

PART 2 A Profile of the Shire and region

2.1 Generally: Temora Shire today

The Shire is located centrally in the eastern Riverina region of New South Wales, on the Burley Griffin Way approximately half way between Sydney and Melbourne. The Shire has a population of 6,340 (2003) and covers an area of 2,812 square kilometres (Figure 1).

The major population centre is the town of the same name (population 4,600 +) with Aria Park (400), Springdale and Reefton following. Wagga Wagga - the largest inland city in the State, is about 80 km to the south. Temora itself is strategically placed at the intersection of the Burley Griffin Way (east-west) and the Goldfields Way - Olympic Way (north-south), a location which puts the Shire on the Melbourne-Brisbane and Sydney-Canberra-Adelaide routes.

Taking a 1-hour travel radius as a measure, the population within a circle centred on Temora would be in the range 90-100,000 people. The Shire is in a strong position to exploit in a positive way its various relationships with other centres in the immediate region. This applies in particular to the City of Wagga Wagga, with its burgeoning local economy and a population of some 58,000

The following table provides a basic statistical comparison between Temora and the six neighbouring local government authorities which lie within approximately one hour's driving time of Temora town (Figure 2).

LGA	POPULATION (2003)	ROAD DISTANCE FROM TEMORA TOWN
TEMORA	6340	-
JUNEE	4000	50
WAGGA WAGGA	55,700	87
WEST WYALONG	6700	67
COOTAMUNDRA	6,500	53
YOUNG	11,900	80
COOLAMON	4100	60
Total	95840	-

* Plus a proportion of the populations of Grenfell and Harden which lies within the Temora Catchment.

2.2 Community organisations, facilities and resources

The community consultation program associated with the 2003 Shire Discussion Paper produced some valuable results in the form of ideas, projects and opportunities for strengthening the Shire community and demonstrating ways and means of utilising the Shire's cultural and environmental resources to better advantage (See Appendix B). Some of the ideas put forward at that time have already been implemented.

Whilst some of these proposals may appear to be fanciful - even unrealistic - each and every one of them is evidence of a willingness on the part of the people of Temora to give serious thought to the future health and well-being of their Shire. The Council records its appreciation of the time and effort which the people of the Shire put into this important exercise.

2.3 Infrastructure

Council's capital works programs over the years have resulted in the provision of essential infrastructure which is well matched to demand, both in the urban areas and in the Shire generally. The current situation is summarised in Table 2.3.1

Table 2.3.1 Temora Shire - public utilities infrastructure, roads: summary 2005

Item	Current situation; comment
Water supply - Temora town	Mains supply by Goldenfields Water, pumped from Gumly Gumly; new reservoir approved and construction is imminent resulting in water from Jugiong Filtration Plant to supplement supply.
Water supply - Aria Park	Mains supply by Goldenfields Water, pumped from Gumly Gumly; Additional storage reservoirs recently completed capacity is adequate
Water supply - Springdale	Mains supply by Goldenfields Water - Cowangs Reservoir: capacity is adequate.
Water supply - Reefton	Mains supply by Goldenfields Water, pumped from Gumly Gumly
Sewage disposal/treatment : Temora town	Existing plant capable of servicing current and foreseeable demand (to 8000EP); treated effluent used for irrigation of golf course, sports fields, parkland, cemetery
Springdale - sewage disposal	Not available; village reliant on septic disposal
Aria Park - sewage disposal	Not available; township reliant on septic disposal
Roads - generally	Current provisions adequate - no new roads currently planned; maintenance program is on schedule
Airport	New main runway recently opened; long-term master plan is in hand; excellent management arrangements are in place
Alternative route for heavy vehicles - Hoskins St	Preferred alignment within rail corridor is currently being evaluated; on-going consultations with RTA, RailCorp under way
Natural gas	Supplied by Country Energy; supply generally adequate to satisfy expected demand; no capacity problems expected
Rural areas generally	No major watercourse ; limited groundwater in some areas; numerous farm dams; surface water almost completely absent; water supply constraints are major obstacle to diversification of agriculture in most parts of the Shire
Telephone, electricity	Capacity of existing services is adequate throughout the Shire

2.4 Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plans 2003

The Action Plans covers the 1600 km total lengths of the Murrumbidgee River and its tributaries, from its rise in the western Alpine areas to its junction in the west with the Murray near Balranald. The catchment covers an area of about 84,000 square kilometres, accommodates a population of some 520,000, and includes the major urban settlements of Canberra, Queanbeyan, Wagga Wagga, Cooma, Yass, and Cootamundra. The southern part of Temora Shire drains south to the Murrumbidgee.



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Fig. 2: Temora and Eastern Riverina
Region

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18 December 2006

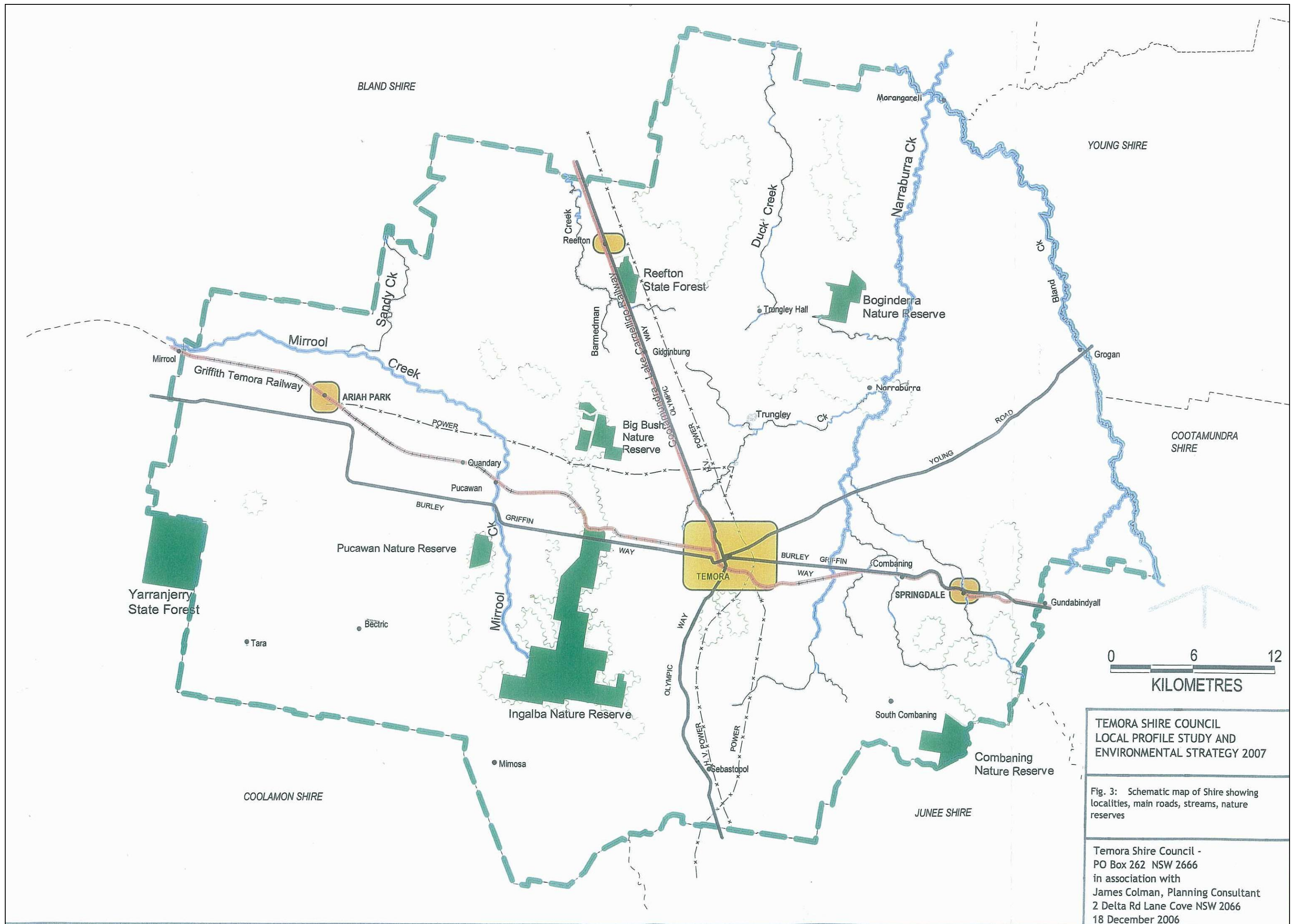
2.5 Lachlan Catchment Action Plan (LCAP)

The Plan covers an area of 84,700 sq km, encompassing areas of 23 local government authorities. Within the Murray - Darling basin the Lachlan River is unique in that its termination in the lower parts of the catchment comprises wetlands and effluent creeks. Wetlands, reserves and high quality crown land contribute to the resources assets of the catchment. Culturally, the bulk of the catchment lies in Wiradjuri country.

About 70% of Temora Shire drains north to the Lachlan - the balance goes south to the Murrumbidgee. Within the Lachlan system the Bland Creek sub-catchment extends from Temora to West Wyalong, Young, and Grenfell. The Council has been collaborating with neighbouring local authorities, Land care coordinators and landholders on catchment management matters and will play its part in implementing the new whole-of-government strategies and the management actions which they contain.

Table 2.3.2 People and resources- a summary profile of the Shire (2004)

Number	ITEM	COMMENTS
1	Demography	4000+ urban - 2340 rural - total 6340 (2001)
2	Urban settlements	Temora (major centre); smaller township of Aria Park; village of Springdale; hamlet of Reefton
3	Rural population	Predominantly engaged in agriculture
4	Climate	Winter -summer temp range 2.6 - 32 deg; rainfall around 550mm per annum
5	Geography	Gently undulating terrain - draining south to the Murrumbidgee River and north to the Lachlan River
6	Community organisations	active in sports, service, heritage and history, welfare, arts and crafts, youth, veterans, seniors, harness racing, women's interests, aviation, equestrian events, churches (12)
7	Health care	Full range of local services - supported by visiting specialists; hospital; dental; aged and disability services; nursing; pharmacies; Temora Community Health Centre; family and youth support; vacation care; emergency relief; before and after school care
8	Education/ research	Primary and secondary level - TAFE (Riverina Institute) Temora campus; proximity to Charles Sturt University; Ag. Research Inst.
9	Government services	Telstra, Country Energy, Goldenfields Water, Agriculture, Land care, Natural Resource Management, Environment, RTA, Courthouse, NSW Government agencies
10	Total Council employees	87 persons (incl. p/t)
11	Council budget '06-07	\$15.5 million (total assets \$68.5m)
12	Economic base	Agriculture; supported by retail, health and community services, education, property and business services; growing recreational aviation sector; harness racing industry; tourism
13	Police	Temora - Aria Park; Wagga Area Command
14	Volunteer effort	135 organisations - very significant resource



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Fig. 3: Schematic map of Shire showing localities, main roads, streams, nature reserves

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2.6 The region

Temora Shire is part of the Riverina Region, one of several which have been created for the purposes of regional planning in New South Wales. The Shire lies in the northern sector of the region, sharing boundaries with the Shires of Coolamon, Junee, Bland, Cootamundra, and Young (known generally as the *Eastern Riverina*) (Figure 3).

At the time of this study there is no comprehensive regional plan or formally adopted set of planning policies for the Riverina Region. Local authorities are necessarily making their own plans in this context, relying on a plethora of agency requirements which impact to a lesser or great extent on local plan-making. Until a regional plan is in place, Shire Councils such as Temora will effectively be relying on government advice - as well as their own judgements - as to how best to respond to regional issues and policies.

For Temora, the main areas of concern at a regional level are those related to agriculture, native vegetation, threatened species, water conservation and management, catchment management, Aboriginal heritage, tourism, culture, health, education and trunk road and rail transport infrastructure. Concerns over issues having a rural focus will almost certainly spill across local government boundaries. It follows that adjoining councils may find it mutually beneficial to adopt similar policy positions when dealing with common problems or planning challenges. These include the recently-endorsed Murrumbidgee and Lachlan Catchment Action Plans - 10-year plans for the integrated management of the two rivers systems containing specific and measurable targets with management actions required to meet those targets

2.7 Demographic profile; employment

The Shire comprises the main town of Temora (located roughly in the centre of the Shire), the small town of Aria Park to the west, the small village of Springdale to the east, and the remnant hamlet of Reefton to the north - all of which sit within an extensive rural landscape dominated by broad-acre agriculture. The total area under the control of the Council is 2812 sq kilometres, with a resident population in 2003 of 6,340 persons. The current (2003) population of Temora town is 4000; Aria Park has 400.

Other statistics of relevance (2001) are as follows.

People of Indigenous origin	53
Persons in 0-14 age group	1482
Persons in 15-44 age group	2254
Persons in 45-64 age group	1471
Persons 65 +	1130
Median age	38 yrs
Mean household size	2.6 persons
No of families (2001)	1580
Education (bachelor's degree or higher)	5% of pop.
Education (diploma, cert, trade cert)	13.3% of pop.
Employed persons	2270
Manuf. Industry	79
Construction	131
Retail	332
Property/bus service	133
Education	168
Health/community services	199
Agriculture/forestry/fishing	507
Wholesale trade	136
Priv. dwellings (owned/being purchased)	1738
Dwellings - rented	396
Total occupied priv. dwellings	2265 (all categories)
Est. population (based on 1996 fig.)	6606 (2006)
Est. population (based on 1996 fig.)	6610 (2012)

[Note: The above table reveals that agriculture is by far the largest sector in the Shire's economy and reinforces the importance of maintaining that sector by way of appropriate planning strategies and job-creation effort].

In 2004, DIPNR (now DoP) released population projections for local areas in the Murrumbidgee region for the period 2001 - 2031. According to the Department's Transport and Population Data Centre, the region is likely to face the following demographic changes during the 30-year projection period.

- The total population of the region will increase from 152,500 (2001) to 162,700 (2031)
- Only 4 out of the region's 15 Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) will see a population increase. In Temora, the projection is for a fall from 6340 (2001) to 5680 (2031).
- All others (11 total) will see a population decrease. This group includes Temora which is projected to experience an annual average growth rate of - 0.4%.
- The areas of population loss are generally dry land farming, grazing or extensive irrigated agriculture. They are mostly beyond commuting range of Wagga Wagga and Griffith.
- Population loss will be caused largely by a net loss of people through out-migration - particularly young people. The relative deficit of young adults is expected to continue, and the number and proportion of children under 15 years are expected to decrease.
- The median age of all SLAs in the region is expected to increase; in Temora's case, it will rise from 38 (2001) to 49 (2031).
- Temora is expected to have a dependency ratio of over 90 by the year 2031, meaning that there will be nearly as many people in the dependent age groups (0-14 and 65+) as in the working age population.

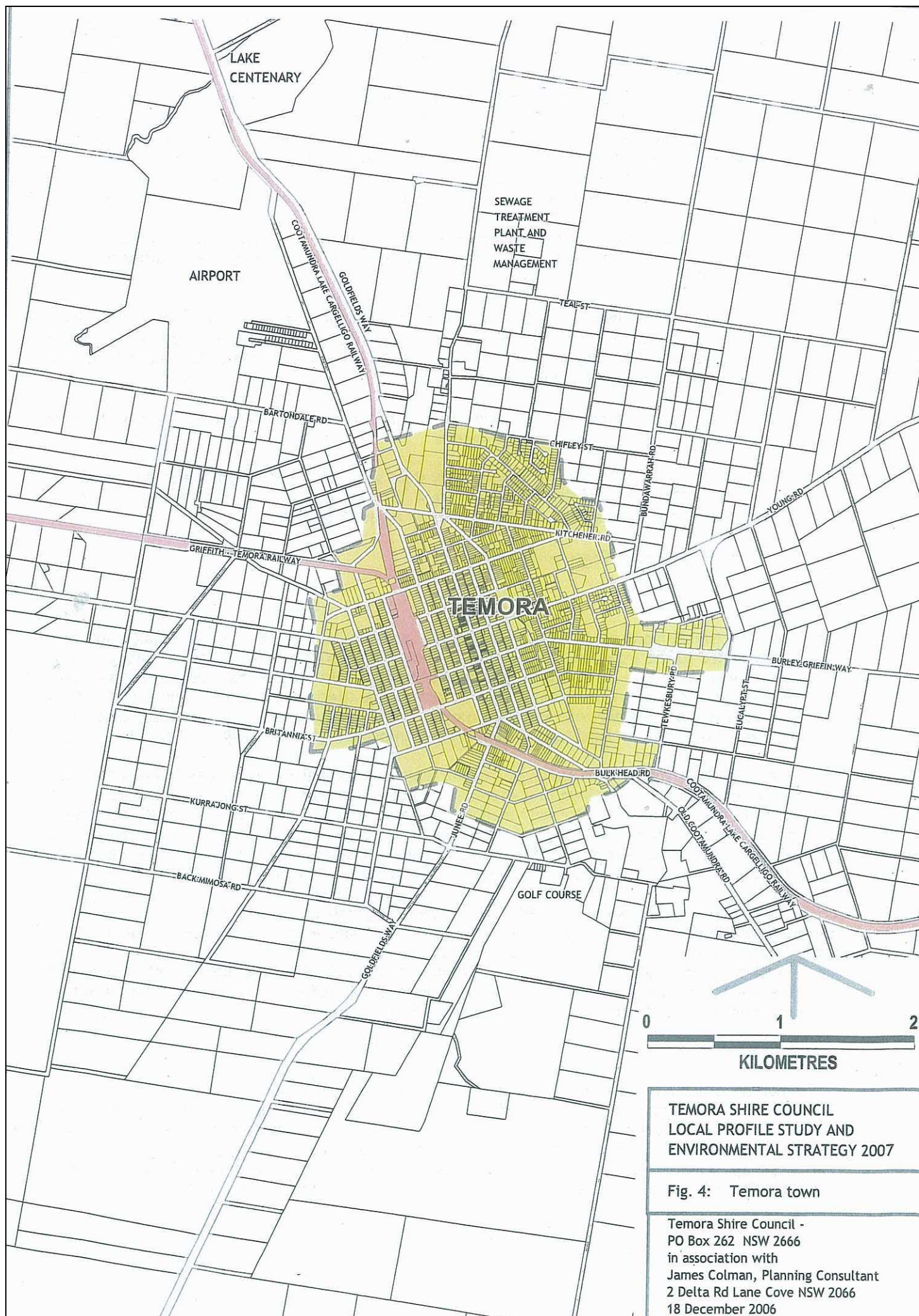
The TPDC projections are based on current and past demographic information. They do not (and could not) take into account the effects or demographic consequences of local government initiatives, government policy shifts, changed farming practices, national migration policy, or other externalities such as vigorous promotional activity or improved communications. Given Temora Shire Council's stated strategic planning objectives as set out in this document, it is the Council's intention to pursue these objectives with determination. This will involve a proactive approach to development in both the agricultural and urban sectors: welcoming new enterprises and assisting existing ones; minimising unnecessary constraints in the planning and development approval process; and generally adopting an open-door policy when it comes to dealing with new business proposals.

By so doing, the Council is confident that the adverse consequences implicit in the TPDC figures can be avoided - at least in part - and the new environmental plan is firmly based on this optimistic view of the future.

2.8 Shire Council

The Shire Council, based in Temora town, provides all the traditional local government services commensurate with size, population and other determinants. In recent years the Council has moved beyond these traditional responsibilities with several initiatives directed towards the provision of an enhanced quality of life and better local services for the Shire community. *For example:*

- The first Temora Shire Social Plan - a joint venture between the Council and the Riverina Murray Office of the NSW Department of Community Services - was released in 2002. Although necessarily focussed on the social environment it dealt with a number of issues which remain of relevance to the current LES including the need for a town by-pass; the need for better 'participatory structures' within the Temora community; changing demographics and minimal population growth (especially within the rural sector); and the continuing inadequacy of the existing Community Centre facility.
- The 1993 State of the Environment report and its annual up-dates since that year cover such topics as areas of unique landscape; soil erosion (especially adjacent to the numerous Ironbark ridges); heritage conservation; water pollution; threatened species; sewage treatment; rural residential development; stormwater management; and preparation of an action plan covering natural resource and land management issues for the Narraburra / Duck Creek sub-catchment of the Bland Creek Catchment (which drains about 80% of the Shire).



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Fig. 4: Temora town

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- In August 2003 the Council made a major submission to the Minister for Local Government on local government reform. This document provided independent statistical evidence of the capability of the Council in managing its affairs, including its decision to revise and update its current LEP. In the event, there has been no change to Temora's boundaries - an action which would have seriously jeopardised the present exercise as one being conducted on the basis that the Shire Council is a competent planning authority in its own right.
- In 2002 the Council worked with the NSW Department of State and Regional Development to produce the *Temora Shire Main Street and Small Towns Strategy*. [See earlier discussion above].
- On the specific issue of 2 ha rural-residential holdings, the 1991 report which the Council commissioned from consultant Kevin Brodie was influential in shaping relevant policies and actions in this development sector. Many of the Brodie findings are still relevant, and the issues he dealt with are still current.
- The Council has enhanced the supply of health care services through initiatives such as the purchase of medical and dental surgeries.

The data and context may have changed considerably since some of the documents referred to above were first released. Nevertheless, there is an important historical continuity evident which has helped to create today's conditions and build the foundation for a new local plan.

2.9 Temora town (Figure 4)

The town centre:

The future of the Temora town centre and of the development pattern in its vicinity are both inextricably linked to the question as to whether or not an alternative route for heavy through traffic should be planned for future construction. Heavy articulated freight vehicles have no place in a modern town centre, and Temora is no exception. Until an acceptable alternative route is found, the quality of the main street environment will remain uncomfortably compromised, with heritage, landscape, pedestrian amenity, safety, human health, comfort and enjoyment all continuing to be at risk.

The value of a major main street up-grade will be less than optimal for as long as heavy articulated semi-trailers and B-doubles continue to compete with local traffic for the available road space. At the same time, it is clear that any alternative route for heavy through traffic will inevitably have some adverse environmental impacts on the areas through which it passes - even if only in the short term. Whilst opposition from some traders and residents can be understood, experience elsewhere shows that overall the long-term benefits are likely to greatly outweigh any short-term costs.

During 2005 Council considered a preliminary engineering report which identified a number of alternative routes for the heavy north-south through traffic load. More recently, one of the optional routes (involving the use of land within the railway corridor) has been explored. Further study will ideally involve community input as well as input from State Rail, the RTA, the road freight industry and other relevant bodies. From a long term strategic planning point of view it will also be important to identify a provisional alignment for a major town by-pass in due course.

Council property:

The Council owns numerous parcels of parkland and other property. Some of these are in constant use; others are not. An inventory of such lands will probably reveal a surplus - suggesting that there may be more efficient ways of utilising these resources. Sale is an option. Redevelopment is another. Where pockets of underutilised parkland exist, their sale might be seen as a means of generating revenue for other more appropriate community purposes. (NB. In addition to Council properties, a number of parcels are Crown-owned Public Recreation Reserves which are managed by the Council.)

Changing housing and neighbourhood needs:

Community planning needs to respond to pressing demographic realities such as the 'ageing population' and the prospect of decline in household size. These phenomena demand a fresh look at the way we design our dwellings and neighbourhoods. The elderly need accommodation which is convenient to health services, library, shops, places to meet and recreate. Given their generally higher levels of education (than previous generations) our seniors will be looking increasingly for satisfying and healthy ways of using their leisure time. Working mothers with young children have entirely different needs, as do childless couples and singles.

The future Temora will ideally provide housing options to suit these various groups, together with a mix of related services and infrastructure. An example of a well-planned precinct might comprise retirement housing, compact apartments for childless couples, a local café or tavern, a corner shop, tennis court, child day care centre, and doctor's surgery, and creative leisure centre/branch library. All these latter would be within walking distance of each other - hence reducing car usage. The key to success in such an approach is to accept that a mix of land-uses is socially more meaningful than the segregated land use patterns which have been the norm in the past. Perhaps the application of these planning principles over time might drive the rehabilitation process for the remnant hamlet of Reefton, in the north of the Shire.

Civic centre, gallery, recital hall:

Whilst the town is rightfully proud of its sporting facilities, Temora lacks a modern gallery and recital hall for the performing arts. A multi-purpose up-grade of the town hall is in hand to accommodate a cinema, gallery space, catering facilities and space for small performing arts events. In the longer term, the town will need a new civic centre which could also help to satisfy the requirements of the conference industry and help to establish the town as a suitable venue for major cultural events including art displays, local and travelling exhibitions, and festivals. Given a determined program for improving the environment of the main street, there would appear to be a clear prospect for creating an attractive pedestrian-friendly focus for civic and cultural activity right on the doorstep of the existing council facilities.

2.10 Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Temora Shire Council is one of 13 local government authorities which constitute the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils. Based in Wagga Wagga, REROC has a full-time executive and undertakes activities which bring collective benefits to its member councils. Promotion of effective regional development is a primary function of the ROC, as is the facilitation of regional planning on a range of environmental, economic, social and infrastructure issues.

Topics which REROC has covered and which relate to this LES include waste management, urban stormwater management, on-site sewage management, centralised mapping, tourism, culture, sport and recreation.

2.11 Tourism in the region

In 2002, Riverina Tourism commissioned a regional tourism action plan which was launched in March 2003. It offered guidance on actions needed to promote tourism in the region, recognising that at present it (i.e. tourism) is a minor contributor to the regional economy. The plan identifies, amongst other things, a series of actions to be undertaken by agencies, industry groups, and local councils. As a member of REROC, Temora Shire is in a position to move unilaterally on some of these actions, given resource availability and proven demand.

The Temora Aviation Museum and its associated events have put Temora on the map in this particular recreational sector (Figure 5). The Temora History Museum is another notable attraction. However, Temora is not yet a tourist 'destination' town. Intermittent events and attractions generate short-term commercial activity; but the town awaits the development of a critical mass of tourism attractions and

the infrastructure to support them. Visitor accommodation is in short supply and uneven in quality, and the absence of a modern 4-5 star motel is perhaps the most obvious signal that the town has yet to reach a crucially important threshold. For the regional tourism action plan, it is 'early days' and its value to the town, Shire and region has yet to be demonstrated in the field.

2.12 Advance Temora

The Shire Council has created the *Advance Temora* enterprise in response to the 2002 Main Street - Small Towns Study. The aim of *Advance Temora* is to provide an organisation having a broad membership base and a mandate to help promote the Shire and enhance the social and cultural life of its people.

Advance Temora is a committee of the Council, charged with the task of supporting the economic and community development of the Shire and providing a focal point for its members in the organisation of events and operations. It is managed by a Board which coordinates the activities of 10 special - interest forums: health, tourism, professional and services, knowledge, agriculture, business, sports, communications, manufacturing and industry, and culture.

