

MURRAY RIVER

Employment Land Strategy 2041



Prepared for Murray River Council

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Executive summary

What is employment land?

Within the Employment Land Strategy (ELS), 'employment land' generally means land zoned for **commercial** or **industrial** purposes that accommodates employment-generating activities. In the Murray River Local Government Area (LGA), this mainly includes the following zones:

- E1 Local Centre
- E2 Commercial Centre
- E3 Productivity
- E4 General Industrial.

The current situation



High population growth

Moama has grown by 73% over the last 20 years.



A focus on agriculture

Employing 18% of residents in 2021.



Low self-containment

54% of residents work outside the LGA.



Less employment land

In comparison with surrounding LGAs.

Future employment land

- This ELS presents **six strategies** for meeting the LGA's future employment land needs. It is accompanied by a separate **Background Report**
- These strategies relate to long-term supply, infrastructure, the local economy, planning, capital attraction, and growth opportunities
- The LGA is projected to have adequate zoned employment land for the next 20 years. However, to plan for unexpected additional land needs, potential **opportunities for expansion** have also been analysed
- Table 1 summarises **key strategic directions** for the LGA as identified in the ELS implementation plan. It indicates key land use planning tasks for Murray River Council to provide for the LGA's changing needs.

Table 1: Implementation plan summary

Strategy	Action	Timing	Council's role	Potential partners
1. Ensure adequate, appropriate and long-term supply of employment land	1.1. Work with landowners and stakeholders to establish a pipeline of employment land	Ongoing	Regulate	Private sector
	1.2. Maximise the utilisation, service and employment capacity of Council sites and infrastructure	Ongoing	Deliver	Private sector
	1.3. Ensure a steady and sustainable release of appropriate employment lands that matches demand data	Ongoing	Advocate	DPHI
2. Align infrastructure with current needs and future growth	2.1. Advocate for a coordinated infrastructure planning and delivery program	Ongoing	Advocate	TfNSW / DTP / Federal Government
	2.2. Enhance accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists	Ongoing	Deliver / advocate	TfNSW / DTP
	2.3. Align infrastructure requirements with the promotion of industrial and commercial growth	Short-term	Deliver	Private sector
3. Support a sustainable and productive long-term economy	3.1. Locate and protect urban services near population catchments	Ongoing	Regulate	Private sector
	3.2. Attract new business and expand industry clusters	Short-term	Deliver	Private sector
	3.3. Foster circular economy initiatives	Medium-term	Deliver	Private sector
	3.4. Leverage growing opportunities in broadacre crop processing where they are financially viable	Short-term	Deliver	Private sector
4. Develop a planning framework that supports opportunity	4.1. Review and update Local Environment Plan provisions	Medium-term	Deliver	DPHI
	4.2. Review and update Development Control Plans	Short-term	Deliver	DPHI
	4.3. Balance environmental and employment priorities	Ongoing	Deliver	DPHI / DCCEEW
	4.4. Continue to progress the consolidation of statutory planning across the LGA	Short-term	Deliver	DPHI
5. Continue to attract people and investments into the Murray River LGA	5.1. Circulate information on requirements for local development	Short-term	Promote	Private sector / DEIT
	5.2. Grow and support creative and cultural initiatives	Short-term	Promote	Private sector / DEIT
	5.3. Enhance the appeal and attraction of commercial centres within the LGA	Short-term	Deliver / promote	Private sector
	5.4. Support opportunities for health and education precincts	Long-term	Advocate / promote	Private sector / Department of Education / NSW Health
	5.5. Align local tourism growth with the expansion of food product manufacturing	Ongoing	Deliver	Private sector
6. Leverage connections to surrounding areas	6.1. Support local centres to complement nearby commercial activity	Ongoing	Promote	Neighbouring Councils
	6.2. Facilitate opportunities for bulky goods retail to service the region's growing population	Short-term	Deliver	Private sector
	6.3. Continue to market the Murray River LGA as an appealing site for businesses in the surrounding region	Ongoing	Promote	Private sector
	6.4. Explore industrial opportunities related to renewable energy projects	Medium-term	Deliver	Private sector / neighbouring Councils

Timing: Short-term = 0-5 years, medium-term = 5-10 years, long-term = 10+ years, ongoing = action to be undertaken on an ongoing basis.

Council's role: Advocate = represent the community's interests to public and private sectors, deliver = coordinate delivery, promote = provide information, regulate = monitor and review.

Potential partners: DCCEW = NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Water and the Environment, DEIT = NSW Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, DPHI = NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, DTP = VIC Department of Transport and planning, TfNSW = Transport for NSW.

1.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Murray River Employment Land Strategy provides a summary of the issues and opportunities associated with employment land within the Murray River Local Government Area. It is supported by the technical Background Report which includes a more detailed analysis of growth influences, current supply and capacity, and projections of future floorspace/land requirements to accommodate additional growth and capitalise on Murray River's strategic location. It is recommended that the Strategy and Background Report be reviewed every five years.

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a robust evidence-base and an overarching framework to guide planning and decision-making for employment lands within the Murray River Local Government Area (LGA) over the next 20 years. Specific objectives are to:

- Provide a current situational analysis and overview of employment land stock in the Murray River LGA including zoned, serviced and non-serviced land
- Consider key priorities and actions in State, regional, and local plans and strategies
- Provide an understanding of key issues for employment land in Murray River through consultation with key stakeholders
- Outline demand forecasts for employment land in the Murray River LGA
- Provide recommendations for short-term zoning and spatial prioritisation of land to accommodate future employment lands
- Develop strategies and actions to ensure a range of developable employment land is available to meet projected demand.

Scope of study

Employment land, for the purposes of this study, is defined by the State Government as:

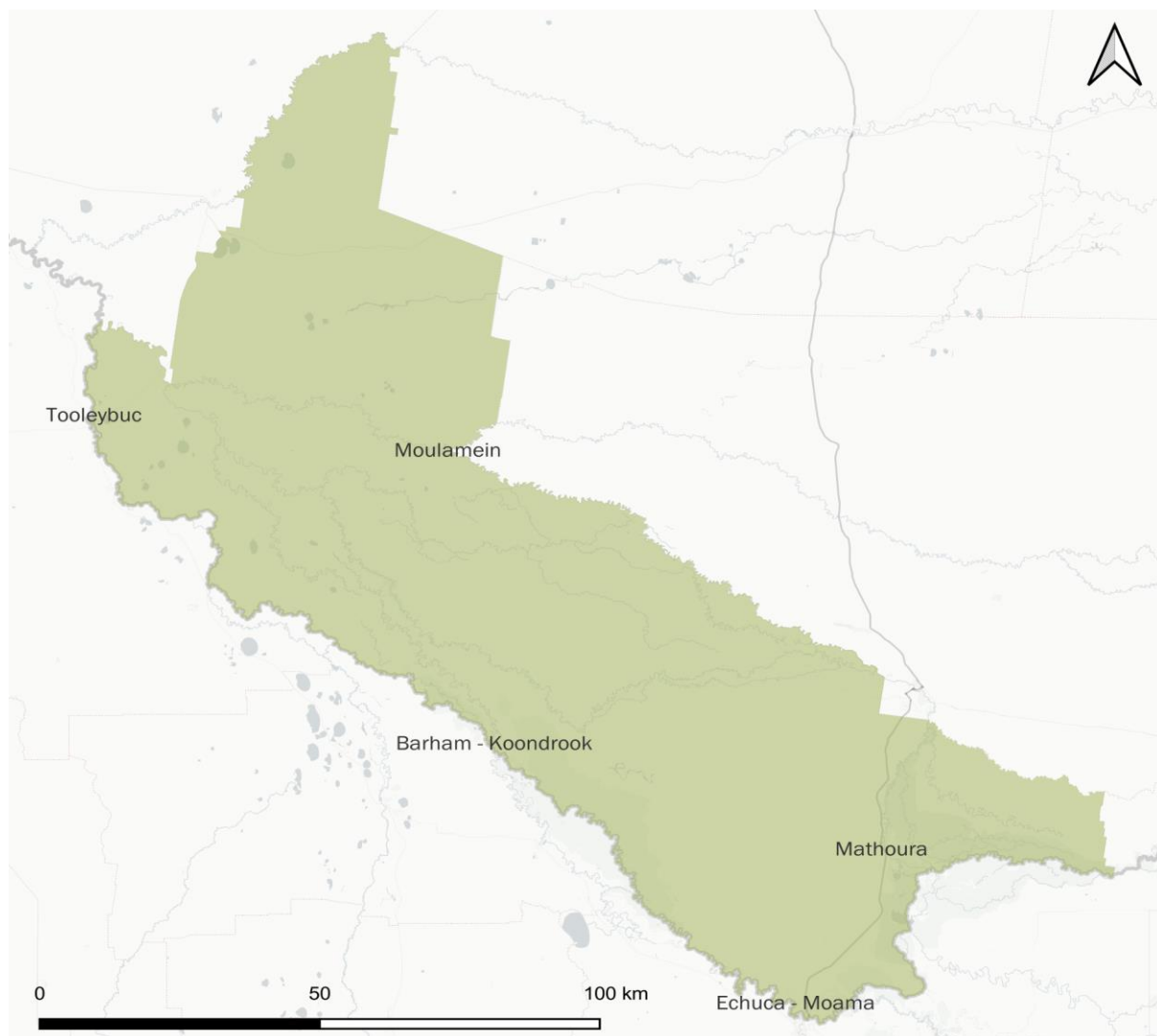
“land zoned for industrial or similar purposes in planning instruments. They are generally lower density employment areas containing concentrations of businesses involved in manufacturing; transport and warehousing; service and repair trades and industries; integrated enterprises with a mix of administration, production, warehousing, research and development; and urban services and utilities.

They are vital to the functioning of our urban areas, providing space for:

- *Essential services such as waste and water management, repair trades and construction services*
- *Warehousing, logistics and distribution centres*
- *Areas for businesses that design, manufacture and produce goods and services”.*

In Murray River, employment lands encompass land zoned as E1 Local Centre, E2 Commercial Centre, E3 Productivity and E4 General Industrial.

Figure 1: Murray River LGA



- Murray River LGA
- NSW-Victoria border
- Cobb Highway

Source: Carto; HillPDA

The Murray River LGA was formed in 2016 after the merging of Murray and Wakool LGAs, and encompasses the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta, Baraba Baraba, Wemba Wemba, Wadi Wadi, and Madi Madi peoples. It is located just north of the Victoria border, and shares several cross-border 'twin towns', including Echuca-Moama and Barham-Koondrook. Smaller towns and rural communities are spread throughout most of the Murray River LGA, with Moama comprising its major commercial centre, with approximately 7,200 residents. About 15,000 people live in the adjacent town of Echuca. The closest major city is Bendigo in Victoria, located approximately 80 kilometres to the south.

Early industries for the area included cattle farming, grain growing, and river boating. The Port of Echuca facilitated initial growth in the region, although Moama's growth was impacted by cattle industry decline and initial relocation due to flooding. Agriculture and related manufacturing have continued to support the region

throughout the intervening 150 years. Today, the strategic context of the LGA presents a number of strengths and opportunities including:

- Significant natural and cultural landscapes throughout the LGA. In addition to the Murray River, the LGA contains and/or borders parts of the Murrumbidgee, Edward, Niemur, and Wakool Rivers. Within the LGA, Ramsar-listed wetlands include the Koondrook Perricoota Forest Group, Weraí Forests, and Millewa Forest Group
- Growing cross-border communities, particularly Echuca-Moama. Cross-border movements continue to play an important role for the LGA, with the Victorian Government recently funding a new bridge between Echuca and Moama
- Within NSW, the Cobb Highway connects Moama and Mathoura to the town of Deniliquin, north of the LGA. The Sturt Highway also runs through the northern tip of the LGA, between Balranald and Hay. In Victoria, highways and rail connect the LGA's cross-border settlements to regional cities of Shepparton-Mooroopna and Bendigo, and further south to Melbourne.

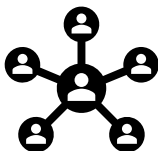


This ELS seeks to leverage such opportunities, aiming for the towns of Moama, Barham, and Murray Downs to develop employment ecosystems with their nearby counterparts.

1.1 Strategic context

Planning for employment lands in the Murray River LGA is guided by government policies at State, regional, and local levels. Relevant strategic planning policies for NSW and Victoria, the Murray River LGA, the wider Murray Region, and connected regions and areas across the NSW-Victorian border have been identified. These include:

- Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041
- Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2022-2030
- Murray Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022
- Regional Development Australia Murray Strategic Regional Plan 2022-2025
- Riverina Murray Enabling Regional Innovation report
- Murray River Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2040
- Murray River Council Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032
- Murray River Economic Development & Tourism Strategy
- Draft Murray River Council Local Housing Strategy
- Loddon Mallee North Regional Growth Plan
- Murray Shire Strategic Land Use Plan 2010-2030
- Strategies of surrounding LGAs, including several strategies for nearby Echuca (see section 1.3).

The following insights can be observed across relevant strategic planning throughout the Murray River LGA and the wider region.

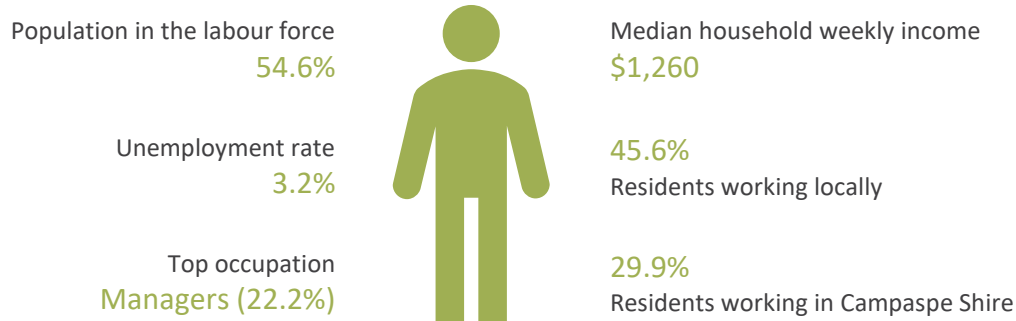
Theme	Insight
Connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an emphasis on maintaining and strengthening cross-border relationships. These can provide opportunities for employment through the development of industries related to or supporting those operating in neighbouring LGAs The new bridge/transport link through Moama provides an opportunity to reinvigorate Meninya Street Smaller townships lack connectivity and have relatively low demand for tourism and housing.
Built form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deficiencies in utility infrastructure and their impact on attracting businesses and new residents have been identified. Coordinating cost-effective infrastructure provision is a priority There is a need to protect and promote primary industrial land.
Target industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic documents frequently highlight the regional importance or potential growth for food and fibre product manufacturing, freight and logistics, and renewable energy industries Attracting specialised food manufacturing businesses has been seen as a way to strengthen the region's character Improving the economic vitality of the region is prioritised through attracting investment from businesses and growing tourism There is potential to plan for industries that are supported by freight networks in Murray River and the surrounding region.

1.2 Socio-economic analysis

Population trends

- Murray River's population grew 16% between 2011-2021
- Moama in particular grew 72.6%
- A quarter of this growth occurred between 2020-2021
- Murray River's population is forecast to grow another 28.6% by 2041
- An additional 1,815 people are expected to join the labour force
- The proportion of residents aged 60+ is expected to increase by 112%

Residents



Top 3 industries by employment for residents



Top Industries by Growth (2011-21)

- Construction (+110.3%)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (+77.2%)
- Public Administration and Safety (+71.7%)
- Transport, Postal and Warehousing (+58.3%)
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (+23.9%)

Top industries by value added

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing – \$190 million
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services – \$107m
- Construction – \$67m
- Manufacturing – \$51m
- Accommodation and Food Services – \$49m

Murray River specialisations

- Murray River has major specialisations in the industries of Arts and Recreation Services and Accommodation and Food Services, and significant specialisations in the industries of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing; Transport, Postal and Warehousing; and Public Administration and Safety.

Employment projections

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing is projected to have the largest increase in jobs within the LGA between 2021 and 2041, followed by Arts and Recreation Services and Manufacturing.

1.3 Comparative analysis

HillPDA has undertaken a comparative analysis of the local government areas (LGAs) that surround the Murray River LGA, specifically those in the Murray Functional Economic Region (FER) which comprises the Murray River, Berrigan, Campaspe, Edward River, Gannawarra and Moira LGAs. The analysis reviews key socio-economic and spatial data that may influence the demand for commercial and employment lands within the Murray River LGA. Key insights include:

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing is a strong employer across the Murray FER, employing 15.6 per cent of the FER's residents and 17.8 per cent of Murray River LGA's residents in 2021
- The presence of regional healthcare clusters in Echuca do not provide extensive employment for Murray River LGA residents, with the Murray River LGA having the FER's lowest rate of employment in the healthcare and social assistance industry
- Industrial and commercial land values are higher in the Murray River LGA than in the adjacent Berrigan and Edward River LGAs, and industrial land values are rising rapidly
- Murray River is relatively less densely populated compared to the rest of the Murray FER
- Murray River has the lowest self-containment rate of all LGAs in the Murray FER
- Murray River's population growth represents 30% of growth in the entire Murray FER over the period of 2011-2021
- Household incomes are high and unemployment is low in the LGA relative to the FER
- The Murray River's proportions of labour force participation and businesses are close to the FER average
- Almost 30 per cent of Murray River residents travel to Campaspe Shire LGA for work, whereas only 6.3 per cent of Campaspe Shire residents travel to the Murray River LGA for work. Of the total residents who both live and work within Echuca-Moama specifically, nearly 80 per cent work in Echuca only
- A slim majority of Barham-Koondrook's working residents are employed in Barham, at 50.4 per cent.

A review of external strategic planning has also revealed the following relevant trends for Murray River:

- There will be a limited supply of zoned industrial land in Echuca in the medium- to long-term, as per the *Echuca South East Industrial and Commercial Growth Corridor Land Strategy 2011*. In particular, limited opportunities exist in the areas currently zoned for industrial development for industries that require buffers of more than 500 metres to residential areas
- The *Echuca Commercial Strategy 2017* also cites limited vacant and appropriately zoned land in the Echuca CBD to accommodate the development of additional retail and commercial floorspace, particularly the development of uses that may require large floor areas, such as a discount department store or regional office development. In contrast, Moama has a large amount of vacant land suitable for both commercial development and for heavy industry such as the Hillside Road precinct
- The *Echuca Economic Development Strategy 2014* also identified that there is scope to grow boutique, specialised and gourmet food sectors. Similarly, there is potential for the Murray River LGA to develop a larger food manufacturing industry, which would have the benefits of increased employment, increased value-adding of local agriculture products, and increased branding and awareness for the wider region
- The *Echuca Economic Development Strategy* has also prioritised the growth of the freight and logistics supply chain. Opportunities exist through relationships between the Murray River LGA and communities south of the NSW-Victorian border to strengthen the local freight and logistics industry.

1.4 Market trends

A range of industry trends will have implications on employment land needs across the Murray River LGA. These include:

- **Globalisation** – Businesses with low inventory turnover are gravitating to inexpensive land and low-cost buildings. In contrast, businesses that have high inventory turnover and high-value products, and that typically provide value added functions (including product customisation, packaging, and customs), are more prepared to pay a premium for access to a large customer base and proximity to roads, ports, and airports
- **Non-traditional uses within industrial precincts** - Typically, these uses are attracted to industrial precincts given their relatively lower land values and market rents compared to commercial centres. However, the presence of these uses can increase market rents and land values in industrial precincts
- **Highway accessibility** - Transport costs typically comprise a large share of an industrial business's operational cost base compared to its rent. As such, industrial businesses are saving costs by locating nearer to key infrastructure.
- **An increasingly automated workplace** - Traditional manufacturing has become more efficient with technology, leading to fewer jobs but not necessarily less demand for floorspace
- **Freight and logistics 'last mile' services** - The rise of e-commerce has increased the demand for delivery, storage, and warehousing services, which, in turn, increases the demand for industrial logistics space
- **Land value trends** - According to the NSW Valuer General July 2022 report, the cumulative value of unimproved commercial and industrial land in the Murray River LGA has increased rapidly since 2021. The value of unimproved industrial land has more than doubled (+150 per cent), with significant growth in commercial land value also being experienced (+73 per cent).

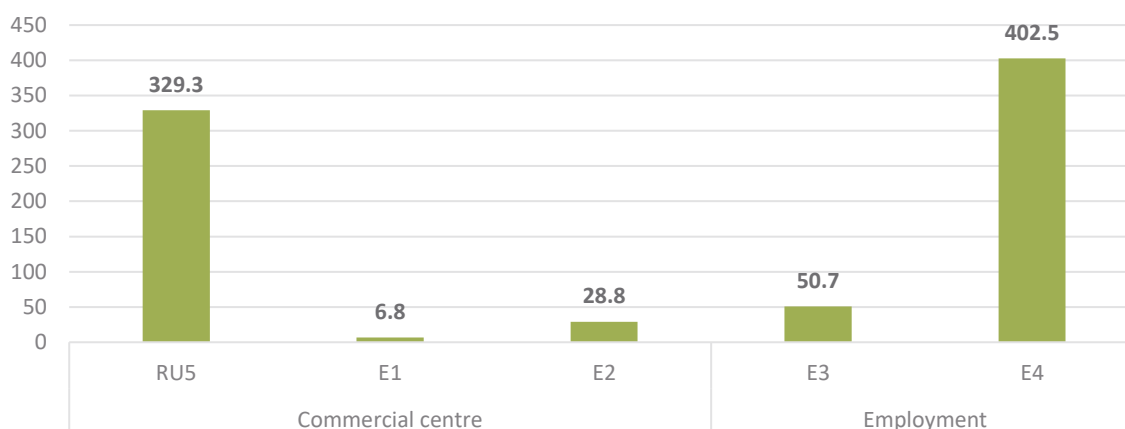
Employment lands will also be impacted by emerging national retail trends, which include the following:

- Full-line supermarkets (over 3,000sqm) are increasingly anchoring smaller centres
- Bulky goods or traditional out-of-centre retailers transitioning to seek opportunities in local or shopping centres
- Integration of residential and other commercial and community uses above shopping centres
- Strengthening 'retail placemaking' with a stronger focus on community, dining, events, and entertainment
- Greater integration of indoor and outdoor environments
- Continued expansion of new international retailers entering the market
- Pop-up, creative, and market-style uses that generate higher turnover and 'destination' factor
- The emergence of 'dark' and 'last mile' stores for online sales. Dark and last mile stores are warehouses or distribution centres that cater to online shopping, which do not require sales areas and are designed for easy product picking
- Growing online grocery market and specialised food stores
- Reinvestment in shopping centres to reinvent offerings, purposes, and interactions with customers and the wider community.

1.5 Land use audit

As of 2023, there was around 818 hectares of zoned employment land across the LGA. Land stocks by zone are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Total employment land stocks by zone (hectares)



Source: HillPDA 2023

Of the 818 hectares of zoned employment land across the LGA, around 601 hectares or 73 per cent is considered developed or being used for business operations. The remaining 217.3 hectares or 27 per cent is vacant and considered available for development.

Table 2: Status of Murray River LGA employment land by existing precincts

Employment precinct	Details
Moama town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four E2-zoned lots could provide future employment opportunities Some developed sites have potential for commercial development opportunities There is a lack of deep sewer access for the undeveloped lots in the north of the precinct.
Moama industrial estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three undeveloped lots of appropriate size and shape could be used for future employment land opportunities As the industrial estate is mostly developed, future growth opportunities would primarily relate to changing types of businesses on already developed land.
Moama Business Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are multiple vacant lots west of the Cobb Highway, containing land zoned for both industrial and business park uses.
Hillside Road, Moama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several lots remain undeveloped, with further development theoretically possible with the subdivision of large sites in the precinct There is a large amount of rural disconnected land adjoining this area, leaving open the possibility of expanding the precinct in the future.
Barham town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively few lots for future opportunities with employment land zonings.
Barham industrial area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E3 and E4 undeveloped sites could be used for future employment land opportunities Low-lying land, waterways, and stormwater issues may challenge the expansion of employment land around this area.
Murray Downs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most land is developed, except for two lots near the eastern end of Cygnet Lane The operator on the employment land to the south-west has the potential to relocate to an industrial park, which may free up potential employment land.

The LGA's commercial precincts are supported by a mix of housing and employment land uses. This mix is also present in industrial precincts. Combined with vacant or other land uses, as audited in 2024, this provides opportunities to consolidate employment uses in such precincts.

Table 3: Count and area of land uses by industry/function and relevant industrial zone, Murray River LGA

Industry	Count of land uses			Area (ha)		
	E3	E4	Total	E3	E4	Total
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2	4	6	0.4	41.8	42.1
Mining	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manufacturing	5	25	30	7.2	10.4	17.6
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	-	14	14	-	247.8	247.8
Construction	3	13	16	0.5	4.4	4.9
Wholesale Trade	3	10	13	0.5	5.3	5.9
Retail Trade	6	2	8	7.5	0.8	8.2
Accommodation and Food Services	-	1	1	-	0.5	0.5
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	12	62	74	2.8	34.7	37.5
Information Media and Telecommunications	-	-	-	-	-	-
Financial and Insurance Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	-	3	3	-	0.8	0.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-	1	1	-	0.5	0.5
Administrative and Support Services	1	1	2	0.2	0.7	0.9
Public Administration and Safety	1	-	1	0.2	-	0.2
Education and Training	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health Care and Social Assistance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arts and Recreation Services	-	2	2	-	1.2	1.2
Other Services	10	19	29	3.6	7.5	11.0
Dwelling	13	1	14	22.2	0.7	22.9
Vacant or other	21	83	104	5.5	47.6	53.1
Total	77	241	318	50.4	404.6	455.0

Source: Murray River Council; HillPDA 2024

Each industrial precinct has the following land use characteristics:

- Moama industrial estate: 43.4ha with 106 land uses/functions, of which 80 are employment-generating
- Moama Business Park: 65.7ha with 119 land uses/functions, of which 67 are employment-generating
- Hillside Road, Moama: 301.5ha with 17 land uses/functions, of which 13 are employment-generating
- Barham industrial area: 28.4ha with 59 land uses/functions, of which 44 are employment-generating and 13 are residential
- Murray Downs: 16.0ha with 17 land uses/functions, of which 11 are employment-generating.

1.6 Stakeholder engagement

To identify opportunities, barriers, and challenges for employment land in Murray River, engagement has been undertaken with Murray River Council and a sample of businesses and industries currently operating in the LGA. Key insights have been outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Engagement findings

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murray River LGA is experiencing new/unique residential development activity Council is strong at promoting cooperation Land prices are cheaper in Moama than in Echuca There is development interest in Moama, primarily from tradespeople and small operators The LGA has a strong and diverse agricultural sector There are nearby educational institutions, including TAFE campuses in Echuca and Shepparton, and La Trobe University in Bendigo New residents and businesses are interested in moving to Barham due to its rural amenity and appeal Council is perceived as having become increasingly effective at accommodating development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is essentially no industrial land currently available in Moama or Barham There is a shortage of housing, which contributes to a lack of skilled labour, and creates a need for seasonal, on-site housing Some conditions frustrate local developers, including need for accessibility, requirement to have infrastructure despite not needing it, smaller primary production lots not having a dwelling, and development contributions Timeline of Council implementing strategies, especially in terms of supplying adequately zoned land, discourages business. The amount of documentation needed is also burdensome Planning controls are restrictive – there have been cases where tenants cannot be found for industrial shed on large lot residential due to lack of permissibility. Minimum lot size for primary production also discourages people from getting into the industry. Buffers around the river and residential encroaching on previously approved industrial land also blocks development There can be issues of Council allowing residential development to encroach upon previously-approved industrial land Businesses in smaller towns are struggling for customers and workforces, due to small local populations There is a lack of in-between lot sizes – lots are either too large or too small. 2,000-3,000sqm lots are important.
Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is smaller commercial land demand in Moama than in Echuca. There is a lack of commercial activity in town and unclear town centre Internet connectivity and phone service can be significant issues for places throughout the LGA – this can slow down the uptake of new technologies and industries, and is a significant problem for primary production and processing Water and sewerage are at capacity in the LGA and can be exceeded in tourist seasons. Water and sewerage expansion has to come from Victoria to Murray Downs, while gas comes from Victoria to Moama Often, proponents driving projects would not have the capacity to solve issues such as connecting water supply and fire safety Often developers come from Victoria and have difficulty navigating the NSW planning system. Additionally, the cost of hiring a planning consultant can be prohibitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council is currently looking at privately-owned options to see if there is any appetite for Council to be a lead on a project Agriculture, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing are growing industries. In particular, Moama has opportunities for solar panel recycling, which has been expanding into Albury recently. This could also potentially support future industries such as renewable aircraft fuel Tanks and storage manufacturing for the agriculture industry is expanding in the Swan Hill area. Smaller manufacturers are moving out of Swan Hill to surrounding areas as industrial land runs out and land prices increase The new Echuca-Moama bridge could indirectly facilitate the redevelopment of Meninya Street, and entice renewable energy companies in the future A business case has been undertaken to explore case for a business developing hemp production in Barham Potential forthcoming developments within the LGA include a circular economy precinct, biomass to bioenergy plant and solar farm. There are opportunities to further leverage the LGA's circular economy, bioenergy and renewable energy strengths in the future If Echuca reaches capacity, commercial/retail stakeholders could theoretically establish in Moama The Murray River LGA has opportunities for value-added production related to industrial hemp and almond production.

1.7 Employment land demand modelling

This study estimates the demand for employment precincts comprising E3- and E4-zoned land under two alternative growth scenarios, these being:

- **Scenario 1** (lower growth): TPA employment estimates, adjusted to match revised REMPLAN population projections.
- **Scenario 2** (higher growth): It was noticed that the proportion of residents aged 15 years and over to total employment in the LGA was 51 per cent in 2023. As estimated by the TPA, this was forecast to decrease to 45 per cent by 2041. Scenario 2 assumes that this only decreases slightly to 48 per cent. The resulting total employment was pro-rated against the TPA's 2041 employment composition.

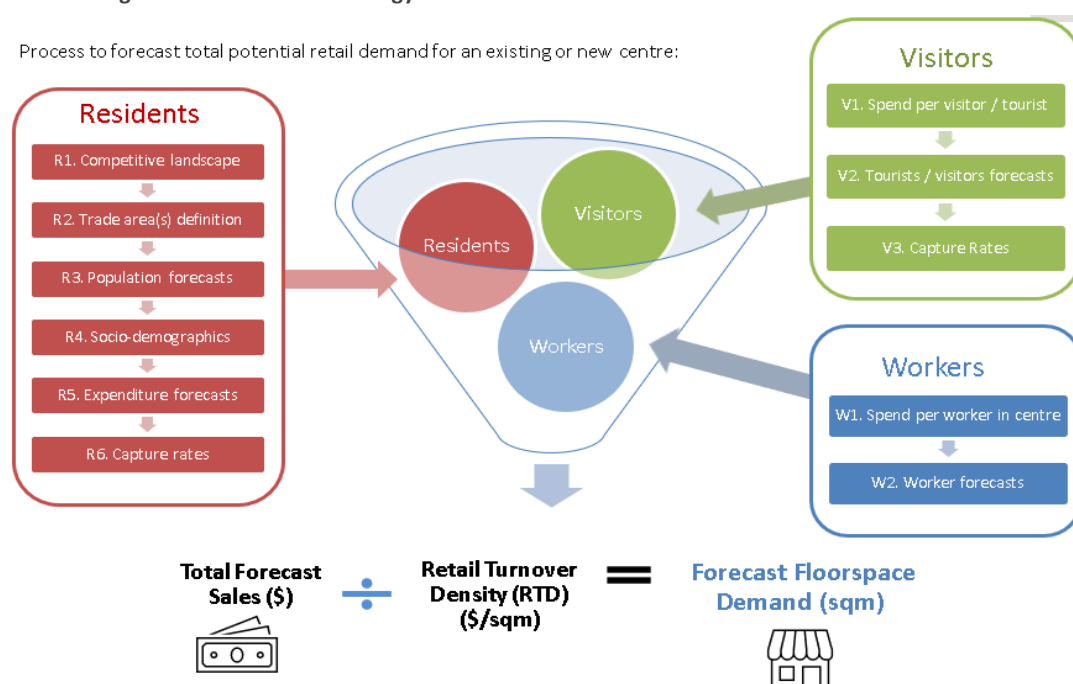
Under both scenarios, the Murray River LGA will require more developed employment land by 2041, but there is surplus undeveloped zoned land to accommodate this requirement.

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Total net growth in jobs across LGA	670 jobs	1,052 jobs
New jobs accommodated in employment precincts	165 jobs	261 jobs
Net occupied floorspace required	31,585sqm	41,025sqm
Additional land stocks required to accommodate (demand)	12.6 hectares	16.4 hectares
Vacant employment land (supply)	92.5 hectares	92.5 hectares
GAP (positive surplus – negative deficit)	79.9 hectares	76.1 hectares

1.8 Commercial demand modelling

The following section estimates the quantity of retail and commercial office floorspace likely to be demanded across the Murray River LGA to 2041.

Figure 3: Forecasting retail demand methodology



Key insights

- The Murray River LGA currently contains around 29,175sqm of retail and commercial space. Of this, around 54 per cent is retail space and 46 per cent is commercial
- Residents generated \$209 million in total household retail expenditure in 2023. This figure is forecast to increase to approximately \$298 million by 2041, representing a 30 per cent increase
- According to Tourism Research Australia's local government profile, in 2019, the Murray River LGA had an estimated \$70 million in domestic visitor spend. This is projected to grow to around \$85 million by 2041
- Retailers across the LGA could achieve total retail sales of around \$101 million in 2023 and an increase to \$142 million by 2041 (measured in 2023 dollars). This represents an increase of around 40 per cent
- By 2041, around 20,000sqm of shop front space could be supported across the Murray River LGA. This represents an increase of 27 per cent. Much of this increase (1,750sqm) would be related to supermarket space
- Based on current floor space distribution, it is estimated that around 60 per cent of forecast space would be accommodated in Moama, around 30 per cent in Barham, and the remaining 10 per cent in the LGA's other localities
- Murray River LGA currently contains almost 13,460sqm of non-retail commercial space. This is forecast to increase to 15,560sqm by 2041, representing an increase of 16 per cent over the period
- Overall, 2041 demand for retail/commercial space will exceed current developed supply by 3,948sqm in Moama, 1,179sqm in Barham, and 1,005sqm in the rest of the LGA
- The extent of the LGA's undeveloped E1- and E2- zoned land, combined with some potential for redevelopment, provides sufficient capacity for meeting these floorspace needs by 2041.

1.9 Planning control review

Separately to factors of forecasted demand, the Murray River LGA's statutory planning frameworks have been reviewed in order to identify any controls that may be impeding development.

Planning Control	Details
Murray and Wakool LEPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The permissibility of uses is largely appropriate to meet the objectives of the zones For E1 Local Centre, consider allowing artisan food and drink industries and/or creative industries to further enhance the vibrancy of the local centre
Murray Development Control Plan 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Murray DCP supports land uses such as hazardous industry, offensive industry, hazardous storage establishments, and offensive storage establishments in the industrial area at Hillside Road For commercial developments, the Murray DCP identifies existing centres in Moama and Mathoura The DCP establishes a preferred minimum lot size for undeveloped industrial land of 1300sqm It seeks to avoid the subdivision of undeveloped land in Moama Business Park.
Wakool Development Control Plan 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DCP requires master planning to be undertaken for industrial developments involving site areas larger than 1-hectare, mixed uses, multiple buildings, buildings over 10 metres in height, significant public/recreation/open space areas, several stages with expansion plans, or the potential for accessibility or environmental impacts A master plan must be prepared for tourist and visitor accommodation with buildings/facilities that exceed 1 hectare or 10 rooms, or include a recreational facility proposal Industrial zones only exist in Barham and Murray Downs
Local infrastructure contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While developer contributions are a critical source of funding, they may to some degree hinder development by impacting on feasibility Some Victorian developers consider the NSW contributions system to be overly complicated, and consider the total amount payable to be unreasonably high compared with Victoria There is the potential for the potential for supporting or waiving contributions fees to attract non-profit developers to the LGA.
Land use encroachment impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowing all business premises in industrial zones would increase demand for such land if well-located with relatively smaller lots. There may be positive co-location impacts, albeit with potential parking impacts, though the potential for development remains low Specialised retail can pay twice the land value compared with general industrial uses, crowding out traditional industrial uses
Protecting and encouraging employment uses by area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an interest in developing employment land throughout the LGA, with a particular need for employment to match population growth in Moama More development in employment areas could be encouraged through incentivising new developments through streamlined planning requirements and permitting some light industries in the Wakool LEP's E1 zone.
Employment land issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murray River LGA contains the State's second-largest source of biomass, which could be used for bioenergy There may be recycling opportunities for renewable energy materials, such as solar panels, which have proliferated from nearby solar farm developments in Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Cohuna, and likely Barham in the future Heavy industrial zonings may be required for circular economy initiatives due to air quality, odour, and noise impacts.

2.0 STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2.1 Statement of intent

The Murray River LGA will contain a range of employment precincts, providing networks of services and clusters of industries that contribute to its economic productivity and prosperity. Industrial zones will accommodate employment growth, leveraging the LGA's existing strengths in primary production and a growing population. Commercial centres will also generate economic activity, further boosting the appeal of the Murray River LGA as a unique place to live, work, and visit.

Employment precincts will be well-located and adequately serviced, providing the jobs needed for a growing population. Residents in different age brackets will be able to stay and maintain livelihoods in the area. This will be bolstered by support for industries that serve the population, such as healthcare, education, retail, and dining. Industrial jobs will also be supported in locations accessible from key towns in Murray River and neighbouring LGAs.

The Murray River LGA will support flows of people and economic activity within and around it. Cross-border links will be strengthened, allowing the LGA to complement commercial and industrial activity occurring throughout the wider region.

Employment-generating activities will include the processing and manufacture of local agricultural products; light/creative industries and office opportunities; service sectors that leverage tourism and population growth; and potential renewable energy and circular economy opportunities. These diverse employment options will help to boost the future resilience of the Murray River LGA to navigate challenges and embrace opportunities.

2.2 Key strategies

Strategy One – Facilitate the long-term supply of development-ready employment land in the right locations

Guiding principles

- Adequate quantum of employment land and floor space available for rent and purchase in areas where businesses want to locate and/or expand their operations
- Sustainable pipeline of appropriately zoned, serviced, and unconstrained land that meets the needs of businesses seeking to establish and/or expand in Murray River LGA.

Actions

- 1.1 | Work with landowners and stakeholders to establish a pipeline of employment land
 - Refer to Chapter 3 for potential new employment land opportunities, including tasks required to enable such opportunities.
- 1.2 | Maximise the utilisation, service and employment capacity of Council sites and infrastructure
 - Partner with the private sector to develop surplus Council land.
- 1.3 | Monitor the release of employment land
 - Maintain an employment land monitor that identifies vacant and underutilised employment land. The monitor should list constraints that may be a barrier to development and be maintained in consultation with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Strategy Two – Align infrastructure with current needs and future growth

Guiding principles

- Accessibility of employment lands via reliable transport
- Employment lands being supported by critical infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, and gas, telecommunication services)
- Industrial precincts being located on road networks that are designed to accommodate B-double trucks.

Actions

- 2.1 | Advocate for a coordinated infrastructure planning and delivery program
 - Key tasks could include:
 - › Advocate to the NSW State Government and the Federal Government for funding of priority infrastructure projects as indicated in the Draft Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. Locations that have the capacity to deliver a greater number of jobs and economic contribution should be considered for early prioritisation
 - › Amend contribution plans, and/or seek planning agreements, to identify and fund infrastructure improvement works and the increased demand for public amenities and public services, created by Planning Proposals for employment lands.
 - Consider undertaking technical studies, in partnership with State Government, and determining an infrastructure delivery program and cost provisioning for greenfield employment land in investigation areas.
- 2.2 | Enhance accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure in local transport planning, to further enhance the activation of commercial centres
 - Advocate for state-based infrastructure projects around the Murray River to enhance pedestrian connectivity between communities on opposite sides of the river.
- 2.3 | Align infrastructure requirements with the promotion of industrial and commercial growth
 - For shed-type industrial developments, consider the necessity of DCP provisions that require utilities to be connected.

Strategy Three – Support a sustainable and productive long-term economy

Guiding principles

- Opportunity to cluster and agglomerate
- Capacity to apply circular economy principles
- Diversity of industries and uses
- Enabling competition and building capability in the economy.

Actions

- 3.1 | Locate and protect urban services near population catchments
 - Aim to protect pockets of employment land in close proximity to town centres by retaining employment land use zoning and encouraging population-serving uses.
- 3.2 | Attract new business and expand industry clusters
 - Create opportunity to expand key industry clusters by partnering with universities to foster collaboration and attraction of new high value industry and to enhance existing established industry.

- 3.3 | Foster circular economy initiatives.
 - Support the implementation of circular economy principles by encouraging development that accelerates the production and consumption of renewable energy to power the Murray River economy
 - Encourage the implementation of circular economy by building upon waste management and recycling businesses that seek to locate close to the waste management facilities.
- 3.4 | Leverage growing opportunities in broadacre crop processing
 - Collaborate with the private sector to deliver Barham Industrial Park, in order to facilitate industrial hemp and related industries
 - Explore opportunities for facilitating almond harvesting and related supply chain industries
 - Consider prioritising new employment precincts near areas that can accommodate broadacre cropping.

Strategy Four – Develop a planning framework that supports opportunity

Guiding principles

- Flexibility and appropriateness of planning controls
- Incentives available for new development to meet needs
- Consideration of character and amenity.

Actions

- 4.1 | Review and update Local Environment Plan provisions
 - Key updates could include:
 - › The removal of some residential and/or food and drink premises development permissibility from the Wakool LEP E3 Productivity Support to reduce potential land use conflicts
 - › Potential rezoning of current residential accommodation in E3 Productivity Support zones
 - › The addition of artisan food and drink industries and/or creative industries development permissibility with consent in the Wakool LEP E1 Local Centre zone.
- 4.2 | Review and update Development Control Plans
 - Consider a relaxation of Wakool DCP's requirement to master-plan where industrial developments fulfil certain criteria.
- 4.3 | Balance environmental and employment priorities
 - Undertake the biodiversity certification process as part of the strategic planning or planning proposal process on any relevant land that is proposed for future employment use to alleviate delays at the development application stage.
- 4.4 | Continue to progress the consolidation of statutory planning across the LGA
 - Identify barriers to integrating Murray and Wakool LEPs into one consolidated Local Environmental Plan
 - Identify barriers to integrating Murray and Wakool DCPs into one consolidated Development Control Plan.

Strategy Five – Continue to attract people and investments into the Murray River LGA

Guiding principles

- New workers and families becoming established in the LGA
- New businesses becoming established in the LGA
- Vibrant neighbourhoods that serve communities and provide jobs.

Actions

- 5.1 | Circulate information on requirements for local development
 - Integrate a fact sheet on development requirements into the ‘web interface’ discussed in Action 2.1.2 of the Murray River Economic Development & Tourism Strategy, to help support prospective developers from both NSW and Victoria to establish in the LGA.
- 5.2 | Grow and support creative and cultural initiatives
 - Help to publicise and support the Bridge Art Project upon its completion
 - Work with landlords and real estate agents to facilitate a ‘pop-up space’ program that allows for vacant business premises to be temporarily rented at a subsidised cost, to entrepreneurs or start-up businesses
 - Market the Murray River LGA’s towns as feasible and attractive sites for creative industries to establish in.
- 5.3 | Enhance the appeal and attraction of commercial centres within the LGA
 - Continue to support and protect employment land uses in town centres and main streets
 - Foster strong connections between the LGA’s natural assets and its commercial centres
 - › Investigate opportunities to integrate the Murray River into the LGA’s towns, including through riverfront tourism activity precincts, a riverfront development strategy, and/or facilitating restaurants with riverfront views, subject to flood constraints
 - › Publicise the accessibility of the LGA’s national parks from its key towns.
 - Continue to support a regular Moama market at the southern end of Meninya Street
 - Complete the Meninya Street development project
 - › Post-redevelopment, seek to support flexible spaces suited to short-term retail licences to allow for small-format or ‘pop-up’ retail experiences
 - › Post-redevelopment, seek to market Moama to prospective dining and retail business owners as a more economical alternative to Echuca.
- 5.4 | Support opportunities for health and education precincts
 - Encourage new healthcare businesses to become established in the LGA
 - Explore opportunities for potential satellite education campuses in Moama.
- 5.5 | Align local tourism growth with the expansion of food product manufacturing
 - Ensure adequate industrial land for food product manufacturing
 - Explore opportunities for artisanal food product trade in the LGA’s commercial centres.

Strategy Six – Leverage growth opportunities and strengthen connections with employment lands in surrounding areas

Guiding principles

- Collaboration with private and public sector stakeholders throughout the wider region
- Boosting the profile of the LGA’s towns as part of a wider regional network.

Actions

- 6.1 | Support local centres to complement nearby commercial activity
 - Collaborate with Campaspe Shire Council to raise the profile of Echuca-Moama as a connected tourism destination.
- 6.2 | Facilitate opportunities for bulky goods retail to service the region’s growing population
 - Support the development and awareness of a ‘homemaker centre’ cluster site near Moama, to service growing populations in both the Murray River and Campaspe LGAs.

- 6.3 | Continue to market the Murray River LGA as an appealing site for businesses in the surrounding region
 - Raise awareness of Murray Downs as an area for Swan Hill-based businesses to expand into
 - Orient the LGA's branding to attract businesses seeking to become established in both NSW and Victoria.
- 6.4 | Explore industrial opportunities related to renewable energy
 - Consider opportunities for manufacturing and recycling related to solar, wind, and hydrogen energy projects occurring in the LGA and elsewhere in its surrounding region.

3.0 FUTURE LAND OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Purpose

Action 1.1 of the Strategy concerns the long-term supply of employment land in the Murray River LGA. The LGA has been estimated to have sufficient zoned employment land. However, it is possible that barriers to develop currently zoned land may emerge; as such, it is useful to analyse potential new opportunities for rezoning, of which 13 future land opportunities have been identified. These comprise areas not currently zoned for employment land, which could be used for industrial and/or commercial purposes in the future. Constraints analysis has been undertaken for each area, with a full discussion and methodology outlined in *Appendix A: Constraints methodology* of the ELS Background Report. Future land opportunities have been classed as ‘investigation areas’ and divided into four precincts: Moama; Hillside Road, Moama; Barham; and Murray Downs. Discussion is also provided regarding land opportunities in other areas, namely smaller villages throughout the LGA. Investigation areas have been analysed according to potential types of employment land uses. These are areas for potential rezonings only, and the development of current employment land should take priority.

3.2 Development pattern

The Murray River LGA has a significant quantity of undeveloped employment land. As such, the first priority for development should be vacant employment land sites, as outlined in the ELS Background Report. However, as employment precincts approach capacity, new areas should be considered for employment land zoning.

Future land opportunities should be prioritised based on constraints and servicing. Some sites are affected by ‘hard constraints’, in which development is precluded by site-specific factors. Other sites are affected by ‘manageable constraints’, in which certain factors impact development, which nonetheless remains possible with appropriate planning, off-setting, or design. Constraints have been numerically analysed per site below, with the exception of flood constraints, for which secondary data have been qualitatively analysed. Servicing primarily involves whether sites have access to water, sewer, and roads.

If investigation areas are serviced and unconstrained, they are prioritised as ‘short-term’. If either affected by constraints on a majority of the site or lacking servicing, they are prioritised as ‘medium-term’. Areas with both majority constraints and servicing barriers are prioritised as ‘long-term’, with profoundly constrained areas deemed ‘unlikely’ for development.

Addressing constraints is generally seen as the first step in development, followed by infrastructure servicing. Reflecting this, the ELS undertakes detailed constraints analysis for the investigation areas, accompanied with broad notes on servicing barriers based on consultation with Council.

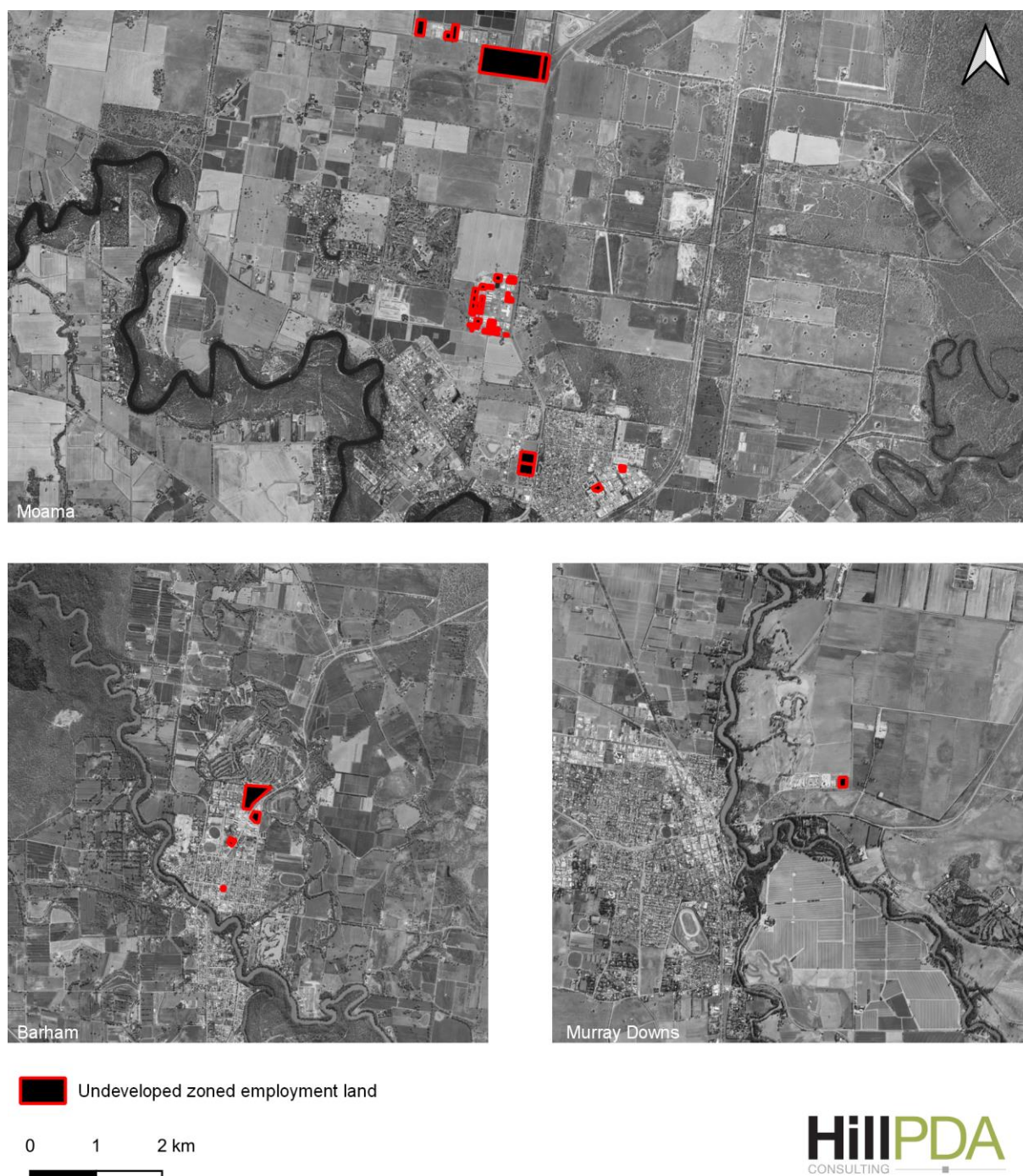
This ELS classes investigation areas based on constraints, servicing, and indicative land uses that reflect discussions with Council. This analysis is to guide Council’s rezoning decisions only; development itself should be subject to a wider range of factors, including (but not limited to) Council’s strategic planning goals, market demand, and more in-depth suitability analysis.

Any future rezoning proposals should be supported by infrastructure servicing plans and detailed studies and assessment of site-specific development constraints, including (but not limited to) potential high environmental value and PMF flood levels, velocity, flood planning levels, and access to critical services during flood events. Land suitability should also be confirmed, including for consistency with the Regional Plan, applicable State Environmental Planning Policies, and relevant Local Planning Directions.

3.3 Existing zoned land

As identified in section 3.1, existing zoned employment land should be the first priority for development. Figure 4 presents an overview of such land across the LGA. As it shows, there is undeveloped land across the LGA, but significantly more in Moama compared to other areas of Barham and Murray Downs. It may be beneficial to concentrate rezoning decisions in the latter areas of lower supply, depending on Council's strategic intentions and levels of demand.

Figure 4: Overview of undeveloped zoned employment land



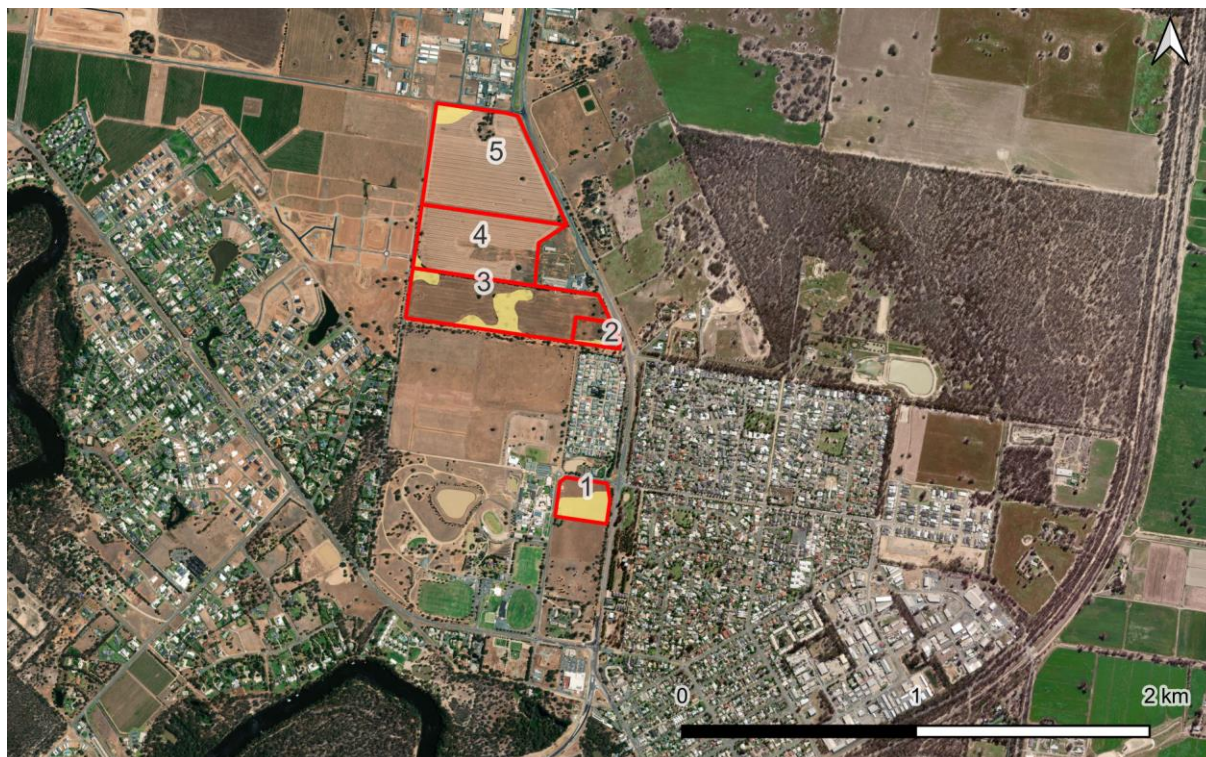
Source: HillPDA; Bing Maps

3.4 Areas by precinct

3.4.1 Moama

Moama contains five investigation areas, all of which are located on the Cobb Highway, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Future employment areas, Moama



- Investigation areas
- Manageable constraints

Source: Murray River Council; Bing Maps; HillPDA

Investigation area 1 has been identified by Murray River Council for a future 'homemaker centre'. It is currently zoned R1 General Residential but could be zoned commercial for consistency with lots immediately to its south. Rezoning would be a long-term outcome, as the area contains category 2 bushfire constraints, while requiring stormwater and sewer servicing, and a potential signalised intersection between Boyes Street and the Cobb Highway.

Investigation areas 2, 3, 4, and 5 are located immediately to the south of the existing Moama Business Park. Rezoning these sites would facilitate infill employment land development. The area is broadly undeveloped except for area 4, which has been separated from the developed area of Lot 230, DP 751152. Council has indicated that these areas could support business park land uses and/or a truck stop. It is recommended that areas 5 and 4 be prioritised for a business park, with the former area used for a truck stop, due to a relative lack of constraints, highway frontage, and distance from residential. While areas 2-5 are only partly constrained, Council has noted that there are minimal services, and that development would require new infrastructure.

Investigation areas 2, 3, and 4 are affected by terrestrial biodiversity constraints, with areas 1 and 5 affected by relatively mild bushfire risk. The following table shows the presence of constraints by site.

Table 5: Constraints by investigation area, Moama

Investigation area	Lot number	Potential use	Area (ha)	Manageable constraints	Area (ha) (unconstrained)
1	3/-/DP1194219	Commercial (homemaker centre)	3.7	63%	1.4
2	1/-/DP802381	Commercial (business/office park)	2.0	11%	1.8
3	2/-/DP802381	Commercial (business/office park)	16.7	19%	13.5
4	Part lot 230/-/DP751152	Commercial (business/office park)	14.8	1%	14.6
5	231/-/DP751152	Commercial (business/office park), truck stop	21.3	5%	20.3

Further work and technical studies

Sites 1, 2, and 3 have constraints that would warrant consultant analysis prior to rezoning. Sites 4 and 5 are mildly constrained; as such, development design could be used to avoid related impacts.

3.4.2 Hillside Road, Moama

There is one investigation area located at Hillside Road to the north of Moama. It is directly south of an existing heavy industrial area, close to the Cobb Highway. The existing area is anticipated to lose some capacity, with the expected expansion of the Moama Waste Management Facility. Currently zoned for primary production, the investigation area would provide a large area for industrial land, albeit being partly affected by terrestrial biodiversity constraints.

Figure 6: Future employment area, Hillside Road, Moama



- Investigation areas
- Manageable constraints

Source: Murray River Council; Bing Maps; HillPDA

The following table shows the presence of constraints at the site.

Table 6: Constraints by investigation area, Hillside Road, Moama

Investigation area	Lot number	Potential use	Area (ha)	Manageable constraints	Area (ha) (unconstrained)
6	58/-/DP751159	Industrial	42.1	5%	39.8

Further work and technical studies

In on-site constraints can be managed, development would then require addressing servicing barriers. Consultation with Council has identified that development would require infrastructure arrangements, including a new sewer scheme in the precinct. Although recent infrastructure will have improved filtered water quality and pressure on the site, there is no raw water access.

3.4.3 Barham

Murray River LSPS notes that Barham is the second-largest settlement in the LGA and that industrial land in Barham is in short supply. Currently, the major industries in and around Barham are agriculture including grazing, broadacre cropping, and forestry. Sites 7-9 are located north of Barham, adjacent to an approved solar farm at 206 Gonn Road. Landowners/developers have expressed interest in future development opportunities in Barham and its surrounds for various land uses including a micro-abattoir, a cereal-processing facility, and a hemp manufacturing and agricultural precinct. It is recommended that land identified in Figure 7 is investigated for opportunities to enhance supporting agricultural practices, including the establishment of a general industrial estate. All three sites are affected by potential biodiversity constraints, with sites 7 and 8 additionally affected by slight slope constraints.

Figure 7: Future employment areas, Barham



- Investigation areas
- Manageable constraints

Source: Murray River Council; Bing Maps; HillPDA

The following table shows the presence of constraints by site.

Table 7: Constraints by investigation area, Barham

Investigation area	Lot number	Potential use	Area (ha)	Manageable constraints	Area (ha) (unconstrained)
7	7/-/DP1095644	General industrial uses to support agricultural practices	52.7	6%	49.7
8	802/-/DP1288756	General industrial uses to support agricultural practices	68.8	1%	67.8

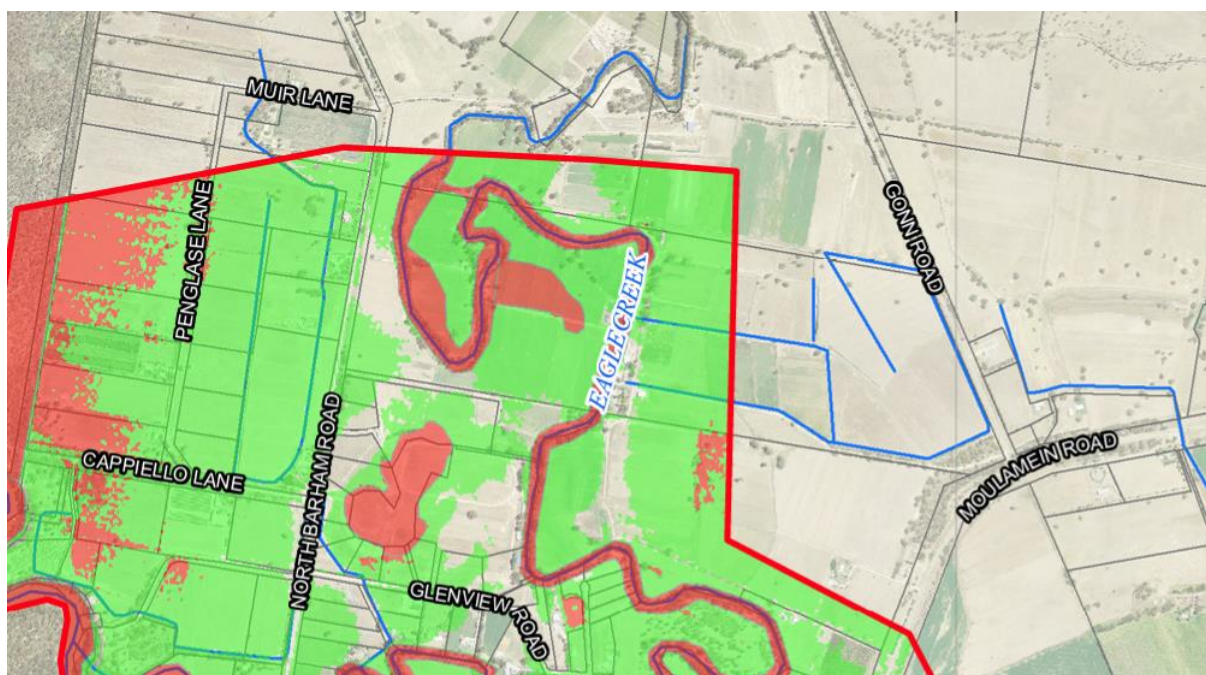
9	2/-/DP1227689	General industrial uses to support agricultural practices, possible rural residential	126.0	10%	113.0
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Flood risk

Different potential flood constraints are present across investigation areas 7, 8, and 9. The Barham Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan (FRMSP) indicates that much of investigation area 9 is within the Flood Planning Area (FPA). However, the eastern portion of the site, and sites 7 and 8, are not in the study area, so flooding risk is uncertain.

Within investigation area 9, Eagle Creek and directly adjacent land is considered a 'high hazard' area, as shown in Figure 8. This may present a hard constraint for development on the relevant parts of the site. The remainder of the site is either low hazard or unaffected, the former of which would create a manageable constraint.

Figure 8: Barham FRMSP 100 Year ARI Flood Event Flood Hazard, Barham



Source: GHD (2017). Red = high hazard, green = low hazard

Further work and technical studies

Once constraints are addressed, consultation with Council has indicated that investigation area 7 may be the best candidate for development due to the potential for a service lane for access to transport. However, all sites would require servicing for development.

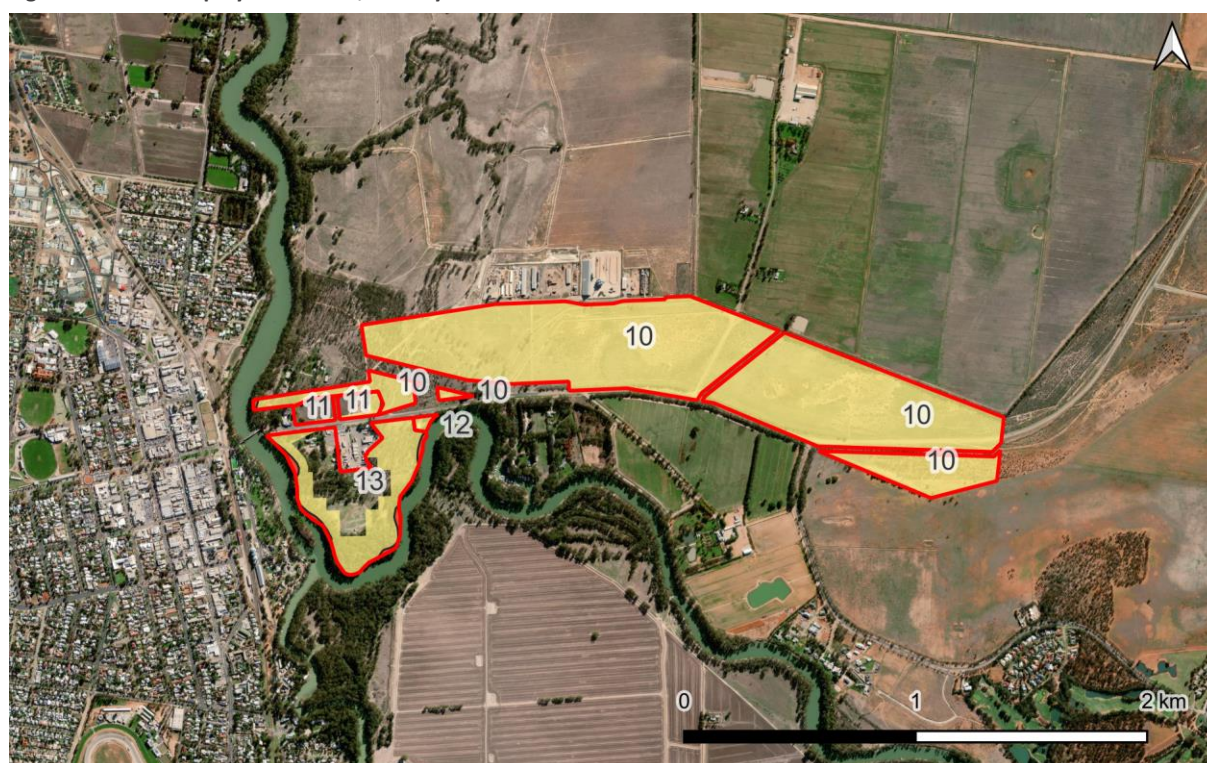
3.4.4 Murray Downs

Murray Downs contains four investigation areas. All such areas are located adjacent to Swan Hill Road and have been identified for potential rural retail and/or service station developments, based on descriptions provided by Murray River Council during consultation. In addition, investigation area 10 has been identified for potential industrial expansion, considering the current capacity of the existing industrial precinct in Murray Downs. Investigation areas 10 and 11 are both split across multiple sites. Investigation area 10 covers a particularly large area, comprising a travelling stock route site.

Some hard constraints are present on investigation areas 10, 12, and 13, due to the lots extending slightly onto the Murray River.

There are generally manageable constraints across all investigation areas in this precinct, involving biodiversity constraints on all areas, wetland constraints on all areas excluding investigation area 11, and land reservation acquisition constraints on all areas excluding investigation area 12. Areas 12 and 13 are also affected by significant slope constraints. Investigation areas 10, 12, and 13 are also partly impacted by LEP provisions that limit some development within 40 metres of the Murray River.

Figure 9: Future employment areas, Murray Downs



- Investigation areas
- Manageable constraints
- Hard constraints

Source: Murray River Council; Bing Maps; HillPDA

In addition, consultation with Murray River Council has identified that many investigation areas are subject to a native title claim, which may preclude development on any Crown Land sites (Federal Court File Number

VID14/2022). The Native Title Register has not accepted the claim, but the Federal Court may still refer it for mediation and/or make a determination. Investigation area 10, a travelling stock route site, is Crown Land; it is therefore entirely constrained by native title. The site also surrounds the Wamba Wamba reserve, an Aboriginal community. Council has identified that there may be opportunities for Council to partner with the Wamba Wamba community to develop land for employment opportunities. This may still allow for development; as such, native title has been revised to being a manageable constraint for this site.

The following table shows the presence of constraints by site.

Table 8: Constraints by investigation area, Murray Downs

Investigation area	Lot number	Potential use	Area (ha)	Manageable constraints	Hard constraints	Area (ha) (unconstrained)
10	7301/-/DP1166196	Industrial, rural retail, service station	104.7	100%	0%	104.7
11	73/-/DP1117956	Rural retail, service station	3.6	22%	0%	2.8
12	2/-/DP1123494	Rural retail, service station	0.4	99%	1%	0.0
13	21/-/DP1017769	Rural retail, service station	23.9	61%	4%	9.3

There is currently an undeveloped zoned lot at 51 Swan Hill Road, discussed in Chapter 6.4.7 of the Background Report. Council has noted that development of this lot should take precedence over future land opportunities in this precinct. In addition, Council is developing a Murray Downs master plan. This master plan will specify where future employment land development may be directed. It is recommended that the master plan consider the prioritisation of different investigation areas in this precinct as outlined in section 3.5.

Flood risk

The investigation areas in Murray Downs are all situated within the FPA within the Murray Downs FRMSP. All areas additionally contain land deemed 'high hazard' under the FRMSP. This is particularly the case for investigation areas south of Swan Hill Road (12 and 13), presenting a possible hard constraint for such sites. All Murray Downs investigation areas contain at least some land with high hazard flood constraints, shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Murray Downs FRMSP 100 Year ARI Flood Event Flood Hazard, Murray Downs



Source: GHD (2017). Red = high hazard, green = low hazard

Further work and technical studies

Constraints would need to be addressed on all Murray Downs sites prior to development. After dealing with constraints, other tasks would be required. In particular, consultation with Council has indicated that a new sewer scheme and/or raw water servicing would be needed for development. Council is expected to detail such requirements in a future Murray Downs master plan. The potential development of investigation area 10 would also require Council to work with Wamba Wamba reserve representatives to discuss the potential for employment land on relatively less constrained parts of the site.

Investigation areas 12 and 13 are considered to be particularly constrained; as such, development is generally recommended to be directed north of Swan Hill Road. Existing vacant employment land on Cygnet Lane should also be prioritised before the rezoning of new employment land.

3.4.5 Other areas

In addition to above-mentioned precincts, there may be future demand for additional employment land in other areas, particularly smaller towns zoned RU5 Village. Although this zoning permits various employment-generating uses, industrial land may be required if heavier or more extensive industry is required in the future. This could occur in Tooleybuc or Moulamein, which have relatively limited industry. If needed, potential new industrial land should be explored around the south-east and north-west/south-east of each respective town, near land zoned SP2 Infrastructure.

3.5 Future land opportunities summary

Table 9 summarises future land opportunities, including the level of priority of each area's potential rezoning.

Table 9: Future land opportunities summary

Precinct	Area	Potential use	Indicative prioritisation
Moama	1	Commercial (homemaker centre)	Long-term
	2	Commercial (business/office park)	Long-term
	3	Commercial (business/office park)	Long-term
	4	Commercial (business/office park)	Medium-term
	5	Commercial (business/office park), truck stop	Medium-term
Hillside Road, Moama	6	Industrial	Long-term
Barham	7	Industrial, agribusiness	Medium-term
	8	Industrial, agribusiness	Medium-term
	9	Industrial, agribusiness, potential rural residential	Medium-term
Murray Downs	10	Industrial, rural retail, service station	Long-term
	11	Rural retail, service station	Medium-term
	12	Rural retail, service station	Unlikely
	13	Rural retail, service station	Unlikely

Timing: Short-term = 0-5 years, medium-term = 5-10 years, long-term = 10+ years, unlikely = rezoning not advised. Prioritisations assume Council's intention to rezone land; decisions to rezone should be subject to Council's priorities and market need

Disclaimer

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