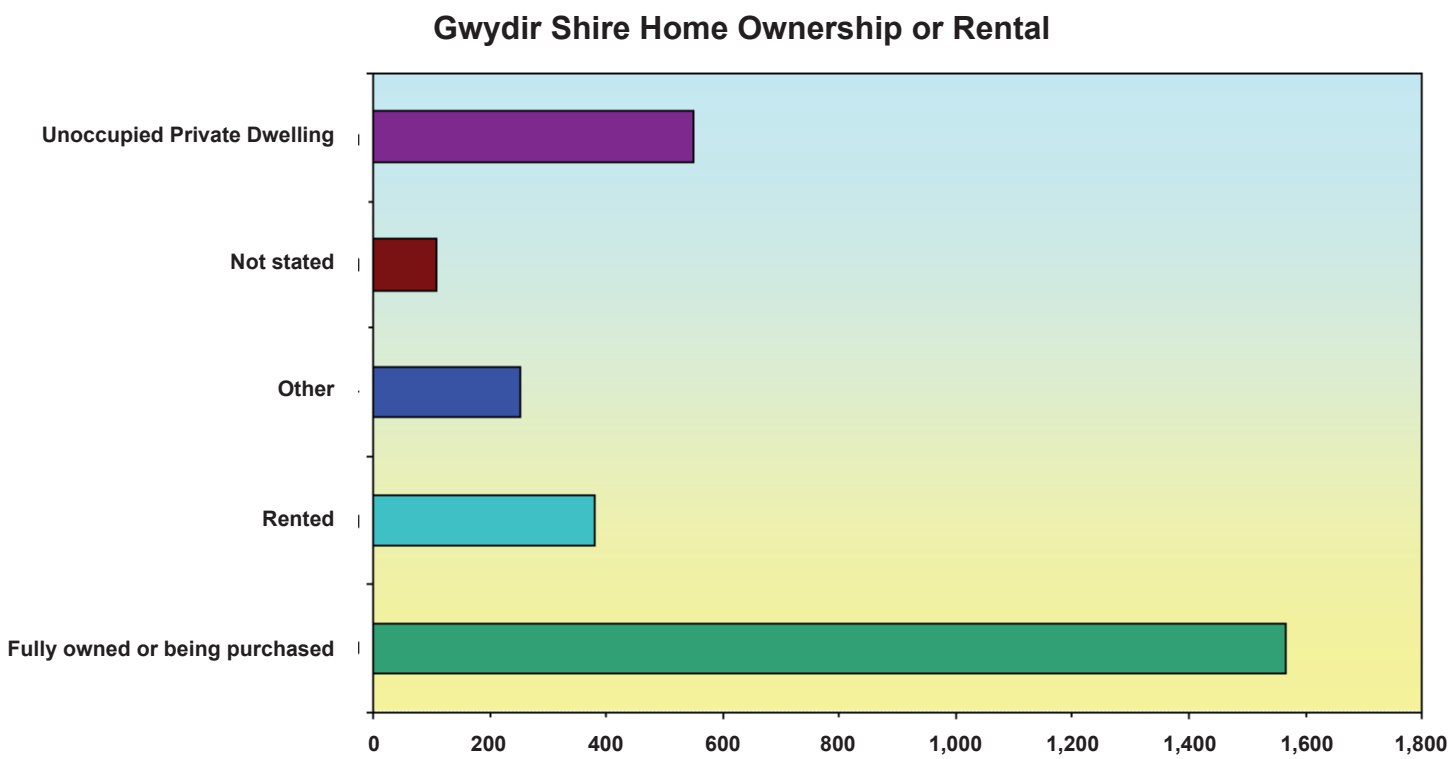
Housing

The majority of the Gwydir Shire population own their homes. Rental accommodation is difficult to obtain for many in the community. Many residents requiring rental accommodation access rental assistance through the NSW Department of Housing and receive bond and rent assistance from Centrelink. There is limited public housing stock and long waiting lists in Wialda only.

The Gwydir Shire Council does provide Aged Care units in Bingara and Wialda as well as the Bingara and Wialda Caravan Parks. There is more demand than supply for most rental accommodation in the towns.

The Council may need to consider financial incentives to investors to attract investment in real estate or become directly involved in the provision of housing. Areas of demand include low income earners who need rental accommodation, older residents who no longer need a large home, now needing low maintenance units close to the CBD and families new to the Shire needing larger homes, or homes that will be available for long term rental.

The recent increase in housing prices across the Shire has disadvantaged many new residents looking to buy homes in the Shire. This has made it less attractive to the Tree Changers looking for an affordable country lifestyle.



Information courtesy of Suzanne Webber and the Gwydir Shire Social Plan



## Planning Strategy

### The Bingara Town Strategy Building Quality for Prosperity

The Bingara Town Strategy provides an instrument to achieve specific goals required to create a more lively and walkable town.

The new planning strategy is designed to create higher densities around the service heart of Bingara. Specific sites have been highlighted as potential development sites for private development. These sites are integral to the town's fabric and if developed as a priority would create a precedent for future development in town.

The Town Centre Precinct includes the opportunity for visitor accommodation and shop top housing designed to liven up the town area after normal work hours. The set back from the property boundary will be zero in this precinct to continue the existing streetscape character and fill in any gaps.

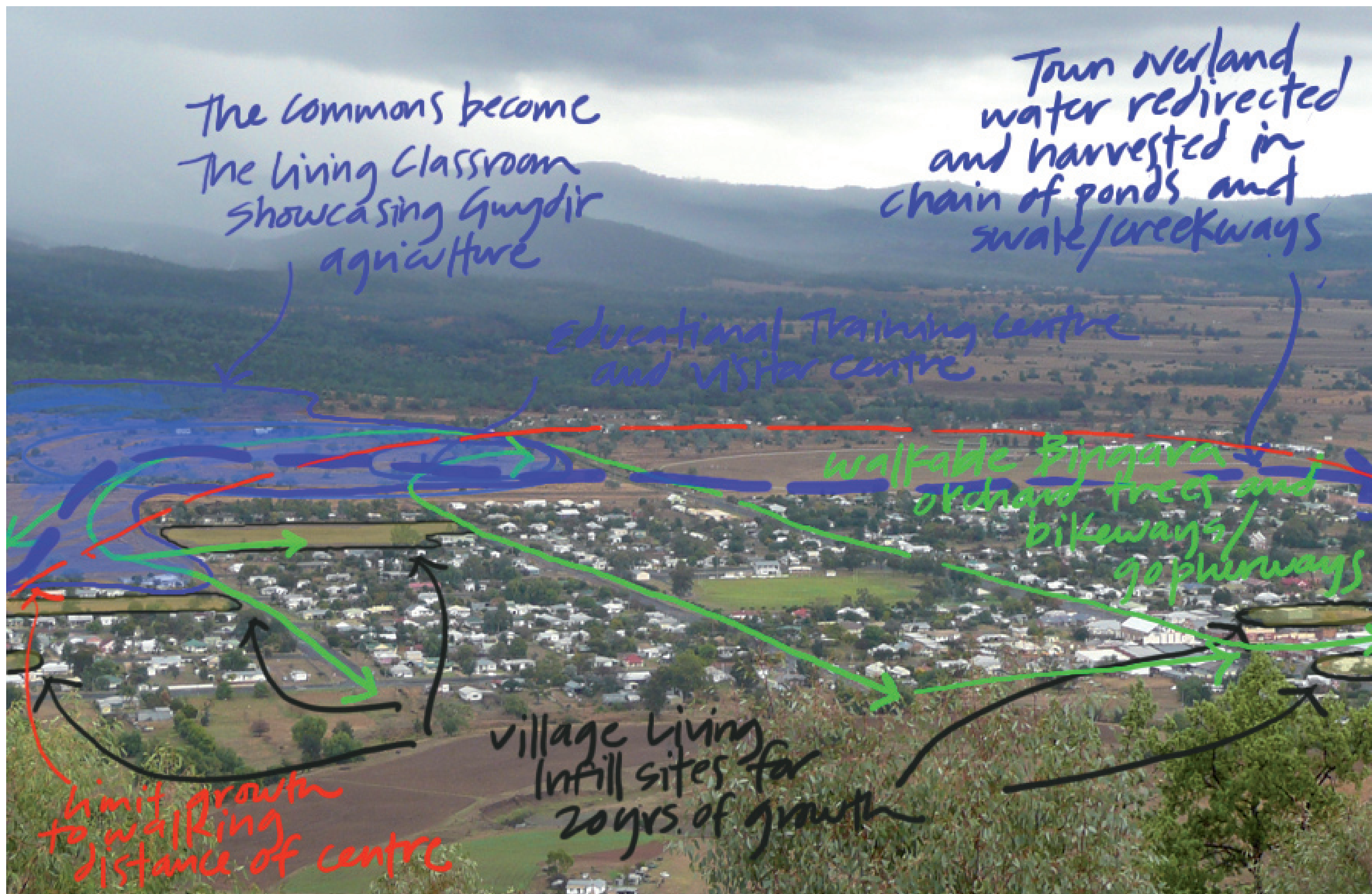
The town residential precincts have been divided into areas which promote greater density closest to the town centre to encourage people to live in the most walkable areas. Set back in the Town Centre Residential is 2.5 metres to allow maximum site usage and encourage a more compact streetscape. Development such as flats and senior accommodation will be encouraged as a priority in this area.

Town Residential is a more traditional approach to housing in Bingara – maintaining the wide open character. Second dwellings will be permitted in this area to allow for extra accommodation opportunities. The Town Centre Residential Transition Precinct is exactly that – a transition zone between dense and less dense housing. Town Rural and Large Lot Rural are aimed at providing people with the chance to live on a bigger block.

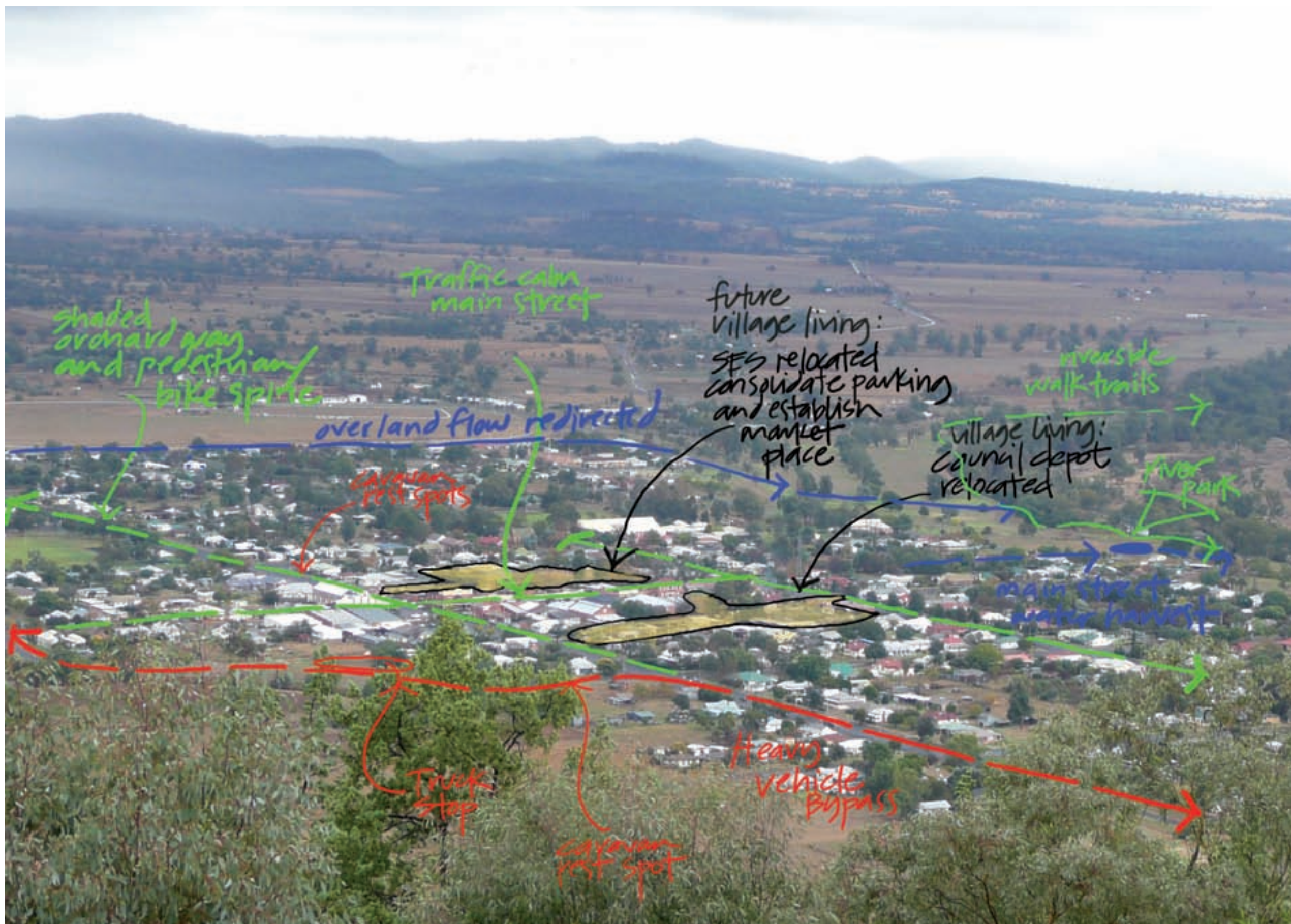
Overall the new strategy aims to promote a mix of housing opportunities within town in an effort to keep Bingara viable long into the future.



















The Bingara Town Strategy is a twenty year strategy to regenerate Bingara with new energy efficient/affordable housing, to create new work and opportunities for local businesses, and to improve the amenity of the town and its public spaces. The Strategy will improve tourism and visitation through conversion of the town commons into interpretive productive land, enhancement of the waterways and riverfront and by improving walks and trails. The Strategy aims to create a walkable, compact town for an ageing population.

The Bingara Town Strategy is a community collaboration which can form a true platform for regeneration and form an example for other towns in rural Australia.